

Newington Walk 4 - Lower Halstow



Walk No. 4064539

This pleasant walk takes you both sides of Newington's historic watercress beds and past lagoons and open spaces filled with birds.

Calculated time : 1h15	Difficulty : Average
Distance : 2.57mi	Return to the departure point : No
Vertical gain : 39ft	Activity : Walking
Vertical drop : 131ft	Location : Newington (Kent)-1
Highest point : 128ft	
Lowest point : 23ft	

Description

(D) Starting from Station Road in Newington, walk towards the railway station and turn right along the footpath towards Church Lane. Cross Church Lane carefully to the pavement on the other side. Walk to the bottom of Church Lane and turn left onto School Lane. Walk past the school and keep to the right onto Boxted Lane, go past the cemetery on your left and stay on Boxted Lane until the footpath on the right just before Libbettswell Cottages.

(1) Proceed along the footpath past the traveller site and continue till you reach a stile. Go over the stile, walk about 25m then through the gap in the fence on the left. Proceed into the orchard and by the electricity pylon.

(2) After the orchard where the footpath turns right through a kissing gate, pause for a while. The wide open fields are a good place to spot birds of prey in the sky or a murder of rooks on the ground. The footpath follows the hedge and then the Libbet stream on your right until you reach the small bridge at Lower Halstow. Note that a willow tree has come down across the footpath beside the stream before you reach Lower Halstow. It is passable with care on the right or through the small gap underneath.

(3) In Lower Halstow, at the brick bridge, cross the stile, turn right then right again along the track with the new weatherboarded houses on your left. Go through the metal gate - remember to close it after you.

(4) Follow the footpath across the field towards the electricity pylon. When you reach the pylon, turn back to enjoy a view across the Medway Estuary. Cross the stile then follow the footpath into the valley and around to the right, keeping Bog Farm on your left. Take care, this footpath has large trees growing in it and the roots can be a trip hazard. A tree has come down across the footpath but it's possible to walk underneath if you're able to crouch down.

(5) At the end of the narrow footpath cross two small wooden bridges and continue on to the right hand corner of the enterprise centre. Take the footpath ahead of you. This exits directly onto Wardwell Lane - take great care as you turn right onto the lane and walk 200m to the junction with School Lane and Church Lane. **(A)**

Practical information

Food and drink : With a small detour, there is an well-reviewed pub in Lower Halstow called The Three Tuns that has outdoor seating and welcomes dogs. Other than this, there are no toilet facilities or water points on the route.

There is some road walking. Take care, walk on the right and keep dogs and children close. In summer and autumn, you will find stinging nettles and brambles on sections of the paths.

Please remember that all directions are advisory and you are responsible for your own safety at all times.

Waypoints

S Starting Point

N 51.352125° / E 0.667968° - alt. 128ft - mi 0

1 Footpath

N 51.360069° / E 0.666093° - alt. 69ft - mi 0.73

2 Birds

N 51.365582° / E 0.666589° - alt. 26ft - mi 1.13

3 Lower Halstow

N 51.371395° / E 0.668436° - alt. 23ft - mi 1.61

4 View

N 51.36441° / E 0.670393° - alt. 79ft - mi 2.11

5 Watercress beds

N 51.359928° / E 0.670886° - alt. 33ft - mi 2.43

F Ending Point

N 51.357973° / E 0.671728° - alt. 49ft - mi 2.57

All historic information is taken from 'Newington Times Past' and 'Newington Street and Place Names' by Thelma Dudley.

In the nearby area

Halfway to Lower Halstow (waypoint 1), pause after the orchard where the footpath turns right through a kissing gate. These wide open fields are a good place to spot birds of prey in the sky or a murder of [rooks](#) on the ground.

After this kissing gate, the footpath turns left along the Libbet stream. You'll see [reeds](#) growing here, once the material used for thatched roofs, and [osier willows](#) which provided the material to make baskets for collecting the produce from Newington's orchards.

The Libbet stream is an ancient waterway that has been economically important to Newington. Originally [watercress](#) was grown in the widened stream of the wet meadow. You'll see where the beds were near the end of the walk. In the early 1920s, three and a half acres of beds were dug out and 12 artesian boreholes were sunk to a depth of more than 300ft to supply the pure spring water that cress requires. Eventually, other water extraction in the area caused the artesian pressure to fail and pumping was necessary. This finally made commercial growing of cress uneconomic about 30 years ago.

The stream opens into two small lagoons. These are a good place to spot water birds. As the bank rises on the left hand side, look across it and you may see a large gaggle of white geese. The stream widens as you approach Lower Halstow. [Grass snakes](#) have been spotted swimming in the water. They are harmless.

As you approach the last section of the walk, the narrow footpath by the side of Bog Farm runs along the eastern boundary of the watercress beds. Once you've crossed the two small wooden bridges, pause for a while.. Despite noise from Newington Industrial Estate, this is a haven for birds. We've seen:

[pied](#) and [yellow](#) wagtails, delightful little birds with, as the name suggests, distinctive wagging tails

[buzzards](#), now the most common birds of prey across the UK

[kestrels](#). Grant, who walks this area frequently, recently saw a kestrel being harrassed by crows. Perhaps she'd got too close to a nest.

[green finches](#),

[woodpeckers](#)

as well as the more common [robin](#).

As you walk towards the enterprise centre from the small bridges you will pass through the top end of the old watercress beds site. If you look carefully you will see old concrete and brick low walls that divided up the beds and maintained the water level. Further on look to the left where you will see a small corrugated iron shed that still contains the pump that sits over one of the wells. The stone by the corner of the enterprise centre, marked 'JS 1923' was left there by James Simmons, owner of this part of the beds. Let us know your opinion on : <https://www.visorando.co.uk/walk-newington-walk-4-lower-halstow/>



Visorando and the author of this walk sheet cannot be held responsible in the event of an accident during this walk.



THE WALKER CODE

Visorando

by Visorando

Before the walk



CHOOSE YOUR WALK CAREFULLY

by matching its difficulty and duration to your skill and physical ability.



CHECK THE WEATHER FORECAST

and look for other important information, such as snow, temperature, tide times, wind speed, fire risk etc.



BE PROPERLY PREPARED

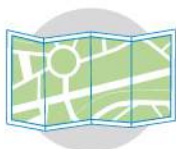
by taking suitable equipment with you, such as a whistle, first-aid kit, appropriate clothing and something to eat and drink.



LET SOMEONE KNOW

where you will be walking.

During the walk



STAY ON THE PATH

(unless you have an exceptionally good reason not to).



RESPECT THE COUNTRYSIDE

by not damaging fences, fields and crops and not picking fruit or vegetables.



RESPECT LOCAL RESTRICTIONS

such as bans on fires, barbecues, camping, fishing, swimming etc.



LEAVE GATES AS YOU FIND THEM

and be cautious of farm animals: try to go around, not through, herds or flocks.



TAKE YOUR RUBBISH HOME

and do not leave any trace of your journey except your footprints.



DON'T MAKE LOTS OF NOISE

and do be respectful and courteous to people along the route.



KEEP YOUR DOG ON A LEAD

and keep it close to you when you meet other people. Make sure you can call it back to you at any time. Walking with a dog is not recommended on routes where there are farm animals.



THE COUNTRYSIDE IS A LIVING ENVIRONMENT

that changes all the time. Walking is an adventure and there are risks associated with it. Be responsible, and know when it is better to give up and turn around than get into danger.

Whether it is private or public, the land you walk on does not belong to you. In particular, the owners of private land have generously and graciously given you permission to cross their property.

If you have an accident, please do not sue the owners of the place where it happened, because other walkers might be banned from that route. However, please feel free to tell us about any dangers you find.