

# a Kentish safari

Discover elephants, giraffes, hyenas  
and bison...





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**Location:** Lympne

**Distance:** 2.7 miles (4.3km)

**Time:** allow 1 hour 45 minutes

**Explorer Map:** 138

**Terrain:** tracks and paths. Very steep in places

**Stiles:** 0

**Parking:** in village centre

**Refreshments and facilities:** County Members public house, Lympne

**Public transport:** for information about local bus and train services in Kent, contact Traveline tel: 0870 6082608, [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

**Step count:** approx 5,400

 **Dog friendly**



This circular walk passes alongside the grounds of Port Lympne Wild Animal Park, owned by The John Aspinall Foundation, which is home to 500 animals representing 50 species.



From the village of Lympne, cross over Roman Road and follow the footpath signs past historic Lympne Castle. Take the path down the former cliff, passing Lympne Place, and on to the remains of Stutfall Castle – Portus Lemanis, the former Roman fort.

Portus Lemanis was built to protect the fleet. It was the site of the fourth Saxon Shore fort taking advantage of a natural haven and key routes to Canterbury and London. This is where the River Rother met the sea in Roman times.

After the Norman Invasion, the Roman fort was left to decay. Lympne Castle was built at the top of the cliff overlooking the marshes. Stone from the Roman fort was used in the construction of the castellated mansion.

It is also thought that there was once a Roman watchtower on or very close to where the castle stands today. And the dramatic views across the marshes and waterways make it clear why this was considered such a strategically important position.

From Stutfall Castle, follow along the peaceful banks of the Royal Military Canal – itself a fortification built to protect against any invasions during the Napoleonic Wars – skirting the foot of the former cliff line through tranquil woodland. A concrete pillbox stands as a reminder of more recent military threats to the Kent coastline.

Follow the path back up the cliffs. From here, animals, such as giraffes, from Port Lympne Wild Animal Park, can be spotted enjoying the Kent countryside.

As the walk reaches the summit of the cliffs to rejoin the road, the marsh opens up behind with breathtaking views over the reclaimed lands and beyond to the open sea.

Excellent sightlines were essential for the security of the country. Panoramic views were also important for the many Romney Marsh smugglers and the excise officers striving to catch up with them.

# look out for...

- Remains of the Roman fort – Stutfall Castle
- Animals at Port Lympne Park
- Royal Military Canal
- World War II pillbox
- Lympne Castle and tower
- Blackberries in late summer
- Stunning views of the sea from the Saxon Shore Way near Lympne Castle

The mansion at Port Lympne Park was built for Sir Philip Sassoon during World War I.

## did you know?

Port Lympne Wild Animal Park contains the world's largest family gorilla house and the world's largest captive breeding herd of black rhino outside Africa.

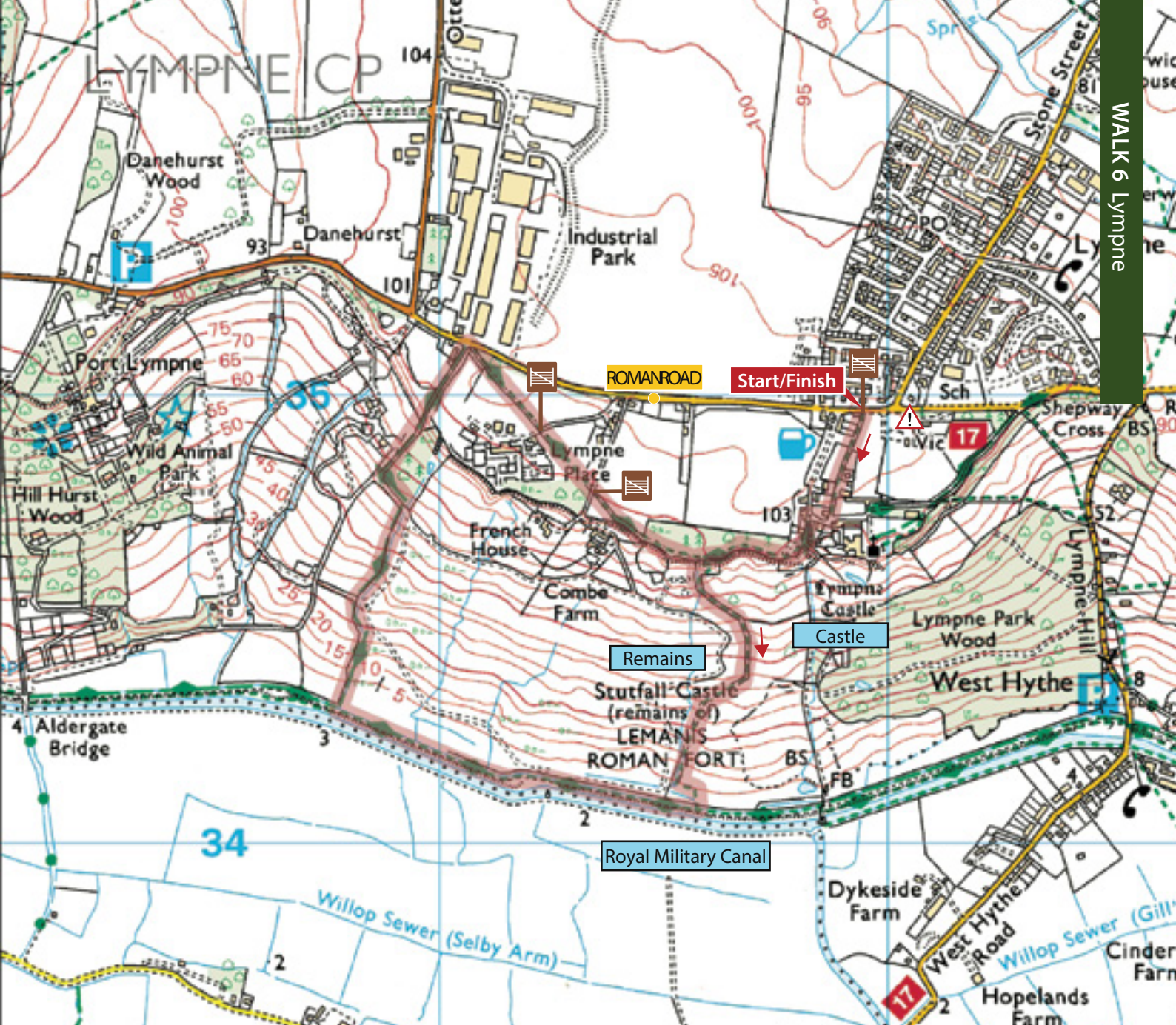
*The Royal Military Canal stretches for 28 miles from Hythe to Cliff End.*

The name Lympne comes from the Celtic name for the River Rother, the Limen, which meant elm.

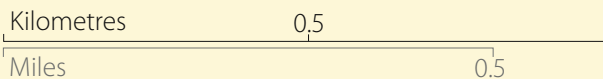
*Lympne Castle was originally home to Archdeacons of Canterbury, including Thomas Becket.*

Romney Marsh smugglers became particularly sophisticated at smuggling wool (owling) – an offence punishable by death.





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- ◆--- Saxon Shore Way
- q Interest
- p Parking
- " Public House
- Gate
- 17 National cycle network
- ▲ Take Care