



Pevensey Castle and The Levels

Walk in the footsteps of The Conqueror as you follow the route of the 1066 invasion over the rough marshes of The Levels

Essential Facts

- Route distance: 13.3 km (8.3 miles)
- Approximate time: 3 hours 45 mins
- Optional extension: 8.2 km (5.1 miles)
- Approx. total ascent: 30 metres
- Start point Grid Ref: TQ 645 048
- GPS Ref: TQ 64589 04819
- Recommended O.S. Map: Explorer 123
- Toughness Rating: Sussex 1

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

Up For A
CHALLENGE ?

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An Individual Walk
A Team Effort

Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

The walk starts from the public car park adjacent Pevensey Castle, now an English Heritage site.

Head out of the entrance of the car park, **S**, to the road and follow the concrete footpath on your left through the grounds of Pevensey Castle. Keep to the main path heading straight on towards the opposite outside wall. Go through the gate and continue straight ahead. After about 150 metres pass St Mary's Church (the first the Normans built). You are now in the village of Westham which has many 15th century timber framed buildings. Continue to the first zebra crossing. Cross the road, turn left, then right into Peelings Lane. Continue on Peelings Lane and at the cross roads turn right into Hankham Hall Road. Continue over the bridge crossing the A27.

About 500 metres after the bridge look out for a footpath on your right just after the bend in the road. Climb the stile and go straight ahead to a second stile, by a gate. Veer slightly left to another gate. Through the gate veer left to a stile and down to the road. At the road follow the footpath sign immediately on your right into Hankham Organics. After about 100 metres go through the gate into a field keeping the fence line and nurseries on your left. Continue straight on, to a stile. Climb the stile and head for a further two stiles at the bottom right corner of the field to reach a road, **A**.

At the road turn right and after about 150 metres climb the stile on your left. Go through the gate immediately on your right and follow the path to the next stile. Climb the stile and go diagonally ahead towards the gap in the trees. At the trees continue to the next gap keeping the bungalow on your left. Then head for the white house on your right and cross the bridge by the house. Turn left at the road. After about 30 metres, go through the gate on your right, turn immediately left through another gate and follow the trees on your right. Enter a second field and head for a bridge.

Follow the footpath signs veering generally left across the rough marshland. You cross another bridge, left through a gate, and then immediately right to a gap over the ditch. Veer left towards another bridge. Cross that bridge. Veer left keeping an area of water on your right, up to a second gap over a ditch. Turn left and keep the stream on your left up to a bridleway.

Turn right at the bridleway and continue for about 1.2 km until you reach a narrow country road at **B**. Now you have a choice; turn right for the shorter route, or left to take the longer extension out to Herstmonceux.

For the shorter route turn right at the road, continuing for about 1.5 km to the T-junction. Turn left past Rickney Farm and soon after the farm turn right into Rickney Road, **C**. Continue on this road back to point **A**. Retrace your steps back to point **D**. Take the footpath on your left and head towards a stile at Castle Farm.

Go through the farm between the two buildings following the way marker on the building to your right and head for another stile. Pevensey Castle now comes back into view. Climb the stile and continue to a bridge in the bottom left corner of the field. Head across the next field to a gate. Cross the bridge and continue heading for two more bridges until you reach the way-post in the right hand corner of the field. Turn left at the road back to the car park, **S**.

For a longer route to Herstmonceux church and castle turn left at point **B**. Follow the road for about 2 km, passing the cottage at New Bridge, pass the pumping station and go over the small bridge. Immediately after the bridge is a gate on your right.



1066 Plaque



Pevensey Castle
English Heritage

Go through the gate and continue along the edge of the field to a dead end. On your left is a stile. Climb the stile and continue through the gate with the river on your right. Go through another gate and instead of following the river veer left across a field to two gates.

Take the left hand gate with the stream on your right. Go through a further two gates keeping the stream on your right. At the end of the field climb the stile on your right and follow the way marker towards the church. Climb a second stile and continue following the path to the right hand corner of the church yard. **B1**. There climb another stile. For a great sight of Herstmonceux Castle and the Observatory follow the footpath sign opposite the church.

Return to the church and go through two gates through the farm buildings to your left. After the second continue on the path as it turns left and then at the way marker follow the 1066 path to the right as you begin the slight descent down. After about 250 metres follow the path to the right and continue on path over a stile and back to the river. Continue on the 1066 path for about 3km until you reach a stile out onto the road. Walk right for about 30 metres to Rickney Road on your left. **C**. Continue on this road back to point **A**. Retrace your steps back to point **D**. Follow the instructions from point **D** in the shorter route.

Refreshment

Priory Court Hotel
Hotel, Restaurant and Bar
Castle Road, Pevensey
Tel: 01323 763150
Meals, bar snacks, cream teas.

The Smugglers
Public House
High Street,
Pevensey
Tel: 01323 762112
Pub with food

The Royal Oak & Castle Inn
Public House
High Street, Pevensey
Tel: 01323 762371
Meals, bar snacks

Cottage Tea Rooms
Tea Rooms & Garden
Pevensey Castle
Drinks & snacks



**Pevensey Castle
Cottage Tearooms**

LOCAL INFO

It's difficult to imagine these days a coastline that has receded out from land rather than eroded the land, but this has happened at Pevensey. The shape of the fort at Pevensey is oval, due to the peninsula of the land in Roman times. There is now roughly 1.5 miles of reclaimed land before you reach the sea. The Roman fort was built c.290 AD to repel Saxon invasions. When William arrived at Pevensey, for the Battle Of Hastings in 1066 he made use of the ruins of the fort. More recently during the Second World War, pill boxes were inserted into the castle.

Just to the east of the castle in the high street is the mint house, now an antique dealers. The original site dates back to 1067 when coins were first minted. The current building dates back to 1342. It is thought there may have been underground tunnels from the mint house to the castle as well as smugglers tunnels to the sea.

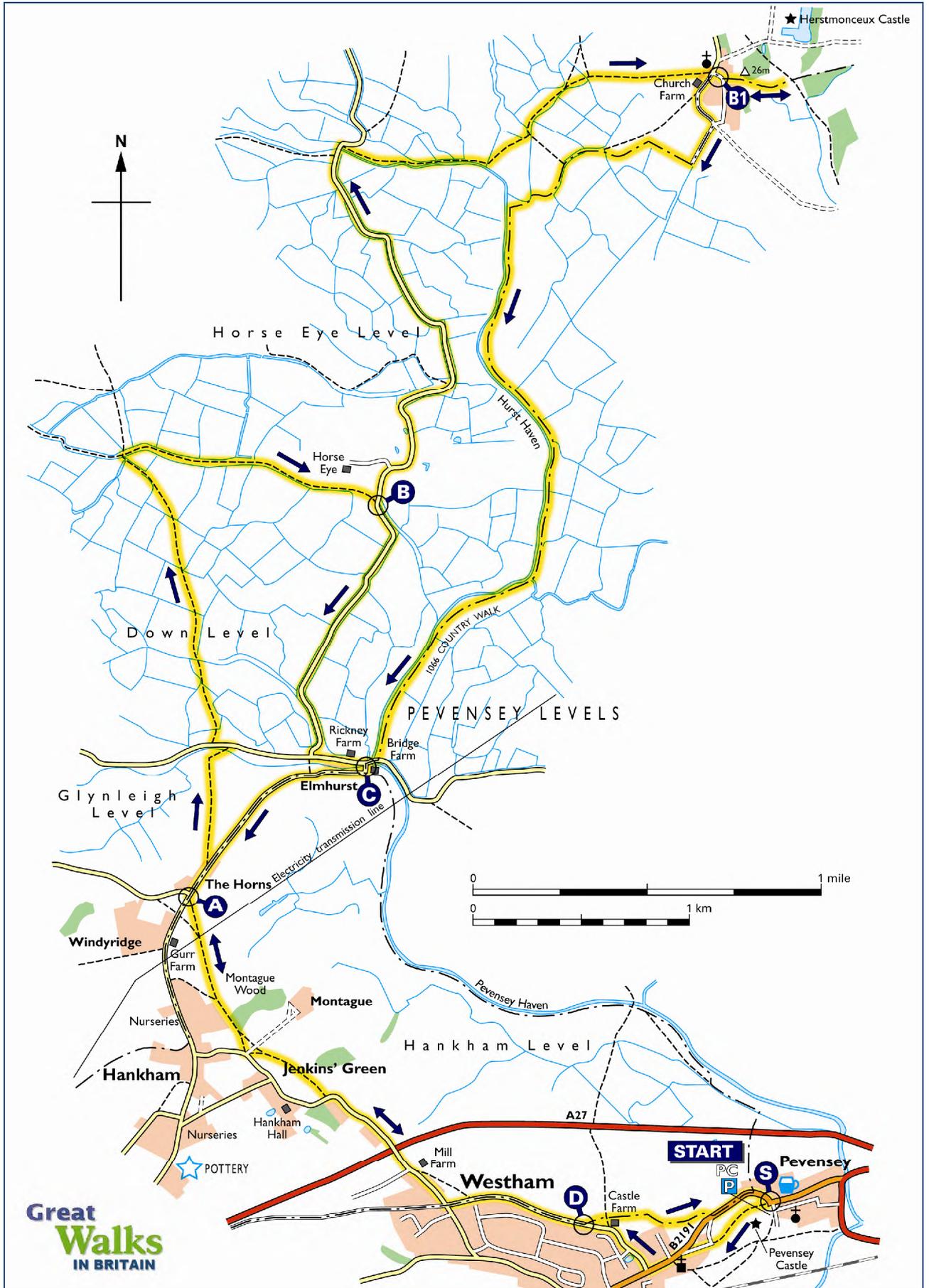
Construction of the grand Herstmonceux Castle began in 1441. One of the earliest castles to be made from brick it was ordered by Sir Roger Fiennes the Treasurer of the Household to Henry VI. Its only purpose was for luxury and not defence.

How did the Royal Greenwich Observatory dating back to 1675 end up in Herstmonceux? By the 20th century Greenwich had become too polluted both by smog and light for the use of telescopes and the Sussex village was chosen as a replacement from the 1950's. The world famous 'pips' were generated at Herstmonceux and relayed to the bbc for broadcast until 1990.

A huge amount of research was undertaken at Herstmonceux during the 60's and 70's. However not being much higher than sea level it was decided that the telescopes would be better on a mountain and by 1998 the Observatory at Herstmonceux had closed.

PEVENSEY CASTLE AND LEVELS G.P.S. WAYPOINTS

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF	CO-ORDINATES	ELEVATION: Metres
PEV S	S	TQ 64589 04819	9
PEV A	A	TQ 61867 06317	9
PEV B	B	TQ 62732 08148	-3
PEV B1	B1	TQ 64301 10178	31
PEV C	C	TQ 62690 06924	5
PEV D	D	TQ 63698 04788	13



MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Sussex & The South Downs** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Cambridgeshire may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route in the Brecon Beacons.