

# Bassett's Farm Rocks

Bowles Rocks  
Erldge Rocks  
Harrison's Rocks  
High Rocks  
High Rocks Annex  
Happy Valley  
Bull's Hollow  
Toad Rocks  
Mount Edgumbe  
Bassett's Farm  
Under Rocks  
Stone Farm

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Away from the hustle and bustle of the busier crags, Richard Barlow enjoys the challenges of *Excavator* (6b+ 5c) - page 431 - on Ken's Wall at Bassett's Farm Rocks.



	No star	1★	2★	3★
2a to 4c/f2 to f4	7	2	-	-
5a to 6a+/f4+ to f5+	6	3	1	-
6b to 7a/f6A to f6C+	7	6	2	3
7a+ up/f7A up	-	2	-	-

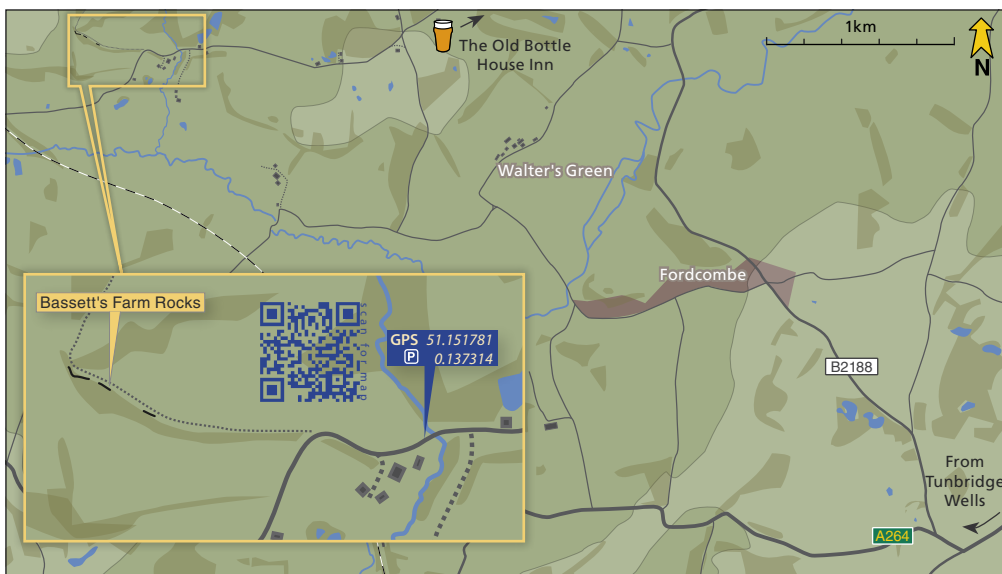
The most northerly sandstone crag is hidden away in some of southwest Kent's most stunning countryside. The main attractions here are the clean-cut red-streaked Ken's Wall and its neighbour Hypothesis Wall, with their vertical testpieces and finger intensive traverses. Across the field are some smaller rocks which are best avoided as the rock is very soft.

### Conditions

The crag is north facing and sees no sun, which makes for an excellent shady venue in the summer months. The downside is that it takes longer to dry after periods of bad weather and the more overgrown areas are prone to be green. The main wall (Ken's Wall) is open and benefits from a good northerly breeze in winter, which helps keep things in relatively good condition for the spring.

### Approach

Also see map on page 18  
From Royal Tunbridge Wells, head west along the A264 towards Groombridge for approximately 3 miles. On entering open countryside, take a sharp right onto the A264 signed 'East Grinstead', and then almost immediately fork right again onto the B2188 signed 'Fordcombe'. Drive for just under 3 miles and turn left, just after Fordcombe's cricket green, signed 'Walters Green'. Drive for another mile passing over the narrow Hedge Barton bridge, and continue until you can turn left at the small triangular traffic island down a narrow lane. At another triangular island, turn right up the hill and follow this for just over half a mile to a sharp left turn signed 'Bassetts and Cowden', just before the T-junction. Drive for another mile until you begin to descend steeply down a hill, and cross a miniature bridge under trees at its base. Immediately to the right is a grassy area where there is parking for two possibly three cars. Continue up the hill on foot (passing the actual Bassett's Farm on your left) to where the road bends to the left and a public footpath and metal gate with stile are in front of you. Cross this and walk along the path for 170m to reach the first section on your left - 100m after that is Ken's Wall.

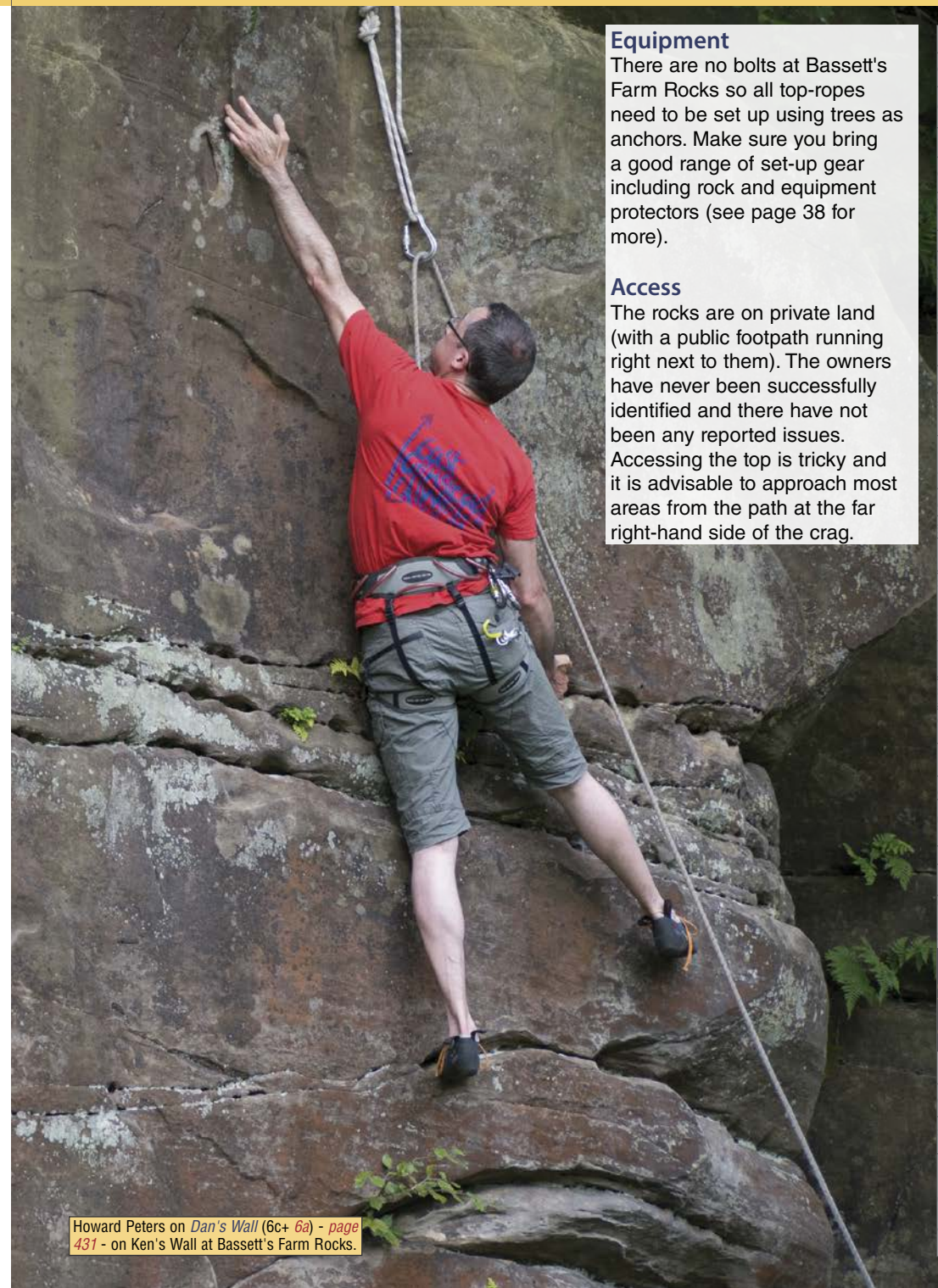


### Equipment

There are no bolts at Bassett's Farm Rocks so all top-ropes need to be set up using trees as anchors. Make sure you bring a good range of set-up gear including rock and equipment protectors (see page 38 for more).

### Access

The rocks are on private land (with a public footpath running right next to them). The owners have never been successfully identified and there have not been any reported issues. Accessing the top is tricky and it is advisable to approach most areas from the path at the far right-hand side of the crag.



Howard Peters on *Dan's Wall* (6c+ 6a) - page 431 - on Ken's Wall at Bassett's Farm Rocks.





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**A Snip in Time to Nice But Dim**  
 About 170m after the metal gate is the first of a small selection of spaced outcrops, which have a limited number of routes and problems. Many of them being a bit grim and rarely climbed.



**A Snip in Time**



**1 A Snip in Time** .....  **6a+ 5b**  
 Climb the arete and slab on the left side. It is seldom in condition, being wet sometimes and overgrown at others.  
 FA. R.Mazinke 9.6.2005

**2 St Patrick's Chimney** .....  **4c 4c**  
 One of the more unusual routes on sandstone. Enter the cave and bridge, squeeze and heave your way to the top and out of a small hole. Bring a change of clothes. It has been aided on rope ladders in the past.  
 FA. Paul and Rosie 16.3.2008

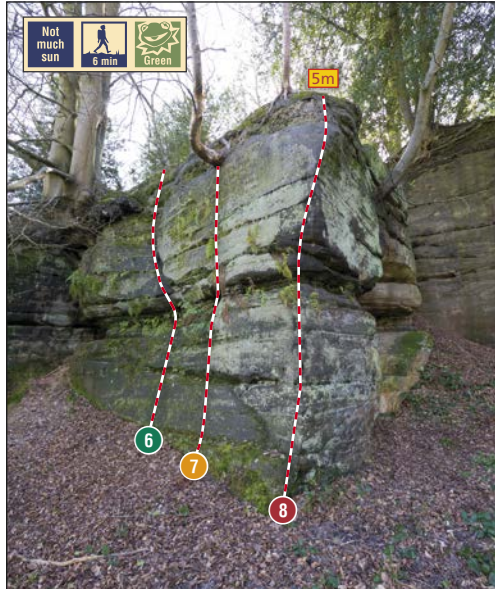


**Nice But Dim**  
 The rock improves about 70m beyond A Snip in Time and to the right of St Patrick's Chimney. The lower wall is hard to top out and the stone is a little soft in places.

**3 Tim Nice But Dim Esquire** . . .  **4b 4b**  
 Climb the face, finishing left of the tree.  
 FA. M.Vetterlein 3.8.1994

**4 Sleeping with Allsorts** .....  **f4**  
 A horrific top-out. Best practice is to touch the top and retreat.  
 FA. C.Gibson 15.7.2006

**5 Bertie** .....  **f4+**  
 Best finished by touching the tree and retreating.  
 FA. T.Skinner 31.1.1993



**6 Really Chossy Flake** .....  **3a 3a**  
 Climb the flake at the centre of the face. Dirty!

**7 Liquorice Wood** .....  **6a 5a**  
 A fairly dirty route direct to the tree.  
 FA. C.Gibson 15.7.2006

**8 Chossy Arete** .....  **6b 5c**  
 A green and greasy arete climb.  
 FA. I.Mailler 1987



**9 Keep the Faith** .....  **6b+ 5c**  
 A tricky climb starting on the left side of the shallow cave. Curve left slightly for an unpleasant top-out.  
 FA. A.Serrecchia 13.8.1995

**10 Tree Route** .....  **5a 4c**  
 The sandy right side of the cave finishing to the right of the tree.  
 FA. K.Wallis 1987

**11 Silly Arete** .....  **5b 5a**  
 The short arete. Less spectacular than its Welsh namesake!  
 FA. K.Wallis 1987

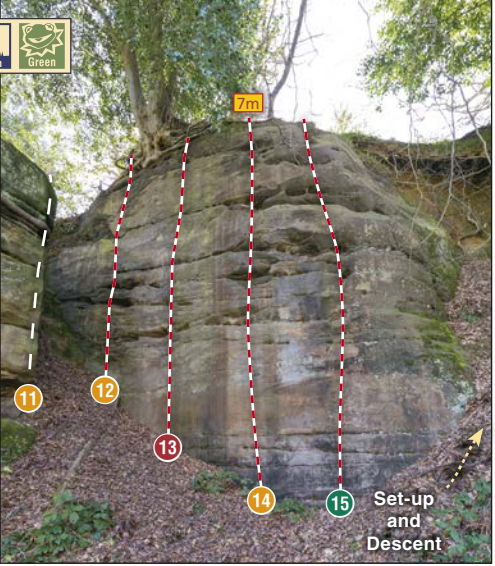
**Chossy Arete and Holly Tree Wall**  
 Things begin to improve here, but not before you encounter the green and often damp Chossy Arete area which is best left for serious heat waves. Adjacent to this is Holly Tree Wall, which is the first decent wall at Bassett's Farm.  
**Set-up and Descent** - The right side of the crag is the best option if not overgrown, otherwise use the steep gully to the right of Silly Arete.

**12 Holly Tree Wall** .....  **6a+ 5b**  
 A short route finishing just left of the tree.  
 FA. M.Vetterlein 2.12.1989

**13 The Indian Face** .....  **6b+ 5c**  
 A climb made difficult by an abundance of sandy holds. Finish right of the tree.  
 FA. M.Vetterlein 2.12.1989

**14 Get Orf Moi Land** .....  **6a+ 5a**  
 The longest route on the wall has a tricky start.  
 FA. M.Smith 2.5.1990

**15 Carpet Slab** .....  **4a 4a**  
 Climb the slabby right-hand arete, which can be greasy at times.  
 FA. M.Vetterlein 2.12.1989



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### Ken's Wall

The showpiece wall at Bassett's Farm Rocks is home to a good number of quality routes, but is not somewhere to take a beginner. The wall generally dries quickly and is more open to the elements than the other walls here.

**Approach (see overview on page 426)** - This wall is the first major section of rock reached on the approach, about 250m after the gate.

**Set-up and Descent** - Use the right of the crag if clear, or use the steep gully to the left.



**1 Beyond Our Ken** . . . . . **6a+ 5b**  
Climb the arete on its left, moving right close to the top.  
FA. M.Vetterlein 3.8.1994

**2 Ken's Wall** . . . . . **6b 5c**  
Start by climbing the thin crack, moving rightwards at half-height. Head up past a series of breaks to a difficult finish.  
FA. I.Mailler 1987

**3 Hound Dog** . . . . . **6b 5c**  
Thin face climbing low down leads to the niche. Finish up the arete.  
FA. D.Riley 1996

**4 Kenian Crack** . . . . . **4b 4b**  
A pleasant (ish) outing up the crack, which is the easiest way up the wall.  
FA. K.Wallis 1987

The next three lines are boulder traverses.

**5 Good Boy** . . . . . **f6B+**  
The lowest level traverse in either direction has good holds but nothing much for your feet.  
FA. D.Potts 2.4.2004

**6 Pirelli** . . . . . **f7A+**  
The hardest of the traverses crosses the thin centre rail from left to right. Right to left is slightly harder at **f7B**.  
FA. M.Diaz 2004

**7 Bad Boy** . . . . . **f6A+**  
The easiest of the three traverses uses a combination of the top two rails and has relatively decent holds for both hands and feet. Can be done in either direction at the same grade.

**8 Harvester** . . . . . **6c 6a**  
Climb the face just right of the crack and finish using the arete out left.  
FA. R.Mazinke 26.8.2003

**9 Dislocator** . . . . . **7a 6a**  
A knuckle-busting series of moves using some very old bolt holes. Either finish direct or more easily to the left.  
FA. I.Mailler 1987

**10 Karate Liz** . . . . . **7b 6b**  
Climb the wall direct to the left side of the shallow scoop close to the top. Make a long reach, or dyno, to finish. Hard for the short.  
FA. I.Mailler 1987

**11 Dan's Wall** . . . . . **6c+ 6a**  
Climb direct to the right side of the scoop, and again, make reachy moves at the top. *Photo on page 425.*  
FA. D.Lewis 1987

**12 Excavator** . . . . . **6b+ 5c**  
Climb the arete and finish on the face with a tricky top-out. *Photo on page 422.*  
FA. I.Mailler 1987

**13 Charming Chimney** . . . . . **4b 4b**  
A slightly contrived route. Bridge the gully without touching the ground and finish on the right wall just left of *Pearl Necklace*.  
FA. P.Highams 14.7.2006

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**Hypothesis Wall**  
 Right of Ken's Wall is another wall with a few good routes. The routes are close together and in some places overlap, especially at the top where exit options are limited. It stays in good condition, apart from the far right of the wall, which is often green.  
**Set-up and Descent** - Use the right of the crag if clear, or use the steep gully to the left.



- 1 Pearl Necklace** .....  **6c 5c**  
 Climb the arete on the right side of the gully to a ledge, then trend leftwards to climb the face.  
 FA. R.Mazinke 17.6.2003
- 2 Foam Dome** .....  **5c 5a**  
 Start as for *Pearl Necklace* and finish right up the scoop.  
 FA. K.Wallis 1987
- 3 Foam Dome Direct** .....  **6b 5b**  
 A direct line up to the scoop.  
 FA. R.Mazinke 17.6.2003
- 4 Solution** .....  **6b 5b**  
 Climb the wall up to the right side of the scoop. Finish up the slight nose at the top.  
 FA. K.Wallis 1987
- 5 Hypothesis** .....  **6a+ 5b**  
 Start as for *Solution* and traverse rightwards up the series of diagonal breaks and flakes to finish (as for *Never Forget*) to the right of the small tree. It takes a bit of top-rope wizardry to protect this one.  
 FA. K.Wallis 1987

- 6 Conclusion** .....  **6b 5b**  
 Climb direct to the large flake on *Hypothesis*. Move rightward and finish as for *Ian's Answer* with a reachy move.  
*Photo opposite.*  
 An alternative finish can be done by heading up and left from the flake and then back right to the ledge and tree at **6c 5c**.  
 FA. R.Mazinke 31.8.1996
- 7 Ian's Answer** .....  **6b+ 5c**  
 Climb the wall direct to the centre of the birch trees.  
 FA. I.Mailer 1987
- 8 Never Forget** .....  **6b+ 5c**  
 Negotiate the lower bulge and climb direct to the right-hand tree past a series of grotty breaks.  
 FA. D.Riley 1996
- 9 Final Solution?** .....  **6b 5c**  
 Things start to get greener. After a tricky start, climb the steep face and pass the large break at half-height. Finish direct with difficulty, or move right for a slightly dirtier outing (original finish).  
 FA. T.Skinner 14.2.1993



- 10 Das Vaterland** .....  **4a 4a**  
 A dirty esoteric crack climb. Best left alone.  
 FA. R.Mazinke 20.9.2003
- 11 Docker's Armpit** .....  **4b 4b**  
 Climb the green bulge to the right of the crack.  
 FA. T.Skinner 31.1.1993

Mark Elwell on the excellent *Conclusion* (6b 5b) - opposite - Hypothesis Wall, Bassett's Farm Rocks.

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