

## **LDWA Kent Group**

### **High Weald Challenge 2018: A Walk with the Smugglers**

#### **Report**



Thank you to all who turned up on a sweltering Sunday and congratulations on achieving your chosen distance; understandably, there were a number of 'no shows' but there were a pleasing 18 entrants on the day, making 96 who started out. Quite surprisingly, there was just 1 retirement (and he did 21 miles). Whilst 9 of those already entered sensibly 'downsized' to the 15 mile route (7 of these from the 26 mile route), quite remarkably we had 2 entrants who decided to do a longer distance than they had entered for – gluttons for punishment. If we factor in that we did not insist on all starting at either 08:30 and 10:00, it will be a minor miracle if all your certificates show the correct mileage and time – my apologies if yours is wrong.

After all the statistics had been perused and slaved over, it transpired that only 3 of you actually completed the 20 mile course (and at least 2 of these 3 are new to the LDWA, so well done you); whilst it would seem to be disproportionate to have that intermediate distance for just 3 people, it no doubt enabled those who set off on the 26 route to have this as a fall back, if required.

I know for a fact that some parts of the course were shady – and, in retrospect, perhaps you all went the wrong way around the courses, as the first 5 miles were probably the shadiest; but the route was designed with a few hills, parts of the two recognised footpaths (the HWLT and the SBP (26 mile route only)) and fields in mind, and not necessarily trees.

The 'results' as shown here only really tell half the story – although on paper, Z may have been 50 minutes slower than X, if Z started 30 minutes after Z (and thus 'suffered' quite a bit more in the sun), who is to say which is the 'better' time? And, as I am fond of saying – it's not a race.

Many thanks are due to the wonderful helpers who gave up a good proportion of their day, namely CP1 Brian, Dave and Ivan, CP2 Jan, Neal and David, CP3 Graham and Dale, CP4 Andrew and Eve, and not forgetting Peter and John at CPA for the shorter routes. Back at base we had Helen zapping entrants in and writing certificates, and Joy, Audrey and Brenda slaving away in the kitchen (OK, the door and windows were open, and the 'heater' provided cooling air).

The 3 year schedule for this event indicates that we will be based in Forest Row next July (Brexit or not!) – plenty of shade in Ashdown Forest if the routes are chosen carefully!! Hope to see you then.

Any issues, please do contact me.

**Neil Higham**, Organiser, [baroqwalkneil@gmail.com](mailto:baroqwalkneil@gmail.com)

Posted to our Kent Group Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/445210702355605/>

I've just posted this on the main LDWA Group page. Thanks to all.

'Thanks to everyone in the Kent Group for their involvement in today's 'A Walk With The Smugglers' Challenge.

It was incredibly hot (Met Office figures suggest it nearly hit 28C during the afternoon) but whilst it was atritional in the open, the various wooded sections did give some very welcome shelter.

A very scenic route and, as always. fantastic support at all of the checkpoints, including the start and finish.'

**Andy Clark**

Walk With The Smugglers. Fantastic organisation and beautiful route. Three of us did the 26 mile route and the pernicious FPSP lived up to its name, one of our group came a cropper hitting his head off it! We also found the most trickiest of stiles but not sure that it was the correct one, missed both the hidden secret path and near the end a footpath turn off as a car was parked in front of a sign. Fortunately no big mistakes and the check points were amazing... Thanks to everyone involved in such a wonderful day.

**Michael Bennett**

I'd like to add my thanks to all the organisers, marshals, and tea ladies who helped put on the Walk with the Smugglers event on Sunday. A wonderful day out in stunning countryside surrounded by smiling faces.

In these days of "commercialisation" of sport, it's reassuring and heartening that on the same day a triathlon business was promoting an event at Hever with entry fee of £360, the LDWA can put on an event such as this, all for less than £10 with quiche and salad at the finish !

Long may LDWA continue as it is !

**David Loble**