



# Ravilious Long man – A walk in the chalk.



By Chris Cook Newhaven Art Club and Photographers Collective

- 3 hour approx. moderate walk - including 2x 30 min rest - photography and sketching stops
- Visits the smallest church in Sussex and possibly in England at Lullington. This was one of Eric Ravilious's first notable artworks from 1925-26 100 years ago.
- Visit Europe's largest portrayal of the human form at The Long Man of Wilmington. From 1939 one of Eric Ravilious last non-military creations as in the same year he became an honorary captain and war artist.

- The route covers parts of the South Downs Way, the Pilgrims way and the Weald Way.
- The route covers a SSSI with rare flora & fauna habitats

Thanks to National Trust Changing chalk and National Lottery funding.

Changing Chalk  
connecting nature, people and heritage



Stp	Time	Description & Information
1		<p>Parking Wilmington</p> <p>The walk begins in the free Long Man car park in Wilmington, near Polegate, East Sussex, postcode BN26 5SL, Grid Reference TQ543042 What three words (WTW Eating.Crest.Author) There is a pleasant picnic area at the car park</p>
2	11.00	<p>On leaving the car park cross the road and turn right onto the enclosed path between two hedges beside the road. parallel to the road for 150m Then turn left up the Wealdway path and walk up the path which leads to the Long Man, a giant 235 ft (72 m) high chalk figure thought to date from the mid-16th century.</p> <p>The first part of the walk is on lower chalk 100million years old.</p>
3	11.10	<p>There is a spring on the other side of the road to the gate. (WTW Mash.Agrees.League ) Wilmington is a spring line village.</p> <p>Turn left onto the bridle path away from the road that leads through a gate to the base of the Long Man.</p> <p>This is part of the Pilgrims Path and the Weald Way.</p> <p>Part way along this path you will cross into the middle chalk layer. (86 – 98 million years) Walk to the gate at the base of the Long Man.</p> <p><b>Locate the exact spot of Ravilious painting</b></p> <p><b>Locate the dew pond in the Taurus Ravilious picture of 1929 and lime kiln &amp; spoil heap</b></p> <p>Then a little further on you enter the SSSI all the way to the top of the hill</p>
4	11.25	<p>At the Long Man 20 – 30 mins Sketch and refreshment break the long man and the location which Ravilious painted in 1939 and wood cut of 1929.</p>
		<p>The Long Man is Europe's largest portrayal of the human form, dating back to at least 1710 when the surveyor John Rowley illustrated the figure. In 1766, the artist William Burrell made a drawing during his visit to Wilmington Priory, which lies under the steep slopes of Windover Hill.</p> <p>Rowley's drawing suggests that the original figure was a shadow or indentation in the grass rather than a solid line. The face had a distinctive helmet shape, giving credence to the idea him being a war-god.</p> <p>Until the 19th century when it was marked out in yellow bricks, the Long Man was only visible in certain light conditions. It is claimed that during</p>





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		<p>this restoration the feet were incorrectly positioned. But, despite local legend, there is no evidence, historical or archaeological, to suggest that prudish Victorians robbed the Giant of his manhood!</p> <p>During World War II, the figure was painted green to prevent enemy aviators using it as a landmark. Restoration in 1969 replaced the bricks with concrete blocks that are now regularly painted to keep the Long Man visible from many miles away.</p> <p>Many theories of his origins abound. Some are convinced that he is prehistoric, others believe that it's the work of an artistic monk from the nearby Priory between the 11th and 15th centuries. Roman coins bearing a similar figure suggest that he existed in the 4th century AD and there are parallels with a helmeted figure found on Anglo-Saxon ornaments.</p> <p>There is another earlier Ravilious picture of the long man and the dew pond representing Taurus in his Almanac of 1925 wiki or 1929. One of his first published books.</p> <p><b>Also look out for the remains of a quarry and lime kiln and spoil heap at the bottom of Long Man and the dew pond</b></p> <p><b>Can you find a geocache Hidden Here?</b></p>
5	11.45	<p>Turn right onto an open downland path cross the track and bear left and ascends to another junction. Both paths now cross chalk grassland that is a <b>Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</b>, a protected habitat which is species rich and of important conservation value (a botanical guide to the route is available).</p>
6	11.55	<p>The path meets a sunken chalk path. Go straight across this and follow the path until it joins the chalk track, the South Downs Way which leads down to a minor road.</p> <p><b>Look out west over Milton Street and see the mound of Burlough Castle and Firle Beacon</b></p> <p>The top of the hill is the end of the SSSI</p> <p><b>There was once a windmill here can you find the outline of its base to the North of the reservoir?</b></p> <p><b>Look out for the broad view of another Ravilious watercolour of Firle Beacon on the way up the hill.</b></p> 
7	12.00	<p>Your route will take you past a covered reservoir on the right and an old sunken chalk path which leads down to a minor road and car park (WTW Herds.Little.Clouds) The walls of the sunken path are quite rich in Middle chalk fossils. <b>Can you find a fossil</b></p> <p>These sunken paths are very old even stone age – the more sunken the older they are.</p>
8	12.05	<p>You can start a shorter walk from this car park although it is a little bumpy to enter.</p>
9	12.10	<p>Cross the minor road and take the track ahead of you. After about 100 yds (90 m) take the signposted path on your left which leaves the South Downs Way track over a stile to cross an open cultivated field. When you reach the first hedge follow it south, to the left (do not continue straight ahead across the next field) to the wooded edge of the field.</p>
10	12.30	<p>Turn left and walk along the field edge up to <a href="#">Lullington Church</a>, WTW Closer.Admiral.Lendwhich is visible as you walk uphill to the churchyard gate.</p>



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11	12.45	Stop and sketch the church - The Good Shepherd, Lullington is the smallest church in Sussex and one of the smallest churches in the country.	
		<p>The Church is one of the smallest 10 in England. It was built from the remains of the chancel of an earlier church that was destroyed by fire. It measures a mere 16 feet (5 metres) square and seats 20 people. The original church is believed to date from the late 12th or early 13th century. <b>Locate the sun dial in the churchyard.</b></p> <p>The church was visited by Eric Ravilious who created a wood cut in 1925/26 at the age of just 22 and around 100 years ago while studying under Paul Nash at the Royal College of Art.</p> <p><i>By raising the horizon Eric created space for stippled downland and employing a gated fence-line in the foreground with a frame of flanking trees,. Described by Douglas Percy Bliss as his friend's 'first ambitious block', this piece was completed by Ravilious prior to his departure for Italy in January 1925 and appeared in 'Gallimaufry', published at the time of his return in 1925. Ravilious used to cycle out from Eastbourne to discover locations in the Sussex countryside – He would also take students.</i></p>	
12	13.15	Head back the way you came via the middle car park.	
13		Cross the road carefully and continue back up the hill and towards Wilmington –	
14		Back near the reservoir there is an Option to take the right hand path which climbs onto Windover hill and past Windover long barrow the largest burial mound in Sussex. This option adds roughly 30 mins to the walk.	
15	option	<p>From the high option there is an avenue of cursive high over and in the general direction of the Long Man. The long barrow is thought to date from 6000 years ago.</p> <p>There are remains of flint mines to the East of the Long Man.</p> <p><b>There is also a Trig point with a Height Benchmark. Can you find it?</b></p> <p>You cross the boundary onto the mainly eroded upper chalk 86-66 Million years.</p>	
16		Return to the Long Man of Wilmington	
17	14.15	Return to Wilmington Car Park and enjoy a picnic in the picnic area or continue to church.	
18	Option 14.20	<p>Walk to church option – will extend your walk 20 – 30 mins.</p> <p>Check out the architecture of the grade 1 12<sup>th</sup> century church. The church is built largely from local building materials, flint, chalk and sandstone. Outside the church is a famous yew tree which is thought to be 1,600 years old and one of the most ancient in the county and an indication this site has been sacred for a long time and even before the existing church was built. The yew tree roughly coincides with the first Christianity in UK. Over the wall are buildings from a former Benedictine priory and the remains of the later 14th-century defensive tower. Along the way is the old 'Village Pound' where stray animals would have been penned until their owners could collect them, usually at the cost of a fine.</p>	



Please let us know how the walk goes. Chris Cook [ccookiemail@gmail.com](mailto:ccookiemail@gmail.com)

<https://www.newhavenartclub.co.uk/>

