



## **The Wickham Walk**

10.5k (6.5 miles)

### **The Country Code**

- Please keep to the path
- Take litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Please clean up after your dog
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals

**This is a lovely walk around the countryside surrounding The Retreat, it takes in a good variety of paths and passes The Five Bells pub in Wickham about two thirds of the way round, which is the perfect time to stop for refreshment. The paths are easy to follow and there are no hills to climb.**

1. Head out of **The Retreat** via the top (right hand) entrance and turn right on the road for about 400 metres until, just after you have passed **Elcot Farmhouse** on your left, you will see a byway sign pointing down a track on the right – take this path. Ignore the bridleway sign pointing right not far along the path, then not long after that fork slightly left onto narrower path between trees.

2. Continue for about 7/8 minutes until you reach a clear junction of paths, turn right on footpath towards a field and when you reach the field bear half left on what should be a clear path. At the far end of the field follow clear footpath sign pointing you through the copse and then continue in pretty much the same direction across the next field towards a gate.

3. Go through gate into next field and go straight across to another gate, go through and turn right, following footpath sign, on short path between trees, then turn left to head up the right edge of large field to a small gate next to a larger one. Go through gate and carefully cross the road towards a footpath sign next to a broken stile. Follow the path into the woods.

4. Keep to the main path, which winds through the woods, but essentially keeps going in the same direction, passing a yellow footpath arrow along the way. Follow the path until you reach a larger gravel path and turn left. When you reach a farm continue straight on past the barn on the gravel track that then curves to the right.

5. At a junction of paths bend to the left, but when the gravelly path bends right keep going straight on across the field. Cross over lane and then take the path opposite along right edge of large field (you could turn left on road here for about 400 metres, then right on gravel track, then left towards **Kiln Cottage** for a short cut). At the end of the field the path forks, take the left fork and follow down to a gravel track, turn left on that.

6. Follow around to the left a little, then turn right on track signposted **Kiln Cottage**. Go straight on past cottage, where you may see chickens, geese, dogs and even a peacock, and continue on track up into the woods. Pass a yellow footpath arrow and then at a clear junction of paths take the right-hand fork, past another footpath arrow until the path splits again – go straight on towards a gate.

7. Go through gate and go straight on across field (you can bear just right of the trees, but it doesn't really matter which way you go) and head for a gate in the far right corner of the field. Go through kissing gate, cross the road, and turn left on pavement past the school. Turn right at main road towards **The Five Bells pub**.

8. Carefully cross the road to carry on along pavement, opposite **The Five Bells**, and when you reach a footpath sign pointing both ways bear left along concrete track. At a junction of paths carry straight on along tree-lined byway. After about 700 metres a bridlepath sign points left, follow this path between trees, then along the left edge of field, then back between trees again all the way to the corner of a road.

9. Turn left on road, passing a footpath sign on the right, and when you reach a T-junction continue straight on along gravel path following left edge of field. At the end of this field carry straight on along left edge of next field, then when you come across a path crossing left to right turn right on tree-lined path. Continue past **Hill View House** as the path becomes a lane, past **Lower Farm**, then left a T-junction. Follow road around to the right, past the byway you took earlier, and back along to **The Retreat**.