

LDWA Kent Group
White Cliffs Challenge 2022

Saturday/Sunday
28/29 August 2022

Report

<https://ldwa.org.uk/kent>

<https://whitecliffswalkingfestival.org.uk>



After many years of using other venues the White Cliffs Challenge returned to Betteshanger Sports & Social Club on the edge of Deal for 2022. The routes headed into the countryside to join the route used in 30-mile years, through Ringwould to reach the cliffs next to the golf club. Following the cliffs through CP1 at St. Margaret's Bay the routes then split just before Dover. The 20-mile route turned inland to pick up the Roman road towards Richborough and after a checkpoint in Willow Woods rejoined the long route at Betteshanger back to Deal. Meanwhile the 51-milers continued along the cliffs to CP2 at Capel, then followed the North Downs Way to CP3 at Etchinghill. After up & down Tolsford Hill the NDW was left at Farthing Common to join the Elham Valley Way north through CP4 in Elham to CP5 at Bishopsbourne. Under the A2 to turn south on the other branch of the NDW before leaving the route used in previous iterations for a shorter route back to Deal to make the total distance closer to 50 miles via CP6 at Nonington and then a final 8-mile leg back to Deal through Northbourne & Mongeham.

The previous day the weather forecast was for a dry weekend, but later versions threatened rain. Sharp but short showers appeared as walkers were arriving and again in the first miles. But then the humid heat reaching the high 70s began to challenge the entrants. Though not as much as on the marshals' walk two weeks before when the temperature reached 90° and the retirement rate on the long route was 71% with only Mary Dumble & Tony Cartwright from Surrey finishing in 20h41m. Despite the heat, 80 of the 88 starters on the long route completed and all 22 on the short route got round.

Congratulations to Kent members who completed their 1st 50-mile event; Jim Briggs, Poppy Norley & David Spring. Next step a 100!

As part of the KSS Triple Challenge checkpoints 1 & 2 were manned by our friends from Surrey & Sussex.

Other helpers were:

HQ: Andrew Melling, Dale Moorhouse, Vic Clapson, Nicola Foad, Michael Headley, John Gilbert, Penny Southern, Steph Le Men, Neil Higham

CP2a Willow Woods: Neal & Jan O'Rourke, Andrew Melling

CP3 Etchinghill: Eve Richards, Clare Evans, Joy Davies, Neil Higham, Andrew Gordon

CP4 Elham: Ros Humphreys, Caroline Curtis, Brent Parker, Sophie Ravenscroft

CP5 Bishopsbourne: Cathy Waters, Andy Clark, Hilary Adams, Nicola Foad, Clare Evans

CP6 Nonington: Helen Strong, David Thornton, Neil Higham (again!)

Search party & repatriation: Dale Moorhouse & Vic Clapson

For those finishers wondering who that red T-shirt with boundless energy, jollity and cheer-leading was, that was Penny Southern. Special mention also of John Gilbert for stalwart & sleepless service in the kitchen over 24 hours and Michael Headley who helped with PACER at registration and then wandered off for 50 miles.

Peter Jull

Event Organiser – Kent LDWA