



Knole was first a medieval manor house and then extensively altered to become an Archbishop's palace before it was acquired by Henry VIII. It was then purchased in 1603 by Thomas Sackville, remodelled by Thomas and his descendants and retained in the family's ownership until 1946 when it was gifted to the National Trust, with the family retaining private apartments. Knole House is one of England's largest country houses with 365 rooms, with a small selection of these open to the public.

- 4 Turn left at a junction with the access road and cross a valley with the house off to the right. The path now crosses the golf course where there are warnings of flying golf balls – take extra care. Stay on the path as it goes through a patch of woodland, past a pond and then past an estate house.
- 5 The path then heads to a park exit so instead, turn right at a junction onto another surfaced path that runs straight between an avenue of trees, including at the start some veteran sweet chestnuts.

Historic parkland is a distinctive feature and habitat of the Darent Valley, found in the upper reaches between Westerham and Eynsford. Many historic parklands are on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and most retain important heritage features such as veteran and notable trees which make their past uses recognisable.

- 6 Follow this path for about 400 metres, passing a dirt path on the right. Turn right in a dip onto the next surfaced path. This runs between woodland and more open land to another path junction.

- 7 Turn right again and follow this track between the rear garden wall of Knole House and the entrance to buildings on the farm estate. The path then bends left to run alongside the side wall of the garden. Reaching the front corner, follow the path as it bears left and walk past the front entrance of the house (or go in if you plan to visit).
- 8 Near the corner of the house, pick up a surfaced path heading right which eventually leads downhill to join the access road for vehicles. Follow the road out to the High Street.
- 9 From here it is about a 15 minute walk to Sevenoaks station. Turn right and when the road forks, bear left onto London Road. The station will be on your left in just over 800 metres.

Enjoy the architecture of many of the buildings through the town as you make your way back to the station.



The Darent Valley Rail Trails have been created by the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme. DVLPS is led by the Kent Downs AONB, working throughout the Darent Valley to conserve the area's rich heritage landscapes and encourage people to enjoy, explore and connect to them www.darent-valley.org.uk

A selection of the Rail Trails are available to use on the Darent Valley Trails app, available free of charge on the App Store and Google Play. With special thanks to Alan Dyer for devising this route.



EUROPEAN UNION



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SEVENOAKS

Deer and Downs

A 4.5 mile circular walk exploring the stunning parkland and panoramic views of Knole Park, Kent's last medieval deer park.



Photo credit - Explore Kent

Start / end point: Sevenoaks station

Length: 4.5 miles / 6.8km

Terrain: Most of the walk is on entirely surfaced paths. Some steeper sections

Accessibility: There are road crossings, a gate and a golf course to pass through

Toilets / refreshments: Available at Sevenoaks station (during opening hours) and in the town centre

What3Words: ///divisions.sounds.snows

OS Explorer map: 147

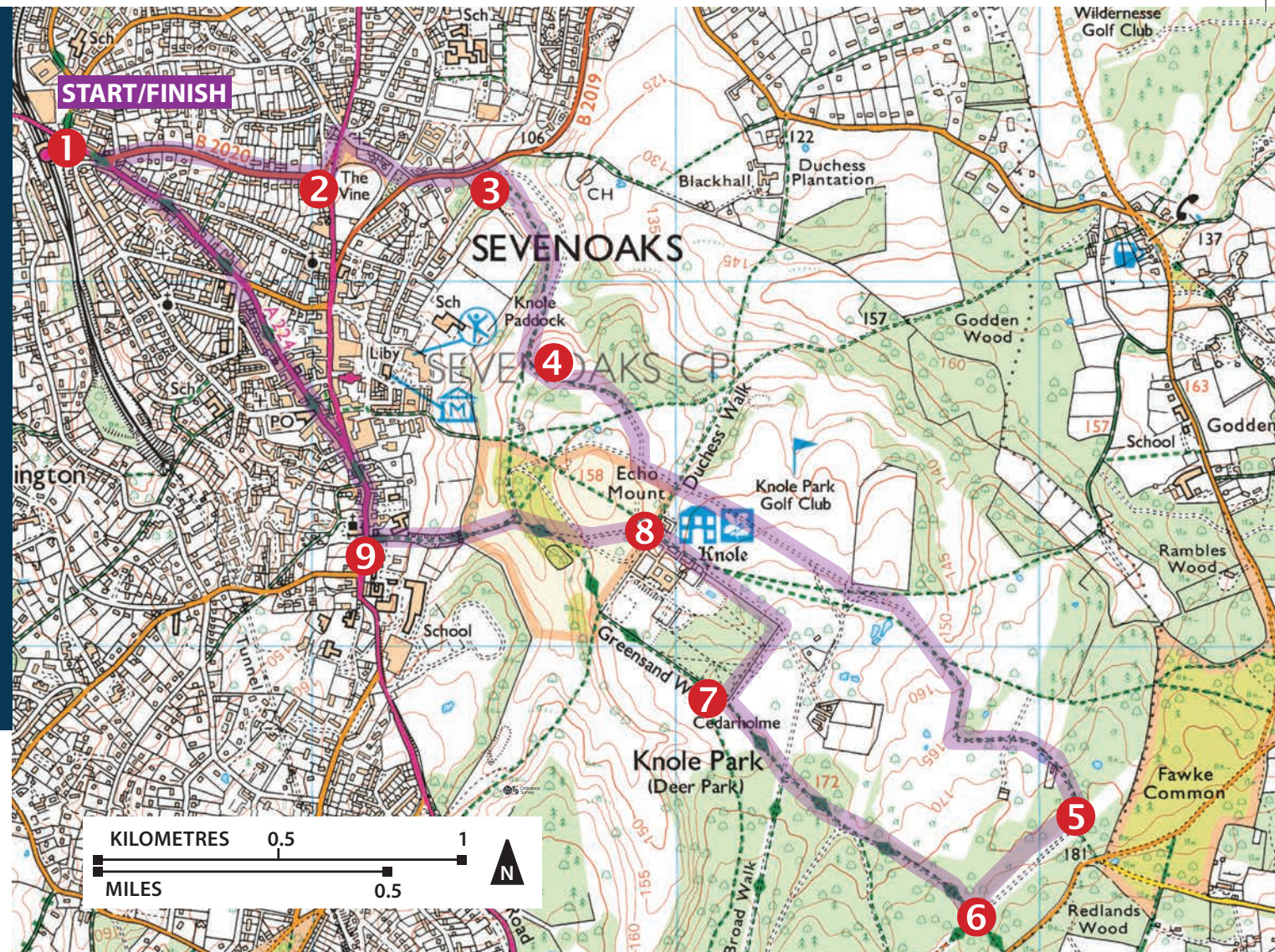
On The Way

- See The Vine, an historic cricket ground in Sevenoaks
- Explore Knole Park with its expanse of parkland, grassland and woodland
- Option to visit Knole House

1 Leave the station by the main exit and walk out to London Road. Cross the road using the pelican crossing, turn right and then left into St Botolph's Road. Follow the road until it ends in front of a war memorial and turn left to join the main road.

Across the road is The Vine, one of the oldest cricket venues in the world with its first recorded match in 1734. It was given to the town in 1773 by the owner of Knole House and is currently the home of the Sevenoaks Vine Cricket Club. Seven oak trees were planted at the northern edge of the ground in 1902 reflecting the Sevenoaks name, six of which were blown down in the 1987 storm and were subsequently replanted.

2 Cross the main road with care and take the first right into Park Lane. Continue straight on at a



crossroads and steeply downhill to join Seal Hollow Road. Turn left for about 200 metres where a stone wall at the back of the pavement marks the boundary of Knole Park. Go through a gate on the right to enter the park.

Knole Park is an area of 383ha and is believed to have been parkland since the fifteenth century. Its varied, undulating landscape contains areas of grassland, woods and some ponds, with part given over to a golf course. Walkers are bound to encounter the herds of

Fallow and Japanese Sitka Deer that live in the park. It is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its populations of rare invertebrates which depend on parkland and woodland habitat, particularly dead wood.

3 Walk ahead a few metres to join a surfaced path. Turn left and follow the path along part of a dry valley and up a wooded slope. The path curves right and enters a more open area with Knole House coming into view.

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