

High Weald ²⁰⁰² Anvil

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



Local Products • Exploring • Heritage • Events • Wildlife • Attractions • Map

Have your say on the care of your countryside inside this issue



Horsham • East Grinstead • Haywards Heath • Crowborough • Heathfield • Battle • Wadhurst • Royal Tunbridge Wells • Cranbrook • Tenterden • Rye

President urges all to have their say



This is the strong belief of AONB President Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith.

"Over the next year or two," says Sir Geoffrey, "you will be asked what future you want for the woods, meadows, ancient lanes and historic buildings that make our landscape so special. And, the organisations responsible for conserving and enhancing it, will eventually seek your views on how best you think it can be governed."

He says these choices are possible in AONBs because of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which improved the 1949 'National Parks' law; and because of major Government policy changes that recognize the particularly important balance between environmental, social and economic issues in rural areas.

"In the last year we have seen many significant local, regional, national and global events that have contributed to a huge shift in thinking and attitudes towards rural issues," Sir Geoffrey adds.

In the High Weald, a specialist AONB Unit is advising on how to turn this new thinking into future policies, and the policies into action, says Sir Geoffrey. "The Unit will be consulting and listening to your views and forwarding them to policy-makers and decision-takers," he continues.

In the meantime, Sir Geoffrey urges everyone this summer to take one or more of three personal actions that will help to conserve the AONB and its rural way of life:

1. shop for local countryside products at a farmers' market (see feature on this page)
2. walk, cycle or use public transport to visit a country attraction (pages 12 and 13)
3. complete the 'Anvil' questionnaire (pages II and III)

Sir Geoffrey concludes: "Now is the time to ask not only what your countryside can do for you, but what you can do for your countryside."

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, wildlife and farming interests. The current chair of the JAC is Councillor Liz Kitchen of Horsham District Council.

The JAC directs the work of the **High Weald AONB Unit**. The Unit is the specialist team that provides advice, expertise and guidance on the care of the area and encourages and enables others to work together to manage the area sustainably.

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Every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this publication is accurate. However, the publishers can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions.

Everyone who lives, works in or visits the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) now has the biggest chance for 50 years to shape how this unique countryside is managed and governed for the next generation.

Farmers' markets

– your first choice for the countryside

Consumer choice counts. If you care about the outstanding High Weald countryside around you, then buying products that are grown or made locally is sure to help. Local farmers' markets are one outlet for such products. Ian Spindley reports...



Many of today's High Weald residents still enjoy a rural way of life in the area's outstanding countryside.

Now however, the character of this historic countryside is changing. Many smaller, land-based businesses such as family farms are going out of business, unable to afford to manage valued landscape features, like woodland and pasture, sustainably into the future.

Farmers' markets are a lifeline to some small businesses. They allow producers, who have genuinely have grown, bred, reared, caught, pickled, brewed, baked, made, processed or manufac-

tured the products in the local area, to cut out the middleman and sell direct to consumers. 'Local' is most often defined as a 20-30 mile radius from the market.

Shopping for countryside products from nearby farmers' markets, or any other local outlet, directly supports rural jobs, communities and the area's economy. Indirectly, buying these products may also provide environmentally responsible farmers, foresters and growers with an income that helps to conserve the landscape, wildlife and historic buildings.

Everyone can benefit from the many

environmental, social and economic aspects of farmers' markets:

- consumers can ask how the produce or goods are made
- produce is fresh, healthy and reasonably priced
- many producers allow tasting before consumers buy
- local shopping reduces both air pollution from cars and the traffic congestion caused by transporting food around Britain and the world
- produce has less waste and packaging
- shopping is fun and educational for all, especially families.

Rolvenden – rare breed among markets



Special tables fit the pew ends

There are 14 farmers' markets within, or very near, the High Weald AONB. Probably the most unusual, if not unique, market in Britain is at Rolvenden on the Kent and East Sussex border. It celebrated its 100th market in February 2002 and, most remarkably, is still partly held inside the village church of St. Mary the Virgin!

Local countrywoman Sue Siggers, of Rolvenden Layne, had the idea of starting a market.

Sue says: "There was a strong feeling in 1999 that farmers in our community, and across the whole of Britain, were having a very difficult time. Local people wanted to show their support."

Sue discussed her idea with friends,

including the community-minded Parish Church Council chairman. They then sought the views of local farmers and Rolvenden villagers.

"There was a lot of interest. Most felt that a village market should be the same day each week rather than say, the third Saturday of each month. The market would then become a 'fixed' event for both producers and consumers. Two hours every Thursday morning was thought to be best, allowing busy stallholders to continue production at home in the afternoon, and customers to shop for the weekend," says Sue.

Searching for a venue, she realized that the old village hall was about to be re-built. Fortunately, the new parish priest, Anthea Williams, was a real-life version of the TV character the 'Vicar of Dibley' – she was prepared to break with tradition and try new ideas. Anthea immediately suggested that, while the new hall was being built, they hold the market inside Rolvenden's 13th century, St. Mary the Virgin church. This would complement an existing 'coffee and chat' morning.



Organisers in balancing act

Some markets, especially those in a town centre or urban areas, are extremely selective as to exactly what type of country products can be sold.

Rolvenden organisers think that village markets should offer as wide a selection of products as possible, alongside the farmers' primary produce. Stalls at Rolvenden include everything from fresh meat, fruit and vegetables, through to dairy, drinks and plants, and even wool, soap and craftwork.

Shelley Mitchell, of Rolvenden, says: "We believe that shoppers want to enjoy a morning out, shopping for home-made foods and local crafts that provide work for local people. Stallholders deal with consumers in a

basic market economy and make strong social connections at the same time. Over time, a whole new social and economic network is built upon custom and practice which benefits everyone."

Sue Siggers adds: "I'm really thrilled that the market has provided tremendous opportunities for people within our local community: for a charity; for at least six businesses to start up; and for 'newcomer' neighbours such as the Mitchells to contribute their skills, experience and friendship."

Lou Blackmore, who organises Tunbridge Wells farmers' market, says: "Before this job, I worked on my family's farm, so supporting the rural economy is close to my heart. I believe

So, Rolvenden's 'church' market began in February 2000 with just a few stallholders using makeshift tables. Voluntary organisers were pleasantly surprised how quickly and enthusiastically local people supported it. Later in 2000 Shelley Mitchell became the market co-ordinator. Shelley, a secretary and housewife, and her husband Brian, a commuting IT systems manager, had raised their family and retired to a smallholding next door to Sue.

Shelley says: "We have lived in the High Weald for 20 years, but only moved to Rolvenden seven years ago. We have enough energy and money left in our retirement to want to make a personal contribution to our new community. Sue soon convinced us that co-ordinating the farmers' market would be a valued contribution."

Producers and shoppers were driving in regularly from Wittersham, five miles away. Organisers used a grant from Community Action South Kent to help to start a free bus service on market mornings between Wittersham, Rolvenden Layne and the village. Thanks to a lot of promotion work, a 16-seater bus continues to be well used and appreciated.

Early in 2001, the new village hall was ready. Did the market organisers keep it in the nearby church or transfer to the hall? Producers of perishable goods, such as meat and dairy, wanted the church's cooler temperatures in the summer; but the many shoppers who enjoyed a social 'cuppa' and chat preferred the village hall's more comfortable seating.

The Foot and Mouth outbreak diverted attention until spring 2001, by which time the organisers realized that they could not fit everyone under one roof. However, because the church and hall are just a few yards apart, they could compromise and use both buildings.

Shelley says: "The market is non-profit making. We keep stall fees to a minimum – from as little as £2 per week – to cover hire of the church, insurance and advertising. In the village hall there's also a small paperback library stall. Extra space means we can invite small exhibitions, such as the Kent High Weald Project, and general information stalls for free to explain what is available for local people."

Charity begins at home and benefits community

Another compelling reason for Sue Siggers to start the Rolvenden farmers' market three years ago, was the need to raise money to sustain a local charity for young adults with special learning needs.

Sue, and other local families, had founded Rolvenden Farmers' Line (RFL) and needed an outlet to sell some of its products. RFL teaches young people with learning difficulties, including Sue's son Miles, all sorts of country crafts, and encourages them to integrate with the local community.

Students are taught for free and learn the whole process connected with local products: from growing and making to marketing and selling. As a community project, RFL often benefits from the practical help of countryside management staff at the Kent High Weald Project at Cranbrook.

Sue says: "Students from RFL continue to be an indispensable part of the market: they set up and dismantle stalls, and help stallholders move produce in and out. There is no better way for special needs students to improve their capabilities and confidence, than to be doing useful work in their own community."



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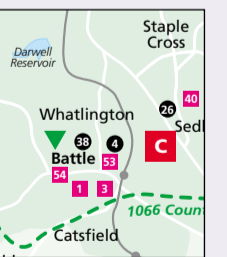
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Farmers' markets

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Dates: second Saturday plus 27 July, 24 Aug, 28 Sept and 21 Dec
Time: 9am–2pm

Location: Civic Way, outside the Town Hall

Contact: Lou Blackmore 01892 554177

TONBRIDGE

Date: second Sunday of each month
Time: 9am-1pm

Location: Tonbridge Castle

Contact: Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council 01732 876077

CRANBROOK

Date: fourth Saturday of each month
Time: 9am-12noon

Location: Vestry Hall

Contact: Cranbrook Parish Council Clerk, Mrs Coral Kirkaldie, 01580 713112

ROLVENDEN

Date: every Thursday

Time: 10am-12noon

Location: Village Hall and in church opposite

Contact: Mrs Shelley Mitchell, 01580 240763

TENTERDEN

Date: second Saturday of each month
Time: 9.30am-1pm

Location: Summer – East Green

Gardens; Winter – St. Mildred's Church Hall

Contact: Bruce Whitehead, 01580 765111 or Phillip Ashton-Cobb, 01797 270327

CROWBOROUGH

Date: fourth Saturday of each month, except for 21 Dec

Time: 9am–1pm

Locations: Pine Grove car park

Contact: Roger Hoggins, 01892 664064

HEATHFIELD

Date: third Saturday in the month
Time: 9am–1 pm

Location: Car park, centre of the town

Contact: Robert Strange, 01435 866382

BATTLE

Date: third Saturday of each month

Time: 9am–1pm

Location: Battle Abbey Green

Contact: Jean Dann, Battle TIC 01424 773721

BREDE

Date: every Friday

Time: 10am–12noon

Location: Brede Village Hall

Contact: Mrs Liz Stephens, 01424 882836

RYE

Date: every Wednesday

Time: 10am–1pm

Location: Strand Quay

Contact: Christopher Strangeways, 01797 280282 or

www.ryemarket.org.uk

UCKFIELD

Date: first Saturday of each month

Time: 9am–1pm

Location: Luxford car park

Contact: Roger Hoggins, 01892 664064

HAYWARDS HEATH

Date: third Thursday

Time: 9am–2pm

Location: Hazel Grove car park, near Orchards shopping centre

Contact: Steve Tilbury, 01444 477324

HORSHAM

Date: every Saturday

Time: 9am–5pm

Location: Carfax, town centre

Contact: Nick Shields, 01403 733144

EAST GRINSTEAD

Date: first Thursday

Time: 9am–2pm

Location: Chequermead car park

Contact: Steve Tilbury, 01444 477324

Local producers

Producers from in and around the High Weald AONB who attend farmers' markets.

1. Sue & Gill Duff
Chalcote Angora Goats
Tophill Farm
Wittersham Kent TN30 7EU
Tel No: 01797 270295
Products: Wool, woollen jumpers

2. Mr Steven Kember
Downgate Farm
Silverden Lane
Sandhurst Kent TN18 5NU
Tel No: 01580 850452
Products: Soft fruit

3. Mrs Hazel Honnywill
Bishopsden Farm
Biddenden
Ashford Kent TN27 8DS
Tel No: 01580 291245
Products: Organic chickens, eggs & lamb

4. Mr Holland
White House Poultry Farm
Netherfield
Battle East Sussex TN33 9QH
Tel No: 01424 838495
Products: Eggs

5. Mr Holmes
Teagues Farm Bungalow
Lewes Road
Scaynes Hill West Sussex RH17 7NG
Tel No: 01444 831387
Products: Free Range Eggs

6. Mr Lawrence Keeley
Farmers Pride
6 Fairfield
Herstmonceux East Sussex BN27 4NE
Tel No: 01323 832660
Products: Pork & Pork products

7. Mr Taylor
Starline Farm
Starborough Marsh Green
Edenbridge Kent TN8 5RB
Tel No: 01732 864970
Products: Trout Products

8. Mr Neill
Jakes
1 Box Cottages The Platt
Dormansland Surrey RH7 6QU
Tel No: 01342 837300
Products: Chutneys, Preserves

9. Mr R P Cook
Family Cook
Hurst Farm Turners Hill Road
Crawley Down West Sussex RH10 4HG
Tel No: 01342 712045
Products: Free Range & Barn Eggs

10. Mr Crawley-Moore
Bridge Farm
Cranbrook Kent TN17 4JT
Tel No: 01580 240203
Email: sally@harringtonfoods.co.uk
Website: www.harringtonfoods.co.uk
Products: Salad dressing/sauce for hot and cold food

11. Mr Hudson
Dane Court Nurseries
81 Copthorne Road
Felbridge Surrey RH19 2PB
Tel No: 01342 326542
Products: Plants

12. Ms Samantha Linter
Bookers Vineyard
Foxhole Lane Bolney
Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 5NB
Tel No: 01444 881575
Website: www.bookersvineyard.co.uk
Products: English wine, red & white wine, traditional method sparkling wine

13. Mrs Doreen Warner
Crimond Farm
North Road
Goudhurst Kent TN17 1JP
Tel No: 01580 211414
Products: Soft fruit - strawberries, raspberries, cherries, plums, tomatoes

Rules and 'regs' give reassurance

Most markets are members of the National Association of Farmers' Markets (NAFM) and are guided by its principles and standards.

NAFM is non-profit making limited company, founded by the National Farmers' Union, the Farm Retail Association, the Soil Association, and Envolv (formerly the Bath Environment Centre). It is supported by the Countryside Agency and Barclays Bank.

All stallholders must adhere to a list of criteria. Stallholders are asked to respect the environment and high animal welfare standards in their methods of production. Stalls are open to inspection by county trading standards or district/borough environmental health officers.

14. Mrs Helen Harrison
Cyrnel Bakery Ltd
Lower Road
Forest Row East Sussex RH18 5HE
Tel No: 01342 822283
Products: Bread, flour & confectionery

15. Mrs Sally Harrington
Harrington Foods
Ramsden Farm Dinglelen Lane
Benenden
Cranbrook Kent TN17 4JT
Tel No: 01580 240203
Email: sally@harringtonfoods.co.uk
Website: www.harringtonfoods.co.uk
Products: Salad dressing/sauce for hot and cold food

16. Mr John Starling
Honeybrook Organic Produce
Franchise Manor Farm Burwash
Etchingham East Sussex TN19 7HY
Tel No: 01435 883151
Products: Jersey milk, cream, eggs, beef, lamb, pork, fruit and vegetables

17. Ms T Jeuken
Laines Organic Farm
47 Newberry Lane Cuckfield
Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 5AA
Tel No: 01444 452480
Products: Seasonal outdoor vegetables

18. Mr D McMillen
Lamberhurst Vineyard
Ridge Farm Lamberhurst Down
Lamberhurst
Tunbridge Wells Kent TN3 8ER
Tel No: 01892 890890
Products: Wine and liqueur

19. Mr Tom Maynard
Maynards
Windmill Hill Ticehurst
Wadhurst East Sussex TN5 7HQ
Tel No: 01580 200394
Email: maynofruit@aol.com
Products: Soft fruit-strawberries, raspberries, cherries, currants, plums and apples, cobnuts.

20. Mrs Stephanie Buckingham
Mount Farm
Faircrouch Lane
Wadhurst East Sussex TN5 6PT
Tel No: 01892 783152
Products: cakes

21. Mr Tom Ventham
Old Plaw Hatch Farm
Sharphorne
East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 4JL
Tel No: 01342 810652
Products: Organic milk, cream, cheese and yoghurt, vegetables, meat, eggs, salads, quark, groceries.

22. Mr Colin Corfield
Owlet Apple Juice
Owl House Fruit Farm Mount
Pleasant Lamberhurst
Tunbridge Wells Kent TN3 8LY
Tel No: 01892 890553
Email: ccorfield@aol.com
Products: Apple juice, pears and cherries

23. Mr J Smith
Kent & Sussex Apple Juice & Cider Centre
Perryhill Orchard Bolebroke Lodge
Edenbridge Road
Hartfield East Sussex TN7 4JJ
Tel No: 01892 770595
Products: Fruit, Apple Juice, Cider

24. Mr David Knight
Pippins Fruit Farm
Maidstone Road Pembury
Tunbridge Wells Kent TN2 4AB
Tel No: 01892 824544
Products: English wine, cider, apple juice, apples

25. Ms Anne Nicholas
Sandhurst Vineyards
Hoads Farm Crouch Lane Sandhurst
Cranbrook Kent TN18 5PA
Tel No: 01580 850296
Products: English Wine

26. Mr Roy Cook
Sedlescombe Vineyard
Hawkhurst Road Cripps Corner
Sedlescombe
Robertsbridge East Sussex TN32 5SA
Tel No: 01580 830715
Email: rcook91137@aol.com
Website: www.tor.co.uk/sedlescombe/
Products: English Wine, Cider, Fruit Juice

27. Mr Mark or Guy Hardy & Sarah Hardy
Sussex High Weald Dairy
Putlands Farm Fairwarp Duddleswell
Uckfield East Sussex TN22 3BJ
Tel No: 01825 712647
Email: mhardy@agnet.co.uk
Website: www.speciality-foods.co.uk
Products: Cheeses made from sheep and organic cows' milk

28. Mr Standen
Sussex Smokers
Gibbs Reed Farm Ticehurst
Wadhurst East Sussex TN5 7HE
Tel No: 01580 200516
Products: Smoked meat and fish

Points to remember when purchasing from local producers:

- Telephone ahead to check opening times.
- Take cash if you can. Many small producers do not have credit card facilities.
- Try to take a re-usable basket or shopping bag with you.

29. Mr Rob Bookham
Twineham Grange Farms Ltd
Bob Lane Twineham
Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 5NH
Tel No: 01444 881394
Email: enquiries@twinehamgrange-farms.co.uk
Website: www.twinehamgrange-farms.co.uk
Products: Italian-style cheese, eg ricotta, mozzarella, parmesan

30. Mr William Cyster
Walkhurst Farm New Pond Road
Benenden
Cranbrook Kent TN17 4EN
Tel No: 01580 240677
Products: apples, cherries

31. Mr Peter Castle
Broad Farm Broad Oak
Heathfield East Sussex TN21 8UX
Tel No: 01435 883435
Products: Woodturning

32. Mr Graham Love
Greenway Fruit Farm
Stunts Green Herstmonceux
Hailsham East Sussex BN27 4PP
Tel No: 01323 833118
Products: Apples, Pears

33. Mr Roger Hoggins
Perrymans Farm Shop
Redbridge Lane Stonecross
Crowborough East Sussex TN6 3SR
Tel No: 01892 664064
Products: Sussex beef, lamb and pork, burgers and sausages

34. Mr Bruce Dempster
Coppicecraft Products
Rookwood Western Road
Crowborough East Sussex TN6 3EH
Tel No: 01892 655447
Products: wood/iron crafts, nestboxes, birdfeeders

35. Mr Yeoman
Deerview Farm
Down Street Piltdown
Uckfield East Sussex TN22 3XX
Tel No: 01825 713139
Products: Preserves, Herbs, chutney, honey, eggs

Here's what the consumers say . . .

Jean Tourle, of Heathfield, regularly attends her town market, the one at Rolvenden, and even those she seeks out when away on country holidays. She says: *"I am Sussex born and bred, grew up and live in the High Weald, and care desperately, as a walker, about the local countryside. There's a grave danger to everybody's well-being if more of us don't buy local food: farming businesses disappear, communities die, and the countryside continues to decline. Too many people say 'I would like to help but . . .'"*

Mrs Sandy Nokes, of Etchingham, loves Tunbridge Wells market and organic products: *"The atmosphere, fantastic products, and sense of camaraderie are unbeatable. Like lots of people, we prefer organic for health reasons. For convenience we do our 'big shop' at a supermarket, and support a local shop every week for many staple goods. But we get really excited by discussing and sampling the high-quality, organic wines, juices, cheeses and plants at the market."*

Diana Hewson, a long-standing Rolvenden resident and genuine Old Maid of Kent, says: *"Producers and shoppers enjoy the novelty and pleasant atmosphere of a market in such a beautiful church. The combined market and coffee morning give local people the chance to buy a wide range of local products and to meet neighbours for a chat."*

36. Mr Ernest Fenton
Dundale Farm
Dundale Road Bells Yew Green
Tunbridge Wells Kent TN3 9AQ
Tel No: 01892 822175
Email: ernestfenton@hotmail.com
Products: Poultry, game, venison

37. Mrs Jean Cragg
Gourds Galore
Waspbourne Farm Sheffield Park
Uckfield East Sussex TN22 3QT
Tel No: 01825 722878
Products: Squashes, gourds - 60 varieties

38. Ms Mary Hayman
Hanco Farm
Whatlington
Battle East Sussex TN33 0NX
Tel No: 01424 870820
Products: Lamb, Mutton roasting joints

39. Jackie & Wallace Fyers
Little Acorns Nursery
Holbans Lane Broad Oak
Heathfield East Sussex TN21 8XD
Tel No: 01435 883217
Email: Jackie@DCHQ.freeseerve.co.uk
Products: Hardy Herbaceous perennial plants

40. Adrienne Fitzwilliam
Fitzwilliam
3 Birling Road
Tunbridge Wells Kent TN2 5LX
Tel No: 01892 517286
Products: Soaps

41. Mr David Honeysett
Cade Street Nursery Cade Street
Heathfield East Sussex TN21 9BU
Tel No: 01435 864957
Products: Pot, bedding, hardy - plants

42. Ms Jane Anniss
Bramley Cottage Back Lane Waldron
Heathfield East Sussex TN21 0NH
Tel No: 01435 866785
Products: Alpine plants

43. Mr Tim Mann
Mannswood Coppice
The Platt 45 The Platt
Edenbridge Kent TN8 5BL
Tel No: 01732 867110
Products: Charcoal, rustic garden accessories

Schemes to promote local products

A variety of organisations and initiatives at the national, regional and local levels are promoting locally produced, environmentally responsible products. Many schemes are connected with the High Weald AONB.

Government advisor the Countryside Agency has a national 'Eat the View' campaign. This helps consumers and suppliers to understand the connections between the local countryside and rural economy that they value and the goods that they buy or produce. This improves the market for regional

produce. Visit their website at www.countryside.gov.uk

Connected to 'Eat the View' is the AONB Unit's 'Made in the High Weald' local countryside products guide. Free, colourful and easy-to-read, it includes a directory section of 175 outlets of producers, suppliers and retailers of everything from organic meat to garden furniture. Contact the AONB Unit office manager on 01580 879500.

Kent County Council's Rural Revival Initiative supports Kentish Fare, a membership organisation that promotes farmers' markets and manages the 'Produced in Kent (PiK)' brand. 'PiK' is 'The Garden

of England' trademark that certifies products to assure consumers of their Kent authenticity. 'PiK' raises the profile of the variety and quality of locally produced food and drink, but its long-term ambition is to embrace other local industries, in particular land-based arts, crafts and manufactured products. Contact Rob Weaver 01622 221928.

Across Sussex and Surrey, A Taste of the South East (ATOSE) the non-profit making, membership organisation that promotes the business of 160 leading, small to medium-sized food and drink producers and outlets. The products of

ATOSE members represent the quality, taste and traditions associated with this rural region.

Contact Sue Scott on 01798 874250.

East Sussex County Council supports local producers by organising two major annual events at its Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum, near Halland, Lewes. 'FoodFair' promotes the best of food and drink in June, and 'WoodFair' the timber industry and woodland products in September. Contact Jane Stevens on 01825 840870.



What the market stallholders think...

Rolvenden stallholder Hazel Honnywill, and her husband, of Benenden, sell organic chicken, eggs and lamb, and apples. They used to grow and sell non-organic apples commercially to supermarkets. But they scaled down and registered with the Soil Association, the UK's leading organic certification scheme.

Hazel says: *"When we first registered 18 months ago, we had no products to sell. I shared a stall and sold about £2 worth of pussy willow as decorations! This market is incredibly supportive if you've got the initiative, a good product coming on-stream, and the skills to sell it. Each week the consumers become ever more willing to buy."*

Meat producer Roger Hoggins, of Perrymans Farm, near Crowborough, also organises the Crowborough and Uckfield markets.

Roger says: *"They have been a lifeline for many small producers. Just over two years ago our farm business was losing £30,000 a year and we were considering our future. Now we make a living, and have built up a strong customer network, based on good, old-fashioned, face-to-face service."*

Mark Hardy, of milk and cheese producers Sussex High Weald Dairy, at Duddleswell, Ashdown Forest, says: *"We attend 20 markets a month in the South East, eight of which are local. Markets account for about 20% of our sales – but most importantly, we can meet customers once a month, let them test our products, and guide them to the shops in their town that are actually our main suppliers."*

Maureen Yeoman, who produces preserves and chutneys and runs a B&C at Deerview Farm, Piltdown, near Uckfield, says: *"As well as the direct-selling opportunity, markets are a fantastic place to chat with customers in a social setting. Some love to exchange recipes and stories, which helps to keep old rural traditions and customs alive."*

Wood and iron craftworker, Mr Bruce Dempster, of Coppicecraft Products at Crowborough, says: *"Crafts add variety to markets and increase consumers' understanding of the range of production, not just food, which benefits the landscape. We can also sell our goods cheaper because we cut out the wholesale or retail middleman, and our attendance can generate future telephone orders."*

Plant producer David Honeysett, of Cade Street Nursery near Heathfield, says: *"Meat, fruit and vegetables are considered the staple goods of markets. But I was surprised by how much customers appreciate talking to us about bedding and pot plants. Key issues for customers are the traceability of products, friendly service and good value."*

'Hammer' ponds to casting...



Small streams were dammed to create large ponds for storing water. Waterpower was needed to operate the bellows of the furnaces and hammers of the forges. These 'hammer' ponds still exist today and are often popular fishing spots.



Large numbers of people were involved in mining iron ore and cutting and processing wood to make the charcoal needed to fuel the forges and furnaces.



A typical Wealden, gun casting blast furnace of the 17th century. It is built against a bank to allow charcoal and ore to be tipped into the top. Furrows were shaped in the sand of the casting floor into which the molten iron was poured.

IRON

Looking across the High Weald today, it is hard to appreciate that it was a landscape of industry. Yet, from pre-Roman times until the beginning of the 19th century, iron was produced here. Jeremy Hodgkinson, of the Wealden Iron Research Group, explains ...

It is hard to picture the former iron industry in today's countryside of small fields, woodlands and steep, narrow, gill valleys. But in this landscape exist all the necessary raw materials that allowed iron to be smelted for over 2,000 years.

The Wealden geology of sands and clays yielded the iron ore, as well as the stone and brick to build the furnaces; the woodland provided the charcoal fuel; and the numerous small streams and valleys ensured water power for the bellows and hammers of the forges and furnaces.

For two periods – in the first two centuries of the Roman occupation, and during Tudor and early-Stuart times – the Weald was the main iron-producing region in Britain. Julius Caesar first drew attention to iron being produced in the coastal parts of Britain. Archaeologists have found evidence of iron working from the late Iron Age at sites near Crowhurst and Sedlescombe in the south-eastern High Weald.

When the Romans invaded in AD 43, they found a well-established local tradition of iron making, using small, clay bloomery furnaces. With growing markets generated by the building of towns, villas and farms, the Romans encour-

aged this native industry. Sites from the period have been found all over the eastern part of the High Weald.

The 'Classis Britannica', or British Fleet, an imperial supply organisation as well as a navy, took a strategic role in iron production. It managed several large smelting sites in the area around Hastings, such as one at Beauport Park, near Battle. This may have produced as much as 30,000 tonnes of iron over 150 years, and a substantial bathhouse was built there for some of the workforce.

We know little about iron making in the Weald in Saxon times, and the industry receives only one mention in the Domesday Book for Sussex, at a location near East Grinstead. However, during the Middle Ages iron production grew steadily, concentrated more in the northern part of the Weald. Accounts have survived from 14th-century works at Tudeley in Kent, and excavations have confirmed medieval references to iron makers in Crawley and near Horsham. Towards the end of the period, waterpower began to be used for forging iron, heralding the introduction, in 1496, of the blast furnace.

Introduced from northern France,

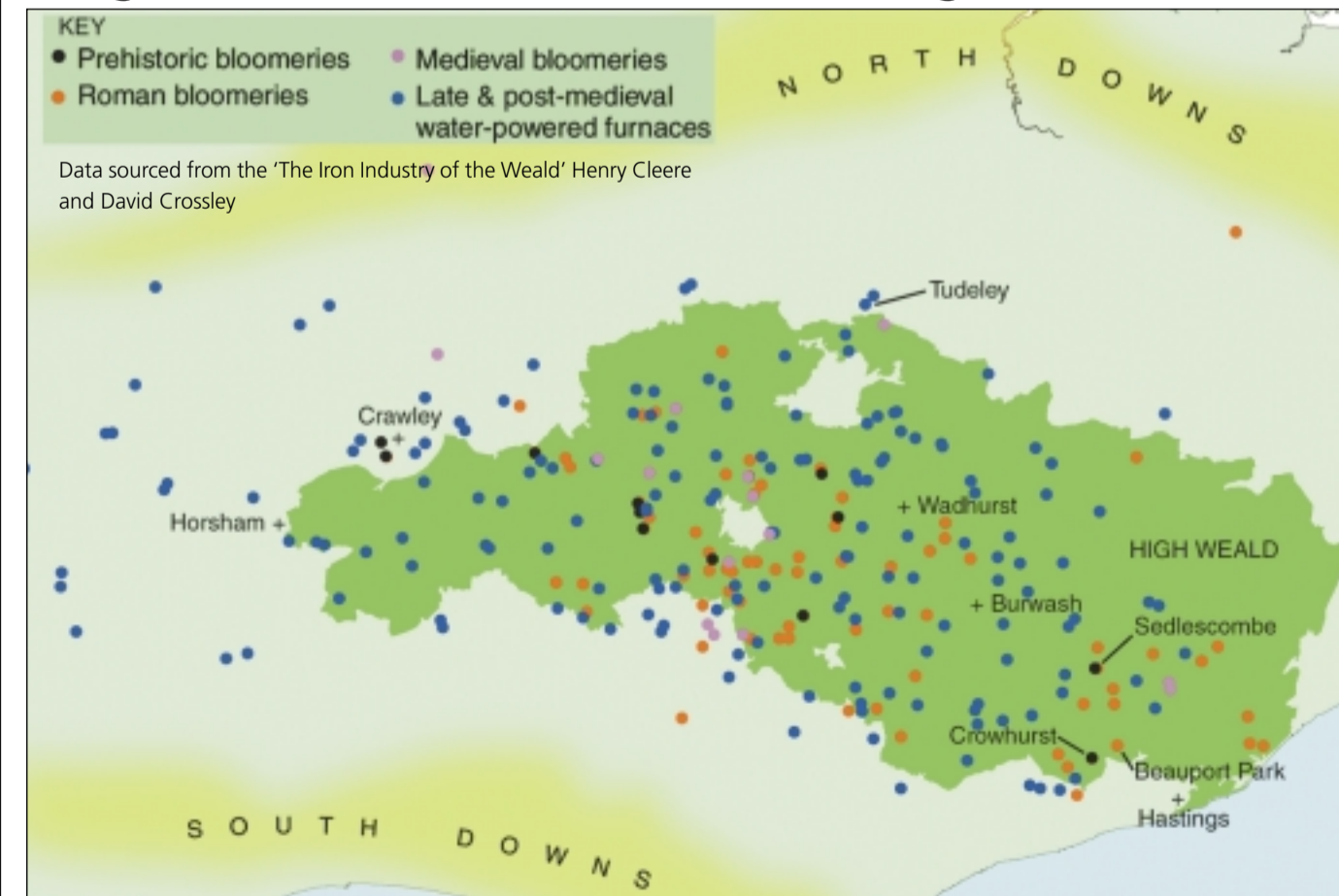
and operated by skilled, immigrant workers, the blast furnace was a much larger, and more permanent structure than the bloomery; and instead of a few kilos of iron being made, daily output was nearer a tonne.

More ore and charcoal were required, and the need to operate the bellows by waterpower, instead of by hand, meant that ponds had to be created to store the water. In addition, the higher temperatures in the furnace meant that a different type of iron was being produced. A second process – the forge, with its own pond and supply of charcoal – was needed to refine the iron.

By the mid-16th century there were 50 furnaces and forges, and that number had doubled 25 years later. All over the Weald, the iron industry was having an effect, with large numbers of people employed in digging ore, cutting wood and transporting both raw materials and products.

Most furnaces made 'sows', or lengths, of iron for refining, but from the 1540s a small number began to make cast-iron cannon, a product that grew to be a profitable, and sometimes illegal, export. Improvements in house design

Forge and furnace location in the High Weald AONB



A once-great Wealden industry

led to the building of chimneys, and the need for iron fire-backs to protect the brickwork. Many Wealden farmhouses contain examples of these decorative and functional plates. In several Wealden churches there are examples of iron memorials. The oldest is in Burwash, dating from the 1530s, while Wadhurst church has over 30, dating from the early-17th to the late-18th centuries.

As competition from imported iron increased, the Wealden ironmasters began to concentrate increasingly on gun founding, and examples can be found all over the world, wherever Britain fought or traded. Eventually, the onset of the Industrial Revolution took heavy industry north to the coalfields, and the last furnace in the Weald, at Ashburnham, closed in 1813.

So, where are the remains of iron production? Building stone was too valuable in the Weald to be left unused, so the works were dismantled, and the woods grew back over the former sites. Only the telltale waste, called slag, from the smelting process, and some of the hammer and furnace ponds are left to remind us of a once-great Wealden industry.



Grave slab at Wadhurst church (top)

Mayfield Cannon (above)

Fireback from Hastings Museum (left)

News in brief

Producers' consortium

A group of East Sussex farmers have formed a co-operative to investigate the feasibility of creating a meat processing and packing facility, but not an abattoir, to ensure that any profit from handling locally produced meat is kept locally. The East Sussex Producers' Consortium will commission a study by industry researchers, funded by the South East England Development Agency, National Farmers' Union, Sussex Enterprise, and Wealden and Rother District Councils.

of mapping, consulting with landowners, and confirming open countryside and registered common land under the so-called 'right to roam' law. Cultivated land, such as crops and pasture, will remain closed under the Open Access section of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000). By autumn 2004, the agency should have agreed and issued definitive maps for the whole of England. For further information visit www.countryside.gov.uk

'Dartfords' in the Weald

Once absent from the Weald, Dartford Warblers now have a stronghold in Ashdown Forest and on the Wealden Greensand Heaths of West Sussex. According to the Sussex Ornithological Society, 77 pairs nested on Ashdown Forest in 2000 (up from 60 in 1999). The Wealden Heaths Breeding Birds Survey uncovered 41 pairs in 2000 (compared to 32 in 1999).

Within the High Weald, 'Dartfords' also breed at Hastings Country Park, and for the first time at Chailey Common (2000), and Buchan Country Park (2001). There have also been sightings at Crowborough Beacon since 2000. It is hoped that the very cold snap in January this year will not take its toll on the 'Dartford' population in the area.

Butterflies bye-bye?

Three-quarters of Britain's 46 butterfly species are in decline. Natural habitats, such as flower-rich grasslands, ancient woodlands and heathlands, are disappearing under intensive farming at a faster rate than climate warming can help these heat-seeking insects to spread north from Europe.

According to a nationwide study by wildlife charity Butterfly Conservation and three UK universities between 1995 and 1999, the declines have taken place over the past 30 years, despite the expected benefits to butterflies of global warming. Meanwhile, a report by the Government's UK Climate Impacts Programme has warned that some of Britain's rarest wildlife could become extinct within 50 years, as the effects of climate change destroy habitats.

Countryside Access

By spring 2005, the public should have access to around 3% more heath, down and common land in South East England, including the High Weald AONB. This is when Government advisor the Countryside Agency hopes to complete a process

Frog virus

Conservationists believe that a disease affecting the frog population of South East England may be caused by a virus carried by goldfish farmed in North America and brought to Britain's fishponds.

Maynards Fruit Farm

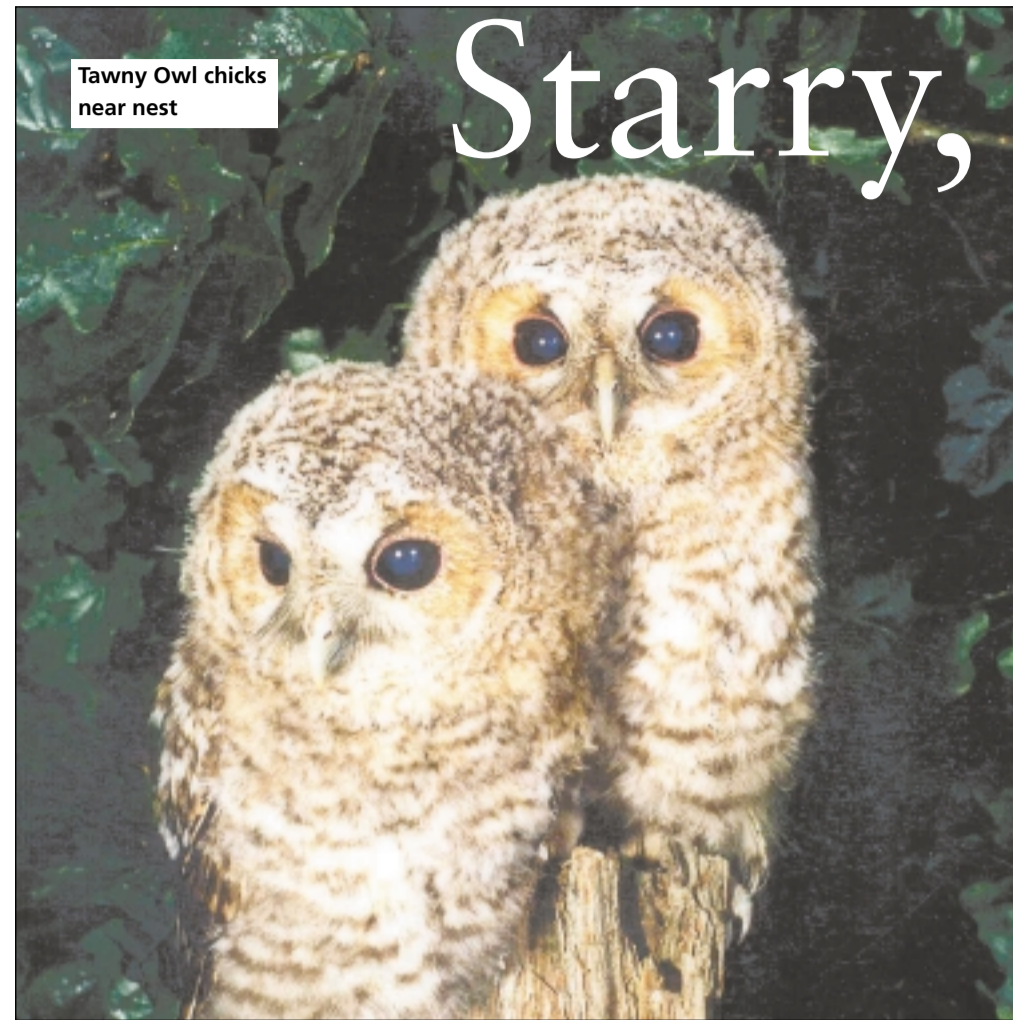


Maynards Fruit Farm at Ticehurst is situated at the heart of the High Weald AONB, on the watershed between the Rother and the Medway. Since 1963 the Maynard family have specialised in Pick Your Own fruit, growing a wide range of crops starting in the strawberry season, through raspberries, cherries and plums, and closing at the end of the apple season.

A visit to the farm combines well with other local attractions such as Bewl Water, Bedgebury Pinetum or Pashley Manor Gardens, and there is delicious fruit to eat at the end of the day.

Windmill Hill, Ticehurst, nr Wadhurst, Sussex TN5 7HQ

01580 200394



Tawny Owl chicks near nest

Starry, starry nights

Tale of the Tawny Owl

It's 2am on a still winter's night in a High Weald village or a town suburb. You've just begun to drift to sleep when, suddenly, you're woken by a harsh, high-pitched noise. Unnerved by this spine-chilling 'kee-wick' sound, you are soon calmed, however, by a soft, quavering 'hooo hu huhuhuhooo'. You realize that the eerie 'tu-whit tu-who' was, in fact, simply an owl 'hooting'.

Or was it? It actually takes two Tawny Owls to make this trademark sound. Both male and female do 'hoot', being extremely vocal between October and May when courting for a mate, defending a breeding territory, and feeding their owlets. But because a male's 'hooo hu huhuhuhooo' song usually precedes a female's most common 'ke-wick' response, it is rare to hear the so-called 'tu-whit tu-who' combination.

Your best chance of seeing a Tawny Owl is at dusk, when this strictly nocturnal (night-time) hunter perches on a chimney pot, TV

aerial or tree branch, waiting for darkness. By day, it roosts out of sight, relying on its tree-coloured camouflage. It is also known as the 'brown' owl, 'tawny' (meaning yellowish-brown) being a misnomer, as many are a greyish or reddish-chestnut colour. In car headlights, it can appear very pale, but not an overall 'ghostly white' like the Barn Owl.

Unlike most other types of British owl, the tawny prefers to hunt by perching low down and waiting for its prey to pass beneath. It uses its ultra-soft feathers and specially adapted eyes and ears to dive quickly and silently on to an unsuspecting creature. But its hearing is exceptionally acute. The concave facial disc channels the slightest sound to its ears, one of which is higher and further from the beak. One ear hears the prey stop moving a split-second before the other, so the owl can pinpoint exactly where to dive. With strong legs stretched forwards, it delivers a killer talon blow.

'Tu-whit tu-who?' Sleep easy now . . .

'Skyglow' destroys darkness

Our countryside illustrates natural patterns and tones. In daylight these are patterns of colour and texture – shades of green or lines in the landscape. At night the patterns are of light – starlight, moonlight and shadow.

However, we are losing some of the splendour of starlit skies and moonlight shadows as more of our rural surroundings are illuminated through the night.

'Skyglow' or light pollution reduces the feeling of remoteness, introduces a suburban character to the countryside and blurs the separation between country and town.

Artificial light gets up into the sky in two ways.

'The sight of our dark skies is as spectacular as our finest mountain views and needs protection'

David Maclean MP, Minister for the Environment and Countryside, 22 June 1992

Most arises from light fittings, while a smaller proportion is reflected upwards from roads, pavements and buildings. It is undeniable that lighting is needed in many areas for public safety. However, a lot of external lighting is poorly designed and therefore intrusive. As more and more road lights, security lights and floodlights are introduced into our countryside, the cumulative impact can be significant.

Dark skies and moonlit and star-studded nights are a beautiful part of the High Weald's rich variety. If you are concerned about light pollution in your area:

- ask for lighting details to be included in planning applications
- make sure lighting is absolutely necessary, that it will be switched off when not required, and that the best designs are adopted.
- check whether road schemes include lighting proposals and seek public consultation on proposals to light existing roads
- road lighting is justified in order to reduce accidents, but enforcing the speed limit and encouraging safer driving would make roads safer by day and night.

'Not to spend time under the stars is as cruel a dispossession as not to spend days in the open countryside'

Daily Telegraph, 18 February 1992

Make your contribution by reducing lighting where you live

Do you need outside lights? If so, they should be low-intensity, directed downwards and have time or sensor controls. High-powered security lights, which cause deep shadows, are usually less effective than softer lights.

Text extracted from the 'Campaign for Dark Skies' information leaflet.

Many moons

Full moons draw attention to themselves by dominating the sky from dawn to dusk, so much so that each one each month has acquired at least one special name. The 'harvest' Moon in September and October is quite well known, but what are the full Moons called for the other months? Below are some names that are often used:

January	Old Moon, Wolf Moon
February	Snow Moon, Hunger Moon, Opening Buds Moon
March	Sap Moon, Worm Moon, Crow Moon, Crust Moon
April	Pink Moon, Grass Moon, Frog Moon
May	Milk Moon, Flower Moon, Budding Moon
June	Rose Moon, Strawberry Moon
July	Buck Moon, Thunder Moon, Blood Moon
August	Corn Moon, Green Corn Moon, Sturgeon Moon
September	Harvest Moon, Fruit Moon
October	Harvest Moon, Hunters Moon
November	Beaver Moon, Frost Moon
December	Cold Moon, Long Night Moon

News in brief

Affordable housing

A survey by Sussex Rural Community Council showed that affordable housing is the top concern in rural communities. People's attitudes to new housing developments are changing, however, as it becomes more difficult to get on to the housing ladder.

Meanwhile, planning officers are concerned about a loophole that allows developers to avoid building low-cost housing that is required in single applications for over 25 new properties – they submit a set of smaller applications instead.

New Forest District Council, in a Hampshire AONB, is considering a 'residency test' for all new housing development, in an attempt to stop rich

commuters buying up property ahead of local home-seekers. The council's draft development plan says new housing will only be permitted, if it is for local workers or who have already lived there for seven years.

People power?

Public apathy has led to fewer people being willing to make sacrifices to protect the environment. According to a recent British Social Attitudes report, people are less likely to take a stand on green matters, despite issues such as BSE, GM foods and transport crises. In the High Weald, residents and visitors have every chance to prove the statistics wrong, by tak-

ing part in the public consultation on the new AONB Management Plan – see pages 1 to IV.

Green farming

Rural Affairs minister Alun Michael has announced £2.2 million of LEADER+ and Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) funding to support the Wealden and Rother rural renewal scheme in the High Weald AONB until 2008. He was on a fact-finding mission to the AONB, particularly interested in Integrated Farm Appraisals (or whole farm plans) being tested in the area. IFAs look holistically at the environmental, social and economic values of farm businesses.

At a national level, the Association of AONBs

has met DEFRA officials to discuss how some AONBs might help the Government to deliver rural recovery and agri-environment programmes and policies. This coincided with a major 'Policy Commission on Farming and Food' report. Among more than 100 recommendations, it suggested:

- scrapping the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) in the long-term
- diverting up to £600 million of UK CAP funds away from price subsidies and towards green farming over the next three years; and
- farmers forming continental-style co-operatives to negotiate higher prices for their products with supermarkets.

A closer look at hedges

Imagine the Weald without hedges! They are an integral part of its landscape, often historic and, together with field margins, provide important wildlife habitats. Gerry Sherwin, of the AONB Unit, explains. . .



The irregular hedges of the High Weald (left) contrast with the straight hedges of the Low Weald (right)

Hedges represent decisions made by our ancestors over hundreds of years. In the High Weald most hedges are remnants of ancient woodland that once covered much of the whole Weald and are therefore unplanted and irregular. They are very different to the straight hedges in the Low Weald and most of England, which were planted during the 'Enclosures' of the 18th and 19th centuries.

All hedges, whether unplanted or planted, serve a function. They indicate land ownership, assist with livestock management, provide shelter for farm animals and crops, help conserve soil and water, and would once have been a source of timber and fuel. They also provide homes, food and shelter for insects, birds and mammals, particularly when combined with a rough grass margin.

Hedgerow types

A closer look at hedges reveals that they vary in form, not only because of the different ways in which they were created, but also the different ways in which they are cared for.

Trimmed stock-proof

The hedge is trimmed on a regular basis ensuring that it is stock-proof.



Trimmed with gaps

The hedge is trimmed but as the gaps have not been filled, fencing keeps the hedge stock-proof.



Overgrazed

Overgrazing of the next field has forced animals to nibble the hedge, leaving it bare and gappy near the ground. The hedge is not stock-proof and has little value for wildlife.



Overgrown

The hedge has been allowed to grow freely. Eventually it will turn into a strip of woodland; a very different habitat to a hedge.



Remnant

The hedge has become increasingly gappy so that it is no longer recognizable as a hedge. Eventually it may disappear.



Knowing the hedge type is important in deciding on the type of management that is needed for it. Trimming is normally all that is needed for hedges in a good condition, but those that are overgrown or gappy may need to be restored using a combination of laying, coppicing and planting techniques.

Best practice guidelines suggest that hedges should ideally be cut every two to three years rather than annually, keeping maintenance costs down and ensuring a bushier hedge for wildlife. Cutting should take place between September and February. Cutting at the end of this season, ensures that nuts and berries are available as wildlife food over the winter but, in milder weather, there is increasingly a risk of disturbing nesting birds.

Fortunately the large-scale removal of hedgerows is now a thing of the past, but incremental loss due to road and property development, as well as replacement with fencing and exotic trees and shrubs, still occurs.

Further information

There are a number of organisations that can advise and assist with hedge care and establishment. See page for details. A free leaflet 'Hedges in the Weald' is available from the High Weald AONB Unit on 01580 879500 Email: info@highweald.org

Other boundary features

Shaws/Rews – strips of deciduous woodland, often 9-12 metres wide, between fields or along roadsides. Managed as woodland, they remain a distinctive feature of the High Weald landscape.



Hedgerow trees – mature trees, normally Oak or Ash or Holly, are often found punctuating hedgerows where the traditional pattern of shaws between fields does not exist.



Shelter belts – tall hedges, often of Poplars and Alders, which have been planted as wind-breaks, particularly around orchards and other fruit crops.



Exotic trees and shrubs – these can thrive on Weald soils and are often used as hedging plants, in particular Leylandii cypress. Their dense, evergreen form is very different to the open, deciduous form of native trees and shrubs, and they can give a suburban feel to rural areas.



Hedgerow regulations

It is a criminal offence, unless an exception applies, to deliberately remove a hedgerow without permission. Before permission is formally sought to remove hedgerows, it is advisable to discuss any plans to do so at an early stage with the local planning authority.

News in brief

Meadows measure up

Around 97% of wildflower meadows in the Weald have been lost to agricultural improvement, development and neglect since the 1930s. Despite this, the High Weald AONB still has among the highest concentrations of meadows in the UK. Although scarce, they are home to many threatened types of wildlife.

The Weald Meadows Initiative provides cost-effective, site-specific and practical support to landowners to help with the management, creation and enhancement of wildflower grasslands.

Since 1996 it has assisted landowners to create and enhance 324 hectares of wildflower grassland, helping achieve a national Habitat Action Plan (1998) target to re-establish 500 ha each of lowland neutral and acid grassland of wildlife value by 2010.

Heathland launch

Ashdown Forest, the High Weald's ancient heart near Crowborough in East Sussex, hosted the launch of a major new initiative to restore and manage rare heathlands across the AONB. The Weald Heathland Initiative (WHI) is a £1.3 million, five-year programme to restore, re-create and bring into sustainable management 1,500 hectares (about one-third) of existing heathland in the High and Low Weald of Sussex and Kent.

WHI is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund to work at sites including Ashdown Forest, Chailey Common near Haywards Heath, and Pembury Common near Tunbridge Wells. It aims to introduce grazing to smaller sites following extensive consultation with local communities, and to

develop and market heathland products. Both open and wooded heathland is an important local, national and international habitat for rare wildlife such as birds and butterflies, as well as a rural retreat for many thousands of countryside visitors each year.

Tourism initiative

Sustainable or 'green' tourism is widely recognized as a contributor to the local economy of many protected landscapes in England and Wales. Income from 'green' visitors to the High Weald AONB might help to replace jobs lost in traditional rural industries, such as farming, if farmers diversify their business. In 2001, the AONB Unit and several local and regional tourism organisations, successfully co-ordinated a Countryside Exchange visit to the area by an independent team of North American and UK experts. The team explored the theme of 'Sustainable Visits to the High AONB'.

Their main recommendation was that local communities, businesses and councils must work together even more in future to market and promote the area's outstanding countryside and cultural attractions. To co-ordinate joint-working over the next two years, the team recommended creating a new AONB tourism officer post for the High Weald and nearby Kent Downs AONB, to work closely with a South East regional AONB tourism co-ordinator.

Wakehurst recovery

A record number of visitors enjoyed Wakehurst Place, in the High Weald near Haywards Heath, last year, despite the Foot and Mouth crisis. Kew's country garden,



which is home to the international Millennium Seed Bank Project, bucked the national trend and managed to make up a dramatic shortfall from six weeks of enforced closure. Each it has year around 250,000 visitors.

Hopfields film 'premier'

A Kent High Weald village has 'premiered' a film about hopfields that was shot there almost 50 years ago, features several child actors who have now become household names, and which was bought by a local movie-buff after being thrown away but rescued in America.

Goudhurst village hall screened 'Adventures in the Hopfields' – which featured a young Anthony Valentine, Melvyn Hayes, Jane Asher and Mandy Miller in 1954 – to 150 villagers, including some who were extras in the crowd scenes. Amateur cinema enthusiast Barry Littlechild, of Tunbridge Wells, was amazed that the film he bought from a magazine advertisement, after the reel had been binned by a television station in Chicago but rescued, had more than just an English hopfields connection.

Barry, a former BBC producer who has his own home cinema and 2,000 movies, says the 62-minute film was made by the Children's Film Foundation, directed by John Guillermin (famous later for 'Death on the Nile' and 'Towering Inferno'), and featured Valentine ('Raffles'), Hayes ('It Ain't Half Hot Mum') and Asher (Party Cakes

company). It was based on a book, 'The Hop Dog' by Molly Thorpe, and centred on Miller's adventures avoiding authorities among Kent hop-pickers after she ran away from home in south London.

Proud to present . . .

Public groups and membership organisations that are interested in conserving the valued countryside, wildlife and buildings of the High Weald AONB, can now request one of three presentations by the specialist AONB Unit. Each illustrated presentation is by a Unit officer, lasts at least 45 minutes, and costs £1 per head for a minimum of 30 people (plus speakers' travel expenses).

The three presentations are:

- High Weald AONB – Past, Present and Future (a general introduction to countryside and people)
- Managing the High Weald AONB (how the countryside and its people are managed)
- Weald Meadows or Weald Heathland – outstanding countryside (how either Meadow or Heathland habitats are managed).

For further details and a booking form, please write to: Kerry Baldwin, Office Manager, High Weald AONB Unit, Corner Farm, Hastings Road, Flimwell TN5 7PR; email info@highweald.org

Heaven Farm

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www.heavenfarm.co.uk

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28th Sept - 6th Oct 2002

01962 870500 for more information

www.access.hampshire.gov.uk

Come to Hampshire for a fantastic selection of guided walks combined with the opportunity of tasting some of our delicious local produce



Houses & gardens

Advice and further information

If you have any queries or comments about rights of way in the area, or would like further information on access to the High Weald countryside, 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

Hidden countryside



The countryside of small fields, scattered farmsteads, wooded rolling hills and river valleys that make the High Weald so unique, remains largely unexplored. The following pages suggest ways for you to head outdoors and explore the AONB...

Exploring THE HIGH WEALD

Planning your visit

Travelling around the High Weald AONB

Wherever possible, the routes have been planned to link with public transport. Information on the frequency of the services is provided but, for exact times, please call the relevant travel line (see page 13). 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 that will not damage road verges or cause obstruction. Leave your car securely locked with any valuables out of sight.

Following the rights of way

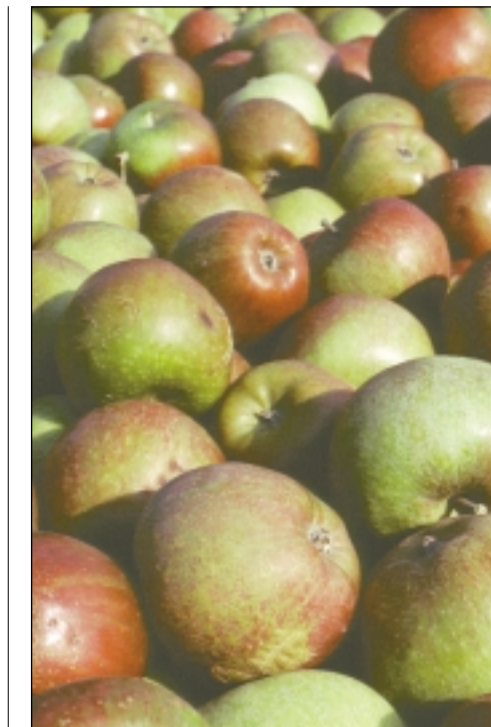
The routes largely follow public rights of way that cross private land and minor roads. Most landowners welcome people on their land, provided that they do not stray from the rights of way and that they abide by the visitors' code. Following the routes should not be a problem, given the detailed maps, directions and extensive waymarking and signposting (see below).

Where rights of way leave the road, metal or wooden finger posts, or a stone plinth indicate the

way. At other points, such as field boundaries or path junctions, footpaths are marked with short posts 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 carved 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.

Be prepared

Paths can be muddy at all times of year so water-proof boots are recommended. Be prepared for changeable weather by carrying waterproofs. Trousers can be useful in providing protection against high or prickly vegetation or rain-drenched or dewy crops. For an up-to-date weather forecast, contact Weathercall on 0891 772 272.



Local produce

Maps

The following Ordnance Survey maps are applicable in the High Weald:

Landranger Series, scale 1:50,000, 1½ inches to 1 mile (2cm to 1km)

- 187** Dorking, Reigate and Crawley
- 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, 2½ 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

Industrial heritage



Waymarking information

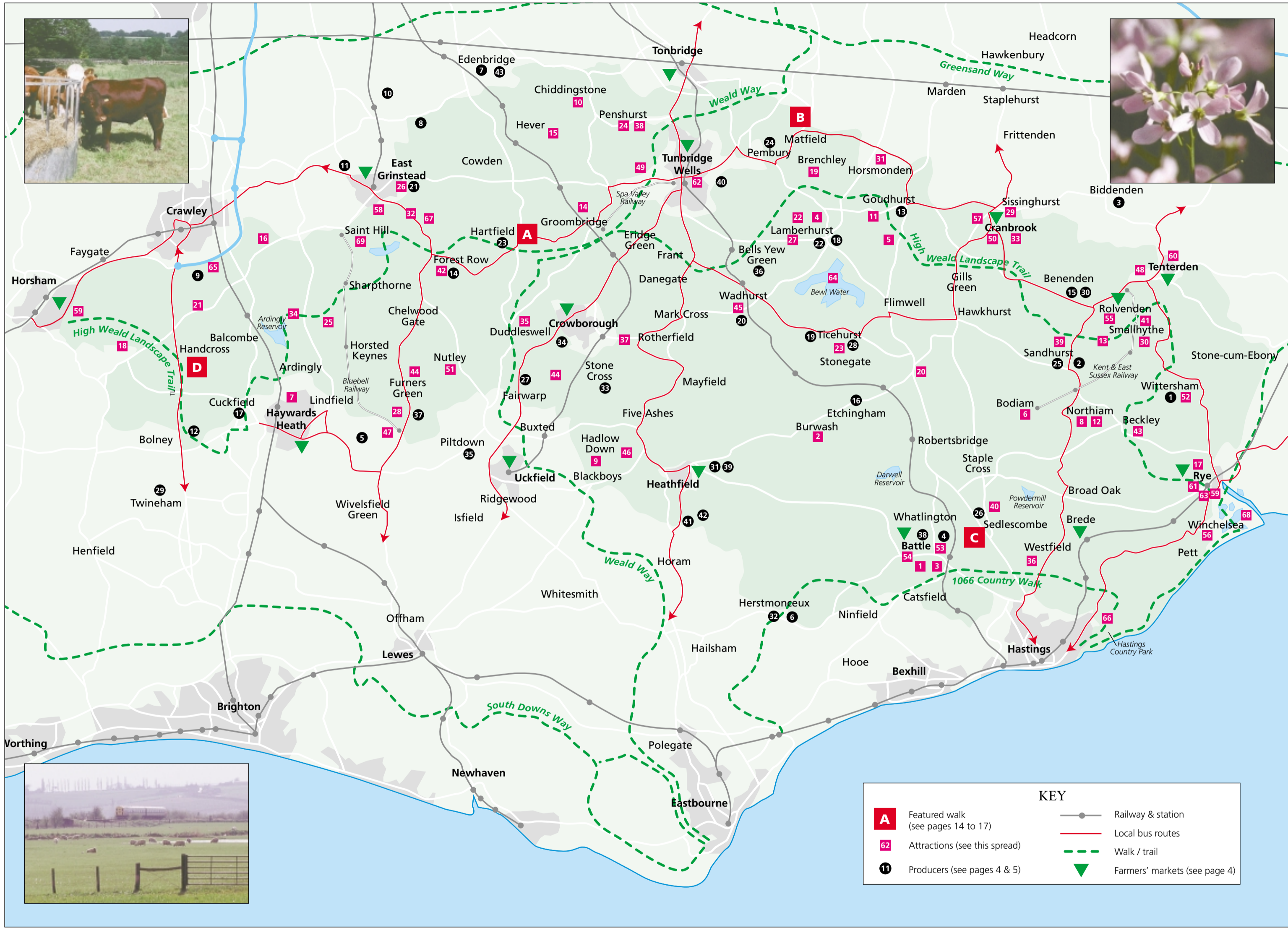
Footpaths, for use by pedestrians only, are marked using yellow arrows

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

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

VISITOR ATTRACTIONS Houses, gardens and castles

- 1. The Almonry Battle, East Sussex
2. Batemans The National Trust, Burwash, East Sussex
3. Battle Abbey Battle, East Sussex
4. Bayham Abbey Lamberhurst, Kent
5. Bedgebury Pinetum Goudhurst, Kent
6. Bodiam Castle Bodiam, East Sussex
7. Borde Hill Gardens Haywards Heath, West Sussex
8. Brickwall House and Gardens Northiam, East Sussex
9. Cabbages and Kings Garden Hadlow Down, Uckfield, East Sussex
10. Chiddingstone Castle Chiddingstone, Edenbridge, Kent
11. Finchcocks Goudhurst, Kent
12. Great Dixter Northiam, East Sussex
13. Great Maytham Hall Rolvenden, Cranbrook, Kent
14. Groombridge Place Gardens & the Enchanted Forest Groombridge, Tunbridge Wells, East Sussex
15. Hever Castle & Gardens Hever, Edenbridge, Kent
16. High Beeches Gardens Handcross, West Sussex
17. Lamb House Rye, East Sussex
18. Leonardslee Gardens Lower Beeding, Horsham, West Sussex
19. Marle Place Gardens Marle Place Road, Brenchley, Kent
20. Merriments Garden Hurst Green, East Sussex
21. Nymans Gardens Handcross, Haywards Heath, West Sussex
22. Owl House & Gardens Mount Pleasant, Lamberhurst, Kent
23. Pashley Manor Gardens Ticehurst, Wadhurst, East Sussex
24. Penshurst Place Penshurst, Tonbridge, Kent
25. Priest House North Lane, West Hoathly, West Sussex
26. Sackville College East Grinstead, West Sussex
27. Scotney Castle Lamberhurst, Kent
28. Sheffield Park Garden Uckfield, East Sussex
29. Sissinghurst Castle Gardens & the Enchanted Forest Sissinghurst, nr Cranbrook, Kent
30. Small Hythe Place Small Hythe, Tenterden, Kent
31. Sprivers The National Trust, Horsmonden, Kent
32. Standen House Standen, East Grinstead, West Sussex
33. The Gardens of Gaia Cranbrook, Kent
34. Wakehurst Place Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex
35. Barnsgate Manor Vineyard Herons Ghyll, Crowborough, East Sussex
36. Carr Taylor Vineyards Westfield, Hastings, East Sussex
37. Davenport Vineyards Rotherfield, Crowborough, E Sussex
38. Penshurst Vineyards Penshurst, Tonbridge, Kent
39. Sandhurst Vineyards Sandhurst, Cranbrook, Kent
40. Sedlescombe Vineyard Cripps Corner, Robertsbridge, East Sussex
41. Tenterden Vineyard Park Small Hythe, Tenterden, Kent
42. Ashdown Forest Llama Park Wych Cross, Forest Row, East Sussex
43. Farm World Great Kneble, Beckley, East Sussex
44. Heaven Farm Furners Green, Danehill, Uckfield, East Sussex
45. Mount Farm Wadhurst, East Sussex
46. Wilderness Wood Hadlow Down, Uckfield, East Sussex
47. Bluebell Railway Sheffield Park Station, Uckfield, East Sussex
48. Kent & East Sussex Railway Tenterden Station, Station Road, Tenterden, Kent
49. Spa Valley Railway West Station, Tunbridge Wells, Kent
50. Cranbrook Union Windmill The Hill, Cranbrook, Kent
51. Nutley Windmill Nutley, Uckfield, East Sussex
52. Stocks Mill Rye Road, Wittersham, Kent
53. Battle Museum of Local History Battle, East Sussex
54. Buckleys Yesterday's World Battle, East Sussex
55. C M Booth Collection of Historic Vehicles Rolvenden, Kent
56. Court Hall Museum Winchelsea, East Sussex
57. Cranbrook Museum Cranbrook, Kent
58. East Grinstead Town Museum East Grinstead, West Sussex
59. Horsham Museum Horsham, West Sussex
60. Tenterden and District Museum Tenterden, Kent
61. The Story of Rye Rye, East Sussex
62. Tunbridge Wells Museum Tunbridge Wells, Kent
63. Ypres Tower and Rye Museum Rye, East Sussex
64. Bewl Water Lamberhurst, Kent
65. Buchan CP Crawley, West Sussex
66. Hastings CP Fairlight, East Sussex
67. Forest Way CP East Grinstead, West Sussex
68. Rye Harbour NR Rye, East Sussex
69. Weirwood NR Saint Hill, West Sussex



KEY
A Featured walk (see pages 14 to 17)
62 Attractions (see this spread)
1 Producers (see pages 4 & 5)
Railway & station
Local bus routes
Walk / trail
Farmers' markets (see page 4)

- 37. Davenport Vineyards Rotherfield, Crowborough, E Sussex
38. Penshurst Vineyards Penshurst, Tonbridge, Kent
39. Sandhurst Vineyards Sandhurst, Cranbrook, Kent
40. Sedlescombe Vineyard Cripps Corner, Robertsbridge, East Sussex
41. Tenterden Vineyard Park Small Hythe, Tenterden, Kent
42. Ashdown Forest Llama Park Wych Cross, Forest Row, East Sussex
43. Farm World Great Kneble, Beckley, East Sussex
44. Heaven Farm Furners Green, Danehill, Uckfield, East Sussex
45. Mount Farm Wadhurst, East Sussex
46. Wilderness Wood Hadlow Down, Uckfield, East Sussex
47. Bluebell Railway Sheffield Park Station, Uckfield, East Sussex
48. Kent & East Sussex Railway Tenterden Station, Station Road, Tenterden, Kent
49. Spa Valley Railway West Station, Tunbridge Wells, Kent
50. Cranbrook Union Windmill The Hill, Cranbrook, Kent
51. Nutley Windmill Nutley, Uckfield, East Sussex
52. Stocks Mill Rye Road, Wittersham, Kent
53. Battle Museum of Local History Battle, East Sussex
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64. Bewl Water Lamberhurst, Kent
65. Buchan CP Crawley, West Sussex
66. Hastings CP Fairlight, East Sussex
67. Forest Way CP East Grinstead, West Sussex
68. Rye Harbour NR Rye, East Sussex
69. Weirwood NR Saint Hill, West Sussex

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.

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
Cranbrook TIC 01580 712538
Tenterden TIC 01580 763572
Rye TIC 01797 226696

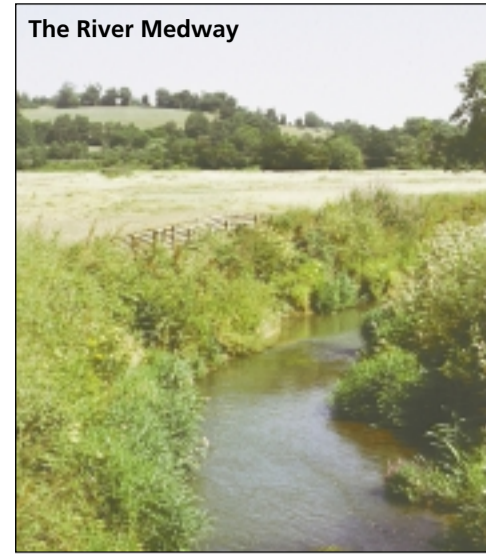
Banks
In addition to main towns, banks with cashpoints can be found in the following villages:
Wadhurst
Cranbrook
Forest Row
Hawkhurst
Battle
Heathfield

Websites
www.highweald.org
www.southeastengland.uk.com
www.sussex-country-tourism.co.uk
www.1066country.co.uk
www.sussexlive.com
www.village-net.com

Country parks
www.1066country.co.uk
www.sussexlive.com
www.village-net.com

Windmills
50. Cranbrook Union Windmill The Hill, Cranbrook, Kent
51. Nutley Windmill Nutley, Uckfield, East Sussex

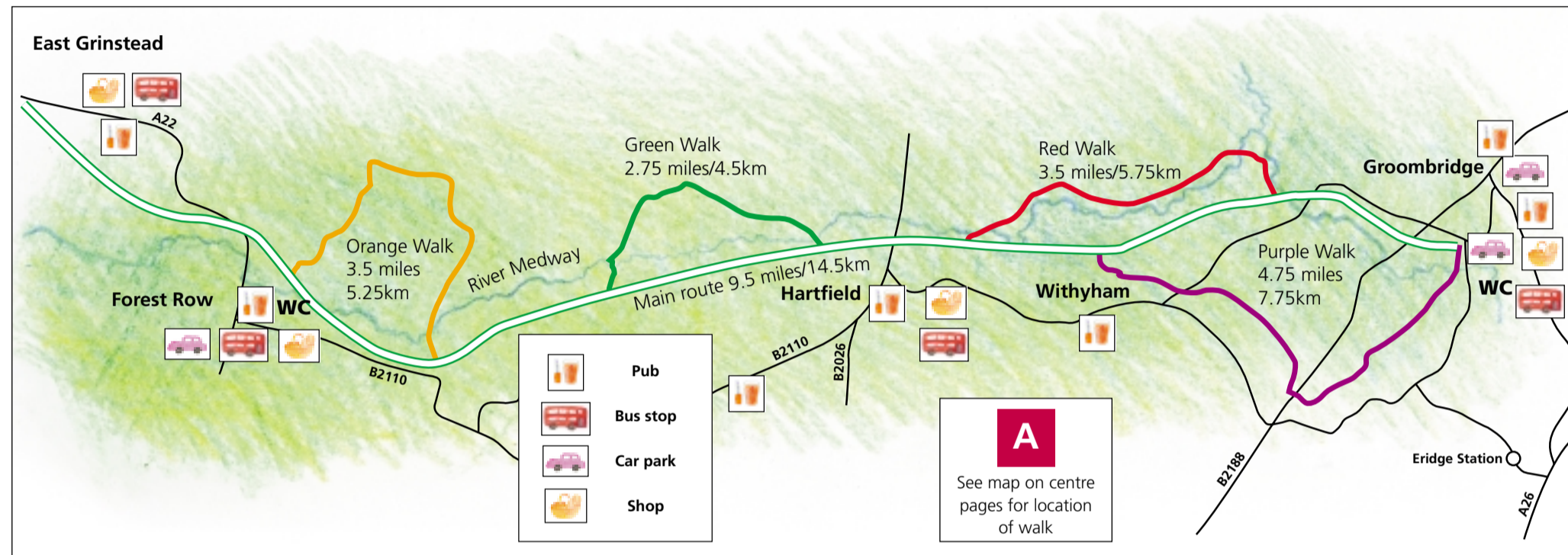
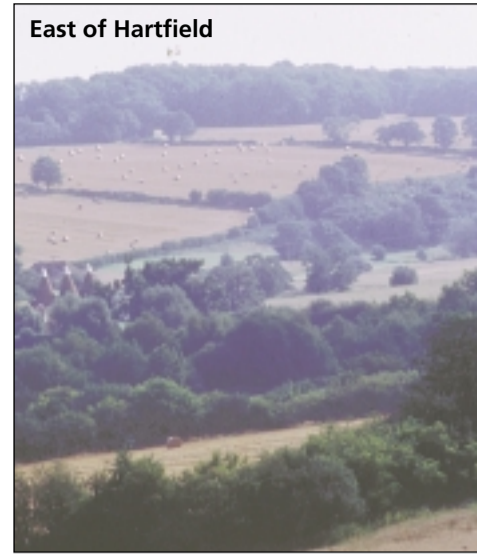




Discover the Medway Valley

On track to enchanting countryside

The Forest Way and the High Weald Landscape Trail intertwine as they cross the Medway Valley, linking the Sussex town of East Grinstead with the Kent village of Groombridge.



Forest Way

A disused railway line, opened in 1866 but closed 100 years later in 1966.

Suitable for horseriders, walkers and cyclists
Start East Grinstead; Finish: Groombridge
Distance 11 miles/18 km
Time by bike 2 hours, by horse 2.5 hours, on foot 4 hours

Guide Free from the East Sussex County Council countryside management service 01273 482670; e-mail: countryside.management@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

Maps Ordnance Survey Explorer 135 Ashdown Forest

Forest Way Circular Walks

Four circular walks linked to the routes allow exploration further afield. The walks are clearly signposted from the Forest Way.

Orange Walk
Start Forest Row, 3 miles/5 km
Green Walk
Start Hartfield, 2 miles/4 km
Red Walk
Start Hartfield, 3 miles/5 km
Purple walk
Start Groombridge, 4 miles 7 km

High Weald Landscape Trail

The High Weald Landscape Trail is a new long-distance walking route that crosses the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty from east to west.

High Weald Heritage

East Grinstead
Originally a 'greenplace in a woodland', by medieval times this was a bustling market town. Sackville College, founded as an almshouse in 1609, is a beautifully designed and preserved early-Jacobean building of Sussex sandstone.

Forest Row
A bustling village that began as a series of lodges to house Royal hunting parties on visits to Ashdown Forest.

Hartfield
The 'hart' (stag) from the village's forest beginnings, features on various signs.

Withyham
The four-square tower of St Michael and All Angels' church contrasts with Hartfield's slender spire. Within are decorated ceilings and a wealth of monuments to the Sackville family.

Groombridge
Groombridge village grew up around a brick church built in 1625, next to a sloping green. The focus of the green is the quaint Crow Inn pub with its Royal coat of arms, and the surrounding tile-hung cottages which are typical of the High Weald AONB.



Fact Pack

Local Products

Forest Row – Tablehurst Farm Tel: 01342 823173; e-mail: tablehurstfarm@talk21.com
Organic meat, vegetables, flour, eggs and apples.

Cyrnel Bakery Tel: 01342 822283. Bread, flour & confectionery. Open: All year Mon-Fri 7.30-3, Sat 7.30-1.

Seasons Forest Row Ltd Tel: 01424 83842. Fruit, vegetables, dairy produce, meat. Open: All year 8.45–5.30, closed 1-2, half days Wed/Sat.

Hartfield – Kent & Sussex Apple Juice & Cider Centre, Perryhill Orchard Tel: 01892 770595. Fruit, apple juice, cider and PYO, preserves, biscuits and cakes, logs. Open: Summer daily Mon-Fri 11-5, Sat & Sun 10-5, Winter Tues-Sun 11-5.

Attractions

Groombridge Place.
Contact details on page 12.

Services

There are pubs in Forest Row, Hartfield, Withyham and Groombridge.

Public transport

Bus: There is a regular two-hourly bus service, Monday to Saturdays, between East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells, stopping at Forest Row, Hartfield and Groombridge. There is a limited Sunday Service between East Grinstead and Horley.

Train: Regular services from London to East Grinstead and Eridge Green via Oxted.



Matfield Circular Walk

Start/Finish Point Matfield. (The walk can be accessed from Paddock Wood rail station at point A).

Duration 2 to 2.5 hours, 5 miles/9 km approx.

Terrain Easy going. Two short climbs which are not especially steep.

Guide 'Walk the Bounds and Eat the View' – pack of 10 circular walks. Available from Kent High Weald Project on 01580 715918, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Offices and Tourist Information Centres.

Map O.S. Explorer 136 The Weald

Walk up side road keeping village pond on left, cottages and Matfield House on right. Immediately after cottages, look upwards between gates to large clock-tower. Note the caption below its face, especially if your walking time is limited. Matfield House, 1728, is in Queen Anne style.

At road junction and facing Canterbury Cottage, turn right along road, passing 'Maycotts', a fine Wealden house, on left. At a junction of five roads, turn right into Chestnut Lane. After around 100 metres, turn left on to footpath marked by a low concrete sign. Take left fork after 30-40 metres. After emerging from scrub, follow left-hand boundary of field. At path junction (delineated by a waymark), continue on same line, ignoring path to right. Admire superb views north to the Greensand Ridge and North Downs beyond. In middle distance, the Medway Valley and sprawl of Paddock Wood (1).

Eventually path is contained by a hedge and trees on left and fence on right. Bear left and pass on left-hand side of a cottage. Path joins a driveway to houses. Bear right, keeping Orchard Cottage on right and pass through the gateway to Gedges Farm (stile to side of gate if closed). Continue with Gedges Farmhouse on right between gateposts topped with white globes. If gates closed, use a stile built into gate's left-hand frame. Ignore orchard track on left. Walk straight on until track bears right. Leave bending track to cross a stile on left side, then down right-hand boundary of an orchard (2). Where hedge ends and orchard opens out, ignore track to right and continue straight between a line of apple trees to far boundary of orchard, facing a copse.

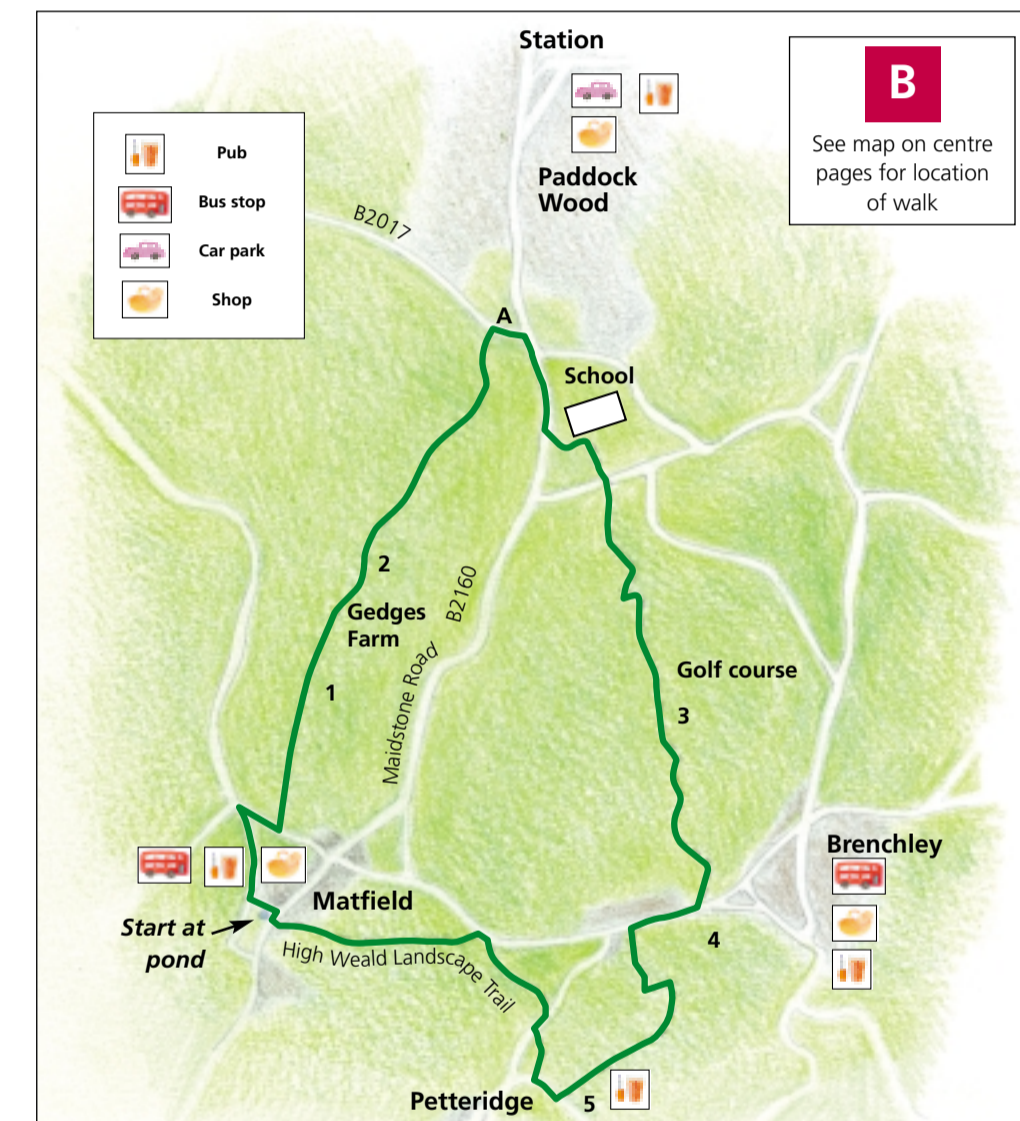
Turn right, keeping fence on left, for around 100 metres to stile on left. Pass through narrow strip of trees to what is initially rough scrubland and then orchards. Paddock Wood in valley below.

Aim for large Oak tree, then pass to right of it,

Discover Matfield

Fruity gem in the Garden of Kent

Some of England's largest remaining orchards and hop gardens are in this area of the High Weald. Tall rows of Poplar and Alder trees, planted to shelter the fruit trees and oasthouses, can be seen on every horizon. Matfield and Brenchley are picturesque villages with welcoming pubs and a green and church, respectively.



and downhill towards converted oasthouse. Pass house on a farm track and leave it immediately to continue straight ahead between apple trees. At far side of orchard, on meeting boundary hedge, turn sharp left on path towards scrub and large pylon. Pass under pylon and through a belt of trees and a very overgrown pond, to B2017 road.

Turn right along road to major road junction. Bear right uphill on grass verge of busy B2160, past Mascalls School on left. Fifty metres beyond school gates, climb steps to leave road at footpath waymark. Cross stile towards cottages on far side of field. Cross stile to join lane alongside cottages. Turn left, and after 10 metres, leave lane to join footpath on right between fences and on to small copse. Emerge into open ground with orchard to right. Continue, keeping orchard fence on right, and towards footpath waymark. Do not cross stile into orchard – go straight on to pass to left of a copse. Here, public footpath crosses a golf course. Beware! Continue left past golf tees and towards waymark on wood edge.

Bear right at waymark round edge to further waymark, and bear left. 20 metres on turn right. Continue virtually straight for 600 metres uphill, passing between copses, golf greens on left and small pond on right. Note the small corrugated hut at pond edge (3).

Bear left at waymark, cross line of Poplars, and head for stile in hedge line directly ahead. Cross stile and on between rows of apple trees and towards line of Alder trees. At waymark, pass through Alders, turn left and on through orchard. At far side of orchard, turn right and after 10 metres turn left through gap in hedge past a timber-clad house and on to surfaced drive. At junction of drives, cross stile on right, through trees and aim for stile in fence line. After crossing stile, pass between rows of apple trees to boundary hedge at bottom of orchard. Turn right along hedge. Before arriving at corner, look for gap in hedge and emerge at road. Turn right along road and pass school, cottages and garage. Note the milestone with Roman figures and bench mark outside 'Milestone Cottage' (4).

Look for Market Heath House on left side. 20 metres after house, leave road to join footpath down left-hand boundary of field and orchard. At waymark turn left to join track. At junction of tracks, turn right on to High Weald Landscape Trail and over bridge. As path emerges between hedges, bear right to continue on track through orchard. Leave main track towards farm buildings and continue straight ahead towards gate and cottages. Pass through kissing gate and after 20 metres join a public road. Turn right on lane and continue for around 100 metres to left-hand bend in road and track and High Weald Landscape Trail marker on right. For refreshment try the Hop Bine pub, the white weather-boarded building ahead (5).

To continue, take indicated path and join farm track. Immediately after an electricity transformer, leave track, walk down straight ahead between apple trees, following line of electricity poles. Leave orchard down brick steps to the right of an electricity pole in hedge line. Join road, turn right and, after around 100 metres, join a track on left, signed public bridleway. After some 500 metres, bridleway joins a road. Turn left and, after 10 metres, leave road on to track on left between cottages. At end of track, cross stile and, immediately after passing Swinglemead, keep to left-hand boundary of orchard. Look for gap in hedge and High Weald Landscape Trail marker. Pass through gap to follow right-hand boundary of field/orchard. Cross stile on right and follow right-hand boundary of field. When hedge ends, continue straight towards cottages and path between them, emerging opposite Matfield pond and green.

Fact Pack

Local products

Matfield – Maynards Farm Tel: 01892 723723. Dessert and cooking apples.
Foxhole Farm Tel: 01892 722132. 16 varieties of cookers and eaters.
Brenchley – Hazelden Tel: 01892 723389. PYO soft fruit, fruit, juices and flowers

Attractions

Brenchley– Marle Place Gardens. Tel: 01892 722304.
See page 12 for details.

Services

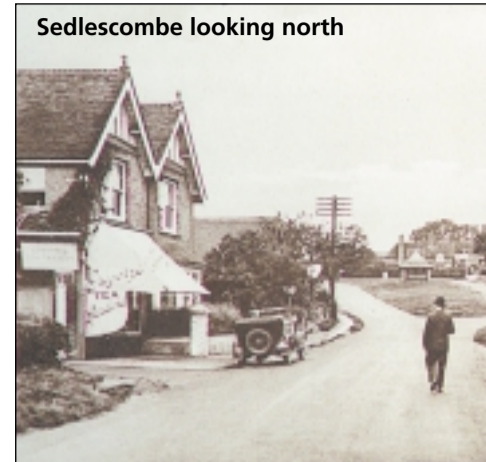
Matfield – Wheelwrights pub and Star Inn.
Brenchley – The Bull Inn (diversion of approx. 300 metres).
 Standing Cross pub/restaurant.
Petteridge – Hop Bine pub (diversion of approx. 50 metres).

Public Transport

Bus: No 6 (Not Sundays) & 297.
Train: Paddock Wood station on the Ashford-Tonbridge line.
 There is no public parking in Matfield.

Accommodation

Matfield – Mr & Mrs Jolly Maycotts, Matfield, Tonbridge TN12 7JU Tel: 01892 852592 Fax: 01892 853268.
Brenchley – C. J. O'Malley Woodlands Cottage, Fairmans Road, Brenchley TN12 7BB Tel: 01892 722707 Fax: 01892 724946.



The Bluebell Walk

Pleasant at any time of year, the wildflowers make spring a particularly good time to walk these paths. Good views all year round.

Start/Finish Sedlescombe Parish Church (TQ 777188)
Distance 4 miles. Allow around 2 hours.
Terrain Typical country walk with some hills, stiles and muddy paths (depending on the weather).
Waymarking Follow the yellow/black footpath discs.

1. From the parish church walk up the road and round a sharp right-handed bend. Immediately cross the busy road and go through the field gate. Walk down the track to cross a stile into the field and continue straight on to the end of the road to right. Bear very slightly right across the field to the right-hand corner of the small wood opposite.

2. Keeping the wood to the left, continue down the field to cross two stiles and a bridge. From here, bear very slightly left across the field to cross a stile into Beech Wood. Walk along the path through the wood and cross a stream before reaching a field.

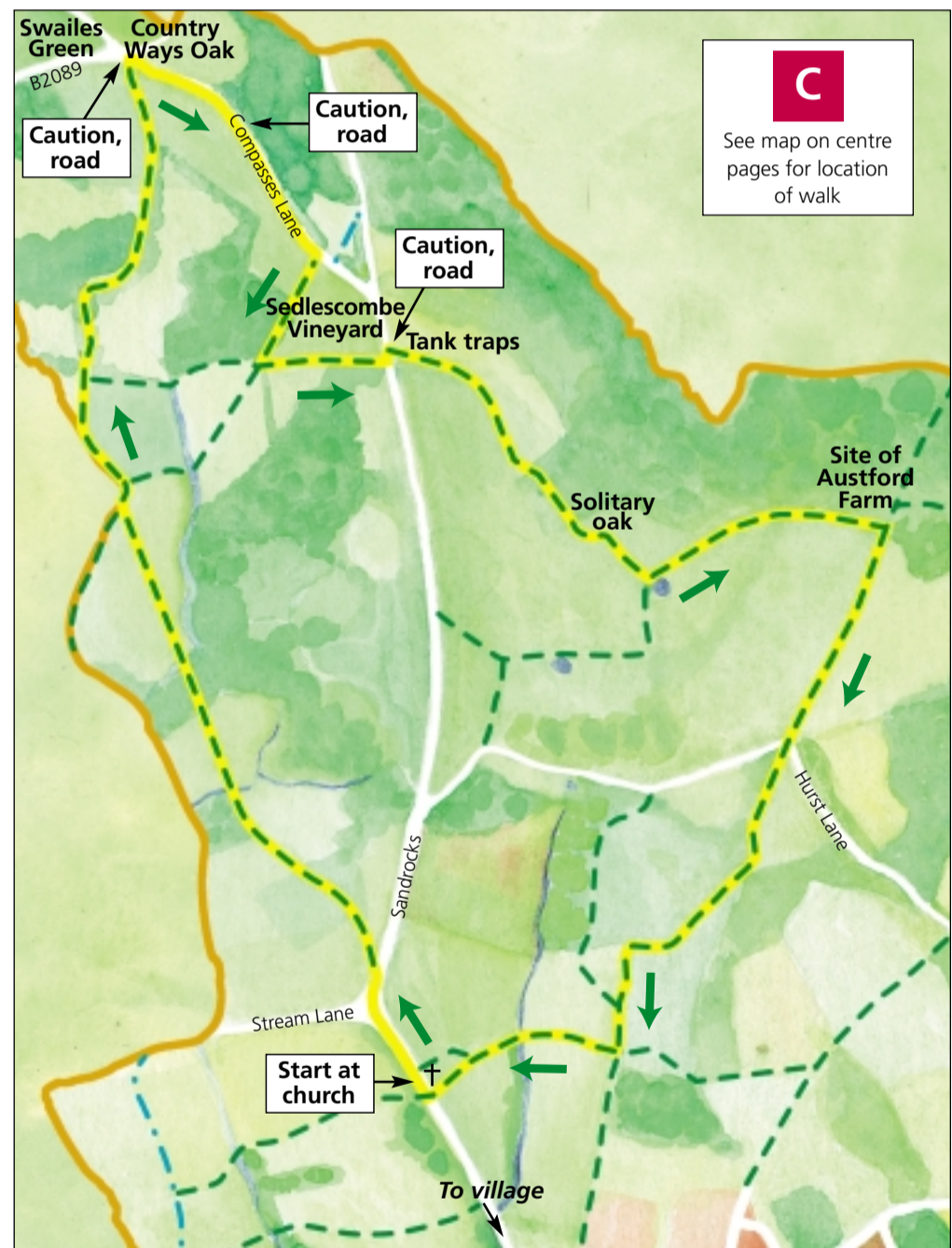
3. Walk diagonally across this field aiming towards a point around 50 metres in from the right-hand end of a conifer wood ahead. Go through one gateway and very shortly a second, on to a track. Walk ahead along the track to reach a busy road at Swailes Green. Turn right. Perhaps visit the workshop and showroom of Country Ways Oak.

4. Walk down Compasses Lane and take the footpath on the right. Cross the field diagonally to the left and on through the wood. At the end, turn left through a garden to reach Sedlescombe Vineyard.

Discover Sedlescombe

Saxon settlement's industrious past

Sedlescombe sits on a gentle, south-facing slope overlooking the river Brede valley and its tributary, the river Line. Over the centuries the village name has been spelled many ways, including Seddlescombe, Setlycombe and Selscomb. In the Domesday Book it appears as Salescome and Selescome. This comes from the Saxon words meaning 'settlement in valley'. The area has strong links with traditional industries including charcoal, gunpowder, brick and tile production, and forges producing cast-iron to make items such as cannons and cannon balls.



5. Leaving the vineyard, cross the road into the field opposite, keeping to the track until it turns sharply left. Here bear right to reach a narrow strip of trees.

6. Keeping left of these trees, walk towards a solitary Oak tree in the middle of a field ahead. Bear slightly right and uphill towards the footpath marker near trees and a pond.

7. Turn left at the pond and through the hedge opposite across the field, keeping the wood to the left. Walk until a track on the left,

leading into the wood. Turn right and walk up the hill to reach a stile and Hurst Lane.

8. Take the footpath opposite between fences, to reach a stile. Turn right on to an unmade road with bungalows on the left. The lane later turns sharply left. Find and pass through a gateway in the field corner. Keeping the hedge on the left, walk through the first field and, on the far side of a second field, turn right down to a stile and bridge. Then carry on up the track to reach the church and the starting point.



Further Information

'A Walk Through History in Sedlescombe' leaflet, 'Footpath Walks Around Sedlescombe' leaflet and the 'Sedlescombe Directory' are available from local businesses and Battle TIC. www.villagenet.co.uk

Fact Pack

Local Produce
 Country Ways Oak, Swailes Green
 Tel: 01580 830077.
www.countrywaysoak.co.uk. Furniture.

Sedlescombe Organic Vineyard, Staplecross
 Tel: 01580 830122.
www.EnglishOrganicWine.co.uk
 Wine & fruit juices.

Services
 Car park, toilets, hotel, pub, tearoom, post office and shops.

Public transport
 Bus: 349 limited service Monday to Saturday between Hastings and Tunbridge Wells; 19 - Saturday service.
 Bus Line 01273 474747
 Train: Battle station (4 miles) on the Hastings-London line has regular trains - 2 per hour. A few cars can park opposite the church.

Accommodation
 The Queen's Head, 01424 870228 (check)
 Brickwall Hotel, 01424 870253



The Walks

All of the walks are around the National Trust's property, Nymans Gardens.

Start Point All the walks start from the kissing gate at the south-eastern corner of Nymans Garden and go out across the parkland.

Distance and Times
Short Walk (Marked with red pointers). A relatively easy route of ¾ mile through the upper areas of Nymans Woods, taking in ancient woodland and many areas of wildflowers. There is also the choice of adding in the Bluebell Walk (½ mile) during spring.

Centenary Walk (Marked with yellow pointers). Opened along with the Short Walk to commemorate the National Trust centenary in 1995, and previously known as the 'Long Walk'. This route of 1½ miles takes in the lake, conifer avenue and cottage, along with many other parts of the woods. The Bluebell Walk (½ mile) can be added during spring.

Millennium Walk (Marked with orange pointers). Opened in summer 2000 to give access to parts of the estate previously unseen by most visitors. This walk looks back at the last 1,000-plus years of Nymans Woods' history, and the archaeological features found here, together with areas of great wildlife value. This walk is around 2 miles long.

High Weald Heritage

At the 'crossroads' at the bottom of the slope, the path that crosses is part of an old iron-workers' track which led from the village of Handcross to the mediaeval iron forge at the bottom of a large lake further into the woods. In places, the track is sunk deep between banks. This erosion is caused by many years of feet pounding up and down to the furnace.

A small valley with steep sides and a stream in the bottom can be seen to the right. This is Cow Wood Ghyll - 'ghyll' being a word used in the High Weald for a steep-sided valley - and this is one of three valleys that flow down to the lake at the centre of the woods.

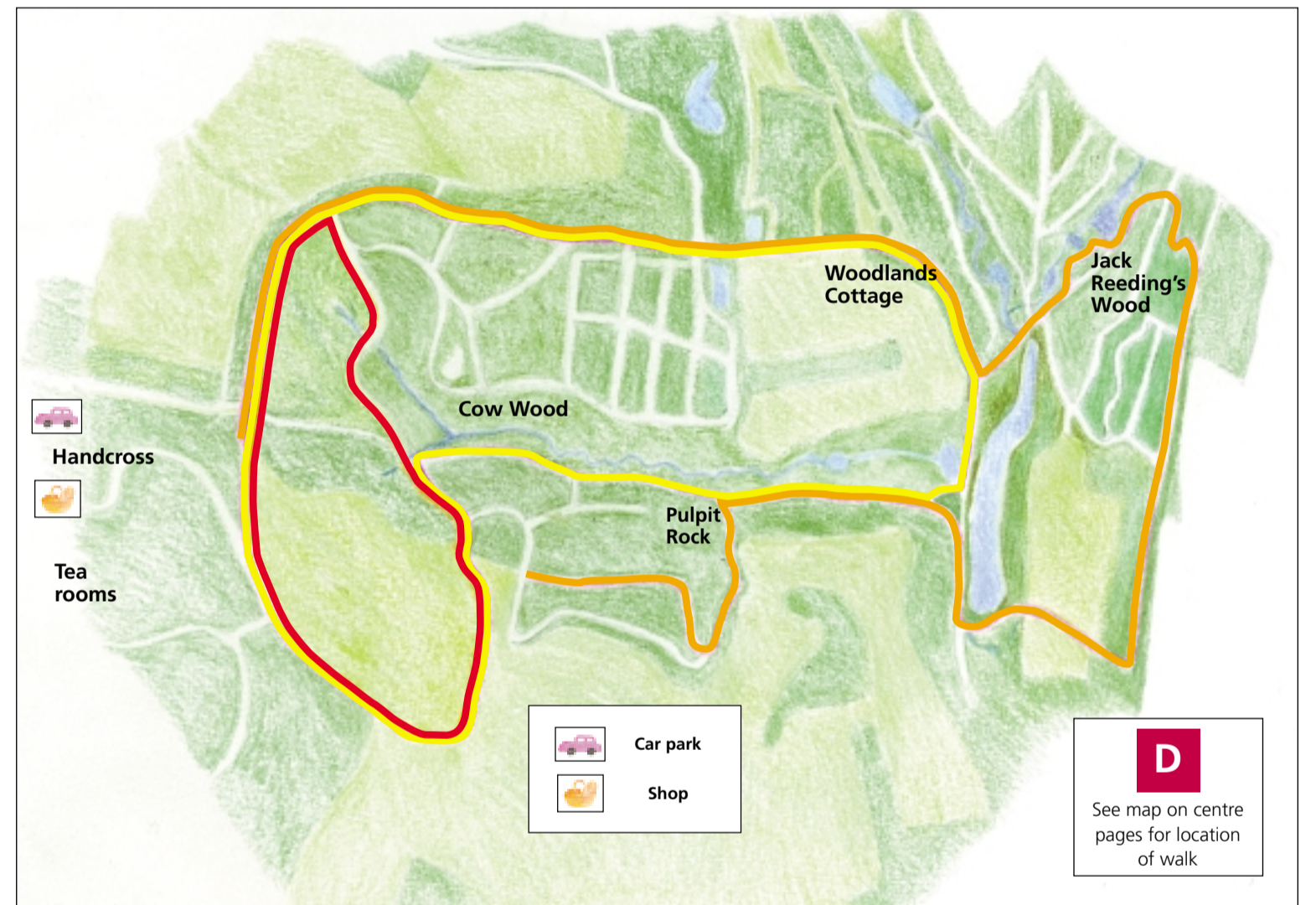
Also on the right are a series of sandstone rock faces, one of several outcrops of Tunbridge Wells sandstone occurring throughout the woods here. They are the same type as those more famous at Eridge and Wellington Rocks. These provide a home for rare mosses and ferns which otherwise grow only in the far west of Britain.

The largest conifer directly in front of the steps is a Wellingtonia, and was until recently the tallest tree in Sussex at 47 metres (154 ft) until it lost its top to lightning. It is now the third tallest, but is re-growing a new top. The conditions down here in the ghyll are ideal for some North American conifers and many Coast

Discover Handcross

Staging post for lovers of gardens

Handcross was once a popular staging post on the London to Brighton road, its history depicted in the village sign. It is now better known for the 30 acres of Nymans Gardens, run by the National Trust, as well as 20 acres of woodland and water gardens at The High Beeches, once owned by the Loder family. In the high street is Verralls, a fascinating shop that specialises in veteran, vintage and classic motorcycles and early transport.



Redwoods in this area are also among the tallest around.

A large rock on its own is Pulpit Rock from where the Reverend Pook is said to have preached.

A concrete spillway stands where an iron furnace once was, for which the lake was originally created. Very few remains are now obvious of what was once a thriving industry. Sandstone with iron in it, known as 'ironstone', was dug from pits throughout the woods here and beyond. The power of water dammed up in the lake drove hammers to break apart the stone and the bellows to drive a furnace that melted out the iron. Ponds such as this are known as 'hammer ponds' for this reason.

This area is known as Jack Reeding's Wood, named after a highwayman who used to rob people on the nearby London to Brighton road, and who had a cave near here as a hide-

out. He was the last person to be hanged in Handcross, in about 1815, outside the Red Lion Inn.

At the top of a track is Woodlands Cottage, the old gamekeeper's cottage house, built in 1868 (to replace a thatched cottage which burned down on this site). It was last inhabited in the 1950s. This area has been the centre of activity in the woods since the iron workings closed down and is still used as a base for volunteer work holidays each summer.

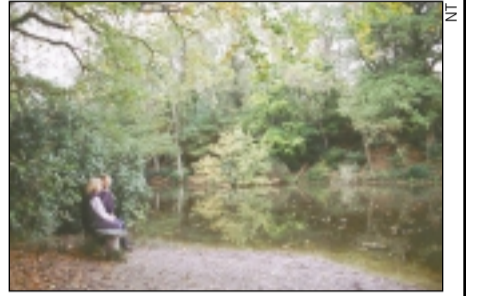
Also in this area are the dog kennels from a time when there was still a shoot on the land, an old game larder and also the old Sussex barn.

On the left, as the field ends, is an old marlpit, where clay was dug to mix with sandy topsoil in the field to improve its structure and fertility. Now a valuable wildlife pond, it is home to many wild plants and occasionally a colony of Grass Snakes.

Further Information

Woodland Walks leaflet available from the reception of Nymans Gardens (pictured below), priced £1.

High Weald Landscape Trail circular walks leaflet available free from West Sussex County Council.



Fact Pack

Local products
 The visitor centre shop sells copies of the High Weald Landscape Trail guidebook.

Attractions
 High Beeches and Nymans Garden - contact details and opening times can be found on page 12.

Services
 There are two pubs in Handcross village and a National Trust restaurant.

Public Transport
 Bus: Every 2 hours, (273) Monday to Saturday between Brighton and Crawley, and (271) between Crawley and Haywards Heath via Three Bridges rail station. No Sunday Service.
 Train: Balcombe station (4 miles) and Three Bridges station (6 miles).

News in brief

Car and fridge dumping

Local authorities in the High Weald AONB are worried about a possible increase in the illegal dumping of old cars and fridges. New European Union directives say they must have their pollutants, such as engine oil and CFC gas coolants, recycled or made safe before they are scrapped.

The 'End of Life Vehicle Directive' became law in April, increasing the cost of scrapping a vehicle from £20-40 to £70-90, but will only be enforced from 2007, the same as in other European countries. Regarding fridges, the Government is allocating funding to local authorities around the UK to store an estimated 2.7 million a year which might otherwise be illegally dumped to avoid collection fees.

National Trust

Officials from Britain's largest membership conservation organisation, the National Trust (NT), have met with the Countryside Agency and national Association of AONBs to discuss how they might work together to implement the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000). The NT is not strictly a public body that must 'have regard' for AONBs under the Act, but the trust does own land in almost all AONBs, has the same legal conservation objectives as for AONBs, and operates in a similar way. After a major re-organisation is completed during 2002, the NT is keen to help to produce long-term AONB Management Plans and policies, particularly addressing the impacts of global warming on the countryside.

Bypass rejection

A controversial issue for the High Weald AONB was the Hastings eastern bypass, proposed to boost the town's economy. Against expectations, the Government rejected the bypass. It said that 'evidently severe implications' for land of designated high environmental value – including a river valley, ancient woodland and medieval field systems - outweighed 'rather weak arguments' that the bypass would help to tackle poverty in Hastings town centre.

Three other related proposals were agreed, which will affect the AONB environment:

- building a dual-carriageway between Tonbridge and Pembury, and bypassing Lamberhurst, in Kent
- electrifying the Hastings-Ashford rail line for a faster and better quality service; and
- investigating rail service improvements between Hastings-London, via Wadhurst and Tonbridge.

In lieu of the bypass, the South East England Development Agency and local authorities have devised a Hastings and Bexhill re-generation package, costing around £400m over 10 years. It includes university provision, broadband internet access for business, education and the community, a package of linked road and rail transport improvements, and an 'enterprise hub' to provide business and new technology training.

Bewl Water



- Sailing, Canoeing, Climbing, Teambuilding and Development Training.
- Courses for Individuals and Groups, Children and Adults, Beginners to Advanced.
- Caring, friendly and professional staff.
- A truly outstanding location in the Heart of the High Weald.

Bewl Water Outdoor Centre
Bewl Water, Lamberhurst
Kent, TN3 8JH
01892 890716
bewl.water@kent.gov.uk
www.bewlwater.org



Events in the High Weald 2002

The events below represent a selection of events happening across the High Weald AONB. The information is collected well in advance of the event taking place, so it is always advisable to check with the event organiser or venue before visiting.

For further information about events in the area, please call the South East England Tourist Board on: 01892 540766 or email to: enquiries@seetb.org.uk

Attraction contact details are listed on pages 12 and 13.

Other information on visiting the area is available from the Tourist Information Centres listed on page 13.

17 May
The Ancient Landscape of Ashburnham Meadows

Rocks & Bunces Farm, Beech Estate, Battle Walk through the ancient wildflower meadows & copses – a secluded valley that has been managed traditionally. The farmland contains important remains of post-medieval iron industry. Can be muddy, bring sensible footwear & binoculars if you have them. Meet at Rocks Farm at 6.30pm. From Battle take B2204 for about 2 km then C road to Pontois Green & Woods Corner. Take 2nd right Lakehurst Lane to end of road marked 'Private Beech Estate' continue up drive to assembly point. Leader: Keith Datchler, Beech Estate.

Also:
29 May
8 June

18 May, 18 October
Hanging baskets workshop
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
With Lynda Bradford. Talk and demonstration to give you ideas for your summer garden, with plants to buy. Price includes a 10% discount voucher for Lynda's plants and Wilderness Wood hanging baskets or planters. 10.30am – 12.30pm Please book Adults £5.00 OAPs £4.00

18 & 19 May
Wild Wood Craft Festival
Wakehurst Place Tel: 01444 894066
www.kev.org
Spearheading the revival in interest in traditional rural skills and promoting the ecological and economic benefits of managing native woodland in a sustainable way. Variety of traditional and rural crafts demonstrations and wide range of hand made products.

19 May
Bluebell Walk
Bedgebury Pinetum Tel: 01580 211781
Discover what Bedgebury has to offer during the spring with Pinetum manager, Chris Reynolds. 2.30-4.30 pm. Meet in Pinetum car park at 2.30 pm. Adults £5, Senior Citizens £4, Friends of Bedgebury free. Please book.



25 May
Orchids & Iron
Rocks Farm, Beech Estate, Nr Battle
Distance 2.5 miles. A more leisurely look at the secluded valley taking time to spot the different Orchid varieties and browse the remains of the post-medieval iron workings. Can be muddy, bring sensible footwear. Meet at Rocks Farm (see entry 17 May)
Also:
1 June

25 May
Heathfield & District Agricultural Show
Little Tootingworth Farm, Broad Oak, Heathfield
Tel: 01435 830977
The largest 1 day agricultural show in the South East featuring main ring displays, trade stands, flower show, crafts, food marquee, children's attractions, music, cattle, horse, llama & sheep classes. A great day out for all the family. Adult £7.00 - £9.00 Child £2.00 - £4.00 Family £16.00 - £20.00

25 May, 14 September
Animal detectives
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Join Lyn Merrick to investigate the mammals, birds and invertebrates of the wood. 10.00am-12.30pm Please book Children (7-13) £5.80 Adults £2.50

29 May
Horsted Keynes – Lakes & Bluebell Line
Horsted Keynes
Distance: 6 miles (3 hours). Circular walk from Horsted Keynes, along Sussex Border Path to Broadhurst Manor, cinder Hill, Bluebell Railway, Mill House. Through woods & fields of the High Weald. Sturdy boots as can be muddy. Pubs in Horsted Keynes for lunch after walk. Not suitable for very young children. Written notes will be available for this walk. Meet at: Horsted Keynes village car park, near Post Office. Leader: Sally Godley, Hassocks Field Society. Public Transport: Metrobus 270 Haywards Heath to East Grinstead – hourly – please check times.

2 June
Family Wildlife Event
2 - 5 pm
Plovers Meadow – on B2102 between Blackboys & Cross in Hand
Sussex Wildlife Trust's annual event with attractions including bats, hawks & owls, reptiles & amphibians, an impressive woodland & lakeside walk, conservation & environmental exhibitions, pond dipping, plant stall, raffle, refreshments. Adults £2.50, children free.

2 June
Friends of Pestolozzi Estate Walk
Pestolozzi Children's Village Trust, Sedlescombe Tel: 01424 870444
www.Pestolozzi.org.uk
Walk the estate at 3 pm.

2 - 3 June
Battle Medieval Fair
Abbey Green, Battle
Tel: 01424 774447
A medieval fair with participants in period costume, maypole dancing. May Queen crowning and entertainment throughout the day. There are food stalls and many other catering outlets. Many items for sale including crafts, clothing & jewellery. Admission free.

3 June
Village Fete
Matfield Green
Fete will begin at 4 pm. At 6.30 pm there will be a barn dance, fireworks and Beacon lit at 10.00 pm.

3 June
Jubilee celebration
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Details to be announced.

4 June
Jubilee Celebration
Brenchley High Street
At 3 pm there will be an open-air party, children's entertainers. a band and refreshments.

5 June
Ashdown Forest Walk, showing its many aspects
10 am
Distance: 4 miles (2 miles) Circular walk on Ashdown Forest, seeing streams, ponds, woodland, waterfall, wildlife. Chelwood Vachery & stunning views. Can be muddy. Pub in Chelwood Gate & Garden Centre café at Wych Cross for refreshments. Meet at Long Car park, southern side of A22, north of Nutley, 3rd car park on left, or south of Wych Cross, 1st on right. Leader: Sally Godley, Hassocks Field Society.



5 June, 29 October
Castaway
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Join an expedition deep into the wood: have fun building shelters and cooking dampers over a campfire. Bring sausages and a picnic lunch. Adults welcome to accompany/help. 11.30am-2.30pm Children (6-11) £6.50 Please book

6 June, 30 October
Survive in the wild
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Discover how to stay alive in the woods; activities to learn and test survival skills! 10.30am-12am Children (8-13) £4.40 Adults £2.50 Please book

6 June
Survival Skills
Marshley Harbour Woods, Pembury
Come and learn how to survive in the wild, with games and shelter building. Suitable for children over 11 yrs. Cost £2. 10.30 am-3.30pm. Contact Sue Nicholas at Kent High Weald Project 01580 715918 for more details.

7 June
Bug hunts
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Hunt for the creepy crawlies of the wood. Bring bug box and identification book if possible. 10.30 am – 12am Children (6-11) £4.40 Adults £2.50 Please book

8 June
Deer, Batts & Beech in the High Weald
10 am
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 & a look at landscape & wildlife along the way. Bring a picnic (though a pub stop in the latter stages is likely). Meet at Stonegate railway station car park. Leader: Steve Diserens, ESCC Countryside Management. donation of £1 to ESCC Voluntary Rangers appreciated. Non car users free. Public transport: Trains to start point.

8 June
Orchids and native plants
Bedgebury Pinetum
Join Field Botanist, Sue Buckingham for an introduction to the plants at Bedgebury. 10.30am-12.30pm. Meet at Pinetum Car Park at 10.30 am. Adults £7.50, Senior citizens £6.50. Contact the shop on 01580 211781. Please book.

8 - 9 June
Bewl Water Garden Show
Bewl Water, nr Lamberhurst Tel: 01892 890661
www.bewl.co.uk
A show for exhibiting and selling plants, garden ornaments, outdoor furniture and garden related products.
16 June Bewl Vintage Car Rally
13 July Firework & Laser Symphony Concert
21 September Dragon Boat Racing
Please phone for further details.

15 June
National Moths night
Buchan Country Park, Crawley
Tel: 01293 542088
Discover the nighttime world of Moths. See Light Traps, Wine Ropes and Moth Sugar in Action. 8 pm-midnight.

15 June
Wild Flowers
Barnetts Wood, Powder Mill Lane, High Brooms
A two-hour stroll led by local botanist, Mary Page to see the flowers of the woodland and meadows. Meet Wheelers field at the junction of Powder Mill Lane and Barnetts Way at 10.30 am. For further information phone 01892 525682.

News in brief

Grants Directory
A new guide to the local, regional and national grants that will support projects in rural areas is now available from the High Weald AONB Unit 01580 879500.

Incinerator proposal
AONB residents in Mountfield and nearby Battle continue to fight an East Sussex County Council (ESCC) proposal to build a waste incinerator near the village, rather than in an urban area near the coast at Bexhill. ESCC received more than 13,000 objections to the first draft of its county Waste Local Plan, of which over 1,000 came from the Battle area. The Mountfield Heritage Group aim to resist an Energy from Waste (EfW) incinerator, on an old 'brown-field' gypsum mine, during the plan's second draft and at a mandatory Government inquiry. Experts are divided. Reasons against are protect-



15 June
Annual Pelargonium Show
Village Hall, Brede, Rye Tel: 01580 880467
A show featuring displays of pelargoniums. There will also be a tombola & refreshments will be available. Adults £0.50

15 - 16 June
Pestolozzi International Festival of Music, Crafts & Storytelling
Pestolozzi Children's Village Trust, Sedlescombe Tel: 01424 870444
www.pestolozzi.org.uk
A festival of international music, dance, exhibitions & craft stalls from Asia, Africa & England. Ethnic & traditional foods & teas will be available. Please phone for details.

16 June
Working Horse Trust Sponsored Ride
Eridge
A ride in and around Eridge. For more information contact Richard Branscombe on 01892 750105.

17 June, 4 October
An Evening of Murder & Mystery on the Golden Arrow
The Bluebell Railway, Sheffield Park
Tel: 01732 862353
www.the-company-upfront.co.uk
An evening of murder, mystery & mayhem aboard the Golden Arrow, Pullman dining train with a 3-course meal. £64.00

21 - 30 June
Battle Festival
Various venues, Battle Tel: 01424 773721
The 42nd Battle Festival is a mixed arts and community event featuring classical & contemporary drama, cabaret, cinema, poetry, street theatre, children's activities & other outdoor events. Please phone for details.

25 June
Bats & Moths
Frant Village Hall and Nap Wood
With speakers – Mike Holmes and Martin Love, local experts. (Part of the East Sussex Tree Warden Programme) From 8-10.30 pm. Find out the important role trees & woodland play as a habitat for some of Britain's rare mammals and invertebrates and see the bats and moths in the setting of splendid Sussex woodland.

30 June
Lamberhurst Circular Walk
Contact: Kent High Weald Project, 01580 715918
From the village a climb to Lamberhurst Down and on through vineyards and farmland to Furnace Mill. Then to Snaggs Well and Own House before returning to Lamberhurst. Cost: £2 which goes to charity and will take approx 2.5 hours. Meet at public car park behind the Chequers Inn, Lamberhurst at 2.00 pm (OS ref TQ676362)

30 June
Golden Jubilee Tunbridge Wells Circular Challenge Walk
Tunbridge Wells
Complete the 27-mile circular walk in one day and get a limited edition commemorative certificate. £5. Contact Ernie Bishop on 01580 879341 for any entry form and more information.

5 July
Go Batty at Hilbert Woods
Hilbert Road, Tunbridge Wells
An evening walk led by Lynne Flower of the Kent Bat Group. Starts at 8.15 pm at the main gate on Hilbert Road. Contact Kenneth Greenway at KHWP 01580 715918.

5 July
Opera at Scotney
Scotney Castle Garden, Lamberhurst
0870 240 3017 www.nationaltrust.org.uk
Performances of La Boheme & scenes from The Savoy in the walled garden. Please bring a picnic & seating. Adult £20.00

for balanced conservation, partly through planning controls and secure funding. The partnership will focus on issues such as sustainable tourism, transport, agriculture and the community, planning controls, and heritage protection.

Recreational horse-riding
Senior members of the High Weald Bridleways Group and the British Horse Society have held a successful meeting with the AONB chairman and the AONB officer to discuss the riders' ambitions to improve the routes network in the area. The riders, on behalf of the Rural Futures Group and Rotherfield Community Tourism Project, discussed the contribution of existing equestrian businesses to the local economy, and possibilities for developing recreational riding further as part of a new AONB Management Plan by 2004.

Walk more – feel the difference

Walking is the perfect activity for health. It can make you feel good; give you more energy; help you sleep better; help you reduce stress; keep your heart 'strong'; reduce blood pressure and help you to manage your weight. As a rule, to obtain all these health benefits, a walk should last about 30 minutes and cover approximately 1½ miles. Here are some simple suggestions to make any walk a healthier walk and make brisk walking part of your life.

- Build a walk into your journey to work
- Get off the bus early
- Park away from the office
- Avoid using a lift or escalator, if you can
- Save the expense of driving to the shops – walk instead
- Walk the dog for longer and more regularly. If you don't have one borrow a friend's.
- Enjoy a 'walking lunch' – walk to the park and eat your sandwiches.



There are opportunities to meet up with others who are also interested in walking to improve their health. Under the 'Walking the Way to Health' scheme – a partnership between the British Heart Foundation, The Countryside Agency, New Opportunities Fund, and Kia Cars – individuals, organisations and the health service are setting up healthy walking groups.

These groups organise 'healthy' walks. Each walk is led by a minimum of two voluntary walk leaders; one at the front who will keep up with the fastest walker and one at the back who will walk at the pace of the slowest walker. This way, nobody is left behind.

The walks are on flat, even terrain and are suitable for all ages and fitness levels. Each walk starts with a 5-minute gentle stroll, as a warm up. Then follows a 20 – 30 minute brisk walk: (each walker is encouraged to walk at their own brisk pace, as if they are late for an appointment). Finally the cool down section of the walk, consisting of a 5-minute gentle stroll.

The majority of the walks are circular, with the finish near to a café or similar facility, to allow walkers to have a drink and a chat afterwards.

Anyone interested in setting up a scheme is provided with free training on running and promoting a scheme and promotional material; display equipment, posters and postcards.

'Walk & Talk Cranbrook' is a scheme already up and running in the Kent High Weald. It meets outside the Vestry Hall at the corner of Stone Street and the High Street and is proving to be a very sociable pastime - so why not come along and try it out.

Kenneth Greenway

Further Information

Walk and Talk Cranbrook, Kenneth Greenway
Kent High Weald Project 01580 715918

Walking the Way to Health Initiative
01242 533258 or www.whi.org.uk.

Bedgebury Pinetum



Have you ever thought about visiting Bedgebury Pinetum in Kent? Situated in the High Weald of Kent, the Pinetum is the largest and most diverse collection of specimen conifers on a single site in the world. Moreover, Bedgebury is a place of peace, tranquillity and visual splendour unequalled anywhere in Kent. In spring, when the rhododendrons are in flower, the Pinetum blazes with colour. In summer the lilies on the lake are superb; autumn colours can extend well into December when, if a stiff hoar frost or dusting of snow appears, the landscape becomes a winter wonderland. Offering a magnificent landscape of hills, streams and lakes Bedgebury's trees too are quite different. All year round there are myriad shades of green in the conifers, interspersed with clever planting of spring bulbs, waters edge plants and a multitude of specially selected, and more colourful, trees and shrubs throughout the collection. Bedgebury Pinetum is open every day from 10 – 5. Entrance: Adults £3, concessions £2.50 & Children £1.20. Visitor Centre and Shop open daily. Pinetum Pantry open every day except Monday. For further details and events please call: 01580 211781.



Pashley Manor Gardens

Winner of HHA / Christie's Garden of the Year '99 Ticehurst, East Sussex. Offers a sumptuous blend of romantic landscaping, imaginative plantings and fine old trees, fountains, springs and large ponds. This is a quintessentially English Garden of a very individual character.

Special events including Sculpture and Botanical Art Exhibitions. Licensed terrace restaurant, plants sales and gift-shop

Open 9th April – 28th September Tues-Thurs, Sat & BH Mons. 11am – 5pm.

Tel: 01580 200888

www.pashleymanorgardens.com



We make attractive garden furniture from local oak and chestnut Rose arches, trellises, garden constructions Chestnut poles, hurdles, fencing, mulch

Also gift shop, refreshments, woodland walks, bluebells, picnic and play areas.

Wilderness Wood

Open daily 10am - 5pm on A272 in Hadlow Down, near Uckfield

Phone 01825 830509 for a catalogue, or visit www.wildernesswood.co.uk



7 July

A Midsummer Nights Dream
Bayham Abbey, nr Tunbridge Wells
Tel: 01892 890381

An exhilarating production by the Chapter House Theatre Company. Performance begins at 7.30 pm. Tickets Adults £10, Concessions and English Heritage members £6.

13 July

1066 Country Walk Part II – Battle to Rye
Distance: 15 miles (8 hours). The 2nd part of the 1066 Country Walk takes in some lovely views of the Brede Valley and the coast, ending in the picturesque form of Rye, full of cobbled streets & colourful history. A linear walk, returning to the start point by train. Possible pub stop en route, but bring a picnic. Meet at Battle Station at 9.30 am. Leader: Marion Hamilton, ESCC Countryside Management. Donation of £1 to ESCC Voluntary Rangers appreciated. Non car-users free. Public Transport: Trains to start point.

14 July

Buchan Park Country Fair
Buchan Park, Crawley
Tel: 01293 542088
Local Products from Wine to Hazel Hurdles are the focus for the day. Discover the benefits of buying locally.
11 am–4 pm.

14 July

Medieval mischief
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
The Lords of the Rings return for more medieval fun. Try your hand at archery, try arms and armour. 10.30am – 4pm Adults £3.10 OAPs £2.50 Children £1.80

18 July

A Walk on Ashdown Forest
Distance: 6 – miles (5 hours approx). Walk across the Forest to see the Airman's Grave. Up to Camp Hill. Lunch stop at Crow & Gate pub (or picnic nearby). Suitable for children over 9 years. Dogs welcome under control. Meet at Fairwarp Village, park by the village green at 10.30 am. Leader: Betty Turner, 01323 416176. Public Transport: Buses 729 (Brighton/Tunbridge Wells) on A26 Road.

20 July

Pop Concert: Bodiam Castle
Bodiam Castle, nr Robertsbridge
Tel: 0870 240 3017 www.nationaltrust.org.uk
An open-air concert with the Counterfeit Stones & Utter Madness & finishing with a spectacular fireworks finale. Please bring a picnic & seating. Adult £15.00

20 July

Matfield Village Fete and Horticultural Show
Matfield
On the Green, Matfield from 12.00 noon.

27 July

Local and Natural History of Tunbridge Wells Common
Thackeray's House, Tunbridge Wells
Tel: 01892 526121 ext 2105
A walk led by Ian Beavis on behalf of the Friends of Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons. Meet 10.30 am at Thackeray's House. Phone for further information.

30 July

Mammals & Masks
Bedgebury Pinetum Tel: 01580 211781
Be a mammal detective for the day and make a mask for camouflage. 10.00am-12.00pm. Suitable for children over 4 years. Children £5, Adults free. Meet office car park at 10.00 am. Please book.

1 August

Ponds & Dragons
Bedgebury Pinetum
Tel: 01580 211781
Become pond detectives and hunt for dragonflies. 10.00am-12.00pm. Suitable for children over 5 years. Children £5, Adults free. Meet office car park at 10.00am.

3 August

Summer Flower Show
Town Croft, Hartfield
Tel: 01892 770328

Event held in a marquee with flowers, vegetables, cooking & children's activities. There are also outside sideshows, craft stalls, raffles, a tombola & plants. Refreshments & ice creams for sale. Beer tent & barn dance in the evening. Please phone for details.

3 August

Classical Music: Last night of the Proms
Batemans, Burwash Tel: 0870 240 3017
www.nationaltrust.org.uk
Enjoy superb classical music alongside Ruyard Kipling's home. The music will be played by the English National Orchestra. A traditional 'Last night of the Proms' finale with spectacular fireworks. Dress in anything from T-shirts to tiaras. Adults £16.00

4 August

Pop Concert: 60s & 70s
Open Air pop concert featuring Voulez-Vous & The Queen B with a fireworks finale. Please bring seating, a picnic. Adult £15.00

3 August

Annual Fuchsia Show
Village Hall, Brede, Rye
Tel: 01580 880467
A show featuring displays of fuchsias with a tombola & refreshments will be available. Adults £0.50

3 August

Moths by moonlight
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Meet the night creatures of the wood; includes "sugaring" tree trunks and identifying visitors to moth traps. Bring a torch. Includes hot drink in the barn. With Simon Curson. 7.30–9.15pm Please book Adults £3.95 OAPs £3.45 Children £2.95

6, 13, 20, 27 August

Wild at art
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Make your own creations from wood and other materials. With local artist / teacher Lyn Merrick. Adults welcome to accompany / help. 10am - 12.30pm Children (6-12) £5.80 Adults £2.50 Please book

8 August

Survival Skills
Cinderhill Wood, Matfield
Come and learn how to survive in the wild, with games and shelter building. Suitable for children over 11 years 10.30 am-3.30pm. Contact Sue Nicholas at Kent High Weald Project on 01580 715918. Cost £2. Please book.

12 August, 28 August

Teddy Bears' picnics
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
An exploration for bears and their owners, with simple games and a woodland picnic. Bring carrier bag and picnic tea. 3pm – 4.30pm. £4.40 per bear (to be accompanied by a child of 3-8) (Accompanying adults normal prices.) Please book

13 August

Native American Tree Hunt
Bedgebury Pinetum
Tel: 01580 211781
Spend the morning as a native American tribe member. Authentic dress essential. 10.00am-12.00pm. Suitable for children over 4 years. Children £4, Adults free. Meet Pinetum car park at 10.00 am. Please book.

17 August

Open Air Concert: Swinging on Broadway
Sheffield Park Garden, nr Uckfield
Tel: 0870 240 3017
www.nationaltrust.org.uk
Enjoy an exciting evening of musical entertainment overlooking this magnificent landscape garden. Featuring the Pasadena Roof Orchestra & supported by the jiving Lindy Hoppers, this concert is guaranteed to get your toes tapping. Also, a spectacular fireworks finale. Adults £15.00

18 August

Rotherfield Nature Walk
Distance 1 mile (1 hour). An open afternoon with regular guided walks around a nature reserve to see the wildflowers, trees, birds, butterflies, insects & other wildlife & explanations of wildlife management. Display boards & information. Meet at Rotherfield Nature Reserve entrance on B2101 at Highcross at 1 pm. Leader: John Hicks, Powdermill Trust. Donations to Powdermill Trust appreciated.

18 August

Natural History of Hargate Forest
Hargate Forest, nr Tunbridge Wells
Tel: 01892 532825
A walk through the site led by Ian Beavis on behalf of the Friends of Hargate Forest. Meet 10.30 am at the main forest access on Broadwater Down near to the junction with Eridge Road. Contact Glen Wilson for further information.

24 - 26 August

Brede Flower Festival
St George's Church, Brede, Rye
Tel: 01424 882222
The 23rd annual Brede Flower Festival featuring displays, lunches, stalls, teas & a raffles. Admission free.

26 August

Le Marche
Town Centre, Heathfield
Tel : 01435 866400
An Anglo-French street market with food, craft stalls & street entertainment including jazz & silver bands, street theatre, circus skills & a petanque challenge. Admission free.

26 August

Treasure trail
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
A special family treasure hunt to exercise your legs, brainpower and map-reading skills. Win a £10 prize voucher; small prizes for all. 11am-4 pm £1.50 extra per family



26 August

Holiday Monday Family Ramble
Distance 8 miles (4 hours). A family summer country ramble, including parts of the Saxon Shire Way, the 1066 Walk and by the Royal Military Canal. The time allows a comfortable picnic or pub snacks break. Meet at Visitors Centre, Hastings Country Park. Leader: Jim Austen, Fairlight Down Conservation Society. Donation to FDCS appreciated.

29 August

Survival Skills at Barnetts Wood LNR
nr Tunbridge Wells
Come and learn how to survive in the wild, with games and shelter building. Suitable for children over 11 years. Cost £2. 10.30am-3.30pm. Contact Sue Nicholas at Kent High Weald Project on 01580 715918 to book a place and for more information.

1 September

Working with Wood
Bough Beech, nr Penshurst
Traditional woodcrafts including Charcoal production, Pole lathing and Mallet making. There is also a chance to watch birds and pond dip. Contact Kent Wildlife Trust on 01622 622012 for more information and to book a place.

7 - 22 September

Rye Festival
Various venues, Rye Tel: 01797 331015
A festival of music, literary & visual arts with concerts, exhibitions, master classes & workshops. There will also be walks, tours, children's events, illustrated talks, lectures & drama performances. Adult \$5.00 - £12.00

15 September

Cinderhill Discovery Day
Cinderhill Woods, Matfield
Come and join the fun, try your hand at different traditional woodland crafts. Explore the fungi, insects and rare Heathland habitat of this beautiful community woodland with the experts. 10.00am-3.00pm. Contact Kent High Weald Project on 01580 715918 for more information.

25 September

Food for Free with the RHS
Bedgebury Pinetum. Hunt and identify fungi in the Pinetum. 1.30 - 3.30pm. Members £7.95, non-members £9.95. Meet Pinetum car park 1.30pm. Call RHS on 0207 8213408 for more information and to book a place.

28 September, 11, 20 & 28 October

Woodland fungi – death or dinner?
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Please book for all events
2.15-4.15pm Adults £5.00 OAPs £4.50 Children (6-15) £3.00

5 October

Fungal fry-up
10am-1pm Adults £10.00 OAPs £9.00
6 October
Follow-up fungus hunt
10.30am-1.00pm Adults £5.50 OAPs £5.00 Children (6-15) £3.50
12 October
Fungi for starters
10am-4pm Adults £22.00 OAPs £20.00 (Includes coffee/tea.)

29 September

Three Parishes walk with Alan Dane
Pembury, Tudeley and Capel
A five-mile walk from Pembury Old Church to Tudeley Church and then to Capel. Excellent view of Medway Valley and Greensand Ridge. The walk will take approx 2.5 hours. Meet at Pembury Old Church (off the A228) at 2.00pm. Contact Kent High Weald Project on 01580 715918 to book a place. £2 donation to charity.

5 October (to be confirmed)

Autumn Flower Show
Village Hall, Hartfield
Tel: 01892 770328
Flower & vegetable show, domestic & hand-craft, refreshments, raffle, tombola, plants for sale.
Adults £0.50

12 - 13 October

Battle Re-enactment: Invasion 1066!
Battle Abbey & Battlefield
Tel: 01424 773792
Eleventh-century warriors & mounted knights skirmish & fight a ferocious battle. Other attractions include a living encampment, music & falconry. Please phone for details.

12 - 13 October

Harvest Celebration
Tenterden Vineyard Park Tel: 01580 763033
www.englishwines.co.uk
A harvest celebration with an owl display, bouncy castle & tractor rides.
Please phone for further details.



19 October (to be confirmed)

Pumpkin Festival
Tulleys Farm, Turners Hill Tel: 01342 718472
www.tulleysfarm.com www.halloweenand-pumpkins.com
The festival will feature games such as maggot racing and a pumpkin shy. Carved pumpkins can be brought along and entered into the carving competition. Refreshments available including a barbecue. Free admission to the festival but there are games, which have charges for entry. Please phone for details.

26 October (to be confirmed)

Halloween Spook Hunt
Tulleys Farm, Turners Hill 01342 718472
www.tulleysfarm.com
www.halloweenandpumpkins.com
30 spooky characters hidden around the tea-room, garden & courtyard for visitors to find. Refreshments including a barbecue available. Please phone for details.

31 October

Hallowe'en creations
Wilderness Wood Tel: 01825 830509
www.wildernesswood.co.uk
Come into the deep dark woods and make spooky Hallowe'en decorations! 10.30am-12am & 2.30 - 4pm Children (6-11) £4.40 Adults £2.50. Please book.

9 November

Rye Bonfire
Rye Town Centre Tel: 01797 223136
A torchlit procession through the town, by Rye Bonfire Society & other societies from Sussex. The event will end with a firework display & a bonfire lit by a guest celebrity. Admission free.

23 November

Blacksmith's Procession
Various venues, Mayfield Tel: 01622 858460
A torchlit procession including costumed performers with re-enactment of local tradition & legend. Admission free.

New publications

There are a huge number of publications that provide information on walking, cycling and riding in the AONB. There is insufficient room to publish details of all of these guides in the 'Anvil', however a list is available from the High Weald AONB Unit and further information will shortly be available on www.highweald.org

Below are some recently published guides:

Short Walks in the Rye Countryside leaflet – six circular walks offering an opportunity to explore the flat coastal plains of Rye Bay and the surrounding rolling hills of High Weald AONB. Free.

Exploring Iden – a guide to public access around the ancient Sussex settlement. Details of local pubs, shops and B&Bs provided. Free. Outlets: Rye Bay Countryside Office 01797 226488 rangers@ryebay.demon.co.uk or the Rye and Battle tourist information centres

New Tunbridge Wells Circular Guide Book – a new and exciting way to explore AONB countryside around the historic spa town of Royal Tunbridge Wells. The Tunbridge Wells Circular is 27.5 miles long and is clearly way-marked so it can be walked in either direction. The guide book contains large scale maps showing the entire route, several shorter walks, together with extensive information. Price £5.50 including p&p.

Walk the Bounds and Eat the View – 9 short circular walks in the Kent area of the High Weald. Details of local producers and B&Bs that provide a local produce breakfast are included. Outlets: Kent High Weald Project 01580 715 918 www.kenthighwealdproject.org/walk or the Cranbrook and Tunbridge Wells tourist information centres

Walk South East England – 20 walks focused on the regions best recreation routes. Details of accommodation that offer a 'Walkers Welcome' are included. Outlets: South East England Tourist Board 01892 540766 www.southeastwalks.com

Horse Riding in Kent & Surrey: Dry Hill Rides – four loops with nine access links, providing rides of up to 15.5 miles of around four hours. Routes use bridleways and sections of quiet minor roads between Markbeech, Marsh Green and Dormansland in Sevenoaks district, on the High Weald's northern boundary with Kent and Surrey. Outlets: 50p from local shops and tourist information centres, or Judith Roberts, Environmental Management Unit, Kent County Council. 01622 221558. judith.roberts@kent.gov.uk

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

Heathlands in the Weald

Free leaflet

Sandrock in the Weald

Free leaflet

Orchards in the Weald

Free leaflet

Made in the High Weald – a guide to countryside products and producers

Free guide

High Weald AONB Management Plan (1995)

£3.50 inc p&p

The High Weald – Exploring the Landscape of the AONB (1994)

£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
or email request for free publications to: info@highweald.org



Fun stuff

WILDLIFE WORDSEARCH

Find the animals in the wordsearch then help them find their way home

L	E	L	T	E	E	B	G	A	T	S	U	I	E	O
L	I	T	T	L	E	O	W	L	C	L	M	M	E	J
U	D	E	T	W	E	N	P	A	K	F	Z	L	W	C
O	U	P	X	L	W	B	D	B	I	D	T	A	N	E
Q	P	P	G	D	B	H	T	X	Y	E	T	M	D	T
Y	L	F	N	O	G	A	R	D	E	E	O	I	N	T
W	I	A	P	B	K	O	S	B	R	P	D	L	T	A
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L	U	A	A	V	T	G	T	M	R	Q	O	E	J	W
O	B	W	I	M	Q	O	A	Q	L	N	U	D	F	R
U	Y	D	A	L	E	R	R	I	U	Q	S	E	C	A
S	A	N	K	E	S	T	R	E	L	U	E	E	F	E
E	J	D	H	M	H	S	Q	M	J	S	B	S	H	L

- DIVINGBEETLE
- DORMOUSE
- DRAGONFLY
- EARWIG
- KESTREL
- NEWT
- LITTLEOWL
- MILLIPEDE
- SQUIRREL
- STAGBEETLE
- WATERBOATMAN
- WOODLOUSE



Logpile



Pond



Woodland

News in brief

Wild Boars about

As many as 400 Wild Boars could be living free in woodlands along the High Weald AONB's Kent and East Sussex border. Signs of boar have recently been seen as far north as Tonbridge and Paddock Wood in Kent. A growing population has spread from its stronghold in the parishes of Appledore, Stone-cum-Ebony and Wittersham in south-west Kent, and Beckley, Peasmarsh and Udimore in eastern East Sussex.

They escaped from Wild Boar farms where they are bred for their meat, from abattoirs prior to slaughtering, and from private animal collections. They became extinct as a native British species 300 years ago due to over-hunting and habitat loss. Experts say that a boar's rooting behaviour benefits woodlands by improving soil fertility and providing a seed bed, but that they are considered a pest by many landowners because they damage agricultural crops.

Visit www.britishwildboar.org.uk on the internet, for more information about this secretive and largely nocturnal animal.

Hay – what a result!

Hay from traditionally managed Weald meadows can provide a range of livestock with nutritional feeding value comparable to commercial hay, according to laboratory results from last summer's harvest. Local seed merchants Agrifactors (Southern) Ltd discovered that some meadow hay, with a variety of grass species, was easily digestible and of high-energy value. Routine laboratory analysis by Agrifactors on re-growth crop in August 2001, showed that it had a digestible value of 68.1% (68% is very good for hay), and a metabolisable energy value of 10.5 per kilo (9.5 is rated as very good). Agrifactors works closely with the High Weald AONB Unit and Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group under a partnership called the Weald Meadows Initiative. The initiative works proactively to identify ways of adding value to grassland products.

Garden birds

Hundreds of households in the High Weald took part in the 22nd national Big Garden Birdwatch, organised by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, in 2001. For one hour over one weekend, everyone counted the birds coming into their garden. The High Weald had the same top three birds as for Britain – Starling was top, House Sparrow second, and Blue Tit third.

Average numbers of each species per garden were higher here than in Britain as a whole, but long-term local trends show Blue Tits increasing, but House Sparrows and Starlings declining substantially. This year (2002) the number of watchers has tripled, so what will the results be?

Gatwick Airport

Government ministers support the building of three new runways in South East England over the next 30 years. This might include a second at Gatwick Airport near the AONB's western boundary with Crawley. The Government anticipates a projected rise in passenger numbers – despite the present slump in demand and resulting job losses after September 11 – and is producing a White Paper for consultation. Gatwick Airport consultative committee has warned that only an Act of Parliament could overturn an agreement between West Sussex County Council and the British Airports Authority not to build before 2019.

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
Alex Harper
01580 879399
email: alex.harper@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: David Bigden
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 (ESCC)
A countryside management service responsible for the management of Weirwood Reservoir, Challey Common and 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.
Contact: Simon Fathers
01797 226488
email: simon@ryebay.demon.co.uk
www.ryebay.demon.co.uk

Surrey County Council
Contact: David Sayce
01483 517592
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

Weald Heathlands Initiative
The Initiative provides advice on the restoration and management of heathlands.
Contact: Caroline Fitzgerald
01580 720851 or
Richard Allum 01293 544118
email: r.allum@highweald.org
c.fitzgerald@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: East-Sussex@btcv.org.uk
Surrey
Alan Osborn 020 8541 7157
email: Surrey@btcv.org.uk

PRESSURE GROUPS

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

Sussex Wildlife Trust
01273 492630
enquiries@sussexwt.org.uk
www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/sussex

Kent Wildlife Trust
01622 662012
kentwildlife@kix.co.uk
www.kentwildlife.org.uk

CPRE (Sussex branch)
01825 890975
cpresussex@aol.com
www.cpre.org.uk

CPRE (Kent branch)
01233 813172
info@cprekent.org.uk
www.cprekent.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, Bexleyheath, 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
Membership: Lorrimer, Main Road, Icklesham, Winchelsea, East Sussex, TN36 4BS
01424 813722
www.susos.org.uk

Kent Ornithological Society
Membership: 61 Alpha Road, Birchington, Kent, CT7 9ED
www.kentos.org.uk

RSPCA Headquarters
0870 5555 999
www.rspca.org.uk

Sussex Moth Group
01273 551216

The Sussex Mammal Group
01243 554018

The Kent Mammal Group
01795 423240

Sussex Badger Society
01243 265905

Sussex Bat Group
01273 464440
www.batbox.com/sbg

Kent Bat Group
01474 833164
www.kentbatgroup.org.uk

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
www.rspb.org.uk

RSPB Youth
01767 680551

British Dragonfly Society
01243 552030
www.dragonflysoc.org.uk

RAMSAK Ltd
01580 241349
www.ramsak-farming.co.uk
Contracting and hire of agricultural machinery in East Sussex and Kent

British Deer Society
01425 655434
h.q@bds.org.uk www.bds.org.uk

LEISURE

Ramblers Association
For details of local groups
020 7339 8500
www.ramblers.org.uk
ramblers@london.ramblers.org.uk

Sussex Gardens Trust/Kent Gardens Trust
Information on gardens open on an occasional basis for charity
01483 211535
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
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Weald & Downland Open Air Museum
01243 811348
www.wealldown.co.uk

Royal Institute of British Architects
South East Region
01892 515878

The Society for the Protections of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
020 7377 1644
www.spab.org.uk

The Georgian Group
020 7387 1720

The Victorian Society
020 8994 1019
www.victorian-society.org.uk

The Churches Conservation Trust
020 7973 3615
www.visitchurches.org.uk

The above is not a comprehensive list. We will gladly receive suggestions for other groups which could be included in the next edition of the 'High Weald Anvil'.

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FoodFair 2002
Saturday 29 - Sunday 30 June

WoodFair 2002
Friday 20 - Sunday 22 September

Bentley Wildfowl & Motor Museum
Halland, nr Lewes, East Sussex

Contact:
Jane Stevens
Local Products Officer
Tel: 01825 840870

Artists of the Weald

Many 'Anvil' readers who have commented on previous editions want to know more about creative local people, such as artists, who make a living from interpreting the outstanding landscape for others to enjoy. Ian Spindley talks to three local artists about which features of the AONB countryside and way of life particularly inspire them to paint...

Sylvia Manuel
Wall Cottage
Leicester Square
Penshurst, Kent TN 11 8BJ
Tel: 01892 870675

"I try to capture the sheer 'Englishness' and historic heritage of the Kentish High Weald," says Sylvia Manuel of Penshurst, a 14th century village between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells.

"I'm fortunate to live in a beautiful house, in an attractive village, surrounded by outstanding countryside. Through my paintings of things that relate to the landscape, but not necessarily of the landscape itself, I want to share the feeling of pleasure and nostalgia that the area's character evokes."

"My paintings are reasonably traditional and representational, rather than surreal, modern or impressionist. An apple looks like an apple. What you see is largely what you get, except that I hope that my still-lives are full of life. I

want the viewer to imagine that they can walk into the picture and be part of the story or situation I'm trying to show," Sylvia explains.

To create this feeling or a particular mood, Sylvia uses a variety of surfaces and all types of paint and pastels. She emphasises colours, dark and light tones and depth of perspective.

"I find modern art too challenging to be pleasing. Many people, particularly in this area, want memories of a gentler countryside or way of life on their walls, because they have to live with the outside world how it is now."

Sylvia exhibits at a Tunbridge Wells gallery, and her 'flowers in a conservatory' painting was recently featured in a national Society of Women Artists' exhibition.

Sylvia, now retired, discovered her artistic talent 16 years ago when she finished her career as a social worker. Her artists' work included commissioned paintings for the BBC's headquarters in London.



David Holden
The Cuckfield Gallery
High Street, Cuckfield
Nr Haywards Heath RH17 5JX
01444 443433

Well-known, man-made landmarks amid the distinctive Sussex countryside of Weald or Down make David Holden's watercolour paintings instantly recognisable and highly saleable both at home and abroad.

David tries to reflect the landscape's history, culture and beauty – whether it's Pooh Bridge in Ashdown Forest, the old town of Rye overlooking the marshes, or ancient sunken lanes that form many miles of woodland walks.

"I want to depict how the architecture of each place has evolved

subtly and uniquely in different ways over the centuries to fit with its surrounding landscape. People who buy my paintings are particularly familiar with, sensitive to, and protective of, their local built and natural environs: parochial, but in the best possible way, towards Sussex," says David.

Most famous for his 'Country Collection' of 75 Sussex scenes that are sold as prints and cards throughout the county, David has no formal artists' training, and only began painting four years ago. He had a life-changing Christian calling and gave up his career as a Burgess Hill estate agent.

But he does come from an artistic family. His great aunt was Edith Holden whose 1906 diary became a

bestseller when it was published as 'The Country Diary Of An Edwardian Lady. His great-grandparents were both professional artists, and his cousin restores masterpieces in London's Tate Gallery.

David continues: *"I can barely remember art lessons at school. People always find it hard to believe that basically I went out, bought some watercolours, took out some photographs, sat down and started painting."*

"My wife Sheila and I have always loved the Sussex countryside and its architecture. Now we have the privilege of living in a traditional medieval hall-house, between the Weald and Downs, which we restored a few years ago."

Valerie Brinton
The Cottage
High Street, Wadhurst
East Sussex TN 5 6AJ
(Next to Meridian Art Co.)
01892 783331

"My favourite places in the High Weald countryside are local dumps, breakers' yards and derelict workplaces. I can paint landscapes and flowers, but it's the story of great industrial heritage now in decline that tickles my fancy," says Val.

"I've had an empathy for railways, factories, forges and old mechanical machinery ever since I was a baby in India. My father, who was a travelling gramophone engineer, would take me and my bottle to warm by the fire-plate of

moving steam engines."

Raised in India, Val came to school in England and, at 14, won a scholarship for an experimental course at Harrow School of Art. At 17, she declined diploma courses in sculpture and fine arts to return to India due to family pressure.

For the next 40-odd years she was a commercial artist, working freelance and for agencies, for individuals and corporate clients, using a vast range of disciplines and materials. This included sculpture, exhibition designs, cartoons and even triumphal arches for Queen Elizabeth's visit to Madras.

"When I married, I was never a good mensahib on the social scene. I'd become used to working with, and enjoying the company of, tradespeople and artists from lower

backgrounds. We came to Wadhurst 23 years ago, mainly so my husband could commute by rail into London, and for our children's education."

Val was widowed but continued with her art work – designing and painting sets for Wadhurst Dramatic Club, being a founder of the village's annual September Art Exhibition (now in its sixth year), and capturing the High Weald's industrial heritage for posterity.

"I want to record what was once important and did its job, but which is now dilapidated, changed beyond recognition and attracts little sympathy. A nostalgia for the iron, cloth and hop industries: could agriculture sadly be my next subject area?"

"I usually work on site, first producing a pastel sketch for position



and proportion. Then I layer oils on canvas to create the colour, shape and texture of corroded rust, swirls of dust and a realistic landscape. I

also like to add a little twist, a motif, to the story I'm showing – perhaps an empty, crushed beer can in a hop-field."