

## Points of Interest

The **CAT INN** is a pleasant English country pub serving a large range of beers, wines and spirits. The current building dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and had a reputation as a smugglers haunt. It is open from 12pm to 3pm and again from 6pm to 11pm (Sunday 12 - 3:30pm only).

**ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH** has a prominent position in the village. A Norman baron ordered a church to be built here in 1090 and it was held by Lewes Priory for over 400 years. The building has been gradually enlarged over the centuries and has many delightful features, including an old parish chest and stained glass designed by William Kempe. The churchyard has been extended in interesting ways, including through the use of terraces on the hillside. The beautiful stone-arched lych gate was given to the church by William Robinson of Gravetye in 1923. It has a simple geometric wooden gate with a Horsham stone roof. There are a number of leaflets in the church providing more information about the church and the village; also a kettle and provisions for making yourself a hot drink !

The **PRIEST HOUSE** is a timber-framed hall house built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century for the Priory of St Pancras in Lewes. It was seized by Henry VIII in 1538 and belonged in turn to Thomas Cromwell, Anne of Cleves, Mary I and Elizabeth I. Central chimneys and a Horsham Stone roof were added in the 16th century to create a substantial yeoman farmer's house.

Now a museum, it contains a varied collection of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century furniture and other domestic bygones. The gardens contain many plants of medicinal and culinary value. Their style was influenced by William Robinson's concept of the 'wild garden' ( as at Gravetye ). It is open from 1<sup>st</sup> March to 30<sup>th</sup> October and there is an admission fee of £3.75.

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# Country Walks from Gravetye Manor



## No. 1 'The Cat Walk'

## The Cat Walk



The full circular walk is 5.5 kms (3½ miles) and will take 70 – 90 minutes, plus stops.

It is mostly on forest tracks but involves one steep climb of 150m on the way out and a fairly steep descent on the way back. The paths near the lake will be muddy after wet weather.

Opening times for the Cat Inn and the Priest House are shown on the back page together with some more general information.

## Route Directions

From the main steps turn right to pass under the pergola and through the wooden gates. Turn half left following the sign 'to the lakes' down the grassy track away from the house. Near the bottom of the hill pass through the ornate metal gates and turn right on a broad crossing track. Cross the stone bridge over the stream and turn immediately left through a wooden gate ① to follow the lakeside path. At the eastern end of the lake cross straight over a broader track to pass through a metal kissing gate ② and follow a path passing a large rocky outcrop, before gently climbing through the woods.



The path joins a much broader track coming up from the left. Follow this uphill to the right, ignoring a broad, more level track going sharply off to the right. The gradient gets easier and in 500m the track is joined by a narrow public footpath coming in from the left ③. Continue straight ahead on the broad permissive bridleway.

At the next Y junction of paths ignore the public footpath going right but stay with the broader track left. Follow this to eventually descend to a wooden gate and exit the Gravetye Estate. The old Sharpethorne railway station is just ahead ④ but our route is immediately right following a bridleway sign up Bluebell Lane. This gives way to a narrow path besides trellis fencing. Half way up keep right as the path climbs more steeply to reach the road by the Vinols Cross Inn.



Cross carefully over into Highbrook Lane and walk up the paving stone steps to the right. After passing a small car park the path bears left. Ignore a gate leading onto the road and continue ahead until the footpath goes sharp right. ⑤ Go straight ahead, past garages, to join a residential road. At the end of the road turn left to reach The Cat Inn.



To return to Gravetye, retrace your steps past Sandy Lane to the main road. Cross carefully to the drive left of West Hoathly Garage and descend into the woods on a sunken track. ⑥ Pass through a kissing gate and in a further 40m take a path going uphill left off the track to pass beside a stile into an open field with a splendid view across the valley. Head straight downhill towards the tall trees and on reaching them pass through a gap between two holly bushes. Continue downhill with the tree line to your left. Near the lower left hand corner descend stone steps into the woods on a rough path over a plank bridge.

Ignore a footpath left and continue ahead across a stile. At the bottom of the hill pass through a kissing gate and cross the stone bridge and in 25m turn left through the ornate iron gates and follow the path up to the hotel.