

High Weald ²⁰⁰⁰ Anvil

A guide to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty **FREE**

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Figurehead fighting on behalf of the High Weald AONB



Local MP Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith has become the first President of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Sir Geoffrey, who has lived in the High Weald for many years, says: "It is a tremendous honour, privilege and pleasure to represent this national treasure."

"Whether you live, work in or are visiting this tranquil corner of bustling South-east England, I sincerely hope that the High Weald's quintessential countryside qualities capture your heart forever. I am sure that the timeless magic of its medieval meadows, ancient woods and hedgerows, and historic buildings will encourage you to care deeply for its beauty."

"I am doing everything within my influence and power to help to protect its unique landscape and rich cultural heritage," Sir Geoffrey adds.

As a 'fighting figurehead', Sir Geoffrey will have two key roles to help to conserve, enhance and sustainably manage this nationally important landscape.

Firstly, he will lobby national government ministries, such as the Department of Environment, Transport and Regions, and its associated agencies, behind-the-scenes to relieve social and economic pressures on the High Weald's distinctive rural character. He has recently supported a successful attempt to secure stronger protection for AONBs via the new Countryside and Rights of Way Bill.

Secondly, he will perform centre-stage for the media and public at promotional events locally to raise the area's profile. For example, he hosted a major celebrity launch of 'Made In The High Weald', a shoppers guide to countryside products.

Sir Geoffrey keenly supports two key aims which will help to conserve the High Weald AONB: to stimulate a thriving, new, rural economy through diverse, land-based job opportunities for struggling producers of countryside goods and services; and to promote green tourism where appropriate, so that people can quietly enjoy the area.

Elected to Wealden in 1983 – the year High Weald was designated as an AONB – he is an honorary National Farmers Union member and a past President of the South of England Agricultural Society. He retires as an MP at the next general election, after which he hopes to devote more time to his High Weald presidency and his hobby of angling.

In 1993 the **High Weald Forum**, a partnership of over 40 local, regional and national organisations and groups, was set up to promote and co-ordinate the conservation of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The work of the Forum is guided by the **High Weald Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)** composed of councillors from 13 local authorities, the Countryside Agency and five individuals drawn from Forum member organisations to represent community, recreation, tourism, farming and forestry interests. The current Chair of the JAC is Councillor Bob Tidy of East Sussex County Council.

The JAC directs the work of the **High Weald AONB Unit**. The Unit is a specialist, dedicated team which acts to secure the conservation, enhancement and sustainable management of the High Weald AONB landscape for everyone, now and in the future.

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Understanding your view

It is all too easy to take for granted the countryside which surrounds our homes or through which we travel to schools, work or shops. Peter Brandon reminds us of what is special about the High Weald and describes how past residents created the features we see today.

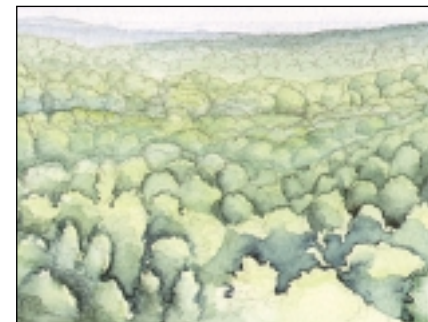
The hostility of the High Weald, poor soils and steep slopes, meant that long after most of England became settled and farmed, the High Weald remained largely wooded and wild. It was the colonization of the area by land-hungry freemen and peasants between about 1100 and 1348 which largely created the landscape we see today. By progressive agricultural improvement, together with the development of crafts using the local raw materials of wood, clay, iron, hides and skins, generations of farmers and craftsmen transformed the once poor and backward community of the High Weald into one of the wealthiest districts of England by 1600.

This was an achievement without parallel in England. These developments created a distinctive kind of rural community, that of the farmer-artisan who supplemented his meagre livelihood from the land with various forms of by-employment. It also created the chequerboard landscape, which is so distinctive when viewed from the air or some vantage point. Although a man-made landscape it has never been fully tamed; a closer look reveals former woodland surviving in deep ghylls, in

spinneys and copses, on steep, rough hillsides, in former deer parks, chases and forests, in extensive wood commons and in thick hedges and wide shaws.

What does one find from a closer acquaintance with the High Weald? The first impression, perhaps, is of a landscape in miniature. Wealdsmen throughout time have tended to be short of resources to tame the land and woods of the High Weald so it still preserves its small family farms, tiny fields (manageable to the small farmer), narrow lanes and small ponds, little greens and strips of roadside verge. Nothing in fact, grandiose, glamorous or pretentious as, for example, in the western Sussex Downs, or like the vast areas of hedgeless arable in the East Midlands or in northern France. In recent times the High Weald landscape has come to be regarded as characteristic of the traditional English countryside, miraculously little changed, it seems, from the days of the large Sussex wagon hauled by a team of horses.

The small family farm, which still remains traditional to this district, accounts for the chequer of small fields of irregular shape and crooked hedges. These have been deplored by agricultur-



The High Weald was once wooded and wild

ist experts as 'blotches on the landscape', with hedgerow trees robbing and shading crops and causing additional toil in ploughing. Yet through obstinacy the hedges have stayed: if they were swept away the whole character of the landscape would be utterly changed.

The small farm also accounts for another distinguishing feature of the High Weald, the labyrinth of minor lanes. To identify highways and lanes in use before, say, 1800 the existing bridleways and footpaths have to be added to the present pattern of metalled roads. The abundance of tracks which served the district is then apparent. A number of these early roads were droving routes to and from the forests and dens from manors on the peripheries to the Weald:

What's inside...

The Weald at work	
Livestock farming	4-5
Wildlife	
A closer look at grass	6-7
Exploring	
Walks and cycle rides	8-12
Guided walks	13
High Weald AONB Map	
Attractions and information	14-15
Homes and gardens	
Sheffield Park Gardens	16
Events listings	17
Timber-framed buildings	18-19
Made in the High Weald	
Local produce	20
From hop to beer	21
Producers list	22-23
People and places	
Crowborough	24
Iron in the Weald	24
Ashdown Forest	25
Kids stuff	26
Parish issues	26
Questionnaire	27
Contacts	27
Village signs	28



Deep hollow-ways, which many lanes and paths follow, are indicative of age-old use

others were local roads linking each and every farm to church, mill, market, common lands and woodlands. Yet others provided access to forges and furnaces and other industrial sites. Few parts of Britain are so covered with such a dense network of roads, each one being a corridor for wildlife. This network is confusing and seemingly illogical to a modern observer until its historical use is considered.

There are many more characteristic features. Only some can be eluded to here. The surface of the High Weald has been repeatedly dug over for various purposes in past times. In the search of manures to refresh the quickly failing fertility of the land, a marl-pit was dug at the corner of almost every field; mine-pits and sawpits pepper the surface of woodlands; wash-pits border lanes, and stone-pits and clay-pits abound. Most of these sites now contain trees and some are ponds.

Not all the High Weald was used for farming. A substantial proportion was held by the Crown and the aristocracy for sport and leisure. Ashdown and the other forests were protected by a prominent pale still largely traceable to this day. A typical deer park was surrounded by a fence in the form of a wide ditch dug inside a bank raised with the soil

The High Weald still preserves its tiny fields, narrow lanes and small ponds, little greens and strips of roadside verge

from the ditch and surmounted by a hedge or paling fence. Such former deer parks contain wildwood which has never been cleared by man and is a rich treasury of lichens and now rare plant species and invertebrates which only inhabit long-undisturbed woodland.



What is to be the future of this High Weald landscape? Despite the many changes which have been introduced over the centuries, the small family farm has been its keystone ever since the initial clearings of the woodland. Successive generations of small farmers have found in their Wealden ways a means of getting a living and scope for modest ambition. Modern life has differ-

ent solutions to offer and small and medium-sized farms in the High Weald are now rapidly disappearing. If the small farm is doomed then the landscape of the High Weald will be utterly changed. We cannot give up our High Weald landscape, for here still remains the beauty which big farms have squandered elsewhere in England.

Glossary

- Shaws** – originally belts of trees left by pioneer farmers to enclose their small irregular fields. They still exist as strips of woodland between fields or along roadsides.
- Ghyll** – a ravine-like valley created by a river or stream.
- Dens** – seasonally occupied swine pastures.

What is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

In 1949 the government introduced legislation to protect areas of the English and Welsh countryside which are considered outstandingly beautiful.

Over the last 50 years the wilder, more dramatic landscapes, with opportunities for extensive outdoor recreation, have been designated as National Parks. The more populated, gentler landscapes have been designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve natural beauty. Recreation is not an objective of designation (as with National Parks). However, it is considered that AONBs should be used to meet the demands of recreation as far as consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other users.

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The Countryside Agency is responsible for designating AONBs and advising government and others on how they should be protected and managed. Day-to-day administration of AONBs rests with local authorities. In the High Weald the designation covers parts of four counties and 11 district and borough councils. In addition to day-to-day administration, the councils also work together, through the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee, to conserve the area.

Further information
 Countryside Agency, 01242 521381
 www.countryside.gov.uk



Facts and Figures

The High Weald AONB:

- Is the hilly core of the Weald
- Is the fourth largest AONB in England.
- Covers an area of 1450 sq km (560 square miles)
- Was designated in 1983
- There are 41 AONBs in total covering 15% of England and Wales.
- The **smallest** is the Isles of Scilly, a mere 16sq km.
- The **largest** is the Cotswolds, totalling 2,038 sq km.
- The first AONB to be designated was the Gower in 1956 and the most recent the Tamar Valley in 1995.

Contentious rural issues come and go

A major topic of debate these days is rural issues – for example, how to strike a balance between the rights and responsibilities of ‘Town and Country’, ‘Resident and Visitor’, ‘Local and Incomer’ and ‘Public and Private’.

As the longest-standing residents of their local community by around 15 years, Rob and Les have seen more than their fair share of contentious issues – and personalities – come and go.



Responsible walkers welcome

Les says: “Our local friends and neighbours have all changed over the years. Traditional farming families got older and retired, and because young locals cannot afford rising land and house prices, they were replaced by ‘incomers’. To begin with it was retired professionals from the suburbs, but now it’s largely commuter workers.

“We’re on friendly terms with most of them, but have a totally different lifestyle. We know each other by sight and name and we occasionally socialise in each others’ homes. While we are not in each others’ pockets, we are always there to help in a crisis, especially as the nearest bus stop is a mile away and the service frequency has never been good,” she adds.

On the sometimes vexed issue of ‘Right to Roam’ on farmers’ land, Les says: “I agree with many others that this media-invented phrase gives completely the wrong impression to landowners and visiting walkers alike.

“All the ramblers, dog-walkers and family picnickers that we’ve met in recent years on the Rights Of Way which criss-cross our land, have fully understood their right to enjoy the farm animals, wildlife and landscape. But they’ve also realised their responsibilities towards protecting that from which we, the farmers, make our living.”

Perhaps the most pressing rural issue now, is persuading local consumers to buy goods and services, such as Rob’s hay for horses, which is produced in the High Weald and benefits the area’s grassland meadows and their wildlife.

Farmers are lifeblood at heart of the High Weald

British farming is at a crossroads – especially for many High Weald cattle rearers whose work to produce beef and milk greatly benefits this protected, pastoral landscape.

Ian Spindley, communications officer for the High Weald AONB Unit, met a local farmer and his wife who, for almost 35 years, have trodden the very fine line between financial survival and caring for the countryside.

Ever since they first met, when Lesley concussed herself on a milking parlour beam at Robin’s farm and he caught her as she fell, the Moncktons have had many headaches, mostly financial, to overcome in their 33 year married life as farmers.

Their romance, marriage and a tough working life together, all began in 1964. Robin, known as Rob, had rented his 15th-century farmhouse in the High Weald to a London couple and their two teenage daughters, including Lesley (Les).

Les’s father had been advised to move to the country because of a chronic chest complaint. Les, 18 then, was a city girl with an ambition to be a nursery school teacher. She remembers that her family’s idyllic image of rose-arched doorways, picturebook scenery and an adventure around every corner, was soon shattered.

Les says: “The reality of rural life was a deafening silence, with nothing to do and nowhere to go, and lots of smelly animals. My sister was in a constant flood of tears, but I eventually began to like it and, of course, our farmer-landlord Rob!”



Kent Burrows

In every sense over the last 35 years, Rob (61) and Les (51) have remained at the very heart of rural life in the High Weald.

Geographically, their home and land at Brook Farm, between the typical villages of Mayfield and Rotherfield, are at the core of the High Weald.

Economically, their work to produce beef and hay – as well as offering farm-house accommodation to visitors and odd-job services to residents – is crucial to conserving the countryside and to supporting local jobs.

Rob, like two generations before him, was born and bred in Crowborough. Rob’s father worked at, and then managed, the town’s Clockhouse Dairy for 40 years, while his granddad was a dairy farmer and odd-job ‘journeyman’.

He agrees that the High Weald, like many rural areas, has faced unprece-



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dent pressures over the last 20 years. Farming, always difficult on the heavy clay soils, has been pushed to the economic margins by soaring land values, competition of cheaper products from abroad, and changing consumer preferences. He has seen the number of

agricultural employees fall by a third in the last 10 years, while opportunities for seasonal workers have halved.

Rob agrees that economic farming activity has declined across the High Weald landscape. As a result, although the countryside may look the same, many vitally important features – such as woodland, hedgerows and pasture – are no longer farmed in the traditional way or, in some cases, no longer managed at all. This has caused a widespread decline in dependent wildlife, such as farmland birds.



SM

Rob loves talking about the birds and wildlife on his farm. He has identified 65 different bird species, this impressive total excluding some types, such as warblers, which he cannot positively name! But sadly, Swallows, Starlings and Grey Partridges are now far fewer, in line with national trends.

Butterflies are increasing however, but only where Rob coppices his woodland to create ‘Bluebell’ glades. Trees at Brook Farm are typically Sweet Chestnut, Hazel, Ash, Oak and Hornbeam. Rob coppices on rotation for fence posts and craftwood, and has

never felled a mature tree. Hedges were 40-feet high and overgrown when he bought the farm – he laid and trimmed every one by hand until he got a mechanical cutter!

Both Rob and Les have a strong appreciation of nature and its importance to people – both for food and its aesthetic pleasure.

Les says: “We’re much less commercial and agricultural than we were, and would probably score about 6 out of 10 over the years for how environmentally-sensitive we could financially afford to be. But we’ve always wanted to do more



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to conserve the countryside and its wildlife.”

Rob continues: “If the public and the government want to maintain the countryside as it is now – or even improve it – then they must become even more aware of how the landscape is created and managed. This includes hedging, ditching and clearance work and not just food production.

“People generally are now more aware, especially since Britain began to have food scares. Whether it’s genetically modified crops or BSE among cattle, the public need to know more about how their food is produced. But above all, they must appreciate that while today’s cheap, imported food does keep their weekly shopping bill low, it will cost so much more tomorrow because of rural unemployment, cleaning up envi-

ronmental pollution, and the declining physical and mental health of farmers.”

Rob wants the reform of common agricultural policies in 2006 to give farmers enough funding and flexibility to manage land more sympathetically, in the way that the public taxpayer wants.



LES

This would meet the specific needs of areas like the High Weald, with its distinctive land types, rural economies and communities, and wildlife which is under threat.

Les adds: “Generally speaking, British farmers must also improve their attitude towards people, especially the public. Many farmers at the moment have a better emotional relationship with their land, animals, crops and machinery than their families, friends and neighbours!”

Sharing his many years of experience also matters to Rob. He says: “If young students are not encouraged to work with farmers on practical tasks and paperwork, a lot of know-how will be lost, perhaps forever, as in other traditional industries. I have had at least three work-placements who’ve gone into farm-related businesses. I’m happy to teach all I know about farming and the countryside, but I cannot afford to give my time without payment.”

As in many other rural areas, many High Weald farmers are selling their uneconomic land to accommodate more



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viable residential development.

Rob says: “In the 1980s housing boom we had the NIMBYs – Not In My Back Yard. Now we’ve got the YIMBAs – Yes, In My Bank Account! Money from selling land assets brings much-needed financial peace of mind. We understand why others have sold – because everyone in society seems to want to make money as easily as possible. But dyed-in-the-wool farmers like me would continue farming even if they won the lottery, because we love the work.”

In 2004 Rob ‘retires’ and receives his state pension. “It will be the first time in my life that I get a guaranteed £100 per week! But I will continue to farm to the physical extent that I can manage.

“We’ll possibly rent out some land to be farmed in the way we would like, rather than sell it to developers and the asset be gone forever,” Rob speculates.

Les will consider retiring ‘early’ at 55 from a local school kitchen, at the same time as Rob. Les says: “My only regret is that our son and daughter – the next generation of Moncktons – probably won’t become farmers. There’s far too little financial security at the moment to encourage them to invest in the long-term. But they really want us to continue until, perhaps in our grandchildren’s working lifetime, farming comes full-circle – that is back to smaller, mixed and economically-viable units.”

Rise and fall of livestock brings just one regret

It was as a teenager that Rob developed the diverse countryside skills and adaptability he would need to survive. He began with 25 chickens on his granddad’s small farm near Crowborough, while working on the local Buckhurst Estate. After National Service, Rob got the National Certificate of Agriculture at Plumpton College.

By selling eggs, Rob earned enough for two pigs and then three cattle. By buying and selling more and more livestock and getting a bank loan, at just 25 he was able to buy Brook Farm for only £16,000 in 1964.

After Rob and Les married, they sold two fields to pay off the bank overdraft. This left them with 10 fields (about 55 acres) of grassland to graze cattle and make hay, and a further seven acres of woodland ‘shaws’.

Rob had 45 Jersey milking cows and 150 pork pigs. This led to 25 years of working seven days a week, up to 12 hours a day on average, and from 6am-9pm for up to a month when hay-making in July and August. He would see up to three agricultural merchant representatives per week, and attend Haywards Heath, Wadhurst and Heathfield markets.

But as the Common Agricultural Policy’s rules, regulations and quotas began to impact on milk, beef and pork production, Rob tried a gradual switch to corn by ploughing up a different field each year. Arable crop production improved the very heavy Weald clay soil, and qualified for subsidies.



JM

Rob says: “But the rules and regulations changed so often and became so short-term, especially for small farmers, that we re-seeded all our fields with silage grass over 10 years ago. Then the grazing quotas were amended, so I sold the dairy herd, keeping only 37 beef cattle. By grazing rotationally and doing an annual hay-cut, we qualified for a subsidy payment of about £3,000 per year.”

As recently as this March, Rob sold all but five cattle when the British beef market declined again.

Now agricultural representatives never even telephone, let alone visit the farm, and if the nearby Hailsham market closes, the next nearest is Ashford.

“The best that can be said about land in this part of the High Weald, is that if you cut and graze as nature intended and apply huge amounts of dung rather than chemical fertiliser – just as it was in medieval times – it grows brilliant grass and trees,” says Rob.

After almost 50 years of farming, does Rob have any regrets? “Only one,” he says. “That I was born at the wrong time to become a farm owner. I was trapped between the Second World War ‘dig for victory’ mentality, and the 1970s when farming became the over-centralised, over-industrialised and arable-dominated agriculture that the taxpayer public is still largely subsidising today.

“Today, the whole farm, that I bought for £16,000 is probably worth upwards of £500,000. I could only buy half a new tractor for that now! But the farmhouse, not the land, accounts for most of that value – unless, of course, we sold the fields for an exclusive housing development.” Rob adds.

Careworn faces catch eye of leading artist



Daphne Todd

Captured in oils – a ‘people’s portrait’ of Rob and Les

Rob and Les are the first to admit that, to look at, they are no oil painting! But, precisely because of their fraught farmers’ faces, a leading British portrait painter chose to feature their careworn character in a national Millennium art exhibition.

As soon as local artist Daphne Todd – who is also President of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters (RSPP) – unveiled the couple’s picture at a major launch in London, Rob and Les enjoyed a massive amount of media exposure.

Daphne, from nearby Rotherfield, helped to create the Millennium exhibition to celebrate the variety of people who make up Britain in 2000. ‘People’s Portraits’, features paintings of ‘the common man’: ordinary citizens who have epitomised the 20th century as much as gentry and statesmen dominated previous ones.

Daphne also chose to paint, in oils, butchers Ron and Ray Pett from Rotherfield, and cespit emptier Trevor Tasker from Crowborough.

In the exhibition guide introduction, renowned historian and journalist, Lord Bill Deedes, writes: “Left free to choose characters that appealed to them, RSPP members presented us with a gallery of people who rarely get painted. Future generations will probably not see their like again for many of their jobs will probably have disappeared.”

A touring exhibition, ‘People’s Portraits’ visits some major regional centres over the next two years: Bristol in July-August, Derby in September-October, and Exeter next February and March.



JM

Long before diversification became a mainstream concept, Rob and Les were creating extra farm-related business to make ends meet.

For many years, Rob has done hedging, fencing, straw and hay-baling for local horse-owners, and odd-jobs large and small for neighbours. And, so that they could both scrape a living from the farm, in 1978 Les began letting two of the four

B&B helps to make ends meet

family bedrooms to paying bed and breakfast guests.

Les says: “Farming paid just enough for the ‘bread and butter’ basics of life, but extra income from B&B guests really was the jam. However, as direct income

from farming began to decline, our paying visitors, especially from the near Continent such as Holland, became a financial mainstay. “There was nothing that many guests liked more than to sit at the farm dining table with us until all hours, talking about the rural, farming way of life.”

But this income stream was not guaranteed from one year to the next so Les went to work as a kitchen assistant at Heathfield

Community College. This is ideal because the 10.30am start and 3.30pm finish mean she can still do B&B and evening meals for guests, and have the summer holidays off to help with the crucial job of hay-making.

For 15 years, Rob and Les have also derived a small sum by leasing part of their managed woodland to Adventure Unlimited. This is a charity which brings special needs children, subject to proper supervision, to experience outdoor country life activities such as rambling and campfire cooking.

“Somehow we’ve managed to keep farm together, especially until last year when we had the slight relief of paying off our mortgage on the farm,” says Les.

A closer look at grass

Pasture dominates the farmed landscape of the High Weald and clothes the area in green throughout the year. A closer look at this pasture reveals that the blanket of grass is actually made up of different types of grassland.

Types of grassland



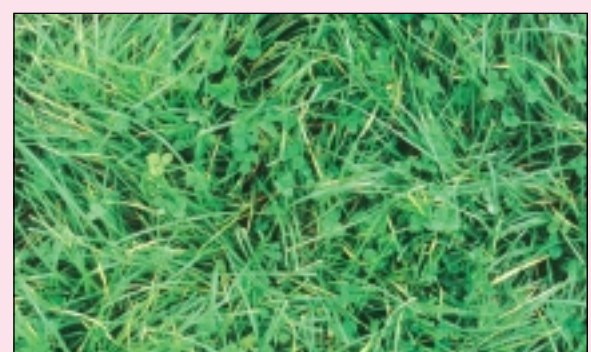
Ralph Hobbs

Unimproved grasslands are ancient habitats that support up to 100 kinds of grasses and wildflowers including such scarce and attractive 'indicators' as Dyer's Greenweed, Pepper Saxifrage, Green-winged Orchid (above), Betony, and Sneezewort.



Ralph Hobbs

Semi-improved grasslands still retain a good number of grasses and valuable wildflowers such as Red Clover, Bird's-foot Trefoil, Ox-eye Daisy and Knapweed which are important for bumblebees and many other insects. Under traditional management these also have the potential for supporting more species, and new sites created from scratch also fall into this category.



Ralph Hobbs

Improved grassland consists of mainly ryegrass with few flowers such as buttercup, docks and thistles. Although there may be high numbers of these 'weeds', they have little value for wildlife. By far the commonest grassland now in the Weald, some have potential for conversion to rough grassland as the ryegrass declines, to attract voles, nesting bumblebees, and Barn Owls.

If you own a wildflower grassland

- Never apply artificial fertilisers or pesticides, in 5 minutes you can destroy a habitat that may have taken 100 or even 500 years to evolve!
- Traditional management will have led to the variety of species in your meadow – try to maintain or introduce traditional management where possible.
- Consider undertaking a survey to find out how many and what types of species are present.
- Seek guidance, advice and grants to help with surveys and traditional management

Unimproved grasslands are some of our most important habitats for wildlife conservation, regionally, nationally and internationally. Less than 100 years ago unimproved meadows, glorious with the myriad colours of wildflowers and butterflies, and literally buzzing with bumblebees, grasshoppers, and a multitude of other insects, would have been commonplace. Ordinary people would have taken the wildlife for granted as they walked to work, school and church. Nowadays very few people have experienced the thrill of strolling through a genuine ancient hay meadow on a hot summer's day.

Unfortunately fewer than 50 pristine 'unimproved' sites remain in the Weald. Most of these are managed in the traditional way thanks to enthusiastic landowners and grant support such as Countryside Stewardship. Another 250-300 valuable 'semi-improved' grassland sites are also known, while a further 100 or so are in the process of being enhanced with wildflowers or even created from scratch.

Grasslands first appeared on the clays and sands in the Weald when our early ancestors began to 'carve out' fields 'from the wildwood to provide summer grazing and winter hay for stock animals. Over the centuries, the traditional regime of making hay followed by autumn grazing with sheep or cattle, provided ideal conditions for many wild grasses and flowers to flourish, having first moved in from natural open areas such as glades.

From the 1950s, however, the management of most unimproved grasslands changed radically with the advent of fertilisers, herbicides, more productive ryegrasses, efficient drainage, and



Pasture clothes the High Weald in a blanket of green

encouragement by successive governments to 'improve' the land and produce more food! As a consequence most grass fields in the High Weald today have been 'improved' out of all recognition. Many of these may turn an attractive yellow in spring with the flowers of buttercups, but they are of little value to wildlife.

To address this, countryside advisers and grant schemes in the High Weald are encouraging farmers and landowners to reinstate a few key species of wildflower.

Fewer than 50 pristine 'unimproved' sites remain in the Weald

Native Bird's-foot Trefoil, various vetches, knapweeds, and particularly English Red Clover can together provide the necessary daily supply of nectar and pollen – if the flowers are not mown or grazed all at once.

The high diversity of wild plants in unimproved grassland supports an even

greater variety of fungi, insects and other creatures. The list is a long one – several kinds of grassland butterflies such as Common Blue, Dingy Skipper, Wall Brown, Small Heath, Green Hairstreak, and Small Copper which are no longer common in the Weald; also grasshoppers, bugs, moths, bumblebees, solitary wasps, ants, hoverflies and other flies, ladybirds and other beetles, spiders, molluscs; and several other less well known groups are all represented by many species. Then there are the dragonflies, frogs, Common Lizard, Green Woodpecker, Skylark, shrews and hedgehog, which thrive on the multitude of insect life. In turn, these support the predatory Grass Snake, Weasel, Stoat, and Kestrel – biodiversity in the truest sense of the word! In stark contrast fertilised ryegrass supports none of these!

Ralph Hobbs, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) and
Dawn Brickwood, Weald Meadows Officer

Meadow wildlife Bumblebees

Bumblebees are instantly recognised by most people, though often viewed with an uneasy mix of affection and circumspection! What is less well known is that there are actually six different kinds of bumblebee that may visit your garden blooms here in the south.

Two of these (the Buff-tailed bumblebee and the Garden bumblebee) have giant-sized queens with the classic black and yellow stripes, and both can be seen in the cool weather of early spring. Others are all black with brown tails, or 'teddybear' brown.

To successfully rear their broods bumblebees need a continuous supply of the right kinds of flower right through the summer and suitable nesting sites. Sadly though, when intensive farming methods replaced the traditionally managed

old flowery meadows, bumblebees suffered a huge decline, exceeding even the well publicised decline in farmland birds! Sixteen species of bumblebee in the British countryside have declined to just six over the last 30 years, except in a handful of isolated areas such as Dungeness.

If you would like to encourage bumblebees in your garden or land consider creating patches of tussocky grass which if left uncut all year will provide nest sites for the queens. Alternatively why not try creating an artificial nest in your garden.

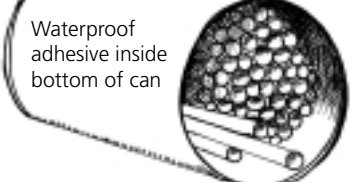
Sowing wildflowers such as Native Bird's-foot Trefoil, various vetches, knapweeds, and particularly English Red Clover will also help provide a nectar and pollen source for bees.

Gardening for bees

Gardens are an important refuge for wild bees. The simplest way to make your garden attractive for bees is to grow plants they like; flowering shrubs eg raspberries, currants and heathers, plants with open

Build a home for little bees

Clean baked bean or other can – painted or rust-proofed outside



Paper – not plastic – jumbo art straws 7mm diameter (available from craft shops) cut to 1cm shorter than tin.

blooms eg hollyhocks and cranes-bill and garden herbs in the mint family.

To encourage your visitors to stay you could also build a bee home!

Set your nest up before the end of April in places where bees are likely to look for nest sites; under the eaves of garden sheds, among wood piles, on wooden fence posts and in walls.

Wild bees are loners so you will not be encouraging swarms of bees!

Create your own wildflower meadow

Meadow creation can provide hours of enjoyment and result in an attractive view as well as a valuable habitat for wildlife. If you think you have the time and patience then read on!



A brush harvester is used to gather in wildflower seed for meadow creation in the High and Low Weald areas

Although it is preferable to encourage a diversity of species in your meadow, as few as four species, such as native Red Clover and Bird's-foot trefoil, can benefit bumblebees and other insects. However, remember that wildflower grassland creation is a long-term process and nutrient poor/infertile soil and a commitment to managing the meadow is the key to its success.

What is the best location?

You need to study your chosen area (your plot, garden, or field) prior to undertaking the decision to recreate grassland. Ideal sites should have low fertility – which can be determined using a soil test. Try to work with nature – sloping land and areas devoid of topsoil are ideal.

Do I need to do any preparation?

Yes! The site must be weed free. Having chosen your site remove the existing cover (ryegrass, weeds and dead grass). Herbicides are best for controlling perennial weeds especially creeping thistle, docks and nettles – please see the guide below and the product label for optimum timing. Mechanical means can also be used for annual weeds but the preparation period may take longer.

What seed should I use?

There is now a huge variety of wildflower seed available on the market. Ideally you need to track down seed of UK origin and, if possible seed of 'Weald Native Origin' if you are creating a meadow in the Weald area. Seed of

Preparation at a glance

Late spring/summer

- Spray/clear the existing sward (The most effective herbicide used is Glyphosate)
- Remove the dead sward
- Create a seedbed by turning over the soil, raking and rolling
- Spray/weed the regrowth (6-8 weeks)

Autumn (ideal)

- Sow the seed (after withdrawal period for sprays) and roll.

native, and preferably local origin, is more likely to include grass and flower species which thrive in local conditions. Check with the supplier that the mix uses non-competitive grasses such as fescues, Sweet Vernal Grass and Crested Dogs-tail. If you live near a traditional grassland it may be possible to get permission from the owner to hand collect species for creating your own.

How much seed should I use?

The recommended seed rate varies eg 2-5 grams/square metre with a ratio of approximately 80% grasses to 20% of wildflowers. For planting on a larger scale the rate is 6-8 kg per acre of Native Origin Seed. If you need to keep the cost down you could use 6-8 kg per acre of catalogue native grass mix and 1 kg of predominantly wildflower seed.

When and how do I sow the seed?

Surface broadcasting by hand or machine into bare soil in autumn (or spring) is best.

What next?

Sowing aftercare is the key to success!

Year 1 Autumn to autumn

Keep the emerging grassland short by cutting and removal, or grazing. This is especially important if you have used a commercial native grass mix. Ensure no excessive dunging. Excessive dunging will increase the nutrient levels in the soil and encourage the growth of competitive plants.

Year 2 Autumn to spring

Continue to cut and remove grass.

Year 2 Spring to autumn

Let the meadow grow and flower and cut in late summer. Bale or rake and remove hay. Repeat annually.

How long before flowering?

Flowers will continue to germinate over the first few years. If you have 4-6 flower species in the first couple of years this is success!

Ultimately more species will establish on most sites provided the above preparation and management techniques are followed and low fertility maintained on the site.



Further information

For details of wildflower creation training days and any aspect of meadow wildlife, management or creation, contact the Weald Meadows Officer 01580 879500.

Most wildflower grassland is in private ownership but one or two sites are open to the public on certain dates, while a few others owned by County Wildlife Trusts may also be visited. Contact the Wildlife Trusts for information.

Millennium Seed Bank – a world resource in the High Weald

The MSB at Wakehurst Place is one of the largest international conservation projects ever to be undertaken. The project will be a world resource, and as such, the seeds will be made available to researchers, conservationists and scientific institutions throughout the world, free of charge.

The project aims to collect and conserve seeds of the entire UK native seed-bearing flora by the end of 2000

and over 24,000 species internationally, principally from the world's drylands by 2010.

Thanks to close collaboration with a number of conservation groups, by the end of 1999 the project was just 32 species short of the UK collection target with 93% of the UK native plant flora now held in our existing bank pending transfer into the new Millennium Seed Bank. Storage in the bank is also part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan

for some of the country's rarest plants.

Once open, visitors will be able to enjoy a 'virtual' tour of the subterranean, sub-zero storage areas and be able to view scientists at work through large glass walls. Interactive computer programmes are integral to the exhibition to allow the public to discover more about all aspects of seed conservation and our international collaborators.

Further information
Publicity Officer, 01444 894000.

South East Walks Festival 7-10 September 2000

The historic town of Guildford will host Britain's second South East Walks Festival. This year's festival, sponsored by Exodus Travels, offers a 4-day celebration of walking in the historic landscape of the Surrey Hills through a varied programme of over 20 themed walks and strolls as well as talks and events. There is a £10 registration fee for the festival which gives you access to all the festival walks, transport to and from the walks as well as post walking activities.



A full programme and booking form is now available from Guildford TIC on 01483 444333 or walksurrey@surrey.gov.uk

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL PRESENTS

Weald WoodFair 2000

The leading woodland, wood-use and woodcraft event in the south-east.

Friday 22 to Sunday 24 September

Everything from growing trees to their final use. Furniture making, woodworking, woodland activities and demonstrations for all the family.

Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum
Halland near Lewes
01825 840573

High Weald publications list

- The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** Free leaflet
- Wildflower Grasslands in the Weald** Free leaflet
- Ponds in the Weald** Free leaflet
- Hedgerows in the Weald** Free leaflet
- Orchards in the Weald** Free leaflet
- Heathlands in the Weald** Free leaflet
- Sandrock in the Weald** Free leaflet
- Made in the High Weald – a guide to countryside products and producers** Free guide
- High Weald AONB Management Plan** £3.50 inc p&p
- The High Weald – Exploring the Landscape of the AONB** £8.00 inc p&p

Please send the items ticked above to

Name _____

Organisation _____

Address _____

I enclose a cheque for £ _____ made payable to **East Sussex County Council**

Return form to:

The High Weald AONB Unit
Corner Farm, Hastings Road
Flimwell, East Sussex TN5 7PR

Discovering the High Weald

The High Weald is a stunning area to explore as the constantly changing height and terrain gives ever-changing views and variety. Enjoy the wide vistas as you travel along the ridgetops then pass into the seclusion of the wooded ghylls with their cool, dappled shade.

The following pages suggest ways by which you can get out and explore the AONB, from the wooded valleys of the west to the open grazing marshes of the east. Short, long, linear and circular routes have been selected so as to cater for all tastes and abilities.

The walks largely follow public rights of way which largely cross private land and minor roads. Most landowners along the route welcome walkers on their land provided that they do not stray from the rights of way and abide by the visitors code. Route finding should not be a problem given the detailed route maps and directions and the extensive waymarking and signing on the ground.

Getting to and from the walks

Wherever possible the routes have been planned to link with public transport but some services are infrequent, particularly at weekends. If you do choose to travel by car please use the car parks indicated on the maps. If car parking spaces are not available please park in a sensible location which will not damage road verges or cause obstruction. Leave your car securely locked with valuables out of sight.

For regional and national travel information see contact details page 15.



Exploring is enjoyable at all times of year – each season adds its own special character. Spring when the orchards are blossoming, lambs are newborn and woodlands are carpeted with bluebells; summer when the hedgerows are scented with honeysuckle and dog rose and the farmers are busy hay cutting and harvesting; autumn when the aroma of freshly cut hops is all-pervading in the hop gardens and, in the orchards, the trees are heavy with fruit; winter, when trees glisten with frost and the smell of woodsmoke pervades.

Be prepared

- Always wear suitable clothing for the season and waterproof boots.
- Be prepared for changeable weather by carrying waterproofs in your rucksack at all times of year.
- Consider taking overtrousers or trousers as protection from any discomfort caused by walking through high or prickly vegetation or rain-drenched or dewy crops.

For an up-to-date weather forecast contact:

Weathercall 0891 772272

Further information

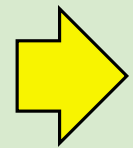
If you would like to be sent walking and cycling leaflets for the area, information on local walking groups, or have any queries or comments about the routes contact:

West Sussex
West Sussex High Weald
Countryside Management Service
01243 777620

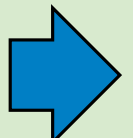
East Sussex
Rights of Way and Countryside
Management Service
01273 481654

Kent
Kent High Weald Project
01580 715918

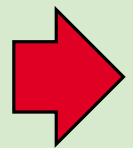
Waymarking information



Footpaths, for use by pedestrians only, are marked using yellow arrows



Bridleways, for use by horses, cyclists, and pedestrians, are marked with blue arrows



Byways, paths open to all traffic, are marked with red arrow

The routes included within the newspaper are well signposted and using the route directions provided are easy to follow. Where rights of way leave the road they are indicated by metal or wooden finger posts or a stone plinth. At other points, such as field boundaries or path junctions, footpaths are marked with short post or taller finger posts. In addition to the posts, public rights of way in Kent and East Sussex are usually marked with small coloured arrows to show the status of the path and direction. In West Sussex the classification of the rights of way is routed in words in the finger post. If the status of a path changes along its length, so does the colour of the arrows or the wording on the finger-post. Where a right of way is a promoted path the arrows are used in conjunction with the route's own symbol.



Stone plinth



Short post



Tall finger post

The following Ordnance Survey maps are applicable in the High Weald:
Landranger Series, scale 1:50,000, 1 1/4 inches to 1 mile (2cm to 1km)
187 Dorking, Reigate
188 Maidstone and the Weald of Kent
189 Ashford and Romney Marsh
198 Brighton and the Downs
199 Eastbourne, Hastings
Explorer Series, scale 1:25,000, 2 1/2 inches to 1 mile (4cm to 1km)
123 South Downs Way
124 Hastings and Bexhill
125 Romney Marsh
134 Crawley and Horsham
135 Ashdown Forest
136 The Weald
147 Sevenoaks and Tonbridge



Exploring by Bike

Along the Flat

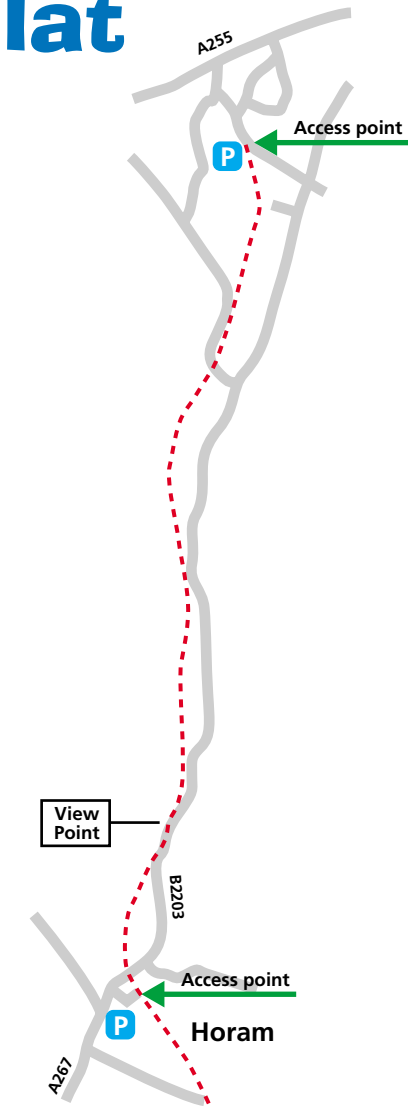
1 Horam to Heathfield on the Cuckoo Trail

Description: This part of the Cuckoo Trail is open to walkers, cyclists, wheelchairs and equestrians. The route follows a former railway line, closed in 1965. It has since been surfaced to provide an all weather trail. From Horam, the trail winds up a gradual incline for two miles to Heathfield, allowing an easier descent back.

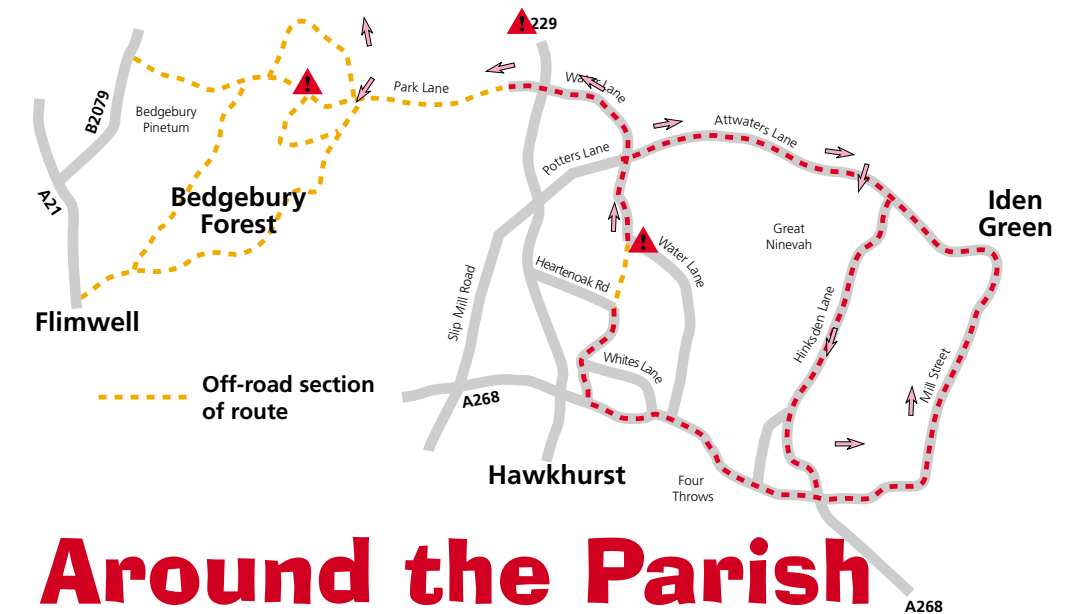
Things to See: There are several fine views over the surrounding countryside and a wide variety of wildflowers and trees providing a habitat for birds, butterflies and small mammals. Foot-weary and saddle-sore visitors can enjoy one of several hand-carved benches made by sculptor Steve Geliot from oak trees blown down in the Hurricane of October 1987.

Other linear cycle routes in the High Weald

The Cuckoo Trail is part of the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 21 connecting London with Eastbourne via Crawley. Route 21 includes the Worth Way and the Forest Way, both former railway lines, which cross the north of the High Weald. More information on the NCN is available from Sustrans on 0117 929 0888.



Fact File	
Distance	2 miles, 5 km
Start/Finish points	Horam and Heathfield, follow signs or see map
Services	Refreshments at Horam and Heathfield
Public Transport	Heathfield can be accessed directly by bus from Eastbourne, Uckfield and Lewes
Further Information	Copies of the Cuckoo Trail leaflet are available from Tourist Information Centres in East Sussex or from Wealden District Council – 01892 602000.



Around the Parish

2 Parish Pedals around Hawkhurst and Bedgebury Forest

Description: Cycling is the ideal way to explore the Kent High Weald and the pretty country lanes around Hawkhurst and tracks of Bedgebury Forest. The route traverses ridges, follows sunken shady lanes and meanders alongside the magnificent pine trees of Bedgebury.

Things to See: There are places of interest such as Bedgebury Pinetum (slightly off the route but within easy cycling distance) as well as picturesque villages such as Iden Green. There are several public houses along the route for refreshment as well as ample opportunity for picnicking alongside the route at various view points.

Please note: The route uses quiet lanes which are also used by horse riders, so please take care when approaching as your appearance could easily startle a horse. When overtaking give the horse and rider plenty of room.

Fact File	
Distance	24km (16 miles), forest circuit 12km (8 miles), road circuit 12km (8 miles)
Start/Finish points	Hawkhurst/Iden Green
Services	Refreshments available at Hawkhurst, Bedgebury Pinetum
Public Transport	Hawkhurst can be accessed by bus from Tunbridge Wells and Hastings
Further information	A pack of Parish Pedals which includes four cycling routes in the Kent High Weald area is available from Tourist Information Centres or direct from Kent High Weald Project (see contacts list). Please send cheque for £1 made payable to Kent County Council.

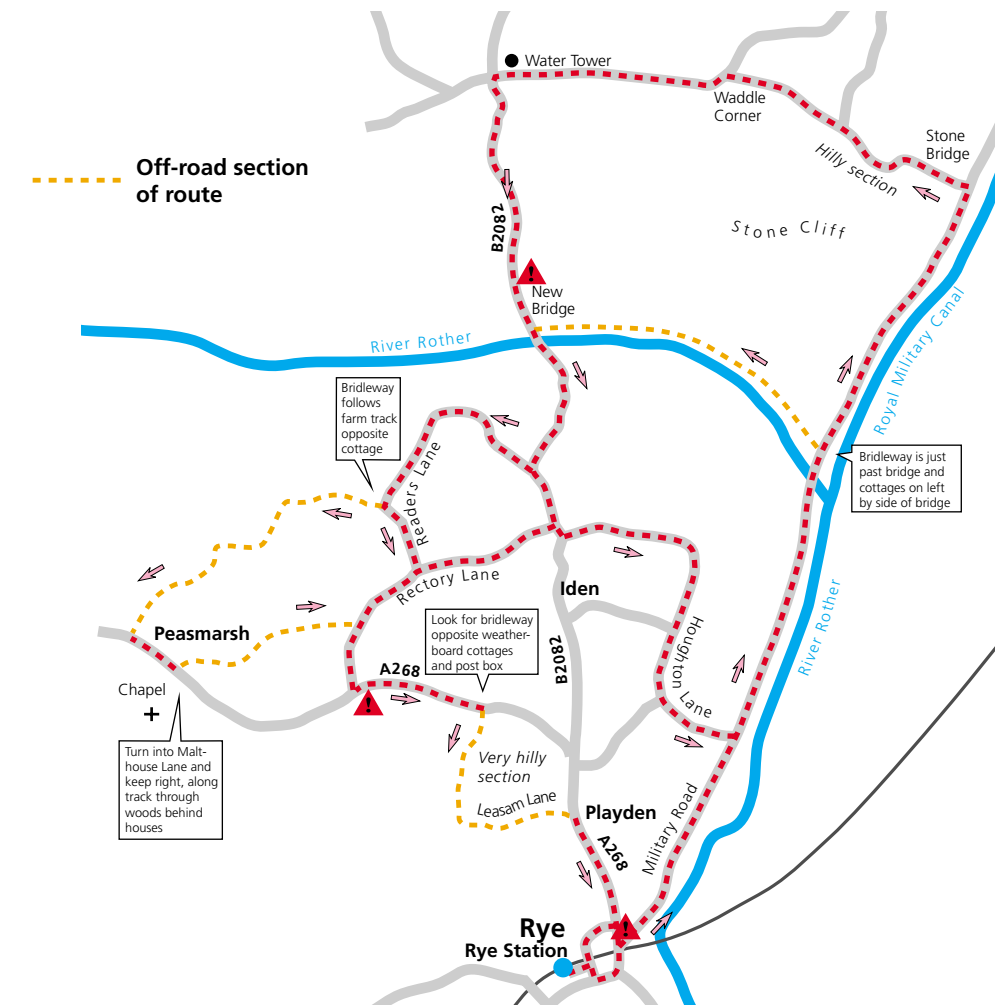
And over the Hill

3 A circular route around Rye, Playden & Peasmarsch

Description: Start Rye Station, through station car park, right at Rope Walk, left at mini roundabout, follow road to left, on to A268, over bridge and right into Military Road. Return via Deadmans Lane.
On-road route: Along the Royal Military Road which follows the route of the Royal Military Canal, steep climb up the old sea cliff, through the village of Iden and back into Rye. (Return to the station via Deadmans Lane).
Off-road route: Along the Royal Military Road then following the River Rother to New Bridge and Iden. This route is challenging and suited primarily to the enthusiast!

Things to see: Oast houses, orchards and the old sea cliff.

Fact File	
Distance	On-road route – 12 miles (19km) 3 hours Off-road route – 9 miles (14.5km) 2 1/2 hours, difficult, especially in wet weather, mountain bikes essential
Start/Finish points	Rye
Services	Refreshments available at Rye and Playden
Public Transport	Rye can be accessed directly by train from Ashford and Hastings
Further information	The Rye Bay Countryside Pack includes a selection of local walk and cycling leaflets. Pack available from Rye Bay Office (see contacts list). Please send a cheque for £1.50 made payable to East Sussex County Council.



Exploring on Foot

1 Buxted – Streams & Sandstone

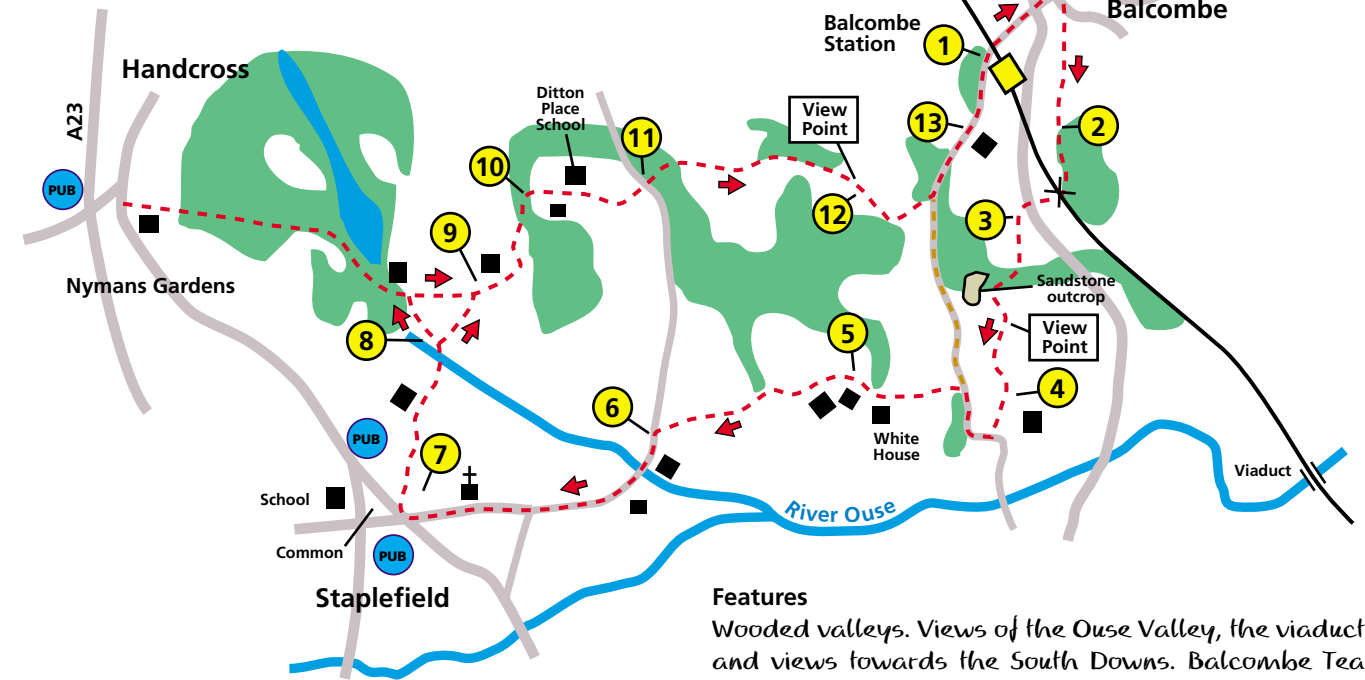
Features
Tranquil countryside. Attractive sandstone outcrops. Buxted deer park.

Directions
From station turn L on main road (A272) and first L along Church Road 1 past St. Mary's Church and oast house. Fork L along footpath on rough track past St. Margaret's Cottage where track ends – cross stile and head for far L field corner. Turn L over railway bridge 2 and bear slightly L downhill to footbridge over stream, then across next field to another stream (on R). Cross stile in field corner – continue with stream now on L to Fowly Lane 3 here turn L over bridge and R along footpath which starts beside gate to Willow Lodge – follow path through copse and across pasture with striking sandstone outcrops on L. Beyond footbridge go straight ahead with stream on L (ignoring second footbridge on L) and continue through three fields to track, where you turn L out to lane 4 Turn R on lane, past Maypole Inn and then L along Perryman's Lane. At bottom of hill cross stream and go L along concrete drive, which becomes narrow footpath within a strip of woodland. Go R up steps, L across fields until reach track, where turn L and R onto access drive out to Rocks Lane 5 Turn R to main road (A26) where you go ahead and very soon turn L along drive to farm buildings (Bevingford) – here bear R through double gates and keep

Fact File	
Length	7 miles (up to 4 hours) or 5 miles (up to 3 hours)
Grade	Undulating
Trains	Hourly off-peak service Monday-Saturday, two-hourly on Sundays in summer (no Sunday service in winter)
Refreshments	Buxted Inn (near Station). Maypole Inn, High Hurstwood
Further information	See walk below

to R of field with narrow strip of woodland on R. In field corner with two gates go through gate on L and follow fence on R down to cross footbridge – go straight uphill over stile by telegraph pole and bear L with fence on L to lane 6 (with view ahead towards Buxted) – turn R and follow lane out to main road (A272). Cross main road R and L and follow drive into Buxted Park. Just beyond church turn L on path through churchyard – leave through gate on far side and bear L along wide grass path through parkland. Just before reaching house ahead 7 turn sharp R along path beside fallen trees or for short cut go straight ahead to main road (A272), where turn R and follow footway back to station. Pass between two lakes (with

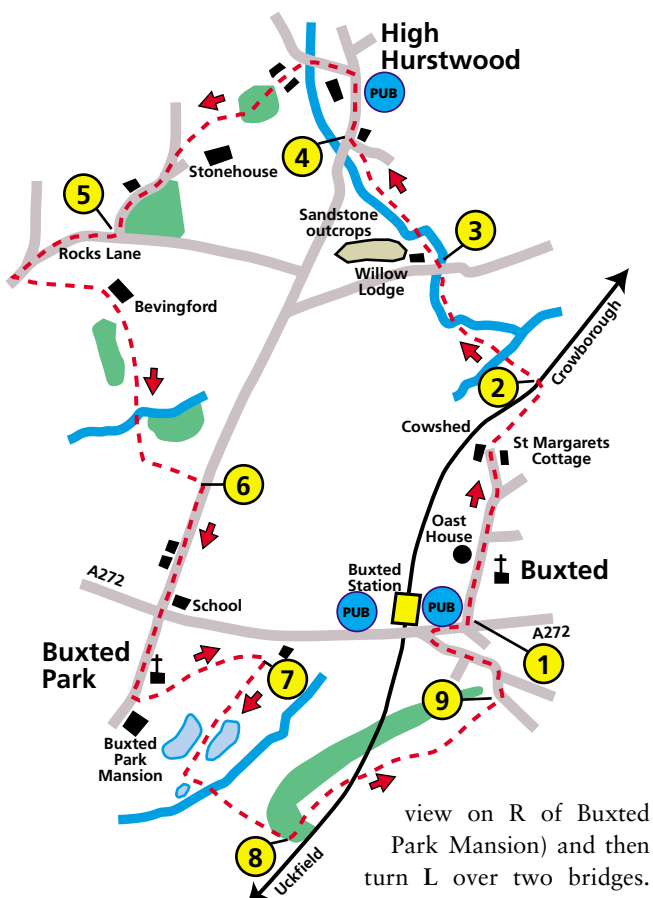
2 Balcombe – Parkland & Gardens



Features
Wooded valleys. Views of the Ouse Valley, the viaduct and views towards the South Downs. Balcombe Tea Rooms are worth a visit.

Directions
1 Exit Balcombe Railway Station via the steps up to the road. Turn L along the road and then R up Bramble Hill into Balcombe village (signposted to the Tea Rooms). Turn R into the road opposite the Tea Rooms and just past the Victory Hall, then R along tarmac footpath. Continue straight ahead through recreation ground and then houses 2 Cross Newlands Road into the field and keep the wood to your left, continue straight ahead until you reach the stile in the corner of the field situated between two oak trees. Turn L and cross the railway (with extreme caution!) and follow through the garden and the drive to the main road 3 Turn L and then cross road to stile opposite (Take care when crossing!) Follow through wooded area and then across grass field down to the wood. Climb over stile and bridge and follow footpath signs up and over the hill 4. Follow footpath in line with three oaks and turn R to follow lane and then L at pond. Along Whitethroat Lane to Spicers Farm 5 At the White House pond, keep L and follow the drive all the way through to the end and 6 continue straight down small flight of steps to Brantridge Lane. Turn L and follow road. At this point you can turn R for a short cut rejoining walk at 11 (6 mile walk). At the road junction veer R. After passing the church

Fact File	
Length	9 or 6 miles (up to 5 hours)
Grade	Undulating
Waymarking	This High Weald Circular route is marked with small arrows on circular discs
Trains	Hourly at weekends, every half hour during the week
Refreshments	Balcombe Tea Room, The Half Moon, Balcombe; The Jolly Tanners, Staplefield; The Victory Inn, Staplefield; The Red Lion, the Fountain Inn and The Royal Oak, Handcross; Nymans Gardens (National Trust), Handcross; Shops in Balcombe and Handcross.
Further information	A free Trails By Rail leaflet which includes this and eight other walks is available from East Sussex County Council – 01273 481654 or West Sussex County Council – 01243 777620



view on R of Buxted Park Mansion) and then turn L over two bridges. Cross pasture, go through gate with stream on R and follow path through copse until it bears L 8 and exits onto grass path – pass under railway bridge, bear L across fields and three squeeze stiles, out to lane 9 turn L on lane, and follow to main road, where you turn L to return to station.

Flora and fauna

- Most British wildlife is harmless but do not pick berries or fungi unless you are certain of the identification as some are poisonous.
- It is against the law to uproot any plant without the landowner's permission.
- The Adder is the only poisonous British snake. You may spot one, distinctive with its 'v' shaped markings, basking in the sun in a heathland clearing, but it is unlikely to bite unless threatened.

keep to the right over open space to a red telephone box 7 turn R up track to the stream. 8 At this point you may wish to turn L to Nymans Gardens and Handcross where you should cross field diagonally (the hard track is not the route) to the stile in the field corner and descend a flight of steps, over bridge and veer R along a sandy track. Follow the red discs carefully through the wood. On your return, retrace your steps through the wood but at field continue straight ahead to stile, then through field to exit onto track via gate. Veer R onto drive to join at 9. Continue straight ahead up track and turn R 9. Before farm, turn R through small gate and L after next gate. Continue ahead around field edge to stile. Turn L and then along wooded path into wooded valley. Follow footpath signs R and L at valley bottom, climb over footbridge 10. At stile continue towards impressive Neo-William and Mary House, (now a school), keeping hedgerow/fence to your right. Climb stile onto drive. Turn R at junction to school drive 11. To left of school entrance cross road carefully and straight over stile to follow signs into the valley. Climb down steps and across footbridge. Continue ahead through fields keeping fence and woods on left 12. Continue ahead over large field with superb views to your right (Weald landscape towards South Downs) and then veer to R keeping pond to your left. Follow footpath to corner of field by white cottage and over stile onto small lane. Turn L downhill 13. At cottage at bottom of hill, either turn R off lane and up steps to Balcombe station or continue L along lane to Bramble Hill and Balcombe Village.

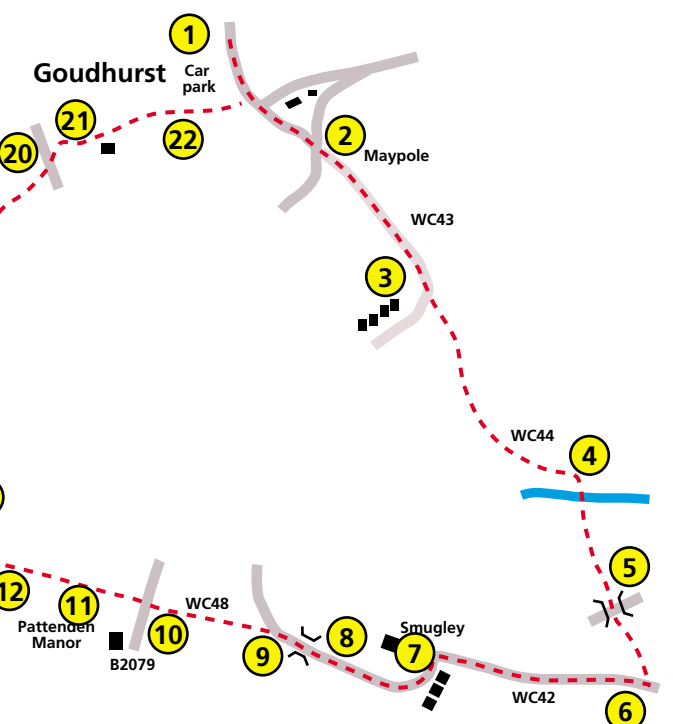
3 Goudhurst – A Village Circular Walk

Features
Traces of recent and past history and evidence of changing patterns of farming at Smugley and Risebridge.

Directions
1 From the car park cross the road (B2079) into the lane opposite, pass the cottages, then turn right (110°) downhill at the 'Y' junction to the main road. 2 There turn left down the private road (WC43) and on past the houses and equestrian area, to where the road bears right to 4 well spaced houses. Here carry on ahead between the hedge and the post and rail fence. 3 At the end of the fence bear left at the marker post on to footpath WC44 and keep by the hedge until the 4m. bridge is sighted then head across to it. (The bridge was erected by voluntary help from Blantyre Prison). To shorten the walk continue ahead at this point and you will arrive at point 7. 4 Cross the bridge and make for the marker post at the top of the field. 5 There continue through a screen of trees, cross a track then over a plank bridge and on to the top of the field where the path meets a track (WC42). 6 Turn right down this track and eventually pass a collection of former poultry houses and a barn then on reaching the fence turn left. 7 Follow the road in front of a large oast house, now converted to three houses, then immediately turn right with Smugley Farmhouse set back to the right. (In 1747 the last two of the Hawkhurst Gang were captured here). 8 Keep to the rough road parallel to the clear line of the dismantled Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst railway. 9 Leave the road where it bears right and carry on ahead to the stile. Cross the stile into an area that was Pattenden siding and on to a good stile and the road. 10 Cross B2079 with great care to footpath WC48 on the opposite side. Descend the steps to the plank bridge then climb the stile into a field used for equestrian jumping practice. 11 Follow the hedge on the left and look across it for a view of Pattenden Manor, a fine example of a medieval hall house – a pity about the adjacent buildings! Go through the gate and follow the faint line of the path across the middle of the field to a metal gate. 12 Go through and on to the next gate. 13 Through this gate immediately turn right through another gate then head up the field to a wood. (This is an officially diverted footpath). 14 Keep alongside the wood until a stile is

reached. 15 Climb up to the stile and into the lane. 16 Turn left along the lane (Peasley Lane) then at the crossroads turn right into Ranter's Lane. 17 Look for Ranter's Hall on the left. A licentious 17th century form of Christianity once flourished here. Further on to the right is Thatcher's Hall: there turn right along footpath WC38 between the house and vegetable garden. 18 In a few yards climb the stile into a paddock and on to the next stile. 19 Go over the stile and on to the top of the field where over another stile the path leads between two houses to a road (Lurkins Rise). 20 Cross the road and up the bank to the pavement, turn left and follow uphill for a few yards and turn right along the shortest path in the parish, WC74. 21 The path ends at the white gate and WC38 continues. Go through the gate, across the lawn and over a stile. 22 After the stile carry on to an unpainted gate, go through and on as far as a white gate that opens on to a tarmac lane. Here the way leads to the rear of the Car Park and all village amenities!

Fact File	
Length	2½ to 3 miles (1½ hours)
Grade	Easy
Bus	297 from Tunbridge Wells and Tenterden 2 hourly. Limited service Sundays
Refreshments	Goudhurst village
Further information	A pack of 4 short circular walks from Goudhurst (£1.99 per pack) is available from shops in the village



4 Buchan Country Park – Access for All

Location
Within the High Weald AONB between Horsham and Crawley.

Description
The park offers an opportunity for quiet relaxation amongst 170 acres of beautiful countryside. Many of the habitats found across the High Weald area are clustered together within the 170 acre park. Amongst the woodland, heathland, meadows and ponds, a wide range of plants and animals can be found. The site is particularly well known for the variety of dragonflies and damselflies which can be found hovering and skimming the surfaces of the ponds.

Ownership and management
Buchan was designated a country park in 1980 and is owned by West Sussex County Council. It is managed by the County Council for both its amenity and wildlife value.

Facilities
Ample car parking, toilets including provision for disabled, picnic areas and a visitor centre. A good network of hard surfaced paths makes for easy walking in all weathers and allows good access for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

Activities
Children's activities are held both during term time and in the holidays. An orienteering course has recently been set up. Fishing is allowed through a permit system. Practical conservation events are suitable for all ages and levels of fitness.

Further information
For a copy of the Buchan Park leaflet (including map) and details of other activities contact the visitor centre 01293 542088.



The gateway to Buchan Country Park has been sculpted from local timber

Exploring on Horseback

In addition to the bridleway network there are a number of areas within the High Weald AONB where permissive access to land has been negotiated or where riding is allowed through a permit system. There is a 75 mile, long distance bridle route which crosses the AONB – the High Weald Route. Starting at the Downs Link at Copsale in West Sussex, it traverses the High Weald AONB to finish at the South Downs Way at Jevington.

Further information	
Details of riding opportunities in the area, including the availability of guidebooks and leaflets, are available from British Horse Society County representatives:	
West Sussex	Mrs V Perrin 01403 752591
East Sussex	Jayne Bramwell 01435 873556
Kent	Miss S Quarndon 01622 843607
or the	
British Horse Society	Stoneleigh Deer Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2XZ 0871 202244
www.bhs.org (includes details of trekking, hacking, livery and stud centres as well as riding holidays in the area)	

“Let’s go for a walk.” “Where?” “We’ll follow a footpath sign.” “But where does it lead?” “I’m not sure.” Now there is no need for this uncertainty, says Roger Coles, Goudhurst Parish Council ROW Officer.

Looking after village footpaths

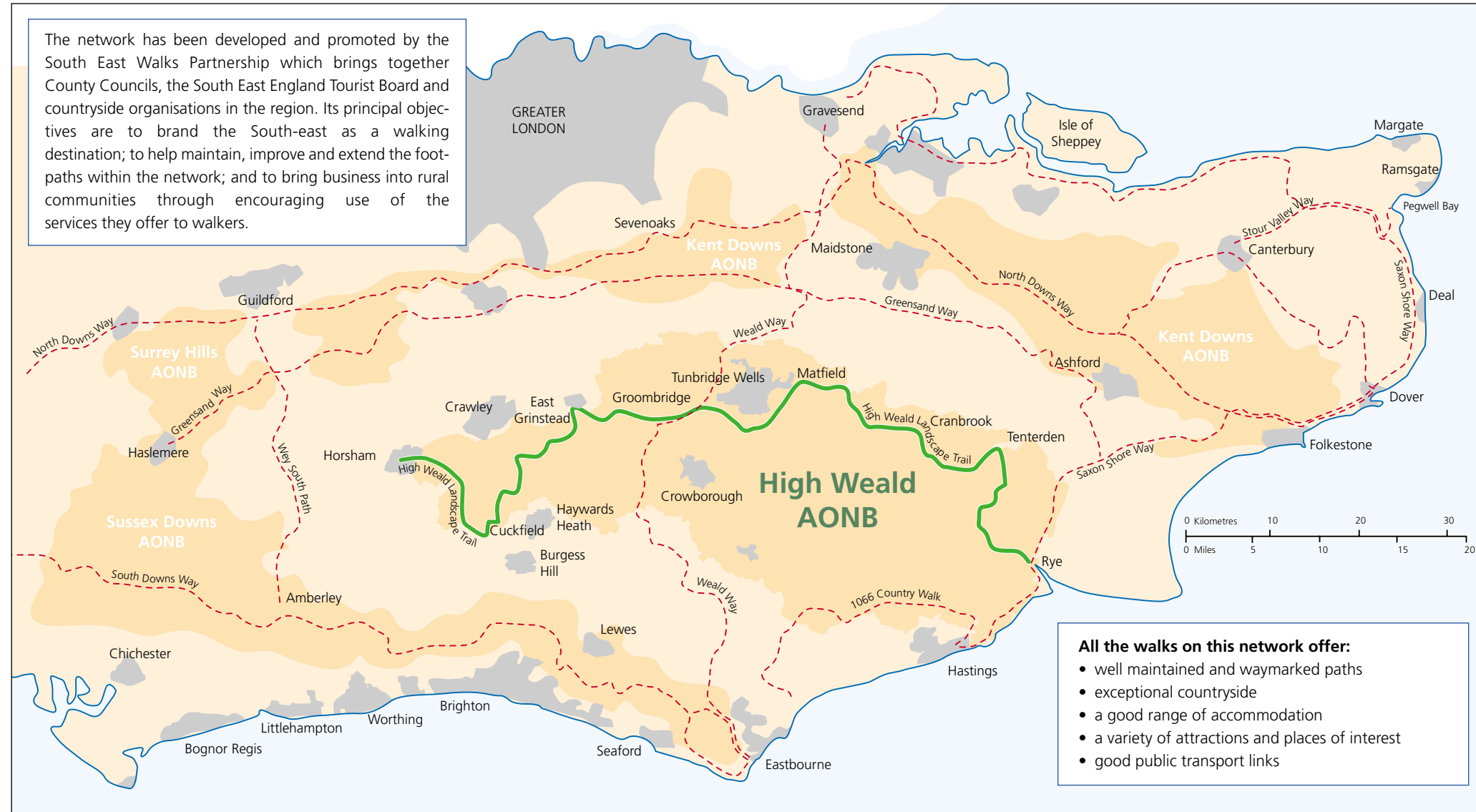
As a starting point when a town or parish council wants to encourage the use of its public footpaths, they will need to ensure they are well marked and properly maintained. A council needs to know the condition of its footpaths and, to do the legwork, it needs to recruit keen walkers to systematically inspect the network and report any problem areas. In one district two doughty ladies keep watch on their patch and not a waymark is missing! Another area is serviced by three near octogenarians, fondly referred to as characters from *The Last of the Summer Wine*, but it has to be said that all their footpaths are in good order. Generally newly retired walkers are attracted to the job and younger folk, if asked, may find

working for the environment of interest and rewarding. Many are the tales of footpaths blocked in some way or other, even built over! A few years ago one council reported two paths unofficially diverted, a double garage built over a footpath and even a covered swimming pool over another. It is unlikely that today, volunteer walkers will come across such problems, but they are sure to find broken stiles, locked gates, neglect, and in certain places fly-tipping which, when reported, a council will deal with, so keeping the clerk extra busy. Certainly to keep public footpaths in good order is in part much like painting the Forth Bridge – the work is never done! With the footpaths in good order, a council may wish to promote their use.

Further information
Help with maintaining village footpaths is available from the Public Rights of Way Officers based with the county councils and countryside management services (see contacts list).

The 843 miles of long distance trails that criss-cross the South-east region, linking seaside resorts, market towns and cathedral cities, create a unique network.

South East Walks Network



Three of the above Trails cross the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The following walk provides...

A taster of the High Weald Landscape Trail

5 Groombridge to Forest Row



Description
Meandering through small fields, ancient woodland, parkland, hop gardens and orchards, studded by ponds and sandstone outcrops, the go-mile Trail links the ridge top villages and historic gardens for which the High Weald is famous.

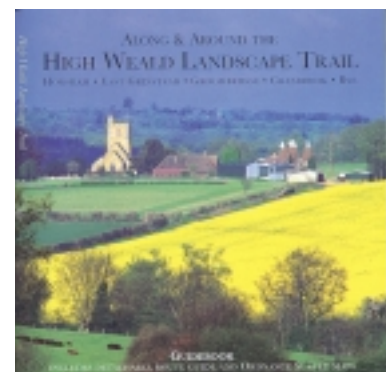
Things to see
From the post office in Groombridge village centre follow Corseley Road for just over half of a mile to pick up the Trail just after the River Medway bridge crossing. After climbing out of Groombridge onto one of the many ridges which traverse the High Weald AONB, the Trail dips down into Buckhurst Park studded with beautiful shaped trees. The 'hart', which features on various signs, stems from the village's location in what was a medieval hunting park. Ascending the ridge to the other side of the Medway Valley, the Trail passes small woodlands used for rearing pheasants; you may see the grainhoppers the birds feed from.

Finally the Trail descends towards Forest Row via a sunken lane. It has taken many centuries for the cartwheels and plodding feet to wear away the Wealden clay. You may see the small red Sussex cattle as you pass through Tablehurst Organic Farm into the village. Their manure is returned to the land to grow biodynamically certified crops. When the Trail meets the A22 turn left towards the village centre to pick up the bus back to Groombridge.

If you wish to undertake the High Weald Landscape Trail in sections you need to plan the return to your starting point. Possible solutions might be as follows:

- Using public transport or one car and public transport.
- Using two cars, one at the starting point and the other at the proposed finishing point.
- Retracing your steps – the scenery can look surprisingly different when walking in the opposite direction.

Accommodation
A range of accommodation is available in most villages and towns en route. It is advisable to book in advance especially in the summer. An accommodation list is available from the High Weald AONB Unit 01580 879500
info@highweald.org
www.highweald.org



Further information
Copies of the above guide are available from TICs and bookshops in the region or from Kent County Council Strategic Planning – 01622 221526.
email:env.publications@kent.gov.uk

Guided walks



The following walks have been extracted from the guided walks and countryside events guides produced by the relevant county councils. For copies contact East Sussex – 01273 481654, West Sussex – 01243 777610 and Surrey – 01483 517592.

July
The Landscape Trail in East Sussex Part 1
Saturday 15th July at 9.30am
Distance: 11 miles (7 hours). A linear walk on part of the newly opened High Weald Landscape Trail. The route takes us from Forest Row to Groombridge through some of the best scenery in the county, returning to start point by bus. Pub lunch stop en route. **Meet at:** Forest Row car park, Station Road (Map Ref: TQ426352). **Leader:** Marion Hamilton, ESCC Countryside Management. **Charge:** £1.00 (non car-users FREE) towards Voluntary Rangers. **Public transport:** Buses 261, 270 and 291 stop near start point.

The Landscape Trail in East Sussex – Part 2
Saturday 22nd July at 10.05am
Distance: 9 miles (6 hours). Groombridge to Tunbridge Wells along the High Weald Landscape Trail, featuring Eridge deer park, Harrisons and Eridge Rocks. A linear walk, returning by bus. Bring a picnic. **Meet at:** Car park next to Village Hall (on Station Road) (Map Ref: TQ532374). **Leader:** Steve Diserens, ESCC Countryside Management. **Charge:** £1.00 (non car-users FREE) towards Voluntary Rangers. **Public transport:** Buses 209/291 from Tunbridge Wells and East Grinstead.

Fields and Fruit, Mud and Moats!
Monday 31st July at 10.30am
Distance: 4 miles (2 hours). Peasmarsh to Iden, through woods, pasture and orchards, then back to Peasmarsh. **Pre-booking desirable** – phone 01797 226488. **Meet:** Outside Jempons coffee shop, Peasmarsh supermarket (Map Ref: TQ883230). **Leader:** Gareth Ellis, ESCC Rye Bay Countryside Office. Donation appreciated to Voluntary Rangers. **Public transport:** Buses from Rye stop 20 yards from start point.



August
Survive in the Wild
Thursday 3rd August at 10.30am
Distance: 1 miles (1½ hours). Discover how to stay alive in the woods: activities to learn and test survival skills! For children of 8-13 years. **Pre-booking essential** – phone 01825 830509. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leaders:** Anne Yarrow and Sarah Wilesmith, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** Children £3.50, accompanying adults £1.40/£1.50. **Public transport:** Bus No. 252 stops 1 mile from start point.

Weir Wood Sunset Walk
Thursday 3rd August at 6.00pm
Distance: 6 miles (3½ hours). A hike around Weir Wood Reservoir, stopping for a break at the newly established picnic site. On the way we will look at the local wildlife and history of the area. **Pre-booking desirable** – phone 01273 482670 or 481654. **Meet at:** Weir Wood Local Nature Reserve car park on Legshead Lane (Map Ref: TQ383341). **Leader:** Ken McManamon, ESCC Countryside Management.



Teddy Bears' Picnic
Tuesday 8th August at 3.00pm
Distance: ½ mile (1½ hours). An exploration for bears and their owners (aged 3-8) with simple games and a woodland picnic, bring a carrier bag and a picnic tea. **Pre-booking essential** – phone 01825 830509. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leaders:** Anne Yarrow and Sarah Wilesmith, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** £3.00 per bear (accompanied by a child of 3+), Adults £1.40/£1.50. **Public transport:** Bus 252 stops 1 mile from start point.

Steam Returns to Bodiam!
Saturday 12th August at 9.45am
Distance: 10 miles (6 hours). Robertsbridge to Bodiam Castle with a short stop at the new Bodiam Station, opened in April where steam trains from Tenterden are arriving for the first time since 1961. Café, pub or picnic lunch at the castle. **Meet at:** Robertsbridge station car park (Map Ref: TQ734235) (parking free weekends). **Leader:** Clifford Bowater, Ramblers' Association, Rother Group. **Public transport:** Train (9.11 from Hastings arrives Robertsbridge 9.33). Bus 4 or 5 stops 10 minutes from start point.

Back to Bodiam at Last
Sunday 13th August at 10.30am
Distance: 9 miles (approx 6 hours). A circular walk up the Rother Valley to Bodiam Castle to celebrate the return of the Kent and East Sussex Steam Railway to this picturesque location. Returning along the Sussex Border Path via Great Dixter to Northiam station. **Meet at:** Northiam railway station car park (Map Ref: TQ835267). **Leader:** John Wren, Northiam Footpath Group. **Charge:** £1.00.

When Dinosaurs Roamed Sussex
Sunday 13th August at 2.00pm
Distance: 1 mile (2 hours). A walk along the beach can become a journey back to the age of the dinosaurs. We will look at the fossilised remains of plants and animals that lived on this area 120 million years ago. **Pre-booking essential** – please phone 01424 426459. **Meet at:** Hastings Motor Boat and Yacht Club, Rock-a-Nore, Hastings (Map Ref: TQ831095). **Leader:** Ken Brooks, Hastings and District Geological Society. Donation appreciated. **Public transport:** Regular bus service along seafront (A21), buses stop 10 minutes walk from start point.

Millennium Bug Hunt
Monday 14th August at 10.30am
Distance: 1 mile (1½ hours). Come bug-hunting in Wilderness Wood and be part of our year-long investigation of the smallest creatures in the wood. Everyone welcome. Bring a bug box and an identification book if possible. **Pre-booking essential** – phone 01825 830509. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leaders:** Anne Yarrow and Sarah Wilesmith, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** £3.50. **Public transport:** Bus 252 stops 1 mile from start point.

Survive in the Wild
Thursday 17th August at 10.30am
Distance: 1 miles (1½ hours). Discover how to stay alive in the woods: activities to learn and test survival skills! For children of 8-13 years. **Pre-booking essential** – phone 01825 830509. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leader:** Sarah Wilesmith, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** Children £3.50, accompanying adults £1.40/£1.50. **Public transport:** Bus No. 252 stops 1 mile from start point.

Wildlife Trail at Rotherfield
Sunday 20th August, 11.00am
Distance: 1½ miles (1½ hours). An open day with regular guided walks around a nature reserve to see the wild flowers, trees, birds, butterflies, insects and other wildlife and explanations of conservation management. Refreshments available. **Meet at:** Car park/entrance to Nature Reserve, signed on B2101 between Rotherfield and Argos Hill (Map Ref: TQ557289). **Leader:** John Hicks, Powdermill Trust. Donation appreciated.

Millennium Bug Hunt
Monday 21st August at 10.30am
Distance: 1 mile (1½ hours). Come bug-hunting in Wilderness Wood and be part of our year-long investigation of the smallest creatures in the wood. Everyone welcome. Bring a bug box and an identification book if possible. **Pre-booking essential** – phone 01825 830509. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leaders:** Anne Yarrow and Sarah Wilesmith, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** £3.50. **Public transport:** Bus 252 stops 1 mile from start point.



Teddy Bears' Picnic
Tuesday 22nd August at 3.00pm
Distance: ½ mile (1½ hours). An exploration for bears and their owners (aged 3-8) with simple games and a woodland picnic, bring a carrier bag and a picnic tea. **Pre-booking essential** – phone 01825 830509. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leaders:** Anne Yarrow and Sarah Wilesmith, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** £3.00 per bear (accompanied by a child of 3+), Adults £1.40/£1.50. **Public transport:** Bus 252 stops 1 mile from start point.

Forest Way Wander
Friday 25th August at 11.00am
Distance: 8 miles (5 hours). A gentle walk along the Forest Way, a beautiful disused railway line to Hartfield to stop at a local pub for lunch. An optional return route which can take in the hilly countryside around Forest Row. **Pre-booking desirable** – phone 01273 482670. **Meet at:** Forest Row Social Club car park (Map Ref: TQ428353). **Leader:** Sandy Williamson, ESCC Countryside Management.

Discovering the Best Of Battle
Friday 25th August at 2.30pm
Distance: 2½ miles (2 hours). Looking at places old and new around Battle, but all being particularly beautiful, interesting or unusual. (Part of the Battle Ramblers' Summer Festival of Walks.) **Meet at:** Lower Market car park, Market Road, Battle (Map Ref: TQ745161). **Leader:** John Harmer, Ramblers' Association. **Public transport:** Buses stop at top of High Street. Battle railway station is ½ mile from start point.



Mayfield Circular Walk
Saturday 26th August at 10.45am
Distance: 3 miles (2 hours). A beautiful walk through typical Wealden landscape, including fields, hedges and woodlands – the product of a unique history. **Meet at:** Mayfield long-stay car park, by public toilets (Map Ref: TQ585268). **Leader:** Marion Hamilton, ESCC Countryside Management. **Charge:** £1.00 (non car-users FREE) towards Voluntary Rangers. **Public transport:** Bus 252 stops close to start point.

Treasure Trail
Bank Holiday Monday 28th August, 11.00am to 4.00pm
Distance: 1 mile (¼ hour). A special family treasure hunt to exercise your legs, brain-power and map reading skills. Win a £10 prize voucher, small prizes for all. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leaders:** Anne Yarrow and Sarah Wilesmith, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** Adults £1.90, OAPs £1.50, Children £1.40. **Public transport:** Bus 252 stops 1 mile from start point.

Iden Old & New
Tuesday 29th August at 10.45am
Distance: 6 miles (3 hours). Another opportunity to explore the beautiful High Weald countryside using existing public rights of way and new countryside stewardship access around Iden. Orchards, oasts, moat and mud for all. Optional lunch stop afterwards. **Pre-booking desirable** – phone 01797 226488 and leave name and number. **Meet at:** Iden Recreation Ground car park, near church (Map Ref: TQ915238). **Leader:** Julia Scanes, ESCC Rye Bay Countryside Office. Donation to Rye Bay Volunteer Rangers appreciated.

Survive In The Wild
Thursday 31st August at 10.30am
Distance: 1 mile (1½ hours). Discover how to stay alive in the woods: activities to learn and test survival skills! For children of 8-13 years. **Pre-booking essential** – phone 01825 830509. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leader:** Sarah Wilesmith, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** Children £3.50, accompanying adults £1.40/£1.50. **Public transport:** Bus 252 stops 1 mile from start point. Buxted station is 3 miles away (leaflet available).

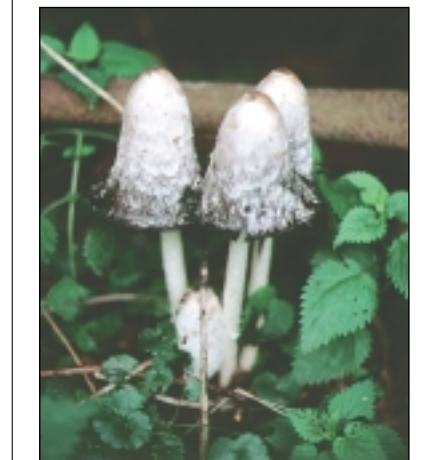
September
Wildlife Open Day At Bewl Water
Sunday 3rd September, 11.00am to 5.00pm
Guided walks, activities, displays throughout the day from the Southern Water Visitor Centre. Dogs welcome on leads. **Meet at:** Southern Water Visitor Centre signposted off A21 Fimwell – Lamberhurst road (Map Ref: TQ677338). **Organised by:** Sussex Wildlife Trust. Donation appreciated.

Deer, Batts and Beech in the High Weald
Saturday 9th September at 10.00am
Distance: 9 miles (6 hours). A linear walk through the hills of the High Weald from Stonegate to Wadhurst (returning by train). Takes in Batts Wood, Wadhurst Deer Park, Best Beech Hill, and a look at landscape and wildlife along the way. **Meet at:** Stonegate railway station car park (Map Ref: TQ658272). **Leader:** Steve Diserens, ESCC Countryside Management. **Charge:** £1.00 (non car-users FREE) towards Voluntary Rangers. **Public transport:** Trains from Hastings and Tunbridge Wells.

Ridges, to Valleys and Rivers
Monday 11th September at 10.30am
Distance: 15 miles (6½ hours). A long walk along rivers and over ridges. **Pre-booking desirable** – phone 01797 226488 and leave name and number. **Meet at:** Rye railway station (Map Ref: TQ919206). **Leader:** Gareth Ellis, ESCC Rye Bay Countryside Office. Donation appreciated to Voluntary Rangers. **Public transport:** Trains from Hastings and Ashford.

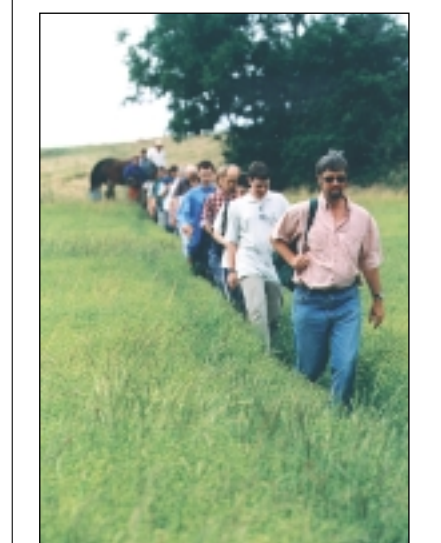
Harvest Walk at Herstmonceux
Saturday 16th September at 10.30am
Distance: 6-7 miles (5 hours). Harvest time again! Seek out the mushrooms, chestnuts and blackberries etc in this lovely unspoilt parish. An hour's break for a pub lunch. Enquiries – phone 01323 416176. **Meet at:** Car park behind the Woolpack, main High Street (Map Ref: TQ633126). **Leader:** Betty Turner. **Public transport:** Bus 98 from Eastbourne/Bexhill stops at start point.

Argos Hill Windmill Walk
Sunday 17th September at 2.00pm
Distance: 4½ miles (3 hours). Walk from Mayfield to Argos Hill Windmill. Guided tour of the windmill and then back to Mayfield village. **Meet at:** South Street car park, Mayfield (Map Ref: TQ587269). **Leader:** Deborah Dixon, Friends of Argos Hill Windmill. Donation appreciated. **Public transport:** Bus 252 Eastbourne – Tunbridge Wells stops 200m from start point.



Woodland Fungi – Death or Dinner?
Saturday 23rd September at 2.15pm
Tuesday 29th August at 10.45am
Distance: 1 mile (2 hours). A two hour fungus hunt. Learn how to tell a blusher from a stinkhorn and a tasty dinner from certain death! Discover the strange and beautiful world of toadstools in Wilderness Wood. Teas (non fungal!) available afterwards. **Pre-booking essential** – phone 01825 830509. **Meet at:** Wilderness Wood (Map Ref: TQ536240). **Leader:** Anne Yarrow, Wilderness Wood. **Charge:** Adults £3.95, OAPs £3.50, Children (6-15) £2.75. **Public transport:** Bus 252 stops 1 mile from start point.

The British Heart Foundation 1066 Country Walk
Sunday 24th September from 9.00am onwards
Distance: 16, 9 or 5 miles (8 hours). Join the many families and groups on this (linear) walk from Pevensey to Battle Abbey, tracing the route that William the Conqueror is purported to have taken prior to the 1066 conflict. Route map provided. For further details phone 01580 200443. **Meet at:** Pevensey Village Hall adjacent to the A259, near Pevensey Castle (Map Ref: TQ648049). All donations to the organisers – British Heart Foundation – appreciated.



Visitor Attractions

Houses, Gardens and Castles

1. **The Almonry**
High Street, Battle
East Sussex
01424 772727
2. **Battle Abbey**
High Street, Battle
East Sussex
01424 63792
3. **Bayham Abbey †**
Lamberhurst, Kent
01892 890381
4. **Bedgebury Pinetum †**
Goudhurst, Kent
01580 211044
5. **Bodiam Castle**
Bodiam, Robertsbridge
East Sussex
01580 830436
6. **Borde Hill Gardens ***
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex
01444 450326
7. **Chiddingstone Castle**
Chiddingstone
Edenbridge, East Sussex
870347
8. **Finchcocks ‡**
Goudhurst, Kent
01580 211702
9. **Great Dixter**
Northiam, East Sussex
01797 252878
10. **Great Maytham Hall**
Rolvenden, Cranbrook
Kent
01580 241346
11. **Groombridge Place
Gardens ‡**
Groombridge,
Tunbridge Wells
East Sussex
01892 863999
12. **Hever Castle & Gardens**
Hever, Edenbridge, Kent
01732 865224
13. **High Beeches Gardens**
Handcross, West Sussex
01444 400589
14. **Leonardslee Gardens**
Lower Beeding
Horsham, West Sussex
01403 891212
15. **Marle Place Gardens ‡**
Brenchley, Kent
01892 722304
16. **Nymans Gardens**
Handcross, Haywards Heath
West Sussex
01444 400321
17. **The Owl House &
Gardens**
Mount Pleasant
Lamberhurst, Kent
01892 890963
18. **Pashley Manor Gardens**
Ticehurst, Wadhurst
East Sussex
01580 200102
19. **Penshurst Place**
Penshurst, Tonbridge, Kent
01892 870307
20. **Priest House**
North Lane, West Hoathley
West Sussex
01342 810479
21. **Saint Hill Manor**
East Grinstead, West Sussex
01342 326711
22. **Scotney Castle ‡**
Lamberhurst
Kent
01892 891081
23. **Sheffield Park
Gardens***
Uckfield, East Sussex
01825 790231
24. **Sissinghurst Gardens**
North Lane, West Hoathley
West Sussex
01342 810479
25. **Small Hythe Manor**
East Grinstead, West Sussex
01342 326711
26. **Sprivers**
The National Trust
Horsham, Kent
01892 891081
27. **Standen House**
Standen, East Grinstead
West Sussex
01342 323029
28. **Wakehurst Place ***
Ardingly,
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
01444 894066
29. **Wineyard**
The National Trust
Burwash,
East Sussex
01892 890651
30. **Carr-Taylor Vineyards**
Wheel Lane, Westfield
Hastings, East Sussex
01424 892826
31. **Lamberhurst Vineyards**
Ridge Farm,
Lamberhurst, Kent
01892 890286
32. **Penshurst Vineyards**
Grove Road, Penshurst
Tonbridge, Kent
01892 870255
33. **Sandhurst Vineyard**
Hoad Farm, Sandhurst
Cranbrook, Kent
01580 850296
34. **Sedlescombe Vineyard**
Cripps Corner, Robertsbridge
East Sussex
01580 830715
35. **Tenterden Vineyard
Park**
Smallhythe
Tenterden, Kent
01580 763033
36. **Ashdown Forest Farm**
Wych Cross
Forest Row, East Sussex
01825 712040
37. **Deers Leap Park**
Saint Hill Green
East Grinstead, West Sussex
01342 325858
38. **Farm World**
Beckley, East Sussex
01797 260250
39. **Heaven Farm**
Furners Green, Danehill
Uckfield, East Sussex
01825 790226
40. **Quarry Farm Rural
Experience**
Bodiam, East Sussex
01580 830670
41. **Spa Valley Railway ‡**
West Station
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent
01892 537715
42. **Bluebell Railway ***
Sheffield Park Station
Uckfield, East Sussex
01825 723777
43. **Kent & East Sussex
Railway**
Tenterden Station
Station Road, Tenterden,
Kent
01580 765155
44. **Museums**
47. **Buckleys Yesterday's
World**
High Street, Battle,
East Sussex
01424 775378
45. **Cranbrook Union Mill**
Little Bakers Cross
Cranbrook, Kent
01580 712256
46. **Nutley Windmill**
Crowborough Road
Nutley, Uckfield
East Sussex
01435 873367
47. **Rye Heritage Centre**
Strand Quay,
Rye,
East Sussex
01797 226696
48. **Horsham Museum**
9 The Causeway
Horsham, West Sussex
01403 254959
49. **Herstmonceux Castle
and Science Centre**
Herstmonceux
01323 833576
50. **East Grinstead Museum**
East Court, East Grinstead
West Sussex
01342 323636
51. **Cuckfield Museum**
Cuckfield, West Sussex
01444 483017
52. **Tenterden Museum**
Station Road, Tenterden,
Kent
01580 764310
53. **Cranbrook Museum**
Carriers Road,
Cranbrook, Kent
01580 712069
54. **Ypres Tower and
Rye Museum**
Gungarden, Rye, E. Sussex
01797 2267280
55. **Motor Museum**
Falstaff Antiques, 63 High St,
Rolvenden, Kent
01580 241234
56. **Sackville College**
High Street, East Grinstead
West Sussex
01342 321930
57. **Country Parks**
58. **Bewl Water ‡**
Lamberhurst, Kent
01892 890716
59. **Buchan CP**
Crawley, West Sussex
01293 542088
60. **Hastings CP**
Fairlight, East Sussex
01424 813225
61. **Forest Way CP**
East Grinstead,
West Sussex
01273 482670
62. **Rye Harbour NR**
Rye, East Sussex
01797 223862
63. **Weirwood NR**
Saint Hill, West Sussex
01273 481654
64. **Fir Tree Cycle Hire**
Fir Tree House, Penshurst, Kent
01892 870382
65. **Cuckmere Cycle Centre**
High Street,
Horam, East Sussex
01435 813000

Regional public transport information

Kent Traveline
0345 696996
East Sussex
01273 474747
West Sussex
0345 959099

Special bus services have been set up in the area to improve access to visitor attractions at weekends and Bank Holidays. Adult fare for all day unlimited travel is typically £2.50.

Attractions marked with * can be accessed from Haywards Heath using the Mid Sussex Link bus service. See page 17.

Those marked with ‡ can be accessed using the Heritage Hopper bus service from Royal Tunbridge Wells. 01892 554177

National travel information

National Rail enquiries
0345 484950
National Express (coach)
0990 808080
Journeycall (rail & coach)
0906 550000

Accommodation

- South East England
Tourist Board**
01892 540766 or local tourist information centres.
- Horsham TIC**
01403 211661
- East Grinstead TIC**
01342 410121
- Tunbridge Wells TIC**
01892 515675
- Heathfield TIC**
01435 865700
- Battle TIC**
01424 773721
- Hastings TIC**
01424 781111
- Rye TIC**
01797 226696
- Tenterden TIC**
01580 763572
- Cranbrook TIC**
01580 712538

Banks

In addition to main towns, banks with cashpoints can be found in the following villages:

- Wadhurst**
Cranbrook
Forest Row
Hawkhurst
Battle
Heathfield
Mayfield (in village shop)

Websites

- www.highweald.org
www.sussex-country-tourism.co.uk
www.1066country.co.uk
www.sussexlive.com
www.midsussex.gov.uk



KEY

- Cycling route (see pages 10-12)
- Walking route (see page 9)
- Attractions (see pages 14 & 15)
- Producers (see pages 22 & 23)

23. **Sheffield Park Gardens***
Uckfield, East Sussex
01825 790231
24. **Sissinghurst Gardens**
North Lane, West Hoathley
West Sussex
01342 810479
25. **Small Hythe Manor**
East Grinstead, West Sussex
01342 326711
26. **Sprivers**
The National Trust
Horsham, Kent
01892 891081
27. **Standen House**
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West Sussex
01342 323029
28. **Wakehurst Place ***
Ardingly,
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
01444 894066
29. **Wineyard**
The National Trust
Burwash,
East Sussex
01892 890651
30. **Carr-Taylor Vineyards**
Wheel Lane, Westfield
Hastings, East Sussex
01424 892826
31. **Lamberhurst Vineyards**
Ridge Farm,
Lamberhurst, Kent
01892 890286

Vineyards

29. **Barnsgate Manor
Vineyard**
Herons Ghyll, Crowborough
East Sussex
01825 713366
30. **Carr-Taylor Vineyards**
Wheel Lane, Westfield
Hastings, East Sussex
01424 892826
31. **Lamberhurst Vineyards**
Ridge Farm,
Lamberhurst, Kent
01892 890286

Farm Attractions

36. **Ashdown Forest Farm**
Wych Cross
Forest Row, East Sussex
01825 712040
38. **Deers Leap Park**
Saint Hill Green
East Grinstead, West Sussex
01342 325858
39. **Farm World**
Beckley, East Sussex
01797 260250
40. **Heaven Farm**
Furners Green, Danehill
Uckfield, East Sussex
01825 790226

Steam Railways

41. **Quarry Farm Rural
Experience**
Bodiam, East Sussex
01580 830670
42. **Bluebell Railway ***
Sheffield Park Station
Uckfield, East Sussex
01825 723777
43. **Kent & East Sussex
Railway**
Tenterden Station
Station Road, Tenterden,
Kent
01580 765155

Museums

47. **Buckleys Yesterday's
World**
High Street, Battle,
East Sussex
01424 775378
48. **Rye Heritage Centre**
Strand Quay,
Rye,
East Sussex
01797 226696
49. **Horsham Museum**
9 The Causeway
Horsham, West Sussex
01403 254959

Windmills

45. **Cranbrook Union Mill**
Little Bakers Cross
Cranbrook, Kent
01580 712256
46. **Nutley Windmill**
Crowborough Road
Nutley, Uckfield
East Sussex
01435 873367

Country Parks

58. **Bewl Water ‡**
Lamberhurst, Kent
01892 890716
59. **Buchan CP**
Crawley, West Sussex
01293 542088
60. **Hastings CP**
Fairlight, East Sussex
01424 813225
61. **Forest Way CP**
East Grinstead,
West Sussex
01273 482670

Nature Reserves

62. **Rye Harbour NR**
Rye, East Sussex
01797 223862
63. **Weirwood NR**
Saint Hill, West Sussex
01273 481654
64. **Fir Tree Cycle Hire**
Fir Tree House, Penshurst, Kent
01892 870382
65. **Cuckmere Cycle Centre**
High Street,
Horam, East Sussex
01435 813000

Leonardslee, Nymans, High Beeches, Wakehurst Place, Borde Hill ... It is not surprising to find so many famous gardens in the High Weald. The climate is mild, especially in the valleys; the sandy silty soils are easy to work but not so fertile that they are coveted by agriculturists. If the heavy clays of the valley bottoms grow one thing to perfection, it is trees, the perfect background for gaudier plants.

Sheffield Park Gardens

Sheffield Park Gardens in many ways is typical of the 19th-century Sussex gardens. A myriad of rhododendrons, azaleas and other specimen trees, complemented by water features and overlooked by a grand house.

Nigel Davis, head gardener of Sheffield Park Garden in East Sussex, has to face the fact that the centrepiece of this 120-acre landscape is too attractive for its own good – an irresistible display of spring and autumn colour, all reflected in four lakes. This display tempts visitors to the lakes' edge, where they miss a host of horticultural treasures and spoil the view for others.

Nigel, who read horticultural science at Reading University and runs this heavy clay landscape with the help of four other gardeners would rather visitors rambled away from the gravel path around the lake. He must be one of the few gardeners in this country who might consider erecting Please Keep On the Grass notices to force the lake-huggers to see a touch of what they are missing: areas of specimen trees, dells, precious plant collections and groves.

These little-known gems are growing faster than anyone might have imagined before the great storm of 1987, which opened up large areas for replanting. "We lost over 2,000 trees out of 6,000 recorded plants – it was high percentage to lose, particularly because so many of the big trees went. So the azaleas are suffering because they are now in full sunlight and they face more competition from the surrounding grasses." says Nigel. The storm also changed the microclimate, stripping away the shelter belts and shady canopy that helped the garden's azaleas and rhododendrons thrive.

"Weather change is a more useful phrase than climate change," he

Sheffield Park Gardens – an irresistible display of colour



says. "We have the same amount of rainfall as we had in the 1880s but the pattern has changed. There used to be about two and half inches of rain a month then you might get seven inches one month and none the next. And every time we have rain we have wind too – and the wind seems to take the water away. The area called Wet Walk for instance is dry."

Now a five-year major replanting plan has begun, starting with shelter belts in the south-west and north-west, made by 'nursery plantings' – a mix of quick-growing, tress like silver birch, cherry, hawthorn, field maple, hemlocks and pines – to protect the oaks and conifers until they get going.

Planting techniques are one thing. But when making the five-

year plan, the Trust was faced with the question of whether to maintain Sheffield Park's planting tradition, or to try a radical new scheme more appropriate for the hotter, drier summers and milder, wetter winters that some scientists are predicting for south-eastern England. As the history of the garden is so important, the Trust has decided to opt for tradition and the recreation of the landscape's microclimate.

The history of the garden goes back to Capability Brown and Repton but little is known about what they did here. However, Sheffield Park's famous spring and autumn colour plantings began in 1910, when Arthur Soames bought the estate from the third Earl of Sheffield. He brought in American oaks for their extraordinary vivid

autumn scarlet, and rhododendrons and azaleas for their sparkling spring colours.

Soames was fond of a grouping together a Nyssa, an amelanchier and an acer to give year-round interest, and it is a planting Nigel is repeating today. The only difference this time round is that Nigel is planting in autumn rather than spring, to keep up with the changing pattern of rainfall.

The 1987 storm has given Nigel a chance to renew much of Soames' original planting and to develop areas like the National Collection of Ghent azaleas, the highly-scented, fully hardy hybrids. Today they grow discreetly around a rhododendron glade, which will be taken out when the azaleas are bold enough to make a good show. Nigel aims to

hold three specimens of all 148 Ghent azalea varieties recorded in Europe and America.

"The Ghent azaleas will make a good show in spring but it's worth coming here at any time of year to see the specimen trees. The obvious times are still the most popular – spring, and then there's October when everyone comes along to see a pile of dead leaves," says Nigel grinning.

© National Trust

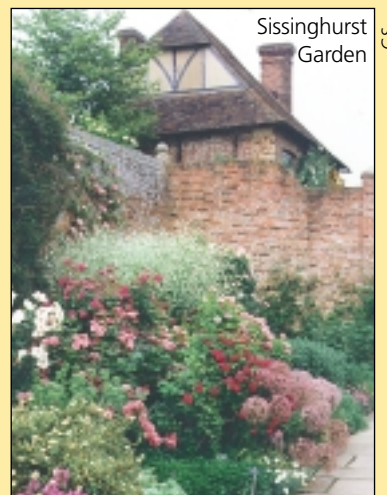
Further information

Sheffield Park Garden is open 1 March to 23 December, Tuesday to Sunday, 10.30am-6pm or dusk. See centre page for contact details. The garden is accessible by bus, see page opposite.

For other gardens in the High Weald see listings on pages 14 and 15



Scotney Castle, Lamberhurst



Sissinghurst Garden



Rhododendron, introduced into the country by the Victorians, are an attractive feature of many gardens in the High Weald. Unfortunately in many areas Rhododendron ponticum (identified by its purple flowers) has escaped from gardens into surrounding woodland where it out competes native plants

A number of other attractions in the High Weald are accessible by public transport. The Heart of Sussex Link has been developed to make journeys by public transport to Sheffield Park Gardens and other attractions in the area as easy as possible.

Leave the car behind

Operating times

The Heart of Sussex Link bus service operates Sundays and Bank Holidays from Good Friday, 21st April 2000 until Sunday 24th September 2000.

How to find it

The Heart of Sussex is accessible by train and bus. Travel by train to Haywards Heath station and catch the Heart of Sussex Link bus that stops outside the railway station.

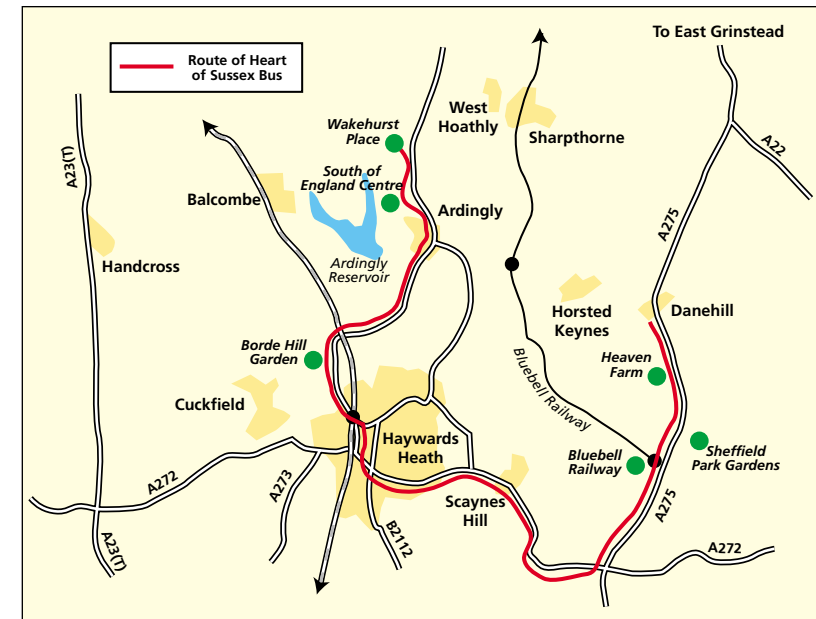
Purchase a Heart of Sussex rail and bus combined ticket from any Connex station. The outward portion of the rail ticket validates unlimited travel on the Heart of Sussex Link bus (service number 40) all day to all six attractions.

If just using the bus, buy your ticket from the driver.

For further information regarding train times, please phone Connex Customer Call Centre on 0870 03 04 05.



Ardingly Reservoir



Bus service number: 40

Bus fare: Adults £2.50, Children 5-15 years 50p and under 5 FREE

Wheelchair access is available on the Heart of Sussex Link. This bus provides connections to bus services to East Grinstead at Danehill.

For more information about attractions and accommodation in the area, please contact the Tourist Information Centres at either:

Burgess Hill, 96 Church Walk RH15 9AS

Tel: 01444 247726

East Grinstead, West Street RH19 4SR

Tel: 01342 410121 Website: www.midsussex.gov.uk

The Heart of Sussex Link (Service 40)

Timetable

From	To	at	minutes	past	until
ARDINGLY Wakehurst Place	–	11.05	05	–	18.05
ARDINGLY Gardeners Arms	–	11.08	08	–	18.08
BORDE HILL Garden	–	11.18	18	–	18.18
HAYWARDS HEATH Station	10.26	11.26	Then	26	18.26
HAYWARDS HEATH The Broadway	10.28	11.28	at	28	18.28
Princess Royal Hospital	10.32	11.32	these	32	18.32
SCAYNES HILL The Farmers PH	10.37	11.37	minutes	37	18.37
NORTH CHAILEY Kings Head	10.42	11.42	past	42	18.42
SHEFFIELD PARK Station	10.47	11.47	each	47	18.47
SHEFFIELD PARK Garden	10.52	11.52	hour	52	18.52
HEAVEN FARM	10.58	11.58	58	–	18.58
DANEHILL Club	11.01	12.01	01	–	19.01
DANEHILL Club	10.07	07	–	17.01	18.07
HEAVEN FARM	10.10	10	–	17.10	18.10
SHEFFIELD PARK Garden	10.16	16	–	17.16	18.16
SHEFFIELD PARK Station	10.21	21	–	17.21	18.21
NORTH CHAILEY Kings Head	10.26	26	–	17.26	18.26
SCAYNES HILL The Farmers PH	10.31	minutes	31	–	18.31
Princess Royal Hospital	10.36	past	each	36	17.36
HAYWARDS HEATH The Broadway	10.38	38	–	17.38	18.38
HAYWARDS HEATH Station	10.43	43	–	17.43	18.43
BORDE HILL Garden	10.50	50	–	17.50	–
ARDINGLY Gardeners Arms	11.00	00	–	18.00	–
ARDINGLY Wakehurst Place	11.03	03	–	18.03	–

Note – The Heart of Sussex Link connects with service 270 (to or from East Grinstead) to Danehill
Note – Limited stop service: stops only points shown

Events in the High Weald

MUSIC

25 - 30 July
The Mikado Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Options
Hever Lakeside Theatre, Nr Edenbridge
8 pm. 01732 866114

29 July
Opera in the Garden – Marriage of Figaro Opera 2000
Pashley Manor, Ticehurst
6.30 pm. 01243 776922

5 August
Last Night of the Proms
Batemans, Burwash
7.30 pm. 01435 882302/01892 891001

6 August
60s & 70s Music
Batemans, Burwash
7.30 pm. 01435 882302/01892 891001

11 August
Black Cat Jazz with Tina May
Penshurst Place, Penshurst
7.45 pm. 01892 870307

12 August
Garden Opera – l'elisir d'amore – Donizetti
Haywards Heath, Borde Hill Garden
6.30 pm. 01444 450326

24, 26 August
The Merry Widow, Court Opera Productions, Franz Lehár
Hever Lakeside Theatre, Nr Edenbridge
8 pm. 01732 866114

25, 27 August
Hey Mr Hammerstein – Court Opera Productions
Hever Lakeside Theatre, Nr Edenbridge
8 pm. 01732 866114

Weekends in September
Finchcocks Music Festival
Finchcocks, Goudhurst
(Fridays & Sundays 8 pm, Saturdays 2 pm & 8 pm) 01580 211702

27 - 30 July
ARC (Artistic Revue and Celebration)
A celebration including performance art. Encompassing drama, dance, comedy, music and street theatre.
East Court, East Grinstead
Carol Cotterall - 01342 325577

22 July
Teddy Bear's Picnic
Nymans Garden, Haywards Heath
11 am. 01444 400321

Various dates in August
Summer Holiday Activities
Bedgebury National Pinetum, Goudhurst
01580 211781

4 - 19 August (except Mondays & Tuesdays)
The Kent Repertory Company - Private Lives - Noel Coward
Hever Lakeside Theatre, Nr Edenbridge
8 pm. 01732 866114

13 August
Treasure Island
Penshurst Place
2 pm. 01892 870307

20 August
An Evening with Dora Bryan
Hever Lakeside Theatre, Nr Edenbridge
8 pm. 01732 866114

20 August
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Penshurst Place, Penshurst
7 pm. 01892 870307

23, 30 July
Falconry Displays
Penshurst Place, Penshurst
12 noon. 01892 870307

5 & 6 August
Craft Fair
Nymans Garden, Haywards Heath
11 am. 01444 400321

8 - 10 September
Weald of Kent Craft Show
Penshurst Place, Penshurst
9.30 am. 01892 870307

19 - 20 September, 22 October, 31 October - 1 November
DMG Antiques Fair
South of England Showground, Ardingly
DMG Antiques Fairs - 01636 702326

13 October, 15 September, 10 November, 1 December
Cuckfield Crafts and Mini Market
Queens Hall, Cuckfield
9.30pm - 1pm. Norma Buckle - 01444 455495

22, 29 July
Justing
Hever Castle, Nr Edenbridge
2 pm. 01732 865224

22 & 23 July
Bluebell Railway Toy & Rail Collectors Fair
Sheffield Park Station
01825 723777

28 July
KCC Water Festival
Bewl Water, Lamberhurst
10 am. 01892 890661

29 & 30 July
Bluebell Railway Steam Fair & Vintage Vehicle Rally
Sheffield Park Station
01825 723777

5 & 6, 12 & 13, 19 & 20, 26 August
Justing
Hever Castle, Nr Edenbridge
2 pm. 01732 865224

1 - 31 August
Children's Fun Days (every weekday afternoon)
Every weekday afternoon in August. Children's activities in park: juggling, face-painting, pond dipping, children's trail and fishing. £4.50 Adult, £1.75 Child, £11 Fam, £4 Group
Borde Hill Garden, Haywards Heath
2pm - 5pm. 01444 450326

16 & 17 September
K & ES Railway - Day out with Thomas
Tenterden Town Station
01580 765155

23 - 27 October
Children's Fun Days
Borde Hill Garden, Haywards Heath
2 pm. 01444 450326

23 - 27 October
Half Term Fun Activity Trail and House Quiz
Penshurst Place, Penshurst
11 am. 01892 870307

27 & 28 August
K & ES Railway Steam Back to the Sixties
Tenterden Town Station
01580 765155

27 & 28 August
Longbow Warfare
Hever Castle, Nr Edenbridge
2 pm. 01732 865224

27 & 28 August
Spa Valley Railway & Groombridge Place, Scarecrows, Shires and Sheepdogs
Tunbridge Wells 01892 537715
Groombridge Place, Gardens, Nr Tunbridge Wells
9 am. 01892 861444

2 & 3 September
Longbow Warfare
Hever Castle, Nr Edenbridge
2 pm. 01732 865224

3 September
King Henry & the Battle of Agincourt
Groombridge Place Gardens, Nr Tunbridge Wells
9 am. 01892 861444

16 September
Dragon Boat Racing
Bewl Water, Lamberhurst
9.30 am. 01892 890661

17 September
The Big Weald Ride
Over 2000 cyclists will ride in 4 different routes around the beautiful Mid Sussex countryside. The Millennium Seedbank, Wakehurst Place. Entry is free
If you would like to take part call Cycling Support Services on 0800 150969

6, 13, 20, 27 August
Falconry Displays
Penshurst Place, Penshurst
12 noon. 01892 870307

5 & 6 August
Bluebell Railway 40th Anniversary Gala
Sheffield Park Station
01825 723777

6 August
Spa Valley Railway & Groombridge Place, Wheels, Wings & Steam
Tunbridge Wells 01892 537715
Groombridge Place Gardens, Nr Tunbridge Wells
9 am. 01892 861444

20 August
Gentian Time
Working shire horses, with craft demonstrations, handicraft and produce stalls.
High Beeches Gardens, Handcross
10.30am - 5pm. 01444 400589

27 & 28 August
King Henry & the Battle of Agincourt
Groombridge Place Gardens, Nr Tunbridge Wells
9 am. 01892 861444

2 & 3 September
Longbow Warfare
Hever Castle, Nr Edenbridge
2 pm. 01732 865224

3 September
King Henry & the Battle of Agincourt
Groombridge Place Gardens, Nr Tunbridge Wells
9 am. 01892 861444

16 September
Dragon Boat Racing
Bewl Water, Lamberhurst
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17 September
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Over 2000 cyclists will ride in 4 different routes around the beautiful Mid Sussex countryside. The Millennium Seedbank, Wakehurst Place. Entry is free
If you would like to take part call Cycling Support Services on 0800 150969

13 - 15 October
Finchcocks Autumn Fair
Finchcocks, Goudhurst
10.30 am. 01580 211702

28 October
Nearly Halloween
Groombridge Place Gardens, Nr Tunbridge Wells
4.30 pm. 01892 861444

5 November
The Blacksmiths Procession
Mayfield
01622 858460

13 August
Summer Plant Fair
Pashley Manor, Ticehurst
11 am. 01580 200888

3 September
Rare Plants Fair
Borde Hill Garden, Haywards Heath
11 am. 01444 450326

15 October
Autumn Splendour
Millennium Celebration by the Cottage Garden Society. Plant sales.
High Beeches Gardens, Handcross
10.30am - 5pm. 01444 400589

15 July - 26 August
Paula Williams Mixed Media Works on Canvas
Weald Gallery, Cranbrook Library
9.30 am. 01952 746505

2 - 30 September
Rose Millar Paintings with Literary Links
Weald Gallery, Cranbrook Library
9.30 am. 01952 746505

The above events list represents a selection of events happening in the West Sussex and Kent areas of the High Weald. For an up-to-date list and details of events in other areas contact the relevant TIC listed on page 15.

15 October
Autumn Splendour
Millennium Celebration by the Cottage Garden Society. Plant sales.
High Beeches Gardens, Handcross
10.30am - 5pm. 01444 400589

15 July - 26 August
Paula Williams Mixed Media Works on Canvas
Weald Gallery, Cranbrook Library
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2 - 30 September
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Timber-framed buildings

It has been estimated that about 2,500 medieval houses survive in Kent. This extraordinary rate of survival, well above that for most parts of southern England, contributes much to the character of the High Weald AONB.

What is a medieval house?

In broad terms 'medieval' houses are those which have a hall open to the roof. They were built up to the early-mid sixteenth century when open halls rapidly went out of fashion and were succeeded by houses that were floored throughout and had chimneys. During the later 16th century most open halls were converted by having floors and chimneys inserted.

When were they built?

Generally, the earlier the date of a surviving house, the higher will be its social status. Numerous houses survive from before the Black Death (1348), but few of them are in the Weald. In the mid 14th century there was a lull in house building in the aftermath of the Black Death, but from about 1370 we start to find substantial yeoman and gentry houses being built in large numbers and it is these that form such a prominent feature of the Weald. There was another lull in the depressed economic conditions of the early-mid 15th century and the great majority of timber-framed hall houses in the Weald were built in the five decades from 1460-1510.

Bayleaf 15th-century farmhouse rescued from the site of Bough Beech Reservoir and now at the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum



Who lived in them?

Medieval houses would have sheltered about one sixth of all households in the early 16th century, but in some parishes the proportion is much higher, approaching one half. It is usually difficult to discover precisely what sort of person lived in a particular house. In general, of course, knights, esquires and lesser gentry built the largest houses, including most of those surviving from the early 14th century and those with cross wings. At the level of the Wealden however, it becomes more difficult to distinguish between lesser gentry and wealthy yeomen. Certainly some Wealdens are known to have been built by gentry families, such as the Manor House, Benenden, but most would have been the homes of wealthy yeomen or those in trade or the professions. Wealth seems to have been the deciding factor. Cloth and other trades were important, but the basis of wealth remained farming, particularly stock rearing.

How did they develop?

The open hall was superseded in the mid 16th century by fully-floored houses with chimneys. This meant the end of the Wealden house as well since its form depended on the absence of an upper floor in the hall. Crown post roofs,

Revolutionary new designs

Nigel Braden Timber, Timber Consultancy



If you go down in the woods today some exciting things are happening. Unusual building shapes are being formed quite unlike any structures previously seen in timber buildings. Building in timber is literally coming out of the woodwork.

Historically, building with timber has been governed by the physical constraints of how large the trees grow and how long timber beams can be cut to form the span of the buildings. The timber buildings within the Weald have developed within these constraints and have limited widths with building posts and beams located at optimum lengths that timber could be produced. Large-span buildings, for

example the great halls of country houses, needed to resort to complex jointing to achieve greater uninterrupted spans.

The requirement for large span lightweight buildings has limited the use of timber in favour of steel framework. Weight-for-weight, timber is stronger than steel but has lost out to steel which is obtainable in long engineered lengths which can easily be jointed and are of consistent quality.

Glue technology has revolutionised the use of timber as a constructional material. Glue lamination allows multiple layers of timber to be formed to create long defect-free constructional beams which can be curved and formed to dramatic shapes. This has enabled designers to use timber in

industrial component form as an alternative to steel and concrete. In Europe and North America laminated timber structures in softwoods have been widely used by designers. Modern advances in glue technology are now allowing the use of other timbers including our own native hardwoods and are pushing previous limitations to new design limits.



The Woodland Enterprise Centre building (above) is a revolutionary new gridshell building being constructed out of local timbers at Flimwell, East Sussex

which dominated the 14th and 15th centuries, started giving way to side purlins around 1500 and were not used at all after the mid 16th century. Walls were framed with close studding if the owner could afford it, or square panel framing if not. All these developments are common to many other parts of the country as well and the Weald starts to lose some of its distinctiveness. But oak remained central to the Wealden economy, used for building houses and ships and for fuel for the iron industry. It is a mistake to think that timber framing died out in the 17th century. Houses were increasingly built of brick or stone, but most barns and farm buildings continued to be timber framed right through the 18th and 19th centuries. They may be more modest but they are no less a glory of the carpenter's craft than the houses built under the Tudors.

Richard Harris, research director, Weald and Downland Open Air Museum

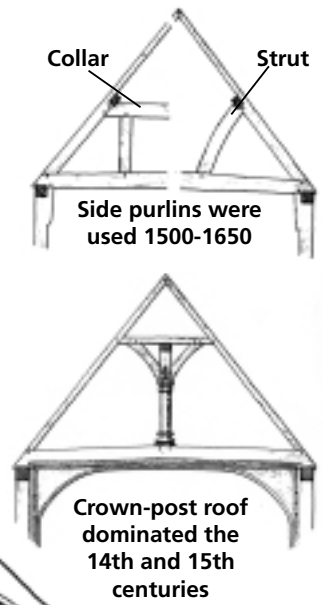
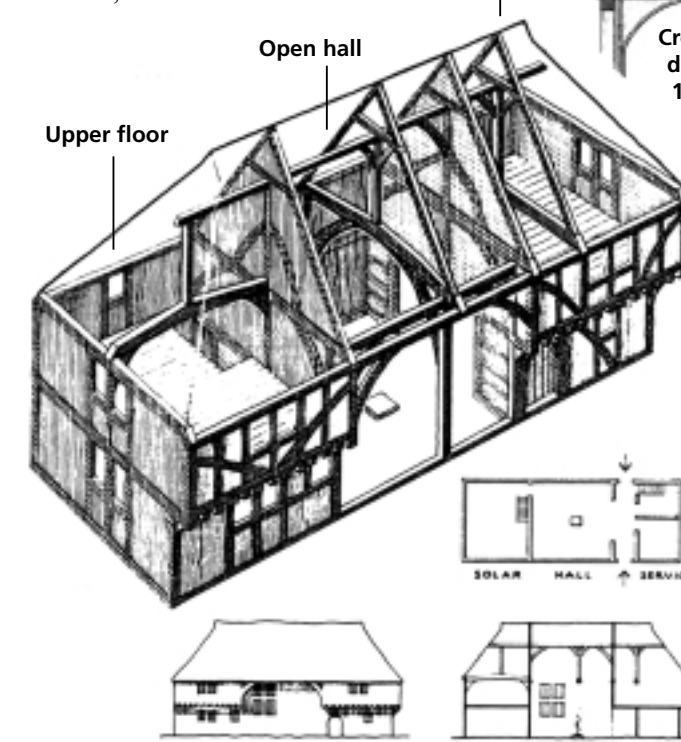


The Wealden hall house

The basic plan of all houses follows a similar pattern over most of southern Britain. An open hall is set in the middle of the house, the rooms at either end usually having an upper floor. One end, known as the lower end, contains the service rooms and the upper end contains the private apartments, known in earlier times as the 'solar', and developing in the 16th century into the parlour.

In the Weald, hall houses can take several forms. The most elaborate have a cross wing at one or both ends, with the hall sandwiched between and the least elaborate are plain rectangular boxes, sometimes with jettied ends (a jetty is an overhanging upper floor). The most common form, however, is so distinctive and so common in the Weald that it has become known as the Wealden house. Its distinctive feature is that the upper floors of the two ends are jettied forward in front of the wall of the central hall, but the roofline continues across all three elements, thus creating the effect of a 'recessed' hall. The ground plan and roof plan however are both rectangles, it is only the upper part of the hall wall that appears recessed.

Many theories have been put forward to explain jetties in terms of practical advantage, but the truth of the matter seems to be that the jetty was admired and desired as an architectural feature in its own right, doubtless with connotations of status. This was also the case with the Wealden form, which is generally used only on one side of a house, the front.



Further Information

The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum offers an opportunity to walk around reconstructed timber-framed houses and runs practical training courses for home owners and other interested individuals on: Timber framing from Scratch; Conservation & the Repair of Timber; Historic Timber – production supply and use; and Dealing with Changes in Historic Buildings (covering planning and design issues).

Open daily
1 March - 31 October
10.30am - 6pm
Wednesdays and weekends
1 November - 28 February
10.30am - 4pm

Information line
01243 811348
www.wealddown.co.uk

Small Hythe Place near Tenterden, Kent and the **Priest House** at West Hoathley, West Sussex are timber-framed buildings which are open to the public.
See page 14 for details.

I spy timber frames

Although there are over 2,000 timber-framed buildings still existing in the area, they are not always so easy to spot!

Timber framing and studding is clearly visible on some properties. However, on many others the walls have been covered by weatherboarding or tiles. Often the lower storey has been entirely replaced by brick walls. Many changes were made in the 18th and 19th centuries when tiles and bricks became fashionable and readily available.

Timber framing and studding is still clearly visible. Prior to the 19th century most timber was left in its natural state with the infill panels limewashed or plastered



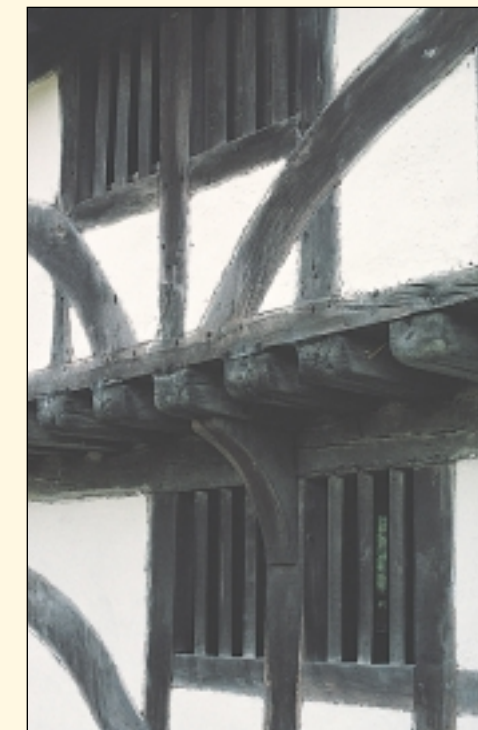
Most oak was used green (unseasoned). Much of the distorted look of buildings arises from the timber seasoning in situ



Weatherboarding and tile facing are wall claddings which frequently disguise timber-framed buildings



An older house with a jetty is almost certainly timber framed



Black-painted timber, contrasting with white infill, has become increasingly popular since the 19th century



Timber-framed buildings are still being built and restored

Apple wassailing

“Here’s to thee old apple tree,
Stand fast root, bear well top,
Pray God send us a howling crop,
Every twig, apples big,
Every bough, apples enow.
Hats full, caps full,
Full quarter sacks full,
Holla, boys, holla! ♪”

The apple harvest has long been an important part of the local economy and has earned its place in folklore. Apple wassailing was an annual event, usually carried out around Twelfth Night. After dark, farmworkers and their families would gather around the largest tree in the orchard. Toast or cake soaked in cider was placed in a fork of the tree, cider poured around its roots and the tree toasted with a chant such as that above. The trunk was then beaten with sticks and a great noise made with shotguns, cow horns, beating of sticks and shouts to drive away evil spirits and arouse the sleeping trees. The ceremony was believed to have a magical significance, protecting the trees and encouraging a plentiful fruit crop. The tradition is still carried on today by some Morris dancing groups in Kent and Sussex, although nowadays it is more a cheerful frolic than the magical ceremony it was once held to be.



Useful contacts

Brogdale Horticultural Trust
Faversham, Kent
Home of the national fruit collections. Budding and grafting service. Training courses in fruit cultivation.
Tel. 01795 535286

Common Ground
Aims to involve people in understanding and celebrating their cultural heritage. Organises events such as Apple Day (October 21st), assists with setting up community orchards and publishes orchard advice notes including small-scale juicing, small-scale cider making, fruit identification and infant tree care and apple tree pruning.
Tel. 020 7267 2144
www.commonground.org.uk

Keepers Nursery
East Farleigh, Maidstone, Kent
Specialist nursery, budding and grafting service.
Tel. 01622 726465

National Summer Fruits Ltd
Matfield, Kent
Supplies recipes using British soft fruits.
Tel. 01892 723900

Royal Horticultural Society
Wisley Gardens, Woking, Surrey
Horticultural advice and fruit identification.
Tel. 01483 211113

Facts & figures

- Over two-thirds of the apples and four out of five pears consumed in this country are now imported, causing an increase in long distance transport and extra packaging and storage.
- There are an incredible 2,500 or so varieties of apple and 550 varieties of pear held by the National Fruit Collections at Brogdale Orchards in Faversham, Kent.
- Since 1987 the area occupied by orchards in the High Weald has fallen by more than a third.

Made in the High Weald

Once upon a time, the woods and fields on our doorstep provided most of our food, the furniture in our home, the fencing around the garden, the logs for our fires and the baskets in which we stacked them.

Today, because of the ease by which retailers can source goods from around the globe, very little of what we buy and use in our homes comes from the countryside around where we live.

Yet the woods and fields are still out there, as are the people with the skills to

cultivate, craft, tend and care for the countryside and what it produces – but only just. Overseas competition and changing consumer tastes have led to a rapid fall in demand for traditional products with the subsequent decline of rural businesses and neglect of the countryside. However it is not too late. Consumers

concerned about health, rural issues and the wider environment can choose to purchase goods which support local employment and rural communities. If produced under responsible land management schemes, the purchase of these goods can also benefit the local landscape and wildlife.

Orchards, vineyards and hop gardens



By purchasing local apples you are supporting rural employment and helping to keep orchards as a feature of the High Weald landscape.

Orchards

In the Weald you can chart the seasons by what’s happening in the orchards. In the spring the orchards are awash with pink blossom and, before you know it big wooden crates filled with apples mark the onset of autumn.

The High Weald is particularly suited to growing orchard fruits, especially apples, as the slow growing conditions of the cool climate produce fruit with an excellent flavour and the well drained soil on the higher land remains free from late frosts which can settle in the valley.

In recent years, however, fruit growing has steadily declined – since 1961 orchards in the High Weald have been reduced by a third. The mild damp climate that grows such flavoursome fruit also makes British orchards more vulnerable to pests and diseases and bad weather can make harvests unpredictable. Imported fruit from southern

Europe can be grown more cheaply and has a more even appearance than British fruit. The pressure from supermarkets for identical, blemish-free fruit with good keeping qualities, has led to many local producers concentrating on growing only three varieties of apple – but small specialist growers do still exist.

The methods of fruit growing have also changed. The traditional orchard with tall, gnarled, well-spaced trees in a sheep-grazed meadow has largely been replaced by rows of densely planted small bushes. These are usually heavy cropping modern varieties grafted onto dwarf rootstock. Some of the traditional varieties are much more difficult to grow and produce a less reliable crop. The dwarf trees are easier to harvest and manage and up to three times as many trees per acre can be planted. Hence, a smaller area of orchard yields considerably more fruit. Traditional orchards support a far greater variety of wildlife

such as lichens, invertebrates, owls and woodpeckers than commercial orchards but cost much more to maintain and harvest.

Local varieties

There were many traditional varieties of apple in the Weald including the Bramley Seedling, a heavy cropper which stores well; and Egremont Russet, a mid to late-season apple with a sweet nutty taste. The most common of the new varieties are Cox, a late-season apple which is crisp, juicy and sweet; Gala and Jonagold. Less common is the Worcester Pearmain, an early apple with limiting keeping qualities; Ida Red and Spartan, a mid-season apple with good keeping qualities and a sweet and juicy white flesh. If you wish to try more unusual varieties, apples sold at the garden gate can throw up some interesting and delicious varieties. Otherwise you will have to search out a specialist supplier, grow your own or visit one of the apple tasting events held by some farm shops in the autumn.

Vineyards

English winemaking is not a new phenomenon, but began when the Romans brought the vine to England around 2,000 years ago. It reached its peak in early Tudor times when English vineyards produced almost three million bottles a year, but declined with the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. The revival in English wine production began about 40 years ago, and is a growing industry. The High Weald is one of the best areas for growing grapes with its comparatively warm and dry climate, which is reflected in the number of vineyards to be found in the area.

From hop to beer

Hops gardens and breweries were once widespread across the High Weald. The number of breweries has now dwindled to a handful, hop gardens are very much reduced in extent and most oast houses have been converted to residential use. However, beers made from local hops continue to provide sustenance and the regimented hop poles remain a distinctive feature.

The process of growing and processing hops into beer has changed very little over the last 300 years, although mechanisation has made what was once a very labour intensive job less so. The process starts in the Hop Garden...



1 In February ‘stringing’ begins. Four strings are attached to each hop pole and pegged to the surrounding ground. A long pole known as ‘the stringing goad’ is used by the stringer to thread the string through the hooks at the top of the pole.



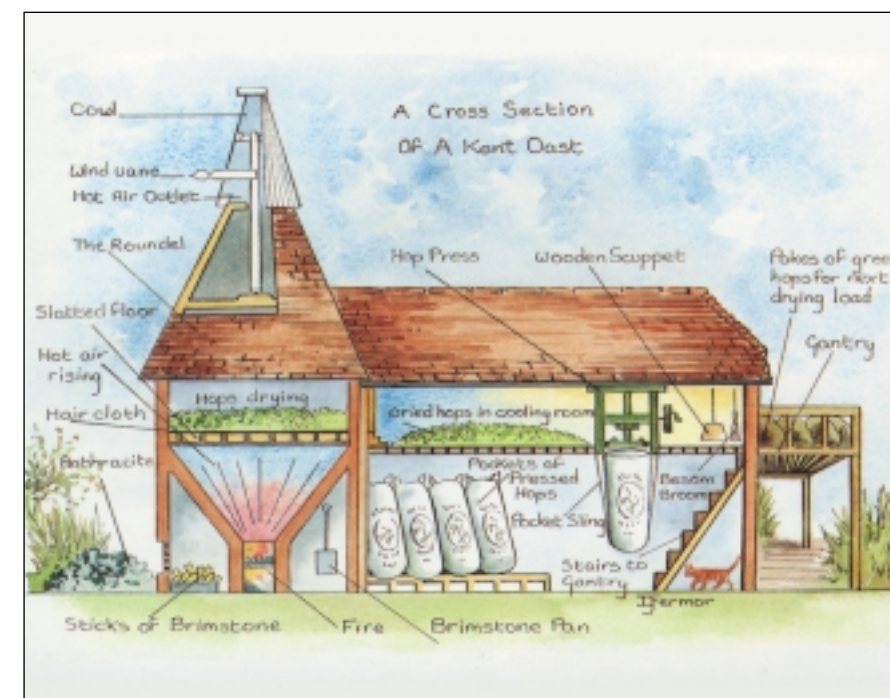
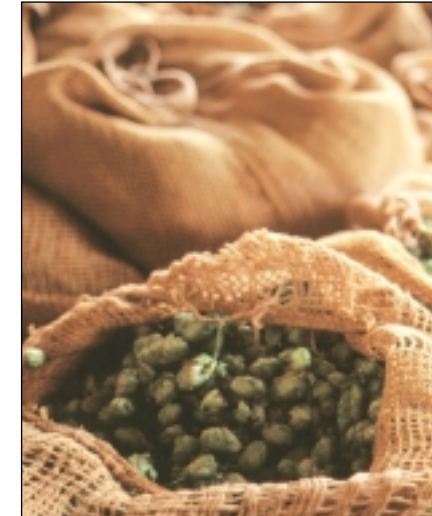
2 From April onwards the plants or bines, which are normally planted in the autumn, rapidly scramble up the strings. Farm workers step in and ‘twiddle’ or train the hops as necessary to ensure they climb clockwise up the string and that the growing tips or hopheads remain on track.



3 It is not until late August that the female flowers produce their pale flowers or cones. The cutting down of the bines then starts in earnest. A labour-intensive activity, one person standing in the crows nest of the tractor cuts the strings at the top, another frees the bines at the base and another heaps the bines into the trailer.

4 The bines are then transported to the drying shed. An automatic picking machine strips the cones from the bine and the cones are then transferred inessian sacks or pokes to the drying kiln.

It is the cone which ultimately provides the flavour for beer.



Beer is the result of turning the starches in malted barley into fermentable sugars, boiling the sugary extract with hops and then fermenting the liquid with yeast to produce alcohol.

The boil extracts resins, acids and tannins from the hops which add flavour, aroma and bitterness to the beer and protect the liquid from infection. Different varieties of hops, like grapes in wine making, add aromas and flavours to beer; spicy, peppery, resinous, floral and acidic. The brewer’s choice of hops therefore is one element which determines the character of the final product.

Many pubs across the High Weald sell real ales produced by local breweries – Harveys, Shepherd Neame, King and Barnes, Larkins and Old Forge.

Facts & figures

- Like wine there are different varieties of hops. In the South East the most common are Fuggles, Whitbread, Target and Goldings.
- In the High Weald the area of land under hops dwindled from 780 hectares in 1986 to 570 hectares in 1996 ie a loss of 25% over 10 years.
- Fruit and hops are never described as growing in fields, always gardens or orchards. One explanation is that tithes, or taxes paid to the church, were claimed on fields but not gardens.

Breweries

Larkins

Chiddingstone, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7BB
M Dockerty
01892 870328 / 01892 871141
Traditional Ale, Chiddingstone Bitter, Best Bitter, Porter
Larkins is the only brewery based on a hop farm. Its ales are malt and additive free.

Harvey & Son

6 Cliffe High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2AH
01403 270870
Beers, Sussex XX Mild Ale, Sussex Pale Ale, Sussex Best Bitter, Sussex XXXX Old Ale, Armada Ale, Seasoned Ales, Bottle Fermented Porter
The Victorian Gothic Tower of Harveys brewery has replicas at Hook Norton in Oxfordshire and Tolly Cobbold in Ipswich.

Shepherd Neame

17 Court Street, Faversham, Kent ME13 7AX
01795 532206 / 01795 538907
Master Brew Bitter, Best Bitter, Spitfire Premium Ale, Bishops Finger (named after an old Kentish road sign), Original Porter
Shepherd Neame or ‘Sheps’ is Britain’s oldest brewery. It celebrated 300 years of continuous brewing in 1998.

King & Barnes

16 Bishopric, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1QP
01403 270870
Mild Ale, Sussex, Broadwood, Old Ale, Festive, Seasonal and bottle fermented ales
King and Barnes has the newest brewhouse (1980) but the old brew house is used for short-run beers

Pett Brewing Company

The Old Forge Brewery, The Two Sawyers, Pett, Hastings, East Sussex
01424 813030
Brothers Best, Pett Progress, Pett Genius, Summer Eclipse, You Could Be So Lucky
The brewhouse for Old Forge is actually set in a restored village forge.

Rother Valley Brewing Co – Northiam, East Sussex
01797 252922



Environmentally responsible products

Products and services from the countryside can have a beneficial or detrimental effect on our environment, landscape and wildlife at every stage in their life cycle from production, processing, marketing and distribution through to final consumption. It is difficult to judge the overall impact of a product on our environment without knowing a lot about the processes involved in their production. However there are some clues we can look for which may help.

Whether land is managed under a recognised scheme or not is one such clue. There are a number of schemes operating which set environmentally responsible guidelines for land management and product processing. There are, however, many farmers and land managers operating outside these schemes who may still be delivering environmental benefits. To find out whether the land is being well managed you will need to ask how the goods are produced.

Schemes to look out for

A few of the more common land management schemes which you are likely to come across in the High Weald which indicate that the landowner is undertaking environmentally positive activity are:

Countryside Stewardship Scheme which is administered by MAFF, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Consumer helpline 0345 573021
www.maff.gov.uk

Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) and **Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG)** administered by the Forestry Commission.

01233 314546
www.forestry.gov.uk

Whole farm plans One of the common whole farm plans you may come across is the FWAG (Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) Landwise Report.

Organic Scheme Regulated by the UK Register of Organic Food Standards (UKROFS) and certified by a number of bodies including the Soil Association, Biodynamic Agriculture Association and Organic Farmers and Growers Limited.

UK Register of Organic Food Standards
020 7238 5915

With the ongoing review of the Common Agricultural Policy and introduction of new Rural Development Regulations, some schemes may cease and new ones may be developed. Farm assurance schemes and quality assurance schemes are not included here although some may include aspects of land management on the farm.

The text and listings on these pages have been extracted from the **Made in the High Weald** countryside products guide which was launched in mid-May 2000 by Antony Worrall Thompson, of Ready Steady Cook and Food and Drink. The guide includes a directory which provides contact details for wood, meat, grassland, dairy, fruit, and vegetable producers and provides further information on how the production of these goods helps maintain the rich wildlife interest and scenic qualities of the High Weald. Copies of the free guide are available from key public and retail outlets such as libraries, TICs, council offices and village shops throughout the High Weald or are available direct from the High Weald AONB Unit.



Producers – juices, ciders, wines and fruit

1. Barnsgate Manor Vineyard

Heron's Ghyll
Near Uckfield
East Sussex TN22 4DB
Keith Johnson
01825 713366 / 01825 713543
English wine, vineyard trail
All year Daily 10-5 or dusk if earlier

2. Battle Wine Estates Ltd

Leeford Vineyards
Whatlington
East Sussex TN33 0NO
David Sacks
01424 773183
BattleWineEstates@btinternet.com
English wine
All year Daily 10-5

3. Biddenden Wines

Little Whatmans
Gribble Bridge Lane
Biddenden
Kent TN27 8DH
Tom Jinks
01580 291726 / 01580 291933
Wine, cider, perry and apple juice, bulk fruit pressing service, business functions
All year Mon-Sat 10-5 Sun 11-5 (except Jan & Feb) Bank holidays 11-5

4. Bookers Vineyard

Foxhole Lane
Bolney
West Sussex RH17 5NB
Samantha Linter
01444 881575 / 01444 881399
bookersvineyard@btinternet.com
English wine
All year Mon-Fri 9-5 Sun 12-5 Closed Sat

5. Chapel Down Wines Ltd

Tenterden Vineyard Park
Small Hythe
Tenterden
Kent TN30 7NG
Rebecca Deacon
01580 763033 / 01580 765333
sales@chapeldownwines.co.uk
Produced naturally – not organic registered
English wines, vineyard trail, herb garden
All year Daily 10-5 (Except Sundays in Jan & Feb)

6. Chiddingstone Vineyards Ltd

Vexour Farm
Chiddingstone
Edenbridge
Kent TN8 7BB
Alastair McClain
01892 871400 / 01892 870878
sales@chiddingstone.demon.co.uk
Land in FWAG Whole Farm Plan
English wines ★

7. Carr Taylor Vineyards

Wheel Lane
Westfield
Hastings
East Sussex TN35 4SG
Linda Carr Taylor
01424 752501 / 01424 751716
sales@carr-taylor.co.uk
Wines, sparkling wines, hampers, fruit wine, trail, tea rooms
All year Mon-Sun 10-5 Closed 25th Dec-2nd Jan & Sundays Jan-Feb

8. Conghurst Vineyard

Conghurst Oast
Conghurst Lane
Hawkhurst
Kent TN18 4RW
Julie Bridgewater
01580 752634 / 01580 752634
Case sales of English wines ★

9. Davenport Vineyard

Limney Farm
Castle Hill
Rotherfield
East Sussex TN6 3RR
Will Davenport
01892 852380 / 01892 852781
will.davenport@virgin.net
Countryside Stewardship Scheme
English wine ★

10. Groombridge Place Wine

Groombridge Place
Groombridge
Tunbridge Wells
East Sussex TN3 9QG
Clifford James
01892 861444
office@groombridgeplace.com
English Wine
Easter-1 Nov Daily 9-6



11. Harbourne Vineyard

High Pasture
Wittersham
Tenterden
Kent TN30 7NP
Laurence Williams
01797 270420
info@harbournevineyard.co.uk
Mainly white wine, some red & rose
All year, Daily, 2-5. Phone to check open if travelling far ★

12. Hidden Spring Vineyard & Orchard

Vines Cross Road
Horum
Heathfield
East Sussex TN21 0HF
Sue Mosey
01435 812640
Organic
Organic wine and fruit
April - Dec Wed, Sat & Sun 11-5 ★

13. Norman Hunt and Sons

Waydown Wood Farm
New England Lane
Sedlescombe, Battle
East Sussex TN33 0RP
Christopher Hunt
01424 871102
Chemical free for 3 years
Apple juice - Sturmer, Pippin, Egremont Russet, Worcester Pearmain & Jupiter ★

14. Lamberhurst Vineyard

Ridge Farm
Lamberhurst Down
Lamberhurst
Kent TN3 8ER
D McMillen (winery)
01892 890890
Wine and liqueur
All year daily

15. Pippins Fruit Farm

Maidstone Road
Pembury
Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN2 4AB
D Knight
01892 824544 / 01892 823866
English wine, cider, apple juice, apples and PYO
June to Sept Daily 9-5 Sep-Jun Mon-Fri 1-4, Sat 7 Sun 10-4 Closed Mon Oct-Dec

Local Products

Made in the High Weald

24. Perryhill Orchard

Bolebrook Lodge
Edenbridge Road
Hartfield, East Sussex TN7 4JJ
J Smith
01892 770595 / 01892 770909
Fruit, apple juice, cider and PYO, preserves, biscuits and cakes
Summer Daily 11-5 Mon to Fri, Sat & Sun 10-5 Winter Tues-Sun 11-5

25. Ringden Farm Apple Juice Ltd

Ringden Farm
31 London Road
Flimwell
East Sussex TN19 7QY
Chris & Lesley Dench
01580 879385 / 01580 879270
Apples, pears and fruit juices
All year Mon-Sat 8-5.30 Sun 9-5

26. Bramley Organic Farm

Staplecross Road
Nr Bodiam
Robertsbridge
East Sussex TN32 5RJ
John Rigby
01580 830566
Certification not renewed
Organic vegetables, soft fruit, apples and apple juices
Phone to check availability

Fruit only

27. Crimond Farm

North Road
Goudhurst
Kent TN17 1JP
Doreen Warner
01580 211414
Soft fruit - strawberries, raspberries, cherries, plums, tomatoes Xmas trees
May to Oct 9-6
December for Xmas trees

28. Downingbury Farm

Old Maidstone Road
Pembury
Tunbridge Wells, Kent
Peter Jervis
01892 824282
Soft fruit - strawberries, plums, raspberries, blackcurrants & redcurrants
All year Mon-Sun 9-5



29. Hawkins & Turner Ltd

Forstal Farm
Goudhurst Road
Lamberhurst, Kent TN3 8AG
R F Barfoot
01892 890960 / 01892 723641
Only plant based sprays used
Hops, strawberries and tayberries
PYO In season Daily 9-6
Enquires welcome about hops

30. Laurel Tree Fruit Farm

Boars Head
Crowborough
East Sussex TN6 3HD
Kent TN3 8LY
J B Stogden
01892 661637 / 01892 663417
Apples and Pears
Sept-Jan Daily
Phone to check availability

31. Little Pixhall Farm

High Street
Hawkhurst
Kent TN18 4XT
William Steel
01580 754058 / 01580 752441
Wfsteel@Farmersweekly.net
Cobnuts, woodland reared pork ★

32. Maynards

Windmill Hill
Ticehurst, Wadhurst
East Sussex TN5 7HQ
Tom Maynard
01580 200394 / 01580 200394
Assured produce scheme
Soft fruit - strawberries, raspberries, cherries, currants, and plums and apples, cobnuts
PYO June-Oct Daily 9-8

33. Oakwood Farm

Poppinghole Lane
Robertsbridge
East Sussex TN32 5BL
M J Wilson
01580 830893 / 01580 830201
Organic
Apples, apple juice, potatoes, carrots, onions ★

34. Oast Farm

Lephams Bridge
Buxted, East Sussex TN22 4AU
Philip Greenland
01825 733446
oast_farm@hotmail.com
Hard and soft fruit and farm shop
PYO May - Oct 9-6
Farm shop - All year Daily

35. RH & TM Wickham

Maynards Farm
Matfield, Tonbridge
Kent TN12 7PL
Mr R Wickham
01892 723723
Dessert and cooking apples
Farm Assured by appointment (August - February)

36. Doves Farm

Cranbrook
Kent TN17 3PR
Mr John Barnes
01580 714015 / 01580 715676
PYO soft fruit - apples, pears, blackcurrants and redcurrants
June - Mar Daily 7 - 6pm

37. Foxhole Farm

Foxhole Lane
Matfield, Tonbridge
Kent TN12 7ES
R Tompssett
01892 722132
Chestnut coppice
Apples (16 varieties 1/3 cookers, 2/3 eaters) ★

38. H G Thompssett and Sons Ltd

Mathurst Farm
Goudhurst Road
Staplehurst, Kent TN12 0HQ
H G Thompssett
01580 891344
Hops on the Bine (for decoration), apples and pears ★



39. Scragoak Farm

Brightling Road
Robertsbridge, East Sussex TN32 5HB
David Wenman
01424 838420
Organic fruit and vegetables, Vegetable box scheme
All year Wed- Sat 9.30-5

40. Tanyard Fruit Farm

Tanyard Farm
Hooe Road
Ninfield, East Sussex TN33 9EL
G Adams
01424 892966 / 892258
Soft fruit and PYO
Jun 9-7 Aug-Sep 9-6

41. Gourds Galore

Wapsbourne Farm
Sheffield Park
Uckfield, East Sussex
TN22 3QT
Mrs Jean Cragg
01825 722878 / 01825 722451
Squashes, gourds - 60 varieties, unusual vegetables, strawberries. Organic conversion
By appointment (Open day in September)



42. Redcoat Farm

67 Main Road
Catsfield, Battle
East Sussex TN33 9DU
01424 727916
Apples, plums and pears
Sep-Dec ★

43. J Barnsley

Matfield
J Barnsley
01892 722749
Discovery apples on the tree. 65 trees for sale as one lot ★

44. Spelmonden Farm Shop

Spelmonden
Goudhurst, Kent TN17 1HE
Mrs B Henley
01580 211400
Apples, pears, plums, bines, cobnuts
Mid August - Mid October Mon- Fri 9-4

★ – Phone to check opening times

If you know of any other producers of fruit and fruit products who live in or close to the High Weald and who would like to be included in future issues of the Made in the High Weald directory, please contact the High Weald AONB Unit.

Where to buy local products

Many small local producers of food and other products are working together to make it easier for local people to purchase their goods. At the moment however you will need to seek out local products, particularly those which benefit the environment, from a variety of dispersed sources.

Village shops Local products often feature strongly and many shopkeepers will be receptive to enquiries about the origin of their products and their impact on the local countryside and economy.

WI markets The WI is best known for high quality preserves and home baking but at WI markets you can also find honey, cheese, eggs and crafts. Markets are held regularly in villages across the Weald. Contact the WI for local details. Kent WI 01622 754507, West Sussex WI 01243 783134, East Sussex WI 01273 472616.

Events and shows Many new events are being organised across the area to promote local producers. These can be good opportunities to talk to producers, try their products and see something of the industry. Contact the Environment Co-ordinator at your local council for details.

Farmers' markets In the last few years farmers' markets have sprung up all over Britain and are well worth a visit for a range of locally produced fresh food and vegetables. For details see below.

Internet shopping The value of the internet in locating specialist producers is likely to increase considerably in the future. Currently you can join an organic box scheme on the internet or order a range of local Kentish Fare products and have them delivered to your door.

Vegetable boxes Usually offered by organic producers, boxes come in a range of sizes at a cost of £6-£12 per box and may be delivered direct to your door or to a local contact point. A typical box will contain a range of root and leaf vegetables and will vary as the season progresses. The Soil Association has a directory of local food schemes such as organic boxes and farm shops.

Soil Association
0117 929 0661
www.soilassociation.org

Supermarkets Many supermarkets now offer a good range of organic and fairly traded food and are increasingly looking at stocking some regional products, but at present you are unlikely to find much from your local countryside on the supermarket shelves.

Points to remember when shopping locally

- Phone ahead to check opening times, particularly when visiting outlets marked with a ★ in this directory.
- Take cash if you can. Many small producers do not have credit card facilities.
- Try to take a reusable basket or shopping bag with you.

Farmers' markets 2000

Crowborough

Dates: 4th Saturday of every month
Contact: Gillian Nassau
01892 653873

Hastings

Dates: Weekly from Wednesday 26th April
Times: 8 am - 4.30 pm
Location: Robertson Street, Hastings
Contact: Nick Shields
Town Centre
Contact: Monica Adams-Acton
01424 781861
Watch out for a one off event –
Hastings Fish Fair on the Stade –
some time in November
Contact: Ted Newcomen
01424 781377

Heathfield

Dates: 3rd Saturday in the month from April to December
Times: 9 am - 1 pm
Location: Car Park, Station Road West, Heathfield
Contact: Katy Thomas
01323 440295

Horsham

Dates: Every Saturday from 18th March to 21st October. Plans to continue markets in November and December until Christmas to be confirmed.
Time: 9 am - 5 pm
Location: Carfax, centre of Horsham
Contact: Nick Shields
01405 215424

Haywards Heath

Dates: 28 July, 25 August, 22 September, 20 October
Contact: Peter Barnett or Steve Tilbury 01444 477324

Tunbridge Wells

Dates: 2nd Saturday in the month from April to December
Times: 9 am - 1 pm
Location: Civic Way, outside the Town Hall
Contact: Paul Stookes
01892 554177

Would Crowborough be what it is today if a medical man with an obsessive interest in the weather had not written a book about it? **Brigid Chapman** explains further.

The doctor who brought commuters to Crowborough

Would Crowborough be what it is today – a flourishing town surrounded by spectacular scenery with a population of 20,000, the majority of them commuters – if a medical man with an obsessive interest in the weather had not written a book about it? And, at about the same time, the railway line from London had not arrived at Jarvis Brook.

It was in 1885 that Dr Charles Leeson Prince published the first edition of what he modestly describes as his 'little monograph' on the climate of Crowborough Hill and distributed it free to doctor friends and colleagues throughout the country. Word soon got round among the rich City merchants, senior Civil Servants and officers of the armed forces that their health would benefit if they had a country home in Crowborough, and they began to build.

After 50 years in his father's practice at Uckfield, Charles Prince had moved to Crowborough in 1872, first to the Grange on the Beacon and then to Church Road where he had an observatory built. The house is still there but has been converted into flats. He was meticulous about his weather observations. This was no dilettante doctor occasionally tapping a



It was in 1885 that Dr Charles Leeson Prince first published his book on the climate of Crowborough Hill

The majority of his patients were poor

was exposed during the day and night. He had his instruments checked for accuracy at Kew observatory and included in his annual tables details of rainfall, wind direction and the heating power of the sun's rays – which, incidentally, was an impressive 106.6° Fahrenheit in August 1884.

The conclusions the doctor arrived at from his studies of Crowborough's climate is that the small daily range of temperature made it an ideal place for anyone suffering from respiratory problems to live. Sufferers from 'nervous depression, general languor, and the debility of the system' he felt would also benefit from 'the delightful and

extensive scenery, the open, airy a vivifying atmosphere, abounding in ozone, together with a numerous retinue of natural attractions in the vicinity'.

Charles Prince certainly had an eye to the main chance – witness the speed with which he sold the Grange for it to become a boys' prep school – but he was not solely interested in rich invalids. The majority of his patients were poor and he cared for them devotedly. He was quite prepared to crawl on hands and knees into a conical hut on the Common to attend a woman living there with her husband and family and was glad to find that: 'Notwithstanding this miserable arrangement, the woman appeared quite contented and soon recovered'.

On another occasion he was let down by his horse. He had to spend a wintry night by the bedside of a seriously ill woman whose condition, and his personal comfort, was not being best helped by the snow blowing in through a broken window. 'This, however, was not the only inconvenience experienced by the household, for in consequence of the inclement weather my horse was brought into the kitchen where, left to its own devices, it found the bread crock and devoured the contents.'

barometer and noting only extremes of heat, cold, drought and flood. Charles Prince used a Stevenson's stand, which offered no protection to his self-registering thermometers, in order that they would record the temperatures to which the surrounding vegetation



High Weald Photographic Competition



The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a nationally important landscape.

Take a photograph on why the area is special to you and win one of our three prizes.

- 1st Prize** A day out at a High Weald attraction
- 2nd Prize** Hamper of Made in the High Weald products
- 3rd Prize** A selection of local books of your choice

There will be a special prize for entrants under 16 years old.

The winning photographs will be published in the next issue of High Weald Anvil.

Please send your entry to:

High Weald AONB Unit, Corner Farm, Hastings Road, Flimwell, East Sussex TN5 7PR no later than 30th November 2000.

Please ensure your name, address, age (if under 16) and phone number are attached or marked on the back of the photograph.

Conditions of entry

- Entries should be colour prints or standard 35mm colour transparencies.
- Each entry may consist of up to 4 photographs.
- Closing date for entries is 30th November 2000.
- The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- Prize winners will be notified by 18th December 2000.
- The High Weald AONB Unit will undertake to take care of all entries but cannot be held responsible for loss or damage of any photographs sent.
- All photographs will be returned if accompanied by an SAE.

“there be furnaces on every side ... to which purpose divers brooks in many places are brought to run in one channel, and sundry meadows turned into pools and waters, that they might be of power sufficient to drive hammer mills, which beating upon the iron, resound all over the places adjoining”

Iron in the Weald



With permission of Hastings Museum

iron was cast directly into moulds to produce guns, fire backs and grave-stones. The iron industry had an overwhelming and lasting impact on the Weald. Maps are sprinkled with names referring to the iron industry – hammer, forge, furnace, pit, mine, col (charcoal) – as well as the bead-like strings of ponds. The industry brought prosperity to the region for some 300 years until the 18th century, when the coal-producing Midlands took over the role of industrial heartland.

The importance of the iron industry in shaping the early landscape of the High Weald is reflected in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty's logo.

The logo depicts an anvil, a tool used by blacksmiths to shape iron into a variety of tools and other products.



Iron was produced on a small scale in the Weald well before Roman times. The scale changed dramatically in the 15th and 16th centuries. French iron workers introduced the blast furnace and the hammer forge, both worked by water power. To get sufficient head of water, the ghylls (steep sided valleys with stream) were dammed, often into a chain of ponds, now known as hammer ponds. The

Camden, 1586

Once considered to be 'wasteland', the scenery and solitude of the Ashdown Forest is enjoyed and cherished by thousands of people and the heath is 'home' to a number of threatened species of wildlife. The Forest has a well-documented history – but does knowing what happened in the past have any particular relevance to how the Forest might be managed today? As management options are discussed, history can give us some clues, says **Chris Marrable**, of Ashdown Forest Conservators.

Ashdown Forest – enjoyed by people, home to wildlife



Ashdown Forest showing the common as an open habitat largely devoid of trees



Grazing sheep and cattle, now and in the past, help maintain the open habitat on which rare heathland wildlife, such as the nightjar (bottom left), depends



Commoners once collected bracken to use as bedding for their animals.



Now bracken mulch is collected by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, to use as compost for their garden at Wakehurst Place

for fuel (as there were no trees) but also for repairing lawns, graveyards and rifle range butts. A local nurseryman was prosecuted for taking peat to use as a growing medium and also for packaging. Grazing was jealously protected. It is clear from the Minutes that there was insufficient grazing for all Commoners' animals. There were regular round-ups organised by the Lord of the Manor's Reeve or the Ranger, and illegal animals were impounded. Recovery involved payment of a significant fine.

Fire is often quoted as an appropriate tool for heathland management. In 1895, the Conservators offered a reward for information leading to prosecution of a Forest arsonist that would be the equivalent of £25,000 today. Every part of the Forest vegetation had a value to the Commoners and setting fire to it was a local disaster. It was only later, as the impact of the Commoners declined, that fire became a useful tool for controlling encroaching scrub.

Another interesting aspect to the Minutes is that 'firewood' is never mentioned. There are plenty of references to faggots (bundles of small wood) and there are several references to wood being dragged over the Forest from private woodlands, but nothing about trees being felled for fuel nor about Commoners claiming estovers – the right to cut wood for the hearth. From this it is possible to deduce that there were no trees on the Common and this fits well with the old photographs that we have of the Forest devoid of grown trees.

It is true that we probably do not want to try to reproduce the Ashdown Forest landscape of a hundred years ago, but there can be little doubt that the regime that existed at that time produced superb heathland and favoured much of the flora and fauna that is of high conservation value today. The recipe for success is clear – over-grazing, turf stripping, bracken cutting and tree removal!

Further information

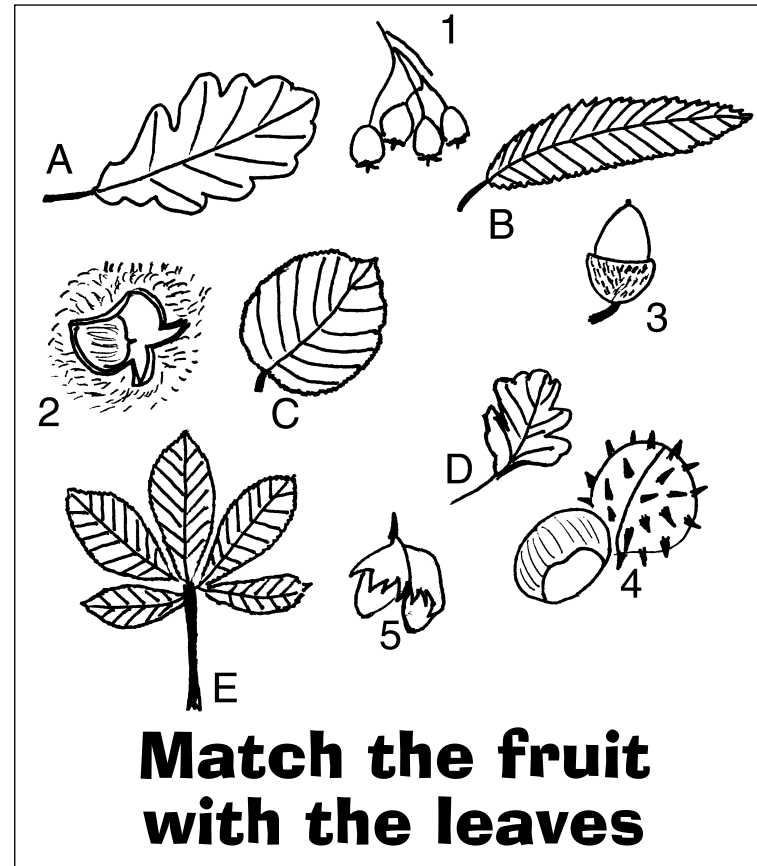
Ashdown Forest Centre
Wych Cross, East Sussex
01342 823583

Opening times

Apr-Sept Mon - Fri, 2-5pm
Sat & Sun, 11-5pm
Oct-Mar Sat & Sun only 11-5pm

Kids' Stuff

Created by Sue Nichols of the Kent High Weald Project



Match the fruit with the leaves

Answers
 Match the fruit with the leaves: **A and 3** (Oak and acorn); **B and 2** (Sweet Chestnut and Chestnut); **C and 5** (Hazel and hazelnut); **D and 1** (Hawthorn and haws); **E and 4** (Horse Chestnut and Chestnut).
Crossword
 Across: 1. Coppicing; 3. Heathland; 6. Weald; 7. Hop; 9. Orchard; 11. Shaw; and conker.
 Down: 1. Clay; 2. Ghill; 3. Hedgerow; 4. Apple; 5. Dormouse; 6. Wool; 8. Pond; 10. Ant; 12. Hammer; 14. Iron; 16. Cast.

Did you know...

The mole gets its name from the mouldwarp, an Old English name for earth-thrower.

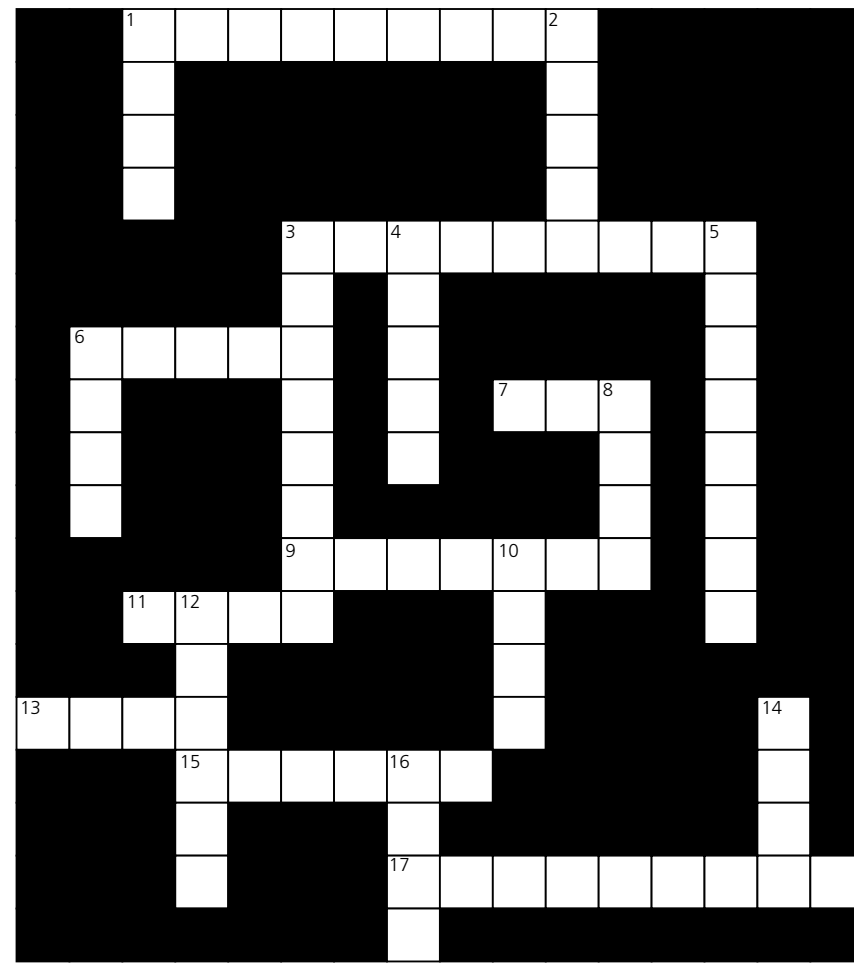
Primroses and other woodland plants mostly grow in the spring whilst plenty of light still reaches the woodland floor.

Oak apples are not fruits. They are caused by wasp grubs burrowing into the leaf buds.

Frogs can jump over 100 times their own length. If you could jump as well as a frog, you could leap across one-and-a-half football pitches.

Barn Owls are farmers' friends because they feed on rats, mice and insects which can do serious damage to crops.

You can roughly date a hedge by counting the kinds of trees and bushes in a 25m stretch and then multiply the number of species by 100. This gives the approximate age of the hedge in years.



Across
 1. A method of cutting down trees so they regrow
 3. A habitat where heather grows
 6. The High - - - - AONB
 7. An ingredient for beer, grown in the High Weald
 9. A field full of apples
 11. A narrow strip of woodland
 13. Where sheep and cattle live and crops are grown
 15. A field full of wildflowers
 17. A type of stone that can turn into sand

Down
 1. A type of soil, also used for pottery
 2. A steep-sided, wooded valley
 3. A field boundary that grows
 4. A fruit that grows on trees
 5. A small mammal that hibernates for four months of the year
 6. Sheep's clothing
 8. A wet place where ducks live
 10. Insects that live in old meadows
 12. A name for a pond used in the iron industry, or a tool used for hitting nails
 14. What you use to get creases out of clothes
 16. A round brick building for drying hops

Answers can be found in several Anvil articles

Have your say on the Anvil

Your views are important in deciding whether another copy of the High Weald Anvil is produced. If you are able to find time to fill in and return the attached questionnaire using the freepost address at the bottom of the form we would be grateful. All respondents will be sent an AONB coaster made from local wood.

- Where did you get your copy of this guide?
 - Library
 - Visitor Attraction
 - Village Shop
 - Doctor/Dentist Surgery
 - Bus/Rail Station
 - Council Offices
 - Tourist Information Centre
 - Direct Mail
 - Other (please state) _____
- What do you like about the guide?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- Is there anything you dislike about the guide?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- Which aspects of the guide do you find most interesting/useful, least interesting/useful? (1 = least interesting/useful and 5 = most interesting/useful)
 - Introduction
 - Wildlife
 - The Weald at Work
 - Exploring by Bike
 - Exploring on Foot
 - Guided Walks
 - AONB Map & Visitor Attractions
 - People and Places
 - Local Products
 - Kids' Stuff
 - Contact lists
- Is there any subject you would like covered in the next issue?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

6. Does the guide encourage you to do any of the following?

- Purchase local products
- Go for a walk or cycle ride
- Visit an attraction or event
- Approach any of the contacts listed
- Manage your garden/land for wildlife
- Other _____

7. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the guide?

Are you a member of any of the following organisations?

- RSPB
- National Trust
- Ramblers Association
- Kent or Sussex Wildlife Trust
- CPRE
- Weald of Kent Preservation Society
- Friends of the Earth and/or Greenpeace

Please name the village or town where you live.

What is your age category?

- 0-9
- 10-15
- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 & over



Thank you for your help

If you would like a free AONB coaster please fill in the following information:

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Tick the box if you do not wish to receive information about the High Weald AONB.

Please return this form to:
Transport and Environment (GS), FREEPOST LW43, Lewes, BN7 1BR

Many parishes within the High Weald face similar issues – increasing levels of speeding traffic, proposals for the erection of telecommunication masts and the threat of inappropriate housing development. Marilyn Payne describes the work of GAPP (Group Action for Pease Pottage) to tackle these issues.

Group Action For Pease Pottage

GAPP was formed in 1994 with the help of Sussex LEAF and Sussex Rural Community Council (SRCC). The residents felt that the village had had its heart destroyed through the loss of all its facilities except a florist. It had been also blighted by industrial development and had been cut in two by the M23/A23. There was a strong feeling that if something was not done the village would become an industrial dormitory of Crawley.

As a starting point we felt that we needed to start off in the centre of the village and tidy it up and make it look more attractive. This was achieved by planting thousands of spring bulbs and ornamental trees.

The next stage was to improve access to the motorway service station which has become our 'village shop'. To reach it by foot meant walking on the road and entering it alongside all the cars and lorries. Fencing and tree planting, which was originally meant to screen the major road from the village had been dropped. After much negotiating with the Department of

Transport, West Sussex Highways, District and Parish Councils, screening was reinstated, a foot-path was built to the service station and Granada Services installed a pedestrian pathway.

We received a great deal of staff support from SRCC as well as grants from them and British Airport Authority. Work continues – we have planted a new round-about entering the village and erected benches, which are often



used by people stopping at the service station or using the new cycle route, where they can sit and enjoy the view over open countryside. To date, the list of things achieved numbers around 150.

Having reached the stage where the village looked better, we felt we wanted our own identity and we held a competition to design a village sign. This was erected and opened by Peter Bryant, Chairman of the SRCC. In 1995 and 1997 we

were very pleased to win the award for the 'Best Community Initiative' in the SRCC Awards Scheme, sponsored by Calor Gas, and in 1996 the Country Landowners Association award for 'Outstanding Contribution to Rural Life in Sussex', presented by Lord Harrington, President, South of England Agricultural Society.

Our future projects include traffic calming measures and, most importantly, a village hall where the villagers can become a real community again.

Now, with the pressure for extra housing within the area, we felt that we needed a Development and Design statement. The feelings of the residents were taken at the AGM in November 1999 and a brief draft outline was produced. A public meeting was called and all the relevant matters which needed addressing were discussed. Needless to say, the most controversial items were sites for future development and all views were taken into consideration.

The full Development and Design Statement will probably take 12 to 18 months to produce and we may need to get a grant to employ a consultant to do this as it involves a great deal of work.

We recognise that councils are under pressure to build new houses, and the village intends to be positive and constructive about this. However, unless we take the initiative award for 'Outstanding Contribution to Rural Life in Sussex' – we will end up again with something that does nothing to enhance the village. This is our opportunity to give Pease Pottage its own identity once more and make it a village to be proud of.

Further Information

Village Design Statements (VDS) let residents have a formal say on the development of their village. VDS are produced by local people and adopted by planning authorities as supplementary planning guidance. For further information contact your local planning office or Rural Community Council. Sussex Rural Community Council 01273 473422, Kent Rural Community Council 01303 850244 and Surrey County Council 01483 566072.

High Weald contacts

General information on the High Weald AONB

High Weald AONB Unit
 Information packs on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
Contact: Kerry Baldwin 01580 879500
 email: info@highweald.org
 www.highweald.org

General information on wildlife

Sussex Conservation Careline
 01273 494777

Advice and help with Wildlife, Landscape and Access Projects

Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
 A national charity which provides practical and confidential advice to farmers and landowners on activities which can be undertaken to enhance land holdings over 10 acres for wildlife. The organisation also provides assistance with drawing up management plans and grant applications.
 www.fwag.org.uk

West Sussex & East Sussex Downs
 Colin Hedley/Paul Ling 01273 891190
 email: colin.hedley@fwag.org.uk
 paul.ling@fwag.org.uk

Kent & East Sussex Weald
 Ralph Hobbs 01580 879399
 email: ralph.hobbs@fwag.org.uk
Kent
 Paul Cobb 01233 813186
 email: paul.cobb@fwag.org.uk
Surrey
 Jane Lewis 01483 404255
 email: jane.lewis@fwag.org.uk

The following are the first point of contact for individuals and community groups who are seeking assistance with landscape, wildlife and access projects.

Kent High Weald Project
 A countryside management project operating within the Borough of Tunbridge Wells, most of which lies within the High Weald AONB.
Contact: Laurence Tricker 01580 715918
 email: kenthighwealdproject@kent.gov.uk
 www.kenthighwealdproject.org.uk

West Sussex County Council
 A countryside management service dedicated to the conservation of the High Weald AONB and surrounding area within West Sussex.
Contact: Jackie Lewis 01243 756888
 email: jackie.lewis@westsussex.gov.uk
 www.westsussex.gov.uk

East Sussex County Council
 A countryside management service responsible for the management of Weirwood Reservoir, Chailey Common and the Forest Way.
Contact: Sandra Williamson 01273 482670
 email: sandra.williamson@eastsussexcc.gov.uk
 www.eastsussexcc.gov.uk

Rye Bay Office
 A satellite of ESCC the office is dedicated to the conservation of the Rye Bay and Rother area of the High Weald AONB.
Contact: Julia Scanes 01797 226488
 email: julia.scanes@demcon.co.uk
 www.ryebay.demon.co.uk

Surrey County Council
Contact: David Sayce 01483 517592
 email: david.sayce@surreycc.gov.uk
 www.surreycc.gov.uk

Weald Meadows Initiative
 The Initiative provides advice on the management and creation of traditional meadows.
Contact: Dawn Brickwood 01580 879500
 email: meadows@highweald.org
 www.highweald.org

South of England Hedge-Laying Society
 The society is the regional expert on hedge-laying. The society can provide details of professional hedge-layers willing to assist with land management.
Contact: John Blake, Coppicing Officer 01444 483999

Volunteering

British Trust For Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)
 BTCV is a national charity which involves volunteers in practical conservation work. It is the first point of contact if you wish to find out about local conservation groups in your area. The charity provides training, insurance and other support for members of the public wishing to set up local conservation groups. They can also organise for small teams of volunteers to provide assistance to landowners with conservation work at a modest cost.
 www.btcv.org

West Sussex
 Dee Christensen 01243 756861
 email: west-sussex@btcv.org.uk
Kent
 Peter Waite 01233 812033
 email: kent@btcv.org.uk
East Sussex
 Mike Cook 01424 446395
 email: m.cook@btcv.org.uk
Surrey
 Alan Osborn 0181 541 7157
 email: surrey@btcv.org.uk

Pressure Groups

The following county-based groups are involved with lobbying for the conservation of the High Weald AONB.

Sussex Wildlife Trust
 01273 492630
 email: sussexwt@cix.compulink.co.uk
 www.wildlifetrust.org.uk

Kent Wildlife Trust
 01622 662012
 email: kentwildlifetrust@cix.compulink.co.uk
 www.wildlifetrust.org.uk

CPRE (Sussex branch)
 01825 890975
 www.cpre.org.uk

CPRE (Kent branch)
 01233 813172 HYPERLINK
 CPREKent@aol.com
 www.cpre.org.uk

Weald of Kent Preservation Society
 Freepost, Hawkenbury, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 0BR

Specialist Groups

The following local and national groups offer specialist advice.

Wildlife
Butterfly Conservation Society – Sussex Branch
 01273 492279

Butterfly Conservation Society – Kent Branch
 57 Westfield Rd, Barnhurst, Kent, DA7 6LR

Sussex Reptile & Amphibian Group
 01273 833097

Sussex Botanical Recording Society
 01273 880258
Young Herpetologist Club
 01202 692378

East Sussex Herpetological Society
 01424 730433

Ashdown Forest Conservators
 01342 823583

Sussex Ornithological Society
 01273 494723

Kent Ornithological Society
 Membership secretary, Flat D, 125 Milton Rd, Gravesend, Kent DA12 2PG
 www.kentaccess.org

RSPCA Headquarters
 0990 555999

Sussex Moth Group
 01273 551216

The Sussex Mammal Group
 01273 551216

The Kent Mammal Group
 01795 890285

Sussex Badger Society
 01243 265905

Sussex Bat Group
 01273 464440

Kent Bat Group
 01474 833164

West Sussex Deer Management Society
 01730 825241

East Grinstead Natural History Society
 01342 321294

Horsham Natural History Society
 01403 864414
RSPB South East England Office
 01273 775333

Young Ornithologists Club
 01767 680551

British Dragonfly Society
 01243 552030

Leisure
Ramblers Association
 For details of local groups
 0171 339 8500
 ramblers@london.ramblers.org.uk
 www.ramblers.org.uk

Sussex Gardens Trust/Kent Gardens Trust
 Information on gardens open on an occasional basis for charity
 01483 211795
 www.ngs.org.uk

Archaeological
Wealden Iron Research Group
 01293 886278

Sussex Archaeological Society
 01273 486260
 www.sussexpast.co.uk

Field Archaeology Unit
 01273 845497

Buildings
English Heritage
 020 7973 3000

Weald & Downland Open Air Museum
 01243 811348 (see also page 19)

Royal Institute of British Architects
 South East Region
 01892 515878

The Society for the Protections of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
 020 7377 1644

The Georgian Group
 020 7387 1720

The Victorian Society
 020 8994 1019

The Churches Conservation Trust
 01730 7373 3615
 The above is not a comprehensive list. We will gladly receive suggestions for other groups which may be included in the next issue of the High Weald Anvil.

Village signs in the High Weald area



Ansty



Leigh



Warninglid



Whatlington



Ardingly



Westfield



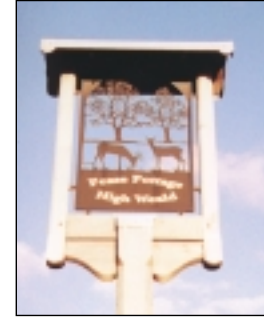
Bodiam



Fairwarp



Goudhurst



Pease Pottage



Markbeech



Hawkhurst



Heathfield



Balcombe



High Hurstwood



Ashurst Wood



Handcross



Robertsbridge



Mayfield



Turners Hill



Crowborough



Rotherfield



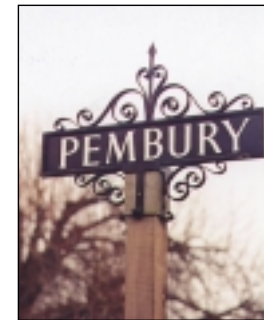
Staplefield



Cowfold



Horsted Keynes



Pembury



Biddenden



Sedlescombe



Speldhurst



East Grinstead



Matfield



Hever



Brencley



Bidborough



Crowhurst



Mile Oak



Battle



Cranbrook



Hartfield

Village signs have largely been erected over the last 50 years to celebrate jubilees and other events, with many new signs having been unveiled to mark the millennium. The signs often feature images associated with the character and history of the village and local area. On village signs in the High Weald many of the features which make the area special – oast houses, apples, trees, deer, pigs, cannons and anvils – appear regularly.

The High Weald AONB Unit would like to thank all parish councils who responded to a written request to send in photographs of their village signs for the illustration of the guide.