



## EGERTON WALK - 3



*These walks have been compiled to enable you to enjoy our village from different aspects. We hope you will appreciate that we use the footpaths through the courtesy of local landowners, who do their best to keep them in good order, so that we can access the countryside at our leisure. Please help us to support farmers in the course of their work by leaving no hazardous litter, closing all gates and keeping dogs under control at all times. Watch out for the occasional rabbit hole and slippery mud – walking boots are a bonus!*

## WALK 3: south of the main village

### START:

The George Inn, Egerton

### DISTANCE:

4 miles (approx.)

### TERRAIN:

Pasture, tarmac, some plough, steep inclines, stiles.

Before you begin your walk, you may wish to purchase some tasty snacks from the **Village Store** just north of **The George**, along **The Street**, in the direction of the church.

From the **George Inn**, walk down towards the hill and turn left into **New Road**. Turn immediately right, winding your way down towards the **Millennium Hall**, completed in 1999, as a result of a generous award from the Millennium Commission, set up to celebrate the incoming of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Egerton was the first village in Kent to obtain such a grant, which had to be matched by the fundraising efforts of the local community, with the additional support of Ashford Borough Council. The view from above the hall looks across the playing fields to the **Weald of Kent** and will surely take your breath away.

Follow the footpath taking you to the right of the bungalows, above the hall. Follow the path out onto **Stone Hill Road** and turn right, walking down the hill a little way and turning left at the footpath sign at **Stone Hill Farm**, into a driveway between two dwellings. The path then veers right, into a field where the old track bed lies broad and flat against the hillside. Here you are walking along the long-distance path known as the **Greensand Way**, running from Haslemere in Surrey to Hamstreet in Kent. It follows the Greensand Ridge, one of a series of ridges forming the landscape of the Weald, between the North and South Downs. Just at the end of the grassy knoll to your left, turn right and descend the hillside, over the stile to the right of the green barns, behind **Britcher Farm**. On your descent, you will wish to make frequent stops to take in some spectacular views across the **Weald**. Covered in dense forest during medieval times, this area of undulating landscape has provided the rich farmland for which Kent has been famous for centuries. To this day, it supports a mixture of arable farming (including orchards and hops) and pastureland for a variety of valued breeds. We are fortunate that the farming legacy continues, giving this area its uniquely rural characteristics. Go straight across the next two fields, crossing two stiles, then swing slightly right, heading towards an old cottage on the far side of **Kingsland Lane**. Cross the stile into the lane and turn left.

At the end of the lane, go straight ahead across the stile into some light woodland. About 100 metres along this path another track comes in from the right. Just past this, on the right, is a stile into a field behind the houses. Go diagonally across the field and cross the ditch via a sleeper bridge – take care of the slippery surface. Walk along the right hand boundary of the next field, turning right onto the roadway and right again into **Newland Green**. On your left is a pretty Kentish hall house, originally timber framed, having one central living area, with a fire burning on stones in the centre of the floor and a two-storey bay at each end. The central hall would have had a crude hole in the roof to let the smoke out. A little further down on the right hand side is **Groome Farm**, a fine timber-framed house, believed to date from the 1400s and probably a weaver's house. Fire places and chimneys were probably installed about 200 years later. The oast house (designed for drying hops) in the same complex would have been built some 200 or more years after the original house, when the growing of hops became widespread in this area.

At the end of the lane, turn left into **Mundy Bois Road** and continue walking past the end of **Rock Hill Road** and down the short hill known as **Crockenhill**. You are now on the edge of **Egerton Forstal**, the area once used to muster cattle ready for market. At the bottom of the hill, take the footpath across the fields to the right. The large field to the left of this path was, until fairly recently, used for auctioning beef cattle. This could explain why, in the forstal area alone, there were once several butchers. Follow the path along the left hand side of the field, over the stile in the left hand corner. Veer slightly right and continue to the far right hand corner of the field, where you cross another small stile. The path now follows the line of the hedge to the right, over a stream and straight on, through the field to the right of **Rockdale Farm** and across another two stiles, taking you out onto Rock Hill once again. Now you only have a short walk, turning left up the hill, past the school, to the **George Inn** dating back to the 1570s. While you enjoy the local hospitality, take a look at one or two historic items adorning the walls.