

### A Tyler Hill Pottery Industry

Clay and woodfuel helped make Tyler Hill a centre of the Medieval pottery and tile industry. At its peak (c.1300) it had a virtual monopoly over east Kent, producing everything from bowls to chimney pots. Tyler Hill ware has been identified as far afield as northern France and Germany. By the 15th century bricks were also being produced on a large scale.

Canterbury's religious houses demanded tiles for both flooring and roofing. Tyler Hill tiles can still be seen in the Corona Chapel and behind the altar of the Crypt in Canterbury Cathedral.

Nowadays it is hard to imagine the peaceful hamlet of Tyler Hill as an industrial landscape with a pall of wood-smoke hanging over a sprawl of busy workshops and their stockpiles of bricks, logs and tiles. Traces of clay pits can still be seen as bumps and hollows. Several medieval kilns have been excavated (including by Channel 4's time team), though many more lie untouched. Wasters or fragments of pottery may be found by the observant walker.

### B The Sarre Penn stream, also known in parts, as 'The Fishbourne', rises from

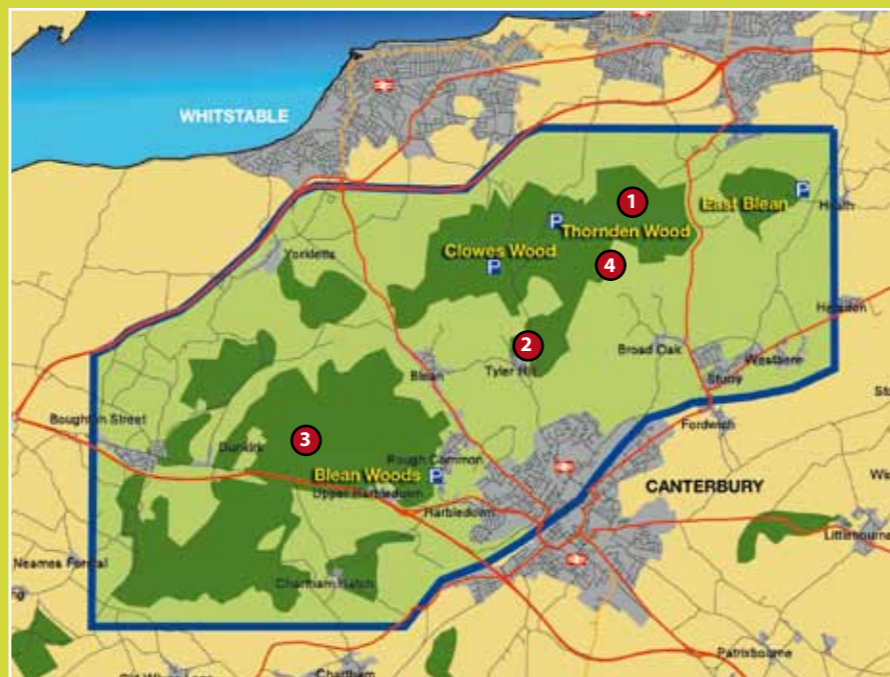
beneath the fields of Foresters Lodge Farm in Dunkirk, before it begins its journey of over 13 km to join the River Wantsum at Sarre. It may seem small but regularly floods, turning a sleepy meandering stream into a raging torrent creating steep banks. It flows through three districts and six parishes, crossing the Old Salt Road at Blean and the 'Crab & Winkle' Railway (1843-1954). It meanders its way through ancient woodlands, past old farmsteads and former hop gardens; under a Roman road and on to the Chislet Marshes, passing sites of ancient salt works and old sea walls. It then forks to flow to the sea, north to Reculver and south to Pegwell Bay.

### C Mayton Farm (Old English Maegoa - mayweed)

Although the 16th century farmhouse was demolished in 1953, the large oast house remains and serves to remind the walker of the more recent history of the landscape. In the 19th century Mayton Farm alone had some 100 acres devoted to growing hops in the Sarre Penn valley. The remaining hops in the parishes of Hackington and Sturry were harvested for the last time in 1989.

The 16th century farmhouse was demolished in 1953 but the large oast house remains. In the 19th century Mayton Farm alone had some 100 acres devoted to growing hops in the valley. Hops were harvested for the last time in the neighbouring parishes of Hackington and Sturry in 1989. The need for straight durable poles also drove changes in our local woodlands, which were extensively planted with Sweet Chestnut for hops as well as other products. The cowls on Mayton Oast were removed during WW2 as the building was thought to be a navigational aid for German bombers.

Nearby Langton Lodge was gifted to the local church of St Stephen's, to support repairs and upkeep, by Simon Langton who was appointed Archdeacon of Canterbury in 1227.



If you have enjoyed this walk why not try the others in this series?

- 1 Herne & West Blean
- 2 Tyler Hill
- 3 Dunkirk & Denstroude
- 4 Broad Oak, Tyler Hill & Herne

For more information on walking in The Blean, wildlife, history and local products visit [www.theblean.co.uk](http://www.theblean.co.uk), telephone 01227 862015 or email [blean.initiative@canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:blean.initiative@canterbury.gov.uk).

The Blean is the area of woodland, countryside and villages between the cathedral city of Canterbury and the coastal towns of Faversham, Whitstable and Herne Bay.

For a thousand years The Blean has remained one of the largest and most distinctive areas of woodland in the south east, covering some 3000 hectares – over 11 square miles! Not only is most of this classified as "ancient woodland" but over half is recognised as being nationally and even internationally important for wildlife.

This walk, devised by Ray Evison, is one of a series produced by volunteers of the Blean Heritage & Community Group. The aim of the Group is to encourage people to visit The Blean, to experience and enjoy its heritage and wildlife. Anyone interested in joining in any of the group's activities please contact us on 01227 372519.



#### The Countryside Code Respect – Protect – Enjoy

Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs. Leave gates and property as you find them. Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home. Keep dogs under close control. Consider other people. For further information please visit [www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk) or call 08451 003298.

This leaflet was produced with funding from the



# the Blean

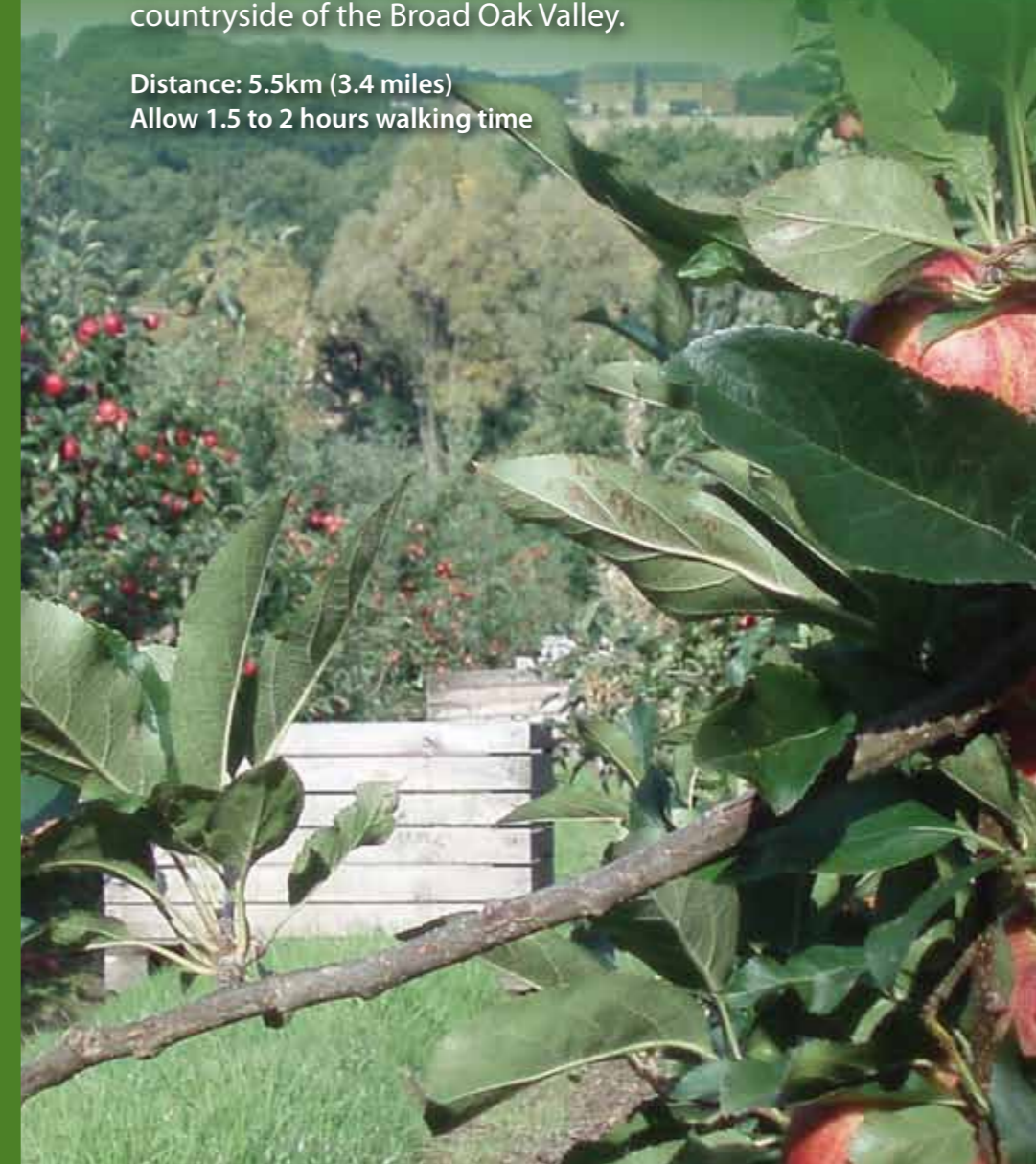
Circular Walks  
Canterbury & Swale's Ancient Woodland

## CIRCULAR WALK No. 2

### Tyler Hill and the Sarre Penn Valley

The walk starts and finishes in ancient oak and chestnut woods, crossing the Sarre Penn stream into the open countryside of the Broad Oak Valley.

Distance: 5.5km (3.4 miles)  
Allow 1.5 to 2 hours walking time



**Information:** The walk has some soft surfaces, gentle gradients and footbridges. The Blean is on heavy clay so can get very muddy when wet - boots are recommended. Please note that dogs must be kept under close control at all times. The public footpaths should remain as published here but please be aware that The Blean is a working landscape and features change from time to time.

**Start Point:** The Ivy House Pub, Hackington Road, Tyler Hill, CT2 9NE 01227 472200 TR 141609.

**By bus:** Canterbury to Whitstable No 5 Visit [www.stagecoach.com](http://www.stagecoach.com) or telephone 0871 200 2233

**By car:** There is a car park behind the Ivy House on Calais Hill/Tyler Hill Rd, next to the telephone box (turn down Link Road at the pub). From the car park take the tarmac footpath next to the Ivy House Pub.

OS map Explorer 150 Canterbury & the Isle of Thanet 1:25000 scale

**1** Starting at the Ivy House pub, cross Hackington Road with care and walk down the alleyway footpath (between Ivy Court and the cottages) to the Memorial Hall. Walk past the hall and down the right hand side of the recreation ground to enter Great Hall Wood at the bottom corner.

**2** Once in the wood walk straight ahead, ignoring the paths almost immediately to your left and right. Pass through chestnut coppice, interspersed with standard oaks, until you come out into a field and join another public footpath (200m).

As you walk down this path notice the dips and hollows. This is one of the places where clay was excavated for the tile industry for which Tyler Hill is named (see **A** overleaf).

**3** Turn left along this path, keeping to the field and woodland edge. After some 800m the path begins to swing down to the right towards the valley bottom, where it meets the Sarre Penn stream in another 300m.

The arable fields were once hop gardens and are bordered by a striking row of poplar pollards.

As you approach the valley bottom, there are good views of Alcroft Grange, commissioned by Thomas Sidney Cooper in the 1880's. Probably Canterbury's most famous artist, Cooper is renowned for his paintings of sheep and cattle and a fine collection remains in the city (Canterbury Museum & Art Gallery 01227 452747).

**4** Just before the stream, pass through the gap in the woodland strip to your left. Follow the footpath along the Sarre Penn, passing under the power lines to a footbridge (100m).

**5** Cross the stream and follow the path diagonally up the field to the top corner (300m). Cross the footbridge under the impressive old oak tree and enter an orchard.

This fine old oak is a prime example of a veteran tree. There is a long tradition of trees being used as boundary markers. As you pass under this one you are crossing from Hackington, which includes Tyler Hill, into the parish of Sturry.

**6** Follow the footpath along the top edge of the apple orchard, passing under the power lines before reaching a farm track in the far corner (350m). Keep straight on and cross the track, heading for the gap (*to the right of a fallen, yet living oak at the time of writing*) that takes you into Heel Lane.

**7** In Heel Lane continue past the cottages on your left until you reach Mayton Lane after some 350m.

If you fancy a break at this point turn right and walk up Mayton Lane for 500m to find two pubs; the Golden Lion and the Royal Oak.

**8** At the junction with Mayton Lane take a sharp left into the arable field. Follow the public footpath diagonally down the field to the Sarre Penn stream (250m). Turn left and walk upstream till you reach a wide bridge (100m).

If the going is very heavy in the field an alternative route to Point 10 is along Mayton Lane, a narrow winding 'bosky' lane bordered by hedges of sloe and bullace (an old variety of wild plum).

The Sarre Penn may seem small but it regularly floods, turning a sleepy meandering stream to a raging torrent – accounting for the steep banks. Look out for the distinctive male catkins and female cones on a magnificent alder tree where the stream bends (see **B** overleaf).

**9** Cross the bridge and walk straight up the field to reach the lane. Follow the old field margin or head just to the right of the houses visible ahead (450m).

**10** Turn left down the lane. Pass through Mayton Farm (see **C** overleaf) where the lane becomes a track and continue past Langton Lodge on your right. You will emerge into fields where the bridleway joins from the right (750m).

**11** Ignore the bridleway and walk straight on following the wooded field boundary ahead. Pass under the power lines and enter the woods over the footbridge (250m).

In early spring there are splendid carpets of wood anemones and other flowers to be seen where recent coppicing has opened up the ground to sunlight.

**12** Cross the bridge and follow this path through the woodland. The path starts to bear right after about 1km before emerging into the recreation ground under the impressive old holly. *Take care – it can be muddy and slippery on this section.*

Look out for the Radfall, an ancient droveway, on the right. Two woodbanks, 15-20m apart, with ditches alongside kept the animals from straying into the woodland and feeding on the valuable new shoots.

**13** Retrace your steps across the recreation ground, perhaps stopping at the Ivy House Pub for some well earned refreshment.

Points of interest please see overleaf



KEY	
	Bridges: 4