

# High Weald Anvil<sup>2010</sup>

A **free** guide to one of England's finest landscapes



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**HIGH WEALD**  
AREA of OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

## Welcome



In the last couple of years the term "carbon footprint" has become popular with the media and politicians as a catchphrase for our impact on the world's climate. However, carbon footprints are not the focus for this year's *Anvil*. Instead we have decided to look at "footprints" in a broader sense.

The High Weald is a landscape that has been shaped by man – and creatures – over generations, so we have delved into the area's history to explore some of the lasting "footprints" made by previous generations. Some we value and are thankful for, while others are more of a conundrum.

Dinosaurs were the first to tramp the sandstones which form the underlying geology of the area – and their footprints can still be seen where the rock has been exposed. Later, the Anglo-Saxons left perhaps the most significant footprint on the landscape – the small, irregular-shaped fields, scattered settlements and drove routes. The Victorians brought us the landscaped garden – and with it the rhododendron, one of the area's most invasive plant species. Deer are another mixed blessing.

Delving into the past leaves me wondering what footprint our generation will leave on the landscape. All the talk of climate change tends to be negative – but what about the positive? My vision, and the one set out in the High Weald Management Plan, is a living, working landscape with a long and bright future. To achieve this vision, we need collective action – hence our A-Z of suggestions on pages 14 and 15.

*Sylvia Tidy*

Councillor Sylvia Tidy,  
Chairman, High Weald Joint Advisory Committee

The High Weald Anvil has been published by the **High Weald AONB Unit**. The Unit is a specialist team that advises on the management of this nationally valued landscape. It furthers understanding of the area's special qualities and enables action to conserve it.

The **High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee** (a partnership of 15 local authorities, Natural England and organisations representing community, recreation, wildlife and farming interests) guides the work of the High Weald AONB Unit.



Written by High Weald AONB Unit staff.  
Editor Jennifer Stuart-Smith.

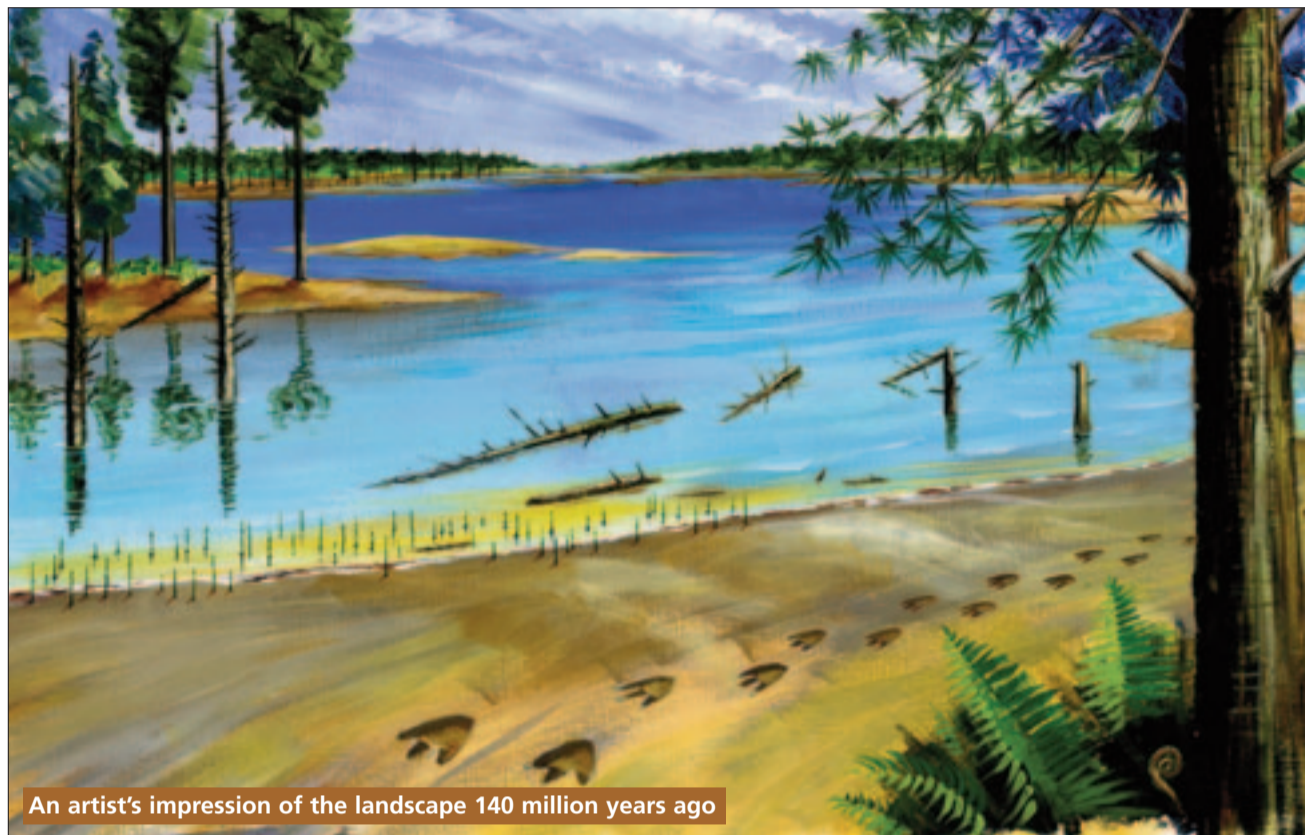
Published by the High Weald AONB Unit,  
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Funded by members of the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee (see back page).

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# The pocket history of a dinosaur



An artist's impression of the landscape 140 million years ago

Who could imagine that a chance find, on a stroll through the village of Cuckfield, would form the basis of modern palaeontology...

**O**n a sunny morning in 1822, while Dr Gideon Mantell, an obstetrician, was making a house call in Cuckfield, his wife Ann decided to take a stroll through the village. She passed a pile of rocks on the roadside, that were about to be used to repair the road, and noticed an unusual object embedded in one of them. On closer examination she realised it was a fossil, so put it in her pocket to show her husband later. Little did she know, but her discovery was to be one of the most significant discoveries in the whole of the history of dinosaurs.



*Hylaeosaurus*, meaning "Wealden lizard"

Dr Mantell, a keen fossil collector, immediately recognised the object as a fossil tooth, but was unable to match it to any known creature. He managed to trace the rock to a quarry in Whitemans Green, north of Cuckfield, where he found more teeth and other remains. Spurred on by excitement, he widened his search to quarries in Tilgate Forest where he found more teeth and bones from this unknown creature. From the age of the rock, he realised that it must have died about 130 million years ago – long before mammals evolved.

Dr Mantell sent the teeth and fossil



© The Natural History Museum, London

In 1834 Dr Mantell heard that *Iguanodon* remains had been discovered in a pit in Maidstone. Before he could get there, the rock had been blasted with dynamite, but a large number of bones remained embedded in a slab of rock. The quarry owner wanted £25 for the slab, so Dr Mantell's friends clubbed together and bought it for him.

He set about reconstructing the *Iguanodon* on paper, from the bones held in the slab of rock. The rock became known as the "Maidstone Slab" and was placed on display in Mantell's personal museum where it became known as the "Mantell-Piece". The Mantell-Piece is now on display at the Natural History Museum in London.

bones to two famous scientists – Baron Georges Cuvier in Paris, and Dr William Buckland, Professor of Geology at Oxford University. Baron Cuvier wrote back suggesting that the remains were from a rhinoceros. Buckland thought they were from a large fish, and suggested Mantell give up his research.

A few weeks later, on a visit to the Royal College of Surgeons in London, he was shown the skeleton of an iguana that Charles Darwin had recently brought back from the West Indies. The iguana's teeth were almost identical to those discovered by Mantell, only much smaller.



*Iguanodon*

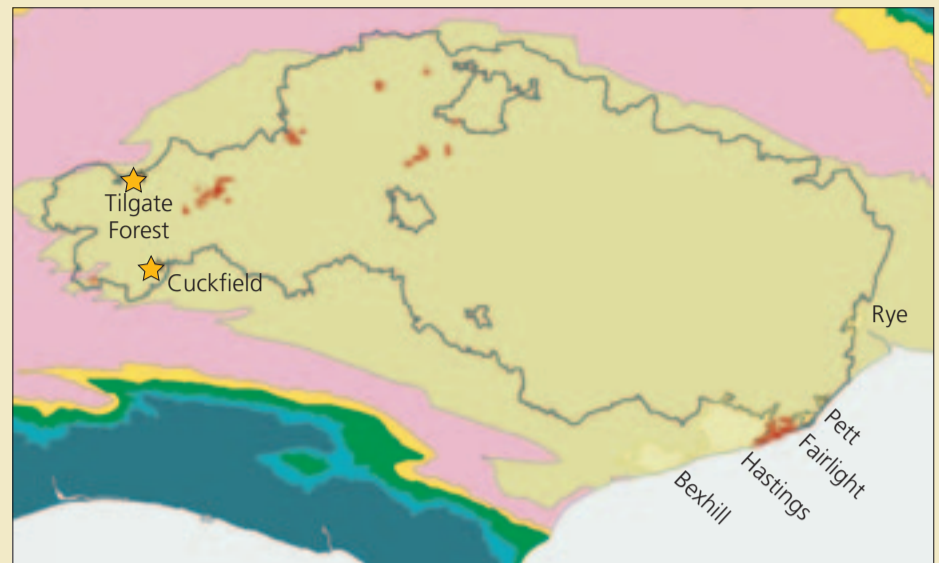
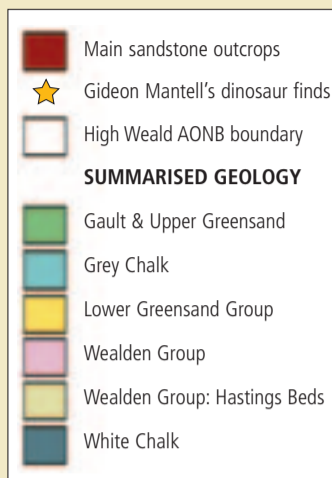
Dr Mantell realised he had found the remains of a giant reptile, not unlike an iguana, so named the creature *Iguanodon*, meaning literally "iguana tooth". *Iguanodon* thus became the first dinosaur in the world to be recognised and named. In 1832 Dr Mantell discovered another dinosaur in Tilgate Forest and named it *Hylaeosaurus*, meaning "Wealden lizard".

Gideon Mantell went on to search for, discover and identify many other dinosaur remains in his unofficial role as the World's first-ever dinosaur hunter.

# The making of the High Weald

The Hastings Group, a series of clay and sand deposits that were laid down in the Lower Cretaceous period, makes up the underlying geology of the High Weald, now exposed by the wearing away of other sediments such as Weald clay, lower greensand and chalk. It is a complex group of sediments, formed when dinosaurs still roamed the area, and includes sandstones deposited in fresh-water conditions and mudstones deposited in brackish (semi-marine) conditions. It is the differing resistance of the soft clays and harder sandstones of the Hastings Group that has given us the High Weald's rolling hills and steep-sided gills.

There are many places where you can see the area's underlying geology: active and disused quarries and pits as well as road cuttings and "natural exposures" as they are called, such as Harrison's Rocks and the banks of streams. However, the best exposures are found along the coast where you can find fish, shark, plant and reptile fossils – and even dinosaur footprints.



Roy Shepherd showing fossils to a young enthusiast

## Present day dinosaur hunters

**R**oy Shepherd discovered his passion for fossil hunting at the age of four when he found a strange object in his father's garden shed, in Arundel, West Sussex. "It was an oddly shaped stone, golden in colour, with stripes running from top to bottom," says Roy. His father told him that it was called a Shepherd's Crown and that it was millions of years old.

"I asked him how it got its name, and he pointed to the patterns on the stone's surface that resembled the outline of a crown. He said that shepherds found them in the hills while caring for their animals."

Although Roy decided against a career in palaeontology, his hobby has had a huge influence on the direction his life has taken. From bonding during a fossil-hunting trip with his now-wife Lu, to appearing on national television, to his setting up the website "Discovering Fossils" in 2002.

The website is taking up an increasing amount of Roy's time, he says: "Since 2003 Discovering Fossils has grown to attract up to 3,000 daily visitors, created countless opportunities and some fantastic contacts in the process."

To keep up with public demand for information and advice on fossil hunting, the best locations and the most exciting finds, the site has been re-launched and now features panoramic views of cliffs, identifying the different layers – a challenging task even for a specialist. Creating the panorama for Beachy Head took Roy over four weeks.

For Roy, the coastal locations at the eastern end of the High Weald are fantastic because of the combination of easily accessible geological sites as well as stunning scenery.

A sea urchin fossil or Shepherd's Crown



He recommends searching on the exposed foreshore and among the boulders and shingle. "At low tide, if shingle isn't covering its surface, well-preserved dinosaur footprints can be seen in the Ashdown Sandstone on the foreshore."

The most common fossils found at Fairlight and Pett Level are bivalve *Neomiodon*, which look like a modern-day clam, and are visible on the surface of foreshore boulders. Plant remains are also common, in particular roots belonging to horsetail plants. Although dinosaur remains are rare, the teeth, jaws, vertebrae, ribs and limb bones of the large two-legged *Iguanodon*, have all been found.

So, what is it that keeps Roy's passion for fossil hunting alive? "It's those elusive moments of elation, having spent hours searching, when finally your eyes glance upon a clue," he says. "The edge of a bone, a collection of scales, or perhaps the tip of a fossilised horsetail stem. With a carefully delivered hammer strike the rock splits and the specimen is revealed... Nothing beats that feeling of success and wonder."

## LOOK OUT FOR...



Dinosaur footprints in coastal locations. The footprint cast above shows *Iguanodon's* characteristic short, wide toes, ideally suited for carrying the dinosaur's heavy body and tail



Rippled sandstone, which reveals the sediment was formed in shallow water. It can sometimes be spotted in the stone used for the area's vernacular buildings



Disused quarries and pits, where you can easily see the area's underlying geology

**i** [www.discoveringfossils.co.uk](http://www.discoveringfossils.co.uk)  
[www.dinohunters.com](http://www.dinohunters.com)  
[www.nhm.ac.uk/jdsml/nature-online/dino-directory](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/jdsml/nature-online/dino-directory)



**Roe Deer** – one of two native deer. It was nearly wiped out during the 18th century through over-hunting but populations have thrived since its re-introduction



© Mike Taylor www.seeing.org.uk

**Fallow Deer** – introduced by the Normans for food and hunting. Common in the High Weald – and the species most often involved in traffic accidents



© Clive Burrow www.seeing.org.uk

# Elusive icon of

**H**oof prints in the Wealden mud, a rustling in the bushes – maybe even a glimpse of fawn-brown coat. Though they may be hard to spot, there are deer all around you in the woods of the High Weald. Deer which, with their twitching nostrils and stamping feet, have yet to forget the Medieval hunters who came close to wiping them out.

Deer have been happily roaming the High Weald since the last ice age. First there were our native Roe and Red Deer then, since the arrival of the Normans, the Fallow Deer. In the 12th and 13th centuries, populations boomed as a great wave of deer parks, chases and forests were created by the wealthy landowners of the time. Deer park and deer numbers have fluctuated ever since as land management has changed and several non-indigenous species have been introduced in the last 200 years. During the two World Wars, when manpower was limited, deer parks were left in disrepair and many of these “exotic” species escaped and are now wild.

In the last 40 years, all species of wild deer have thrived; their geographic spread has expanded and their numbers have increased rapidly – in part, because of our milder winters.

Of all the mammals native to the High Weald, it is the largest – the deer – that holds the most iconic status

As one of the most wooded areas in the country – 25 per cent of the area is woodland – the High Weald is a stronghold for deer.

The booming deer population may seem like cause to celebrate, but these doe-eyed creatures can be a prickly subject – despite being a popular and iconic symbol. Grazing by excessive numbers of wild deer can result in severe damage to trees in both new native woodlands and in commercial forests. They can also prevent natural tree regeneration and reduce valuable ground layer plant species. Crops and gardens are also damaged by deer.

However, reasonable deer numbers can play a positive role. Many people enjoy seeing deer in the countryside and a degree of grazing or browsing can benefit a habitat by creating open space and controlling competitive ground layer species. The ideal scenario is to get a balance between enough and too many deer.

If deer are a problem where you live, there

are numerous “smelly” deterrents you can try, for example: lion dung, sweaty socks, chemical agents. Or, there are mechanical worriers: sonic sirens, streamers and flashing light units. With both methods, success is questionable, and deer can become used to such deterrents. The only effective control is proper, yet expensive, deer fencing put in by qualified persons – or electric fencing can be effective against larger deer species. Both types need regular maintenance.

With deer thriving, and with few natural predators, it's clear that population control is the main issue that needs to be addressed. This may jar with some people's idea of letting nature take its course, but deer experts believe that responsible “culling” is the best all-round solution, both for humans and deer.

“There is increasing recognition by a broad range of people that population control is needed,” says Hew Prendergast, Director of Ashdown Forest and chairman of the local deer

forum. Most areas already carry out deer shooting to a certain extent. If done properly and legally, the shooting is carried out by a stalker with nationally recognised qualifications who will be able to shoot the deer safely and humanely with a rifle.

Deer, however appealing, are clearly having a negative effect in the High Weald, says Dr Prendergast. “It is clear that the population level is having a damaging effect on the area's ancient woodlands and gardens as well as being the cause of a very high number of road accidents.”

So, what can those of us who don't have a deer stalking licence do to help? “What would really help is if more people ate venison, therefore creating a demand for the meat and making population control a more economically viable activity”, says Dr Prendergast. Venison is low in cholesterol, high in iron, contains Omega 3 and contains no antibiotics or growth promoters. And of course it's local.

It's a strange paradox, but the best way to keep the High Weald woodlands rustling with deer is to hunt them for their meat. Just as in medieval times deer were both revered and hunted, so it is today.

## Safety Tips



Deer are responsible for a high number of road traffic accidents, particularly where their habitat is crossed by major roads. The A22 between Forest Row and Nutley is the worst stretch of road in Britain for collisions with deer. Ashdown Forest Rangers deal with, on average, 320 accidents a year. Many more accidents are dealt with by the police and others go unreported.

### Understanding deer behaviour

- Deer accidents can occur at any time of year but tend to peak in May, October and November
- Sunset to midnight and around sunrise are the busiest times, as deer move between feeding and resting grounds
- Fallow Deer usually travel in small groups; more deer may follow the first one you see

### Change the way you drive

- The “deer” or “wild animal” sign is there for a reason
- Deer can appear almost instantly
- If your headlights are on, use full-beam when you can, but dip them if you see deer as they may ‘freeze’
- Be prepared to stop. Try not to swerve to avoid deer, as hitting oncoming traffic or another obstacle may have more serious consequences

### If the worst happens

- Stop somewhere safe, off the road ideally. If you can't get off the road, put on your hazard lights and put up a warning triangle if you have one
- Report the accident to the police. If the deer is blocking the road and is causing an obstruction or is a danger to traffic call 999 and ask for the police. Tell them if the deer is still alive. If the deer is alive, but not a danger to road-users, call the police on the non-emergency number 0845 6070999. They should be able to contact someone who can assist with an injured deer
- Do not approach an injured deer – it could be dangerous
- If you see a dead deer by the road, report it to the waste disposal department of the relevant district council



A 2007 survey estimated that there were as many as 74,000 accidents involving deer across the country annually

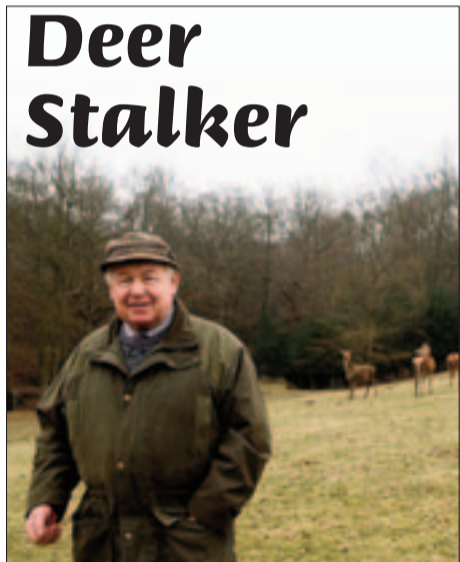


**Muntjac Deer** – Asiatic species that is spreading quickly throughout the High Weald. It is about the size of a badger



**Sika Deer** – a medium-sized Asiatic species with a very localised distribution in the High Weald

# the High Weald



## Deer Stalker

**F**or Fred Marshall, who has worked as a stalker for local estates since the 1950s, deer management is a way of life.

Fred stalks all year round – there are different seasons for different species – and he largely seeks out deer in the early morning

before there are many people around. Once the deer have been shot or “culled”, carcasses are processed under strict hygiene procedures before being stored in a chiller. They will then be sent to a game dealer.

Fred says that estimating deer numbers is notoriously hard, even using modern scientific methods, but believes there has been a decline in deer numbers since the Ashdown Forest Deer Forum was formed. “But culling has to be an ongoing process, and only continued effort will bring results,” he adds.

There also has to be co-operation between adjacent areas and farming estates to ensure that landowners who are not involved in the culling scheme do not end up harbouring deer. “Deer, particularly Fallow, are canny,” says Fred. “If there is a safe haven they will find it”.

Besides being a deer stalker for more than half a century, Fred pioneered live deer exports to New Zealand for the establishment of commercial deer farms and was also involved in the re-introduction of Chinese Pere David Deer to China after the breed died out there, 150 years ago.

## LOOK OUT FOR...



**Browsing:** where deer feed on plant tips and shoots. This can significantly inhibit tree growth



**Thick brash covering recently-cut coppice stools:** this stops deer feeding on the new tree shoots

Large banks and ditches which can indicate an old park “pale”: a pale marked the boundary of the deer enclosure and stopped the deer jumping out. It consisted of an earth bank four to five feet high, topped with wooden fencing, with a deep ditch on the inner forest side

**Deer-related place names:** these can indicate the location of parks, chases and forests



## Parks, chases and forests

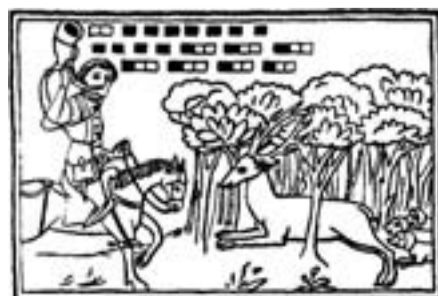
**P**arks, chases – forests owned by lords or those of high rank – and Royal Forests served many purposes, one of which was to enclose deer for hunting.

Hunting was both a sport and a way of acquiring venison which was highly desirable to noble households and as a gift to curry favour. Deer enclosures were usually created on land with poor soil, hence the high number of such parks in the High Weald. With its sandy and clayey soils it has never been an area of high productivity.

The deer parks were largely inhabited by Fallow Deer introduced by the Normans. Deer management included, as it does today, restricting other farming activities at important times of the year such as the rutting and calving season; supplementary feeding when food was scarce, for example in hard winters; digging watering holes; maintaining hays (open areas for grazing); building banks, ditches and

fences as well as temporary lodges for fodder storage and shelter for gamekeepers. Ashdown Forest, Broadwater Forest, St Leonard’s Forest and Tilgate Forest were all managed for deer in medieval times.

*Medieval hunting: a 14th-century print of a hunter blowing a horn and a stag in the forest. Also present is a tabulature showing the rhythm of the horn signal*



**i** [www.bds.org.uk](http://www.bds.org.uk)  
[www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk](http://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk)  
[www.deercollisions.co.uk](http://www.deercollisions.co.uk)  
[www.ashdownforest.org](http://www.ashdownforest.org)  
[www.basc.org.uk](http://www.basc.org.uk)

## Grants available for local landscape action

Small grants of up to £750 are currently available from the High Weald Sustainable Development Fund for projects that promote, conserve or help people to enjoy the High Weald. Anyone can apply for a grant and assistance with completing the application form will be provided. Match funding of at least £250 will be required. Projects awarded a grant must be completed by 31 March 2011.

**i** [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org) for project ideas. For guidance on project eligibility please email [s.nicholas@highweald.org](mailto:s.nicholas@highweald.org) with a project summary.



## £1.2 million available to rural businesses and communities

Grants of up to £50,000 to help revitalise and support rural businesses and rural communities are currently available from local "Leader Action Groups" – partnerships of local people and organisations working for the regeneration of the rural area.

The action groups have secured the funding from the Rural Development Programme for England which is funded by Defra and the EU. In 2010 they have over £300,000 to award.

**i** For Rother and Wealden districts [www.warrpartnership.org.uk](http://www.warrpartnership.org.uk)  
E: [info@warrpartnership.org.uk](mailto:info@warrpartnership.org.uk)  
T: 01424 787400  
For Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling [www.westkentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.westkentpartnership.org.uk)  
E: [westkentleader@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:westkentleader@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

## Ashdown Forest favoured by dogs



A recent study (September 2008 to September 2009) of visitor use of Ashdown Forest has revealed that:

- The majority of people (60 per cent) visit for the primary purpose of dog-walking, followed by walking (30 per cent)
- Most visitors are regular users of the forest, with 73.3 per cent visiting once a day or once a week
- Most use the forest all year round
- 56.7 per cent would be prepared to pay a parking charge
- The biggest attraction is the forest's "openness" (28 per cent), "views" (20.5 per cent) and "natural beauty" (10.3 per cent)
- The area has approximately 2.91 million visitors per annum, largely from an area of 13km radius

# News in brief

## Iron Age settlement unearthed



© Kent Archaeological Project

**A**rchaeologists working alongside South East Water on the route of a new pipeline between Kipping's Cross service reservoir and Pembury in Kent have uncovered the remains of an Iron Age settlement. Postholes, pits and ditches, along with pieces of pottery that can be dated to the late Iron Age have been found on the 4.6km (2.9 mile) route, suggesting that this was the site of an Iron Age roundhouse. Discoveries further along the route include a medieval enclosure and five circular, fire-scorched pits, which were probably ancient hearths, kilns or used for charcoal production.

## Smokehouse restored

**A** meat smokehouse dating from the 1740s has been painstakingly restored by its local community. The Highbrook community, in West Sussex, has replaced rotten timbers, repointed brickwork, applied fresh lime plaster to the walls and installed a solid floor. Outside seating has also been built to give walkers passing through the hamlet a place to sit and admire the smokehouse next to Highbrook's historic church. The project has been funded by the Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme (page 16).



## 'Viceroy' comes to a National Trust shop near you



**S**hoppers can now buy the Westerham Brewery's Viceroy India Pale Ale, flavoured using hops from the National Trust's Little Scotney Estate, at independent local outlets as well as National Trust restaurants and tea rooms. The beer is one of a range of branded food and drink products that were launched by the National Trust in October 2009.

The ale's name was inspired by Lord Curzon, one-time Viceroy of India who donated properties, including Bodiam Castle, to the Trust. By purchasing beer made with local hops, shoppers can help to maintain the increasingly rare Kent and Sussex hop gardens.

Breweries that use local hops can be found at [www.highweald.org/localproducts](http://www.highweald.org/localproducts).

**i** Viceroy is available in 500ml bottles and on draught from Westerham Brewery [www.westerhambrewery.co.uk](http://www.westerhambrewery.co.uk). A case of twelve bottles retails at £23.



© National Trust

## Butterfly recording goes through the roof

Local people have made 32,181 butterfly sightings in the Rother Woods area during 2009. The unprecedented response came after the Rother Woods Project asked people to send in details of their butterfly sightings. The sightings will help Butterfly Conservation, who manage the project, to build up an accurate picture of butterfly populations in the eastern High Weald. The data will be combined with national data to report back to government on the state of our environment. The information will also be fed back to landowners.

A new online butterfly recording system for Rother and the High Weald will be launched by the Project, which is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, in 2010.

**i** To view a map of the 2009 sightings  
[www.sussex-butterflies.org.uk/rother](http://www.sussex-butterflies.org.uk/rother)



© Butterfly Conservation

## Raw talent makes for a thirst-quenching first



Farmers Phil Hook and son Steve, with Paul Vidler, their Hailsham milkman

Philip and Steve Hook, who supply organic, un-pasteurised milk to homes around Hailsham and Eastbourne, have upgraded and expanded their production equipment. The improvements at their farm on the edge of the Pevensy Marshes will allow them to sell nationwide – the first farmers to sell the raw “green top milk” online. They will also be able to make and sell cream and butter. Safety concerns mean that “raw” milk is not available in shops in the UK, however there is a growing market for the product amongst those who prefer unprocessed foods and like its full flavour. Steve says that raw milk retains the natural benefits that pasteurisation can destroy. “We get customers who say that our raw milk helps reduce their eczema and hay fever and, being organic, it is also a great source of Omega 3, which is good for the heart and brain.”

**i** T: 01323 843746  
 M: 07968 167338  
[www.hookandson.co.uk](http://www.hookandson.co.uk)

## Fundraising efforts secure future of Meadow Project



A High Weald Landscape Trust guided walk organized to raise funds for meadow conservation

The High Weald Landscape Trust, the five-year-old charity dedicated to conserving and enhancing the area, has recently taken over the running of the Weald Meadows Initiative. The future of the meadows scheme, which was run by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee for ten years, was looking uncertain. But, thanks to the fundraising efforts of the High Weald Landscape Trust, a Meadows Officer will continue to offer landowners advice on the management and creation of wild-flower grasslands for another two years.

**i** Weald Meadows Officer, Dawn Brickwood  
 T: 01424 774668  
 M: 07863 081281  
[www.highwealdlandscapetrust.org/projects](http://www.highwealdlandscapetrust.org/projects)

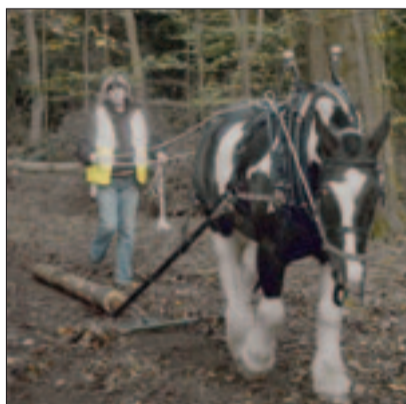
## Improving the view

More than 60 telephone-type poles and 4km (2.5 miles) of power lines have been removed from Brightling Down to improve the view from one of the High Weald’s highest points. This is the first project to be completed as part of a scheme, sponsored by EDF Energy, to install underground cables in place of overhead power lines.

The removal of the power lines from the landscape near Mad Jack Fuller’s folies has been made possible by a special allowance provided by Ofgem, the electricity industry regulator. EDF Energy Networks have £7.7million to invest on projects in the South East’s AONBs and National Parks in 2010.



## Stepping back in time



Owners of woodland can now hire horses to help with timber extraction through local company Sussex Horse Logging. Horse logging is ideal for steep or difficult terrain that is hard to access with machinery. It also has less impact on sensitive woodland areas, creates less “mess” and gives the public an opportunity to see traditional methods of forestry. Over the wetter winter months, when ground conditions make heavy machinery particularly destructive, logging horses are in their element.

**i** E: [sussexhorselogging@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sussexhorselogging@yahoo.co.uk)  
 T: 01435 860774  
 M: 07785 552728

## Winnie-the-Pooh – his story continues



Winnie-the-Pooh has been drafted in by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest to help raise children’s awareness of the local landscape. A Winnie-the-Pooh “story sack” which links the famous bear and his adventures to National Curriculum themes can be borrowed from the Ashdown Forest Centre. The sack is one of a number of new education resources designed to help teachers use the forest for cross-curricular activities. Other resources include 15 activity cards that teachers can use when taking children outside and a debate pack entitled “Nature v Nurture” which examines tree felling and its significance in Ashdown Forest. Both are downloadable from [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org) and [www.ashdownforest.org](http://www.ashdownforest.org). The project has been funded by the Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme (page 16).

**i** High Weald AONB Unit T:01580 879500

# News in brief

HOUSES, GARDENS & CASTLES



**1 Bateman's**  
TN19 7DS  
01435 882302  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

**2 Battle Abbey**  
TN33 0AD  
01424 773792  
www.english-heritage.org.uk

**3 Bayham Abbey**  
TN3 8DE  
01892 890381  
www.english-heritage.org.uk

**4 Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest**  
TN17 2SL  
01580 879820  
www.forestry.gov.uk/bedgebury

**5 Bodiam Castle**  
TN32 5UA  
01580 830196  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/bodiamcastle

**6 Borde Hill Gardens**  
RH16 1XP  
01444 450326  
www.bordehill.co.uk

**7 Brickwall House and Gardens**  
TN31 6NL  
01797 223329

**8 Chiddingstone Castle**  
TN8 7AD  
01892 870347  
www.chiddingstonecastle.org.uk

**9 Finchcocks Musical Museum**  
TN17 1HH  
01580 211702  
www.finchcocks.co.uk

**10 Great Dixter House and Gardens**  
TN31 6PH  
01797 252878  
www.greatdixter.co.uk

**11 Great Maytham Hall**  
TN17 4NE  
01580 241346  
www.cha.org.uk

**12 Groombridge Place Gardens and the Enchanted Forest**  
TN3 9QG  
01892 861444  
www.groombridge.co.uk

**13 Hammerwood Park**  
RH19 3QE  
01342 850594  
www.hammerwood.mistral.co.uk

**14 Hever Castle and Gardens**  
TN8 7NG  
01732 865224  
www.hevercastle.co.uk

**15 High Beeches Gardens**  
RH17 6HQ  
01444 400589  
www.highbeeches.com

**16 Hole Park Gardens**  
TN17 4JA  
01580 241344  
www.holepark.com

**17 Lamb House**  
TN31 7ES  
01892 890651  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

**18 Leonardslee Gardens**  
RH13 6PP  
01403 891212  
www.leonardslee.com  
Closed from 30 June 2010

**19 Marle Place Gardens**  
TN12 7HS  
01892 722304  
www.marleplace.co.uk

**20 Merriments Garden**  
TN19 7RA  
01580 860324  
www.merriments.co.uk

**21 Nymans**  
RH17 6EB  
01444 405250  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

**22 Pashley Manor Gardens**  
TN5 7HE  
01580 200888  
www.pashleymanorgardens.com

**23 Penshurst Place**  
TN11 8DG  
01892 870307  
www.penshurstplace.com

**24 Priest House**  
RH19 4PP  
01342 810479  
www.sussexpast.co.uk

**25 Sackville College**  
RH19 3AZ  
01342 326561

**26 Saint Hill Manor**  
RH19 4JY  
01342 326711

**27 Scotney Castle**  
TN3 8JN  
01802 893820 (information line)  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/scotneycastle

**28 Sheffield Park Garden**  
TN22 3QX  
01825 790231  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

**29 Sissinghurst Castle Garden**  
TN17 2AB  
01580 710701  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/places

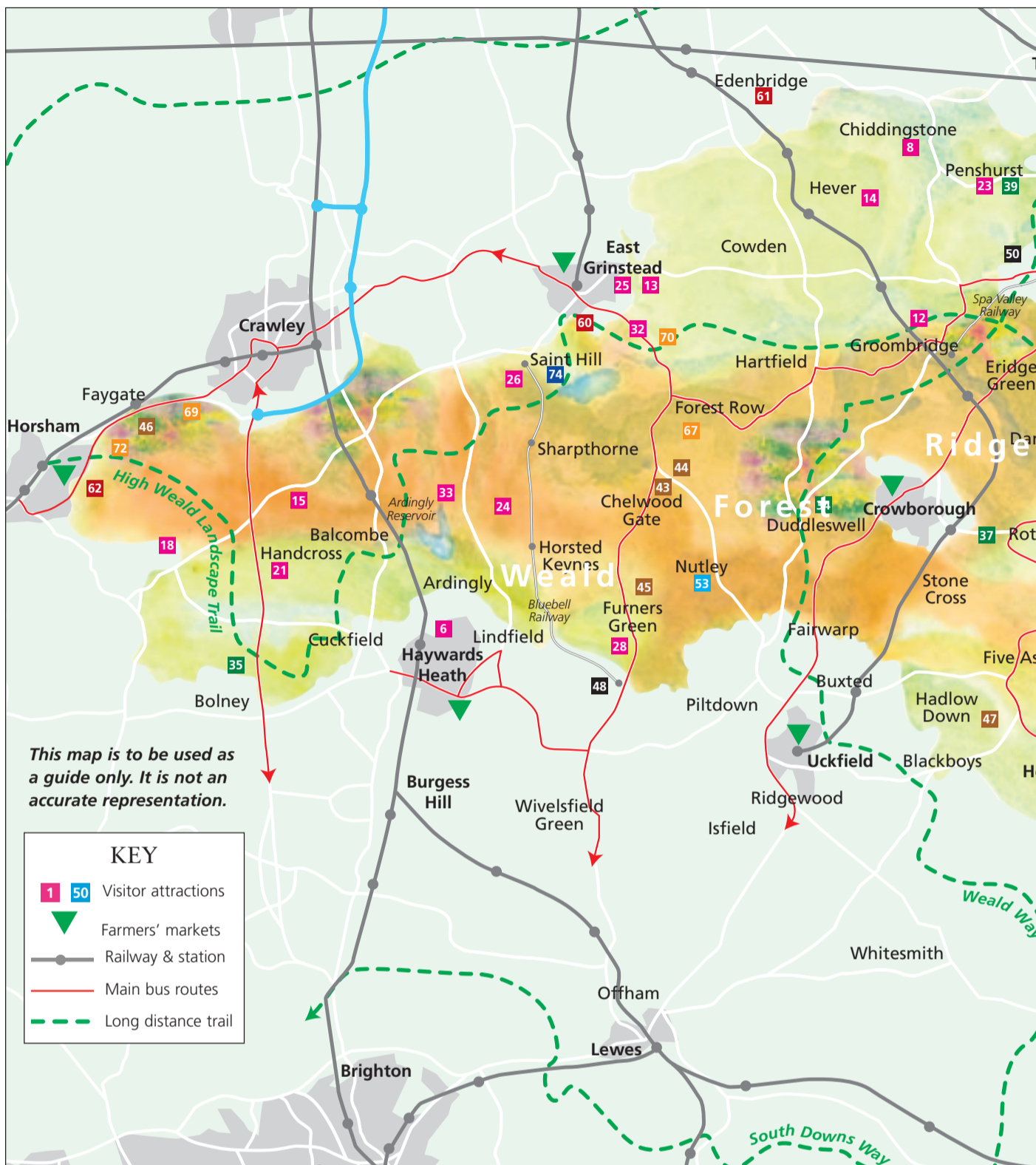


**30 Smallhythe Place**  
TN30 7NG  
01580 762334  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/smallhytheplace

**31 Sprivers Garden**  
TN12 8DR  
01892 890651  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

**32 Standen**  
RH19 4NE  
01342 323029  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/standen

**33 Wakehurst Place**  
RH17 6TN  
01444 894066  
www.kew.org



VINEYARDS



**34 Barnsgate Manor Vineyard**  
TN22 4DB  
01825 713366  
www.barnsgate.co.uk

**35 Bookers Vineyard**  
RH17 5NB  
01444 881575  
www.bookersvineyard.co.uk

**36 Carr Taylor Vineyards**  
TN35 4SG  
01424 752501  
www.carr-taylor.com

**37 Davenport Vineyards**  
TN6 3RR  
01892 852380  
www.davenportvineyards.co.uk

**38 Lamberhurst Vineyards**  
TN3 8ER  
01892 890412  
www.lamberhurstvineyard.net

**39 Penshurst Vineyards**  
TN11 8DG  
01892 870255

**40 Sandhurst Vineyards**  
TN18 5PA  
01580 850296  
www.sandhurstvineyards.co.uk

**41 Sedlescombe Vineyard**  
TN32 5SA  
0800 9802884  
www.englishorganicwine.co.uk

**42 Tenterden Vineyard**  
TN30 7NG  
01580 763033  
www.englishwinesgroup.com



FARMS & WOODS



**43 Cats Protection**  
RH17 7TT  
01825 741330  
www.cats.org.uk

**44 Ashdown Forest Llama Park**  
RH18 5JN  
01825 712040  
www.llamapark.co.uk

**45 Heaven Farm**  
TN22 3RG  
01825 790226  
www.heavenfarm.co.uk

**46 Holmbush Farmworld**  
RH12 4SE  
01293 851110  
www.holmbushfarm.co.uk

**47 Wilderness Wood**  
TN22 4HJ  
01825 830509  
www.wildernesswood.co.uk

Visit the High Weald



www.highweald.org.uk  
information on all  
farmers' markets,  
Other useful websites  
www.visithighweald.org.uk  
www.sussex.gov.uk



NATURE RESERVES



**73 Rye Harbour NR**  
TN31  
01797 223862  
[www.wildrye.info/reserve](http://www.wildrye.info/reserve)

**74 Weir Wood NR**  
RH19  
01273 482670

INFORMATION

Tourism



**Tourism South East**  
023 8062 5400

**Battle TIC**  
01424 773721

**Burgess Hill TIC**  
01444 238202

**Cranbrook TIC**  
01580 712538

**Crawley TIC**  
01293 846968

**East Grinstead TIC**  
01342 410121

**Edenbridge TIC**  
01732 868110

**Hastings (Old Town & Queens Square) TICs**  
01424 781111

**Herstmonceux Village Information Centre**  
01323 833961

**Horsham TIC**  
01403 211661

**Rye TIC**  
01797 229049

**Sevenoaks TIC**  
01732 450305

**Tenterden TIC**  
01580 763572

**Tonbridge TIC**  
01732 770929

**Tunbridge Wells TIC**  
01892 515675

Travel



**Traveline**  
0871 200 22 33

**National Rail enquiries**  
08457 48 49 50

**National Express (coach)**  
08717 818181



**60 East Grinstead Museum**  
RH19 3BJ  
01342 302233  
[www.eastgrinsteadmuseum.org.uk](http://www.eastgrinsteadmuseum.org.uk)

**61 Eden Valley Museum**  
TN8 7LE  
01732 868102  
[www.evmt.org.uk](http://www.evmt.org.uk)

**62 Horsham Museum**  
RH12 1HE  
01403 254959

**63 Tenterden and District Museum**  
TN30 6HN  
01580 764310  
[www.ukpages.net/kent/museum.htm](http://www.ukpages.net/kent/museum.htm)

**64 Rye Heritage Centre**  
TN31 7AY  
01797 226696  
[www.ryeheritage.co.uk](http://www.ryeheritage.co.uk)

**65 Rye Castle Museum**  
TN31 7JF  
01797 226728  
[www.ryemuseum.co.uk](http://www.ryemuseum.co.uk)

**66 Tunbridge Wells Museum**  
TN1 1JN  
01892 554171  
[www.tunbridgewellsmuseum.org](http://www.tunbridgewellsmuseum.org)  
*Major improvements are planned for 2010 and the museum may be closed for a period of time. Please phone or visit the website to confirm details before your visit.*

COUNTRY PARKS & SITES



**67 Ashdown Forest Visitor Centre**  
RH18 5JP  
01342 823583  
[www.ashdownforest.org](http://www.ashdownforest.org)

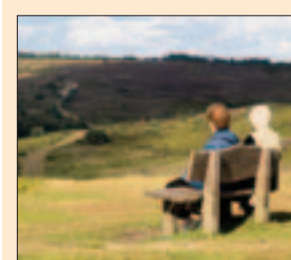
**68 Bewl Water**  
TN3 8JH  
01892 890661  
[www.bewl.co.uk](http://www.bewl.co.uk)

**69 Buchan Country Park**  
RH11 9HQ  
01293 542088  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk/buchan](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/buchan)

**70 Forest Way Country Park**  
RH19  
01293 542088  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)

**71 Hastings Country Park**  
TN35  
01424 813225

**72 St Leonard's Forest**  
RH13  
01293 542088  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)



RAILWAYS



**48 Bluebell Railway**  
TN22 3QL  
01825 722370  
[www.bluebell-railway.co.uk](http://www.bluebell-railway.co.uk)

**49 Kent and East Sussex Railway**  
TN30 6HE  
01580 765155  
[www.kesr.org.uk](http://www.kesr.org.uk)

**50 Spa Valley Railway**  
TN4 8HL  
01892 537715  
[www.spavalleyrailway.co.uk](http://www.spavalleyrailway.co.uk)

WINDMILLS



**51 Cranbrook Union Windmill**  
TN17 3AG  
01580 712256

**52 Windmill Hill Windmill**  
BN27 4RT  
01323 833033  
[www.windmillhillwindmill.co.uk](http://www.windmillhillwindmill.co.uk)

**53 Nutley Windmill**  
TN22 3HY  
01435 873367

**54 Stocks Mill**  
TN30 7ER  
01797 270295

MUSEUMS



**55 Battle Museum**  
TN33 0EA  
01424 775955  
[www.battlesussex.co.uk](http://www.battlesussex.co.uk)

**56 Yesterday's World**  
TN33 0AQ  
01424 893938  
[www.yesterdaysworld.co.uk](http://www.yesterdaysworld.co.uk)

**57 CM Booth Collection of Historic Vehicles**  
TN17 4LP  
01580 241234  
[www.morganmuseum.org.uk](http://www.morganmuseum.org.uk)

**58 Court Hall Museum**  
TN36 4EU  
01797 226382

**59 Cranbrook Museum**  
TN17 3JX  
01580 712516  
[www.cranbrookmuseum.org](http://www.cranbrookmuseum.org)

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l.org for additional  
attractions, accommodation,  
local producers and walks.  
sites:  
[visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com)  
[westsussexcountry.co.uk](http://www.westsussexcountry.co.uk)



### Ashdown Forest Llama Park



Over 100 Llamas & Alpacas • Meet our lovely Reindeer  
Adventure Play Area • Picnic Area • Coffee Shop  
South American Craft Shop • Alpaca Knitwear

**www.llamapark.co.uk**

**Ashdown Forest Llama Park**  
on A22 between East Grinstead and Uckfield  
Wych Cross, Forest Row, E.Sx, RH18 5JN.  
Tel: 01825 712040  
Email: [info@llamapark.co.uk](mailto:info@llamapark.co.uk)  
Open daily 10am to 5pm



*Wilderness Wood*

**A living example of rural sustainability**  
A 62 acre award-winning, sustainably managed working woodland park offering a fun, interesting day out for the whole family

Woodland trails, bluebell, folklore & fungi walks, adventure playground, kids' parties, BBQ and picnic areas, camping, café with fresh local ingredients, gift shop, garden furniture & wood products direct from the workshop

Open daily all year 10.00-5.30/dusk if earlier  
On A272 in Hadlow Down, N.E. of Uckfield

(01825) 830509  
[enquiries@wildernesswood.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@wildernesswood.co.uk)  
[www.wildernesswood.co.uk](http://www.wildernesswood.co.uk)

## Heaven Farm



Stable tea rooms  
Nature Trail  
Cart Lodge craft shop  
Farm museum  
Country coach tours  
Caravans and camping  
Organic farm shop

190 years of farming  
in the heart of the  
Sussex Weald

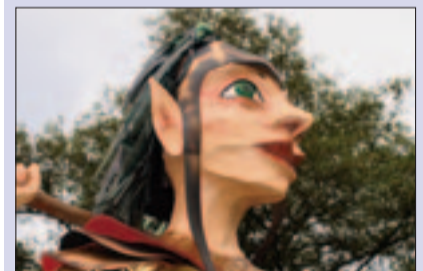
Open March to November inclusive, 10am to 5pm  
Furners Green, Uckfield, Sussex, TN22 3RG

Tel: 01825 790226 Fax: 01825 790881  
[www.heavenfarm.co.uk](http://www.heavenfarm.co.uk)

## APRIL

- 13**  
● **Survive in the Wild**  
Wilderness Wood, Hadlow Down, East Sussex  
01825 830509  
[www.wildernesswood.co.uk](http://www.wildernesswood.co.uk)  
10am - 12pm  
*What are the four things you need in order to survive? Find them in the woods. Hands-on activities to test your survival skills, from lighting a fire without paper or matches, to toasting marshmallows. Booking required.*
- 15**  
● **Spring Bushcraft for Children**  
Buchan Park, Crawley, West Sussex  
01293 550730  
[tomforward@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:tomforward@sussexwt.org.uk)  
10am - 4pm  
*Have fun learning about the natural resources to be found in your local woodland. Develop skills in shelter-building, fire-lighting and tool-making. Suitable for children aged 8 -14 years. Booking required.*  
A Weald Forest Ridge event (see page 16)

- 23**  
● **Spring Forward! A Giant Maiden's Celebration**  
Ashdown Forest Centre, nr Wych Cross, East Sussex  
01273 571106  
[bec@amesky.co.uk](mailto:bec@amesky.co.uk) [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)  
4.30 - 6.30pm  
*A free community event, with procession, to celebrate the arrival of spring. Celebrate the history of the Saxon goddess of spring, "Eostre" – whose story forms the basis of many of our Easter traditions – and the story of the Ashdown Forest Maiden. Local schools and community groups will create parade items in workshops leading up to the event.*  
A Weald Forest Ridge event (see page 16)



- 25**  
● **Introduction to Woodland Birds**  
Brede High Woods, Brede, East Sussex  
[learning@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:learning@woodlandtrust.org.uk)  
0845 2935734  
9 - 11.30am  
*All welcome from birding beginners to experts. Bring your binoculars and enthusiasm. Booking required.*

# Event

- 29**  
● **Introduction to Green Woodwork**  
Woodland Enterprise Centre, Flimwell, East Sussex  
01273 892052  
[www.woodnet.org.uk](http://www.woodnet.org.uk)  
10am - 4.30pm  
*For anyone interested in learning how to make a range of products from green or freshly felled wood. If you own or manage a woodland it will open up opportunities to use your wood creatively – for your own use or to sell. Those interested in traditional crafts will also find the course inspiring. Booking required.*

## MAY

- 3**  
● **Beastly Battles**  
Chiddingstone Castle, Chiddingstone, Kent  
01892 870347  
[www.chiddingstonecastle.org.uk](http://www.chiddingstonecastle.org.uk)  
11am - 5pm  
*Travel back in time to 1642 and the start of the English Civil War. Try out mini-jousting, learn pike drills and watch civil war fighting methods.*
- 10**  
● **Meadow Gardening**  
Great Dixter, Northiam, East Sussex  
01797 252878  
[www.greatdixter.co.uk](http://www.greatdixter.co.uk)  
10am - 4pm  
*Discover the secrets of meadow gardening using the Great Dixter Meadows for inspiration. Fergus Garrett will take you through the process of creating your own meadow and maintaining it. The day will include slides and talks and practical sessions in the meadows. Refreshments and lunch included. Enjoy a 10 per cent discount on all plant sales on the day. Booking required by telephone.*
- 15**  
● **High Weald Walk – Broadwater Warren**  
Broadwater Warren, near Tunbridge Wells, Kent  
01892 554171  
[www.tunbridgewellsmuseum.org](http://www.tunbridgewellsmuseum.org)  
11am - 1pm  
*One of a series of nature walks with expert Ian Beavis, looking at the plant, animal and insect life of different High Weald habitats. Booking required.*  
A Weald Forest Ridge event (see page 16)

## JUNE

- 8**  
● **Watercolour Painting Day**  
Marle Place, Brenchley, Kent  
01892 527317  
[www.marleplace.co.uk](http://www.marleplace.co.uk)  
*An opportunity to capture the colours, textures and beauty of Marle Place in watercolour with tutor Julie King. There is plenty of cover if the weather turns nasty.*
- 12**  
● **High Weald Walk – Brakeybank Wood**  
Brakeybank Wood, near Tunbridge Wells, Kent  
01892 554171  
[www.tunbridgewellsmuseum.org](http://www.tunbridgewellsmuseum.org)  
11am - 1pm  
*One of a series of nature walks with expert Ian Beavis, looking at the plant, animal and insect life of different High Weald habitats. Booking required.*  
A Weald Forest Ridge event (see page 16)
- 26-27**  
● **Wildflower Spectacular**  
High Beeches Gardens, Handcross, West Sussex  
01444 400589  
[www.highbeeches.com](http://www.highbeeches.com)  
11am - 5pm  
*Explore one of the best wildflower meadows in the South East – guided by experts. The meadow has not been ploughed in living memory and has an outstanding variety of wild plants. More than 200 species of wildflowers have been recorded throughout the gardens. Guided tours will take place all weekend. A number of nature and wildlife groups will be present with displays and information.*



## Exhibitions

26 February – mid April  
**Tunbridge Wells Rocks**  
Tunbridge Wells Museum (see Museums listing page 9)  
*A celebration of the astonishing sandstone outcrops of Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding High Weald that have fascinated us for over 6000 years. The exhibition uses historic images and objects from the museum collection, along with newly commissioned artwork, to explore how generations of people have responded to the rocks as places of wonder and mystery.*  
A Weald Forest Ridge event (page 16).

1 May – 31 October  
**One Boy's War**  
The Priest House, West Hoathly  
01342 810479  
[www.sussexpast.co.uk](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk)  
*Memories of growing up in the Wealden village of West Hoathly 1939 – 1945.*  
Normal admission prices apply.  
House and garden open Tuesday to Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays

Exhibition May 1st – October 31st



**ONE BOY'S WAR**

# tasters

## JULY

16

### ● Chestnut Gate Hurdles

Woodland Enterprise Centre, Flimwell, East Sussex  
01273 892052  
www.woodnet.org.uk  
10am - 4.30pm

This course is for anyone interested in making chestnut gate hurdles for farm, woodland and garden use. Alan Sage will teach you the skills needed to construct chestnut gate hurdles by helping you make a small hurdle to take home. Booking required.

17

### ● Common Countryside Trees Walk

Bateman's, Burwash, East Sussex  
01435 882302  
10am - 12pm

Enjoy a walk around the Bateman's estate and learn how to identify common trees while hearing about their natural history, folklore and uses through the ages. Please wear walking boots/shoes or wellies and suitable clothing. Booking required.

©NTP/LStuart Cox



## AUGUST

4, 11, 18, 25

### ● Wild Life Safari

Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest  
01580 879820  
10am - 12pm

Bedgebury's Pinetum and forest provides a haven for many wild animals. A mini-beast hunt will introduce you to some of the smaller inhabitants, and you will look for evidence of other inhabitants as you walk in the area around the walled garden. The morning will finish with children making a beautiful dragonfly to take home.

16, 17

### ● Photography workshops: summer flowers

Nymans, Handcross, West Sussex  
01444 405256  
9am - 4pm

Full-day photography workshops with National Trust garden photographer David Dixon, including an illustrated talk on photographic techniques, followed by exclusive access to the garden on a closed day to practise photographic skills with hands-on tutoring. Coffee and cakes on arrival. For competent photographers with SLR-type cameras. Booking required.

24

### ● Children's Fun Days

Smallhythe Place, Tenterden, Kent  
01580 762334  
2pm - 4pm

Fun with clay. Limited numbers. Please book early.

## SEPTEMBER

13

### ● History of the High Weald Landscape Walk

Bateman's, Burwash, East Sussex  
01435 882302  
10am - 12pm

This landscape owes much of its beauty to the involvement of man. Enjoy a walk with the warden and discover what made the High Weald what it is today. Please wear walking boots/shoes or wellies and suitable clothing. Booking required.

13

### ● Nursery Propagation Day

Great Dixter, Northiam, East Sussex  
01797 252878  
10am - 4.30pm

The nursery at Great Dixter will host a day on propagation. You will be taken through each stage, from making your own compost, to taking cuttings, sowing seeds, splitting perennials and looking after potted plants. Places are limited to 15 for this study day, but further dates will be available. Refreshments and lunch included. There will be a 10 per cent discount on all plant sales from the nursery. Booking required.

### Key categories

- Displays, Exhibitions & Talks
- Training Courses
- Family Fun, Sports & Outdoor Activities
- Guided Walks
- Kids' Activities
- Wildlife & Gardening

24, 26

### ● Kent Goes Wild

Dunorlan Park, Tunbridge Wells  
01622 221468  
Kent.goeswild@kent.gov.uk  
www.kent.gov.uk/kentgoeswild  
10.30am - 4pm

A free two-day event about wildlife recording and nature conservation in Kent. Organisations such as Kent Wildlife Trust and Kent Reptile Amphibian Group will be there to let you know how you can get involved. Children can take part in the Junior Recorders activities held at many of the stands. Previous years' activities have included pond dipping and quizzes.

## OCTOBER

10

### ● Fungi Foray

Brede High Woods, Brede, East Sussex  
learning@woodlandtrust.org.uk  
0845 2935734  
11am - 1.30pm

A chance to discover fungi in a beautiful 650-acre mixed woodland and heathland located five miles north of Battle. Booking required.

24

### ● Recreating the Mesolithic

Ashdown Forest Centre  
East Sussex Archaeology and Museums  
Project 01273 486959  
Centre on 01342 823583  
10.30am - 4pm

A chance to help build a Mesolithic house and explore aspects of everyday life in the Mesolithic period such as flint-knapping, archery, string-making, as well as identifying, gathering and processing plants. The house will be a permanent feature at the Ashdown Forest Centre to be used by visitors and school groups. A Weald Forest Ridge event (see page 16)

28

### ● Feed the Birds

Bedgebury National Pinetum & Forest  
01580 879820  
10am - 12pm

This autumn bird event, timed to coincide with National Homes for Animals week, provides an opportunity for a short birdwatching walk. You will find out how to look after birds in your garden throughout the winter and will get your hands messy as you make your own bird feeder to take home.

## Bewl Water Outdoor Centre



Great activities at a great location  
Sign up to one of our great courses for Juniors or Adults and for all levels of ability

RYA Sailing Courses, BCU Canoeing Courses

Please call for a brochure 01892 890716 or look on our website

**www.bewlwater.org**

We also offer courses for groups, either day or residential visits, with action packed activity programmes: Sailing, Canoeing, Climbing, Teambuilding and Development Training

Bewl Water Outdoor Centre, Bewl Water, Lamberhurst, Kent TN3 8JH  
01892 890716



– The Sussex Gardens Trust is committed to the care and conservation of historic designed landscapes.

– Join the Trust and enjoy newsletters with articles, information on events, activities and items of interest.

– Guided visits to parks and gardens

– Lectures, study and training days

– Involvement in research

– Helping to conserve the heritage and horticultural tradition of Sussex.



For membership information please email us at: [information@sussexgardentrust.org.uk](mailto:information@sussexgardentrust.org.uk).

For further details see our website: [www.sussexgardentrust.org.uk](http://www.sussexgardentrust.org.uk)

### Plumpton College at Flimwell courses in

## Woodland Management Woodland Skills & Crafts Timber Construction



For information please visit [www.woodnet.org.uk](http://www.woodnet.org.uk) or telephone 01273 892052



Countryside site information at [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)

Self-guided walks leaflets at [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)

More events at [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)

## Book choice

### Return to the Hundred Acre Wood

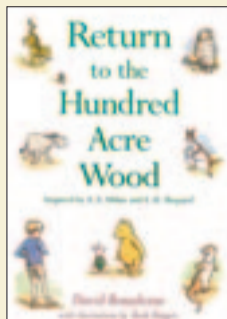
David Benedictus, illustrated by Mark Burgess

ISBN: 0525421602

Publisher: Dutton Books

Price £12.99

In early 2009 rumour spread through the High Weald and beyond. Christopher Robin, people said, was coming back to Ashdown Forest. *Return to the Hundred Acre Wood* is the first sequel to the much loved Winnie-the-Pooh stories. Authorised by the trustees of AA Milne's estate, it includes ten new adventures about Christopher Robin, his bear Pooh and their friends.



The author, David Benedictus, says he has tried to continue the original stories and develop the characters by introducing new elements. In this he has been partly successful. As before, Christopher Robin and his friends embark on a series of small adventures revolving around expeditions, honey, songs and bees. By staying true to the original characters, Benedictus retains the spirit and feeling of Milne's stories.

Less successful is the introduction of Lottie the otter, whose harsh snobbery seems at odds with the gentle and endearing foibles of the original characters. And, although the new stories emulate those of Milne, the unforced wit, warmth and tenderness of the original characters proves more difficult to capture. It remains to be seen whether they will match the ability of the originals to transport the reader back to their childhood.

Jason Lavender, AONB Co-director

### The Pond Book: A Guide to the Management and Creation of Ponds

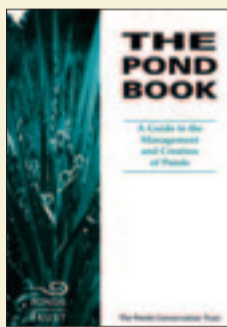
ISBN: 0953797104

Published by Oxford Brookes

Price £17.00

Available directly from the Ponds Conservation Trust [www.pondconservation.org.uk/advice/Buythepondbook](http://www.pondconservation.org.uk/advice/Buythepondbook)

An excellent manual for anyone wanting to attract wildlife to their pond. It talks clearly through pond management choices and describes good-practice techniques. The book also presents the reasons behind each recommendation logically and objectively, enabling anyone to make informed decisions about the best way to manage their pond.



Matt Pitts, AONB Cultural Heritage Advisor

### The Wealden Iron Industry

Jeremy Hodgkinson

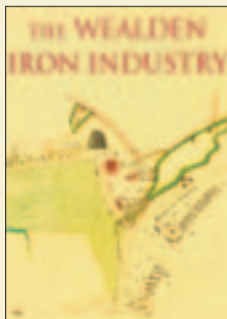
ISBN: 0752445731

Published by The History Press Ltd

Price £15.99

Available from local independent bookshops

An accessible guide to the history of iron production in the Weald. The book covers the two main periods of iron production during the Roman occupation and the Tudor and early Stuart period. Written by Jeremy Hodgkinson, who has been a writer and lecturer on the Wealden iron industry for 25 years, it is richly illustrated



with both colour and black and white images, including many reconstructions. This book is a must for anyone with an interest in the landscape history of the High Weald.

Matt Pitts, AONB Cultural Heritage Advisor

# Glorious



Leonardslee

A testimony to the enthusiasm and hard work of landscapers, gardeners and plant hunters over the decades...and the High Weald's unique character

**I**t is hardly surprising that there are so many famous gardens in the High Weald, where the climate is mild, and in some places more akin to the oceanic climate of western Britain. Dotted across the area you'll find garden oases that build on and blend with the landscape and are a testimony to the enthusiasm and hard work of landscapers, gardeners and plant hunters over the decades.

Other features of the area have also

offered some help and inspiration; steep-sided gill streams that provide a shady, warm, damp environment and are the perfect home for ferns, liverworts and mosses – as well as the heavy clays of the valleys that native trees seem to love. And, anyone who owns a garden or allotment on the sandy or silty ridges will know how easy it is to work the soil. Thankfully, some garden enthusiasts might say, the High Weald soils are not so fertile that they are coveted by agriculturalists.

Instead their acidity provides perfect growing conditions for azalea, magnolia, rhododendron and camellias, set off against an undulating backdrop, where remnants of the area's industrial past, such as pits and quarries and mill ponds provide "picturesque" features worthy of the best 18th-century landscape designer.

The area, with its proliferation of notable gardens, also provides a potted history of landscaping fashions. Ashburnham Park, Sheffield Place, Battle

## Rhodo battles

**I**t is virtually impossible to read about a turn-of-the-century garden and not find references to rhododendrons. This "new" plant had recently been discovered in the Himalayas and introduced to Britain – and the damp and acidic soils of the High Weald provided perfect growing conditions. A huge number of varieties were grown, including one species, *Rhododendron ponticum*. Gardeners of the time had no idea that this species, for all its beauty and magnificent purple flowers, would one day be regarded as a pest.

The plant spreads rapidly through seeds and layering, overwhelming woodlands so that access and management become difficult. Its dense shading, acid litter and toxin-secreting foliage cause rare and fragile ancient woodland plants to disappear. It also acts as a host for the *Phytophthora ramorum* fungal infection that causes sudden oak death.

The plant is prevalent in the High Weald's ancient woodlands. Control, achieved mechanically or with the use of herbicides, is a high priority and significant grants are available from the Forestry Commission for landowners keen to stem the invasion.



© Forestry Commission

Removing *Rhododendron ponticum* is necessary to prevent damage to native flora and fauna in ancient woodlands

# Gardens



Bedgebury Pinetum

© Forestry Commission



Nymans

© NTP/Andrew Montgomery



Sheffield Park

Abbey and Brightling, all represent the “gardenless” form of landscaping which was led by Capability Brown in the mid 18th century. Distinctive features of this seemingly effortless design include undulating grassland running up to the house; clumps, belts and the scattering of trees and serpentine lakes. At Leonardslee, Scotney, Sheffield Park and Wakehurst there are more examples of the “picturesque” style – wild, dramatic, irregular scenery incorporated into large gardens – and “gardenesque” where a picturesque landscape is furnished with exotic plants. The later “Arts and Crafts” style is typified by elements at Great Dixter and Sissinghurst.

In the early 1900s another historically important development took place, that was more about substance than style. The great plant hunters, inspired by the likes of Charles Darwin, headed off on expeditions to places such as the Himalayas, China, Burma, Tasmania and the Andes in search of new exotic plant species. These exotic species, like azaleas and camellias, triggered new planting schemes over hundreds of acres of the High Weald as well as the building of conservatories and garden hothouses. Enthusiastic country home owners created spectacular displays amongst existing woodland and parklands, transforming their estates into the places that are so popular with visitors today. In fact they dominate the area’s attraction list (see page 8), with visitor numbers reflect-

ing their value as places for inspiration, contemplation, a family walk, exercise – or just a cup of tea in beautiful surroundings. They attract thousands of visitors per year, for example, Wakehurst Place alone attracted 443,000 visits in 2008.

Each of the area’s magnificent gardens deserves our time and attention, but let us not forget their location, which is an intrinsic part of their beauty. Many of the gardens look out on to the High Weald landscape beyond, with summer houses, arbours, pavilions and seats providing resting places to admire the area’s irregular-shaped fields, woodland and, as Siegfried Sassoon described: “the Weald in all its green contentedness”.

In some cases garden designers have incorporated features of the High Weald’s unique character into the garden, for example, merging the main house and its agricultural outbuildings into the design, as at Great Dixter. Or, there’s the Himalayan glade at Wakehurst Place that makes use of the topography of a High Weald gill.

Most gardens are in fact created as an adjunct to a historic building that exemplifies local building – so there is added interest for those with a love of vernacular architecture and social history. Aspiring ecologists and natural-

ists may prefer exploring the wildflower grasslands, heathland and woodland that are often found beyond the more formal areas.

As the great garden designers of the past were influenced by broader, cultural themes such as classical literature, European tours and Darwin’s research, so our generation is coloured by environmental concerns. “Greener”, wilder gardening is perhaps the most significant modern trend in our local gardens – whether they be grand gardens or tiny courtyards – and one that will hopefully leave its own mark.

Whichever way you look at it, it is clear that these special gardens are an integral part of the area, just as the area and its character is an essential part of every garden. The High Weald would not be the place it is without the likes of Wakehurst Place, Nymans, Sheffield Park – and they would not exist if wealthy garden enthusiasts and landowners had not been drawn initially, to the area’s natural beauty.

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)  
[www.greatgardensofsussex.com](http://www.greatgardensofsussex.com)  
[www.sussexgardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.sussexgardenstrust.org.uk)  
[www.kentgardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.kentgardenstrust.org.uk)  
[www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk)



## LOOK OUT FOR...

### Rocky outcrops and cliffs



Where: the entrance lane to Standen; the Sandrock Walk at Wakehurst Place; “The Pulpit” in Nymans woodlands

### Wildflower grasslands and heaths



Where: High Beeches; the Loder Valley at Wakehurst Place; Great Dixter; Leonardslee

### Archaeological features such as ponds



Where: The seven lakes at Leonardslee; the mill pond at Batemans; Nymans woodland; Marle Place Gardens

### Ancient woodland



Where: The Himalayan glade at Wakehurst Place makes use of the topography of a High Weald gill; woodland walks around Leonardslee; Standen

### Vernacular architecture



Where: Standen; Great Dixter; Herstmonceux; Pashley Manor; Sissinghurst; Batemans; Wakehurst Place; Borde Hill

© NTP/John Miller

## Sign up to...

**A free advisory visit** if you own more than one acre of land in the High Weald. The visit will give you the chance to:

- explore maps showing the historical development of your property
- learn more about its special landscape, archaeology and wildlife features
- find out about specialists who can assist you with land management

After the visit you will be given free digital historical maps of your property and specialists' contact details.

E: [m.pitts@highweald.org](mailto:m.pitts@highweald.org)  
T: 01580 879500



**A practical conservation task** to improve access to the area and conserve its habitats.

Four new volunteer groups established in the Weald Forest Ridge area need a helping hand with activities such as installing new stiles, creating ponds and coppicing ancient woodland. The Horsted Keynes Hackers focus on maintaining and improving rights of way and public areas in their parish. Two other groups are site-based; one at the Woodland Trust's Hargate Forest, south of Tunbridge Wells and the other at the RSPB's Tudley Woods, to the east of Tunbridge Wells. Another group, the Weald Forest Ridge Rovers, work on a variety of sites across the Ridge. New volunteers are welcome either on a regular or one-off basis. Energy and enthusiasm are the only requirements, as induction and training is provided.

Warren Young, the BTCV Community Project Officer

E: [w.young@btcv.org.uk](mailto:w.young@btcv.org.uk)  
M: 07740 899678

**A free drama workshop** to develop your acting technique and find out more about people who once lived in the area.

Five events are planned in locations across the area. The workshops are open to anyone over the age of 16, whatever your acting experience. We are keen to hear from amateur dramatic groups who would like to host an event and individuals interested in attending the Weald Forest Ridge (see back page) funded workshop.

E: [t.tiltman@highweald.org](mailto:t.tiltman@highweald.org)  
T: 01580 879500



# A step forward

*The High Weald is a magical area created through centuries of human activity. Wherever you live, from Horsham in the west, to Crowborough in the centre to Tenterden and Rye in the east, you'll be familiar with the attributes that make it so special. But this same area also needs protecting, as it develops to meet current and future population needs. Our A to Z sets out 26 steps that will help you connect with the AONB and ensure that your "footprint" is a positive one.*

**Add to the record** Note down where and when you see wildlife. Join national schemes such as the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch or the Woodland Trust's Nature's Calendar survey ([www.naturescalendar.org.uk/survey/](http://www.naturescalendar.org.uk/survey/)) where volunteers record signs of the changing seasons where they live. You don't have to be an expert – lots of help is given. Or join a local scheme such as the Rother Woods Project's butterfly survey (see page 7). With 2063km of footpaths and 332km of bridleways to take care of, local authorities also welcome reports on countryside access problems.

**Buy local products and services** from those who undertake activities that benefit the environment. The wildlife value of the area's woodlands, hedges, meadows, heathlands and field margins are dependent on sympathetic management. Money invested in products and services that help support this management is money invested in conserving the AONB and its local economy. Visit [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org) for local product and producer information.

**Capture** what is special about your local area with a camera and share your photos through online photo galleries. Local papers, parish magazines and the High Weald AONB Unit always welcome images that highlight what is special about the area.

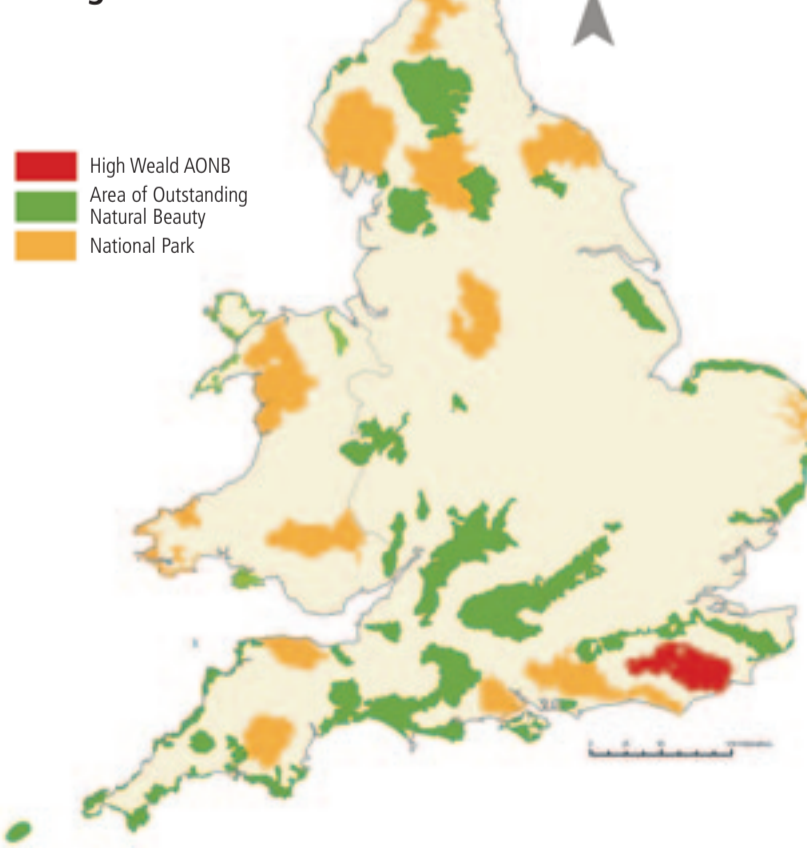
**Do your bit** to reduce carbon emissions by reducing your energy use. Consider using renewable energy such as wood in your home. Emissions from petrol and other non-renewable fossil fuels contribute to climate change which in the long term will affect local wildlife and plantlife such as bluebells.

**Explore** your local rights of way. The network is detailed on Ordnance Survey maps [www.leisure.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.leisure.ordnancesurvey.co.uk). Free maps are normally included in promotional path leaflets which can be found on local authority websites.

**Follow the Countryside Code** Through responsible behaviour we can all use and enjoy the countryside without hindering the enjoyment or livelihoods of others. There are five key actions under the Code: be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs; leave gates and property as you find them; protect plants and animals and take your litter home; keep dogs under close control and consider other people.



### National Parks and AONBs in England and Wales



#### The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- Is the hilly core of the Weald
- Is the fourth-largest AONB in England
- Covers an area of 1450 sq km (560 sq miles)
- Was designated in 1983

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve "natural beauty"



#### In Britain...

- There are 41 AONBs covering, in total, 15 per cent of England and Wales
- The smallest AONB is the Isles of Scilly which are 16 sq km
- The largest is the Cotswolds, at 2,038 sq km
- The first AONB was the Gower Peninsular, which was designated in 1956
- The most recently designated is the Tamar Valley – in 1995



© Forestry Commission

**Get closer** to the area by getting out. Wandering, walking, cycling, running and sailing are all great for body and mind. Or why not participate in a countryside event – tasters on pages 10 and 11. There is something for everybody; walks, talks, art activities, wildlife-spotting and training in land management and countryside crafts.

**Have a say** Your views matter – get involved at parish, district, county or AONB level to steer policy and action that affects the area.

**Investigate** one of the area's wildlife habitats. Visit a woodland, grassland, heathland or sandstone outcrop and see how many different plant and insect species you can spot and identify.

Visit [www.woodlandtrust.org](http://www.woodlandtrust.org) for Spotter guides.

**Join** a wildlife, history or walking group. With your financial and practical support, local conservation organisations can take care of the area by monitoring threatened wildlife, undertaking conservation tasks and lobbying government. Groups often offer walks, talks and social occasions. You may want to join the Friends of the High Weald which guarantees you annual delivery of the *High Weald Anvil*.

**Know your place** Open your eyes to historic features in your area and find out more about one of them, for example your pub, church or village sign.

**Let** children have fun outside. Environmentalist David Sobel, says: "If we want children to flourish, to be truly empowered, let us ask them to love the earth before we ask them to save it".

Visit [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org) for details of countryside sites you can visit free of charge and where children can roam. From summer to autumn the National Trust runs "Wild Child" schemes with exciting family challenges including pond-dipping, bug-hunting, animal-tracking and wilderness-exploring.

**Manage** your land for wildlife and maintain the rural nature of your property. Fields, woodland, paddocks and gardens support valuable and threatened wildlife. Inappropriate materials and features are leading to the gradual loss of the AONB's rural feel.

Visit [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org) for a list of local advisors, some of whom undertake free site visits.

**Note place names** – do they indicate the history of the area? For example combe (valley) as in Balcombe; den (woodland pasture) as in Tenterden; field (open land within woodland) as in Hartfield; ham (settlement or water meadow) as in Ashburnham; hurst (wooded hill, wood) as in Sissinghurst; ing (people of, or associated with) as in Hastings; ley/ly (woodland clearing) as in Ardingly; stede/stead (place) as in East Grinstead; ton/tun (enclosure, farmstead) as in Dallington.

**Offer** your countryside experiences to others; share old photos, write down your stories, assist with training courses, help with practical conservation tasks, do talks for local groups.

**Plant** one of the rarer species of local orchard trees – seek advice from the curators of the national fruit collection at Brogdale in Kent ([www.brogdale.org](http://www.brogdale.org)). For more ambitious tree, hedge or meadow-creation projects, track down native species, preferably of local origin, and seek advice for maximum success.

The Weald Meadows Officer can advise you on wildflower grassland: [meadows@highwealdlandscapetrust.org](mailto:meadows@highwealdlandscapetrust.org)

**Quench** your thirst with drinks made from local products – fruit juice or cider made with locally grown apples or pears, beer made with local hops and wine made with local grapes.

**Reduce, reuse, recycle** – and dispose of litter responsibly. Litter spoils the enjoyment of the countryside for the majority of residents. Less rubbish means less pressure for landfill sites and incinerators in the AONB.

**Slow down** for people, horses and wildlife. Traffic hinders the enjoyment of the High Weald for 80 per cent of residents. Speeding cars can kill people, horses, badgers, deer and foxes. Ancient routeways and their rare plants are damaged by inconsiderate driving and parking.

**Take pride** in the High Weald – promote its special features and places to family, friends and visitors. Promoting what you find special about the High Weald is the best way to encourage commitment and action by others. Request another copy of the *Anvil* and pass it on to friends and family.

**Use new technology** that reduces your impact on the environment. There are many technologies that make a difference – low energy appliances, light bulbs, insulation, cars...

**Volunteer** Help with practical conservation work – from planting and coppicing, to scrub clearance and fence building. The work is vital and could not be done so effectively without the help of volunteers.

**Walk** one of the long distance paths that cross the area. Ranging from 44km (27 miles) to 151km (94 miles) they present a challenge which can be completed over a number of years.

**Xerox** Don't print documents unless it is absolutely necessary, and recycle your printer cartridges: [www.recycling-guide.org.uk/printer-cartridges.html](http://www.recycling-guide.org.uk/printer-cartridges.html)

**Yank out** invasive and harmful plant species when they are small, before they become a bigger problem. Introduced plant, animal and fish species spread rapidly in the High Weald, competing with, and threatening, our native wildlife.

**Zoom in** on your property on [www.google.maps](http://www.google.maps), select the aerial view and see the High Weald's pattern of small ancient woodlands and irregular-shaped fields in your area.

# Calling all...

**Local historians** to assist with a research project that will build a better picture of the area's historic routeways.

A survey involving both desk research and practical tasks has been developed, guided by landscape historians at the University of East Anglia. A survey of routeways around Rolvenden and Benenden has been completed by local volunteers and more volunteers are now needed to undertake surveys in other areas. The information will be used to help develop better protection for historic routeways.

**i** E: [r.childs@highweald.org](mailto:r.childs@highweald.org)  
T: 01580 879500



**Primary schools** to join 44 other schools in pledging to Find Out, Take Care Of, Enjoy, Explore and Be Proud of the High Weald.

"High Weald Heroes" schools benefit from a "pick and mix" package that encourages and enables exploration of the school's local countryside. It includes; themed assemblies, plays and workshops, map packs, ideas for School Welly Walks, outdoor learning activity cards, story sacks, countryside site exploration packs, newsletters, education forums and teacher training.



**i** E: [l.sweeting@highweald.org](mailto:l.sweeting@highweald.org)  
[www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)

**Photographers** to submit images that celebrate what's special about the area.

The High Weald's "The Weald in Summer" photography competition will run from 1 May to 31 August 2010. The winning images will be displayed on [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org) Entries must be submitted digitally in JPEG format, either on CD or by email to [photocompetition@highweald.org](mailto:photocompetition@highweald.org) (max file size 3MB).

**i** [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)



**i** Be inspired by other people's actions at: [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)



# FOOTPRINTS RUN DEEP



### Narrow, often sunken lanes

Pigs being driven along the same route between their parent villages in the Downs and the High Weald formed tracks, known as droves. The radiating network of roughly north-south droving routes lives on in the area's roads, lanes, bridleways and footpaths. Many are sunken, after centuries of use by trotters, feet, hooves – and later, cart-wheels.

### Rolling hills dissected by steep-sided gill streams, studded with sandstone outcrops and dotted with ponds

Clays form the low valleys of the High Weald, while harder sandstone forms the high ridges that run east-west. The sandstone outcrops scattered across the area and cliffs at the coast are a sign of what lies underneath. Gills – steep-sided, narrow, often wooded valleys with small, fast flowing streams – support liverworts and mosses. Many ponds are by-products of past industries' activities e.g. fish ponds, mineral quarries, marl pits, hammer ponds and mill ponds are found hidden in woodlands, tucked in field corners and next to farmsteads.

### Scattered farmsteads and hamlets

Over 38 per cent of the area's houses are in the countryside outside villages. The area's distinctive pattern of scattered settlements stems from the "dens" that were scattered across the area – over time they became permanent farmsteads and hamlets, many of which remain today.

### Abundant, interconnected ancient woods and hedges

Woodlands have been a valuable resource for centuries, yielding acorns for pigs, timber for building, fuel for heating and charcoal for iron-smelting. As a result, numerous small woods interconnected by narrow shaws (strips of deciduous woodland between fields and along roadsides) and hedges still cover one third of the High Weald, making it one of the most densely wooded parts of the country.

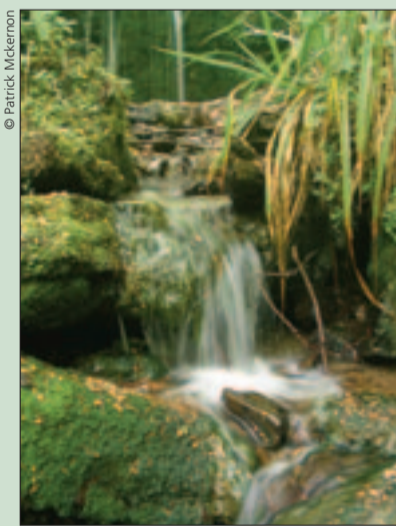


### Small, irregular-shaped fields and heaths

Small, irregularly shaped fields were hewn out of woodland pastures by settlers to create the farmed landscape we know today. Though parkland creation and agricultural developments have led to boundary changes, the shape of many fields hasn't changed in centuries.



**A**s long ago as the Neolithic period, or even earlier, people from the South Downs, North Downs and coastal plains began to use the area's woods as a seasonal source of food for their animals. Each year, in late summer or early autumn, they would drive their pigs into the High Weald woods to fatten them on acorns and beech mast (nuts), an activity known as "pannage". They would return with their pigs to the same woodland pastures – known as "dens" – year after year. (Next time you are traveling around the area, note the number of villages whose name indicates its origin as a "den", for example Benenden, Rolvenden, Iden Green). Pannage, more than any other activity, has created the character of the landscape we see today; the High Weald is still essentially a medieval landscape.



**WEALD FOREST RIDGE**  
Landscape Partnership

The Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme is a £3.1 million heritage programme focused on the High Weald's highest ridge. The Scheme is restoring ancient habitats in the area's four medieval forests, improving public access and involving people in the area's unique heritage. The three-year Scheme, which is led by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee, involves 18 partners.

[www.highweald.org/WealdForestRidge](http://www.highweald.org/WealdForestRidge)  
T: 01580 879954

LOTTERY FUNDED

Produced by the High Weald AONB Unit with funding from members of the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee: Natural England; West Sussex County Council; East Sussex County Council; Kent County Council; Surrey County Council; Horsham District Council; Tandridge District Council; Mid Sussex District Council; Wealden District Council; Sevenoaks District Council; Tunbridge Wells Borough Council; Rother District Council; Ashford Borough Council; Crawley Borough Council; Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council; Hastings Borough Council.

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