

Your signpost to walking in the Lewes and Wealden District
A guide to led and independent walks to suit all ages and abilities



Just an hour from London, this area of England offers surprising diversity and tranquility.

The beautiful Lewes and Wealden districts are home to a unique mix of picturesque villages, market towns bursting with culture and traditions, long stretches of coastline and unspoilt countryside.

Visitors to this area can explore this beautiful undulating countryside which is perfect for walkers; and with two thirds designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty you are assured of breathtaking views wherever you turn.

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Why Walk?

Regular walking can

Make you feel good

Give you more energy

Help to reduce stress

Help to reduce the risk of osteoporosis

Help to reduce the risk of heart disease

Help to reduce the risk of bowel cancer

Help to manage your weight

Help to reduce the risk of diabetes

Help to reduce blood pressure

Help you sleep better

Current recommendations, by health experts, say that 30 minutes a day of moderate activity, such as brisk walking, is the minimum we need for good health.

Brisk walking means that you breathe a little faster than normal but can still carry on a conversation. You could walk for 10 minutes three times a day or 15 times twice a day - it's up to you!

If you haven't done much physical activity for a while, try a walk that is no longer than 3 miles before moving on to something more ambitious!

Your aim is to improve by gradually increasing the distance walked and your speed.

Walking can easily become part of our everyday routine. Walk to the local shops rather than using the car. Shorter journeys made on foot can even save time that would otherwise be spent looking for a parking space.

What to take with you

**water • money • waterproofs • first aid kit
maps • mobile phone**

Country 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

Consider other people



Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs):-

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are a precious landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them. They are havens for wildlife and places for people to live, work and enjoy the beautiful countryside around them.

South Downs AONB

The area of the South Downs are a perfect place to get away from it all. The Downs are a place of tranquility, recreation and escape. The South Downs are home to an abundant range of grasses and flowering plants that in turn support a host of butterflies

and other insects, birds and small mammals. On a clear day the views from the South Downs Way are spectacular with picturesque villages of flint cottages nestled in to its lush valleys, open chalk grasslands and crystal blue sea.

High Weald AONB

Lying at the heart of the South East, the High Weald can be described as one of England's finest landscapes: protected by government legislation since 1983 to ensure its conservation for present and future generations.

The High Weald is protected for its unique character of small irregular fields, hedgerows and woodlands which unfold gently in to green riverside pastures and scattered farmsteads, all draped over rolling hills.



Wren Walks

A series of graded walks to encourage people to do a walk that they feel comfortable to undertake. The walks are graded from level 1 (for those who are unable to walk or do not wish to walk any great distance) to level 5 (for the more experienced walker). 01273 481654

Paths to Prosperity Walks

East Sussex County Council have begun a three-year programme called Paths to Prosperity, aimed at improving many of the foot-paths across the area in order to boost the local economy. There are a range of trails varying from long distance routes to small local trails. For information and a copy of the walks. 01273 482250/482354/482324 email: rightsofway@eastsussexcc.gov.uk or go to www.eastsussex.gov.uk

Picture a Walk

The Picture a Walk project is four short walks all under 3 miles in length. Most are circular walks. Art work has been incorporated into three of the walks to highlight what is unique in the area. The colourful leaflets 'picture' what there is to see along the walks. 01892 602756 or email: helen.markwick@wealden.gov.uk Or go to www.wealden.gov.uk

Health Walks

A health walk is a short walk (about 45 mins) led by trained Health Walk Leaders. Walks are on level ground and there is a leader at the front and back to make sure no one gets left behind. 01273 486000 Community Leisure.

Rotherfield Community Tourism Initiative (RCTI)

Visit the beautiful parish of Rotherfield located in the High Weald area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Rotherfield is one of the largest parishes in East Sussex. It is criss-crossed with over 40 miles of public rights of way. The RCTI formed in 2000 and working with other partners has successfully funded a £500,000 project which has led to all the rights of way in the parish being upgraded and improved. A 28 page guide book has been produced which contains a map of all the rights of way network. The guide book costs £2, the Rotherfield walkers guide costs £1.50 and a leaflet on Rotherfield is free. For more information 01825 713862.

Starting Out

Walks of up to 1 hour, short and easy, up to 2 miles

Paths to Prosperity Walk The Wellingham Walk

A 1.5 mile walk from the Cock Inn, just north of Lewes, along quiet country lanes and across fields with some stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk The Sandy Cross Walk

A 1.5 mile walk from the Runt-in-Tun, just south of Heathfield, taking in the Cuckoo Trail and surrounding countryside. Mainly gates and kissing gates with one stile.

Paths to Prosperity Walk The Rotherfield Walk

A 1.5 mile woodland walk starting in Rotherfield and taking in Jarvis Brook and the Woodland Trust property of Old Lodge Warren. Some steep gradients and mainly stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk The Chiddingly Walk

A 1.8 mile walk starting from the Six Bells and taking in Muddles Green, mainly flat with some stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk The Chalvington Walk

A 2.3 mile walk taking in the villages of Chalvington and Ripe, easy walking with a few stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Hellingly Walk

A 1.9 mile walk starting in Hellingly and taking in the Cuckoo Trail, flat and mainly gates with one stile.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Summerhill Walk

A 2 mile walk along and round the Cuckoo Trail, mainly flat with a number of stiles.

For more information on the Paths to Prosperity walks 01273 482250 482354 /482324.

Picture a Walk

Fletching

A 2 mile walk from the attractive and historic village of Fletching. Simon de Montfort visited the church on the eve of the Battle of Lewes, 1264. Whilst walking learn about the trees that feature within this landscape.

Picture a Walk

Chelwood Gate

A 2 mile walk discovering ponds, streams and waterfalls on the Ashdown Forest.

Picture a Walk

Boreham Street

A 2 mile walk which is hilly in places (approx 15 stiles). Whilst walking learn about the birds and animals that feature within this Parish.

For more information on the 'Picture a Walk' routes contact Wealden District Council 01892 602756.

Health Walks in the Lewes District

A health walk is a short walk (about 45 mins) led by trained Health Walk Leaders. Walks are on level ground and there is a leader at the front and back to make sure no one gets left behind. There are walks in **Peacehaven**, **Lewes** and **Seaford** and cost £1.75 per walk which includes a free tea/coffee afterwards.

For more information contact Community Leisure 01273 486000.

Moving On

Walks of 1-3 hours, moderate, up to 5 - miles

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Cowbeech Walk

A 4.2 mile walk starting at The Merrie Harriers pub and taking in surrounding countryside, mainly gentle gradients with stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Witherenden Walk

A 5.4 mile woodland walk starting at Stonegate Station, taking in Batts Wood. Some steep gradients and mainly stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Boreham Street Walk

A 4.1 mile walk taking in Herstmonceux Castle, mainly gentle gradients and some stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Newhaven Walk

A 4.8 mile wetland walk starting at Seaford station and taking in the newly created Riverside Park and the Tidemills, a combination of flat and hilly walking with some stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Wadhurst Walk

A 3.8 mile walk starting at Wadhurst station taking in Woods Green, some steep gradients and stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Buckhurst Walk

A 5.4 mile woodland walk starting at Wadhurst Station and taking in Buckhurst, some steep gradients and mainly stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Arlington Walk

A 4 mile wetland walk starting at Berwick Station and taking in Arlington reservoir. Easy walking with some stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Blackboys Walk

A 4.4 mile walk starting from the Blackboys Inn and taking in the Wealdway and Vanguard Way long distance paths. Mainly stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The East Hoathly Walk

A 3.6 mile walk starting from the Kings Head and taking in the surrounding countryside, mainly stiles but with few gradients.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Chailey Common Walk

A 2.8 mile walk starting from Sarita's Tea Rooms in North Chailey, taking in Chailey Common, some steep gradients and mainly stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Groombridge Walk

A 5.1 mile woodland walk, taking in Groombridge, Eridge and Harrisons Rocks, some steep gradients and mainly stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Pevensey Castle Walk

A 5 mile wetland walk from Westham railway station taking in the historic town and castle of Pevensey and the Levels to the north. A flat route with a number of stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Buxted Walk

A 4 mile woodland walk running from Buxted station, taking in Buxted Park and the Woodland Trust property, Views Wood. Some stiles but mainly gates, conditions underfoot may be muddy in winter.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Forest Row Walk

A 4.5 mile wetland walk running from Forest Row and taking in Weir Wood Reservoir, mainly stiles and easy gradients.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Wivelsfield Walk

A 4 mile walk from the Cock Inn in Wivelsfield Green, an passing through

the surrounding countryside, gentle gradients and mainly stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Danehill Walk

A 2.7 mile walk starting from the Coach and Horses in Chelwood Common and running through the High Weald countryside, some steep gradients and stiles.

Paths to Prosperity Walk

The Barcombe Walk

A 5.3 mile walk from the Royal Oak at Barcombe Cross, taking in Barcombe Mills and the River Ouse, with some stiles and easy gradients.

For more information on the Paths to Prosperity walks 01273 482250/482354/482324.

Picture a Walk

East Hoathly

A 3.5 mile walk along farmland, quiet lanes and woodland. Whilst walking learn about Thomas Turner, a local resident and diarist who lived in East Hoathly during the 18th Century. For more information 01892 602756.

Wren Walk

Miles Without Stiles

A circular walk set in beautiful countryside around Herstmonceux. This walk provides panoramic views of the coast and the downs. Graded level 2. Duration:- 1-1 ½ hours. Distance 2 - miles



Mayfield Walk

A 3-mile circular walk through a landscape of contrasts! It is difficult to imagine that 500 years ago this was an industrial area alive to the smoke and noise of England's Iron Industry!

Rotherfield Walk

A short circular walk incorporating historic Rotherfield (the name of the village comes from the Anglo-Saxon word 'hrther', meaning horned beast bull' and 'feld' meaning an open clearing for grazing animals. Views to the Argos Hill Windmill.

Batts Wood

3 miles east of Mayfield A 65-hectare wood situated in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Access to Batts Wood is by public footpath only but is well worth a visit. The views from the wood are excellent, across rolling countryside and Wadhurst Deer Park.

For more information on the Wren walk; Mayfield; Rotherfield and Batts Wood 01273 481654 or email vicky.pannell@eastsussex.gov.uk

Getting Serious

Walks more strenuous, up to 15 miles- taking the whole day

Wren Walk

5 'Wren's Round Newick

The walk passes along streams through woodland and arable and pasture land around the parishes of Newick, Spithurst and Isfield. Graded level 5.

Duration:- 4-5 hours.

Distance 7 miles. 01273

481654 or email

vicky.pannell@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

Across the Andredsweald

This 15 mile walk between Buxted and Ashurst crosses the heathy wild landscape of the Ashdown Forest. For your Free 'Walk South East' brochure email info@ruralways.org.uk.

Blackboys and Gun Hill

This 15 mile walk follows the stretch of the Wealdway between Buxted and Upper Horsebridge. The walk takes in the secluded woods and thickly hedged fields of the Low Weald. For your Free 'Walk South East' brochure Email info@ruralways.org.uk.

Long Distance Trails

High Weald Landscape Trail

The High Weald Landscape Trail explores the beautiful landscape of the High Weald,

passing through ancient woodlands, small fields and pretty villages.

The guidebook costs £5 and is available from Kent County Council.

www.kent.gov.uk

01622 221526

Wealdway

The Wealdway explores the landscape that lies between the English Channel and the Thames Estuary. The Way travels over rolling chalk downlands, along river valleys, through woods fields and across open heathland.

The guidebook costs £5

and is available from Kent County Council.

www.kent.gov.uk

01622 221526

1066

Walk back through time as you retrace William the Conqueror's historic journey to battle. The walk meanders through the stunning countryside between Pevensy and Rye via the town of Battle. Guidebook available from your local Tourist Information Centre.

South Downs Way

The Way follows the old routes and droveways of ancient man along the chalk escarpment and ridges of the South Downs covers beautiful rolling country. Guidebook available from Sussex Downs Conservation Board, www.vic.org.uk

Countryside Sites, Nature Reserves and Country Parks

Seven Sisters Country Park

This magnificent Country Park is located in the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Come and discover the unspoilt coast-line of the famous Seven Sisters. 01323 870280, www.sevensisters.org.uk

Ashdown Forest

An internationally important conservation area. Despite its name only 40% is woodland with the remaining being heathland which is a threatened and declining habitat. Visitors are free to walk where they like over 80 miles of footpaths. Car parking is free. The Ashdown Forest Centre 01342 823583.

The Cuckoo Trail

A 11 mile long leisure route following the old railway line from Heathfield to Polegate, passing through Horam, Hellingly and Hailsham. The route can be used by walkers, cyclists and horseriders. 01273 481637.

Forest Way

A 9 mile long leisure route following the old railway line through Forest Row, Hartfield, Withyham and Groombridge. The route can be used by walkers, cyclists and horseriders. 01273 482670.

Lewes Railway Land

Designated a Local Nature Reserve in 1995 after a long battle to save the site from housing development, this site occupies a central location in the Lewes Town landscape. Nestling on the flood plain of the River Ouse, the site consists of 25 acres. Dan Ross 01273 484166, Lewes District Council

Seaford Head Nature Reserve

Spread over 303 acres (123 hectares), Seaford Head is primarily made up of shingle beach, chalk downland and salt marshes, which provide a habitat suitable for a wide range of bird species. The views from the top are magnificent, looking down onto the Cuckmere Valley and across to the Seven Sisters. 01323 871095, Ranger Service.

Forestry Commission sites

The Forestry Commission is the Government Department responsible for forestry policy throughout Great Britain.

Abbots Wood

An ancient area of woodland located near Hailsham. A walk through these lovely and historic woods takes you along shady paths and through thickets rich in wildlife. 01323 870911 www.forestry.gov.uk

Friston Forest

Located behind the Seven Sisters County Park off the A259. The Forest offers an infinite number of way marked routes for visitors to explore the beech woods. 01420 520212

The National Trust sites

The National Trust works to preserve and protect the coastline, countryside and buildings of our country.

Birling Gap

Features a delightful beach that is ideal for seaside picnics. With its rock pools and areas of pebbles and sand, Birling Gap is also a marine nature reserve

Crowlink

From Crowlink there is open access to both the downs and the beach and you can enjoy spectacular, unspoilt views out to sea.

Frog Firle Farm and Chyngton Farm

Both Located at Alfriston, in classic South Downs country, rich in natural history and with a splendid view over the Cuckmere valley.

Ditchling Beacon

The third highest point in the South Downs and once the location of an Iron Age hill fort offering a superb view of the Weald to the North.

For more details call The National Trust South Downs Office 01323 871318

English Nature Countryside Sites

Castle Hill

Situated between Lewes and Woodingdean, this small reserve is a fine example of ancient traditionally managed chalk grassland with many rare plants, such as the early spider orchid. The South Downs Way passes close to the northern boundary, and a bridleway and other footpaths run through it.

Lullington Heath

This 62 hectare reserve lies between the villages of Litlington and Jevington, accessible by bridleway. It contains one of the largest areas of chalk heath in Britain. Explore by following the chalk heath nature trail.

Mount Caburn

Mount Caburn is an ancient hill fort on the Sussex Downs just outside Lewes. Its steep slopes are rich in wildflowers and insects, owing to centuries of grazing. A public footpath runs from Glynde, through the reserve to Lewes.

For more details English Nature 01273 476595, or visit the website at

Sites of the Countryside Management Service

These sites are for the local communities to enjoy, care for and enhance the local environment.

West Park

Situated on the western edge of Uckfield, its special value is due to the variety of diverse habitats contained within a relatively small area of 11 hectares. Wooded sandstone outcrops, home to 58 species of mosses and liverworts are also present.

Park Wood

Hellingly. The wood is scheduled ancient semi natural lowland woodland covering approximately 60 hectares, with a long history of coppice management. There are two entrances suitable for pedestrians; from the western side (Grove Hill) there is a car park with a capacity for 8 cars.

For more information on West Park and Park Wood contact Jo Heading 01273 482670

Weirwood Reservoir

Weirwood is notable for a breeding colony of Great Crested Grebes and has become well known for visiting Ospreys on passage in spring and autumn.

Ditchling Common Country Park

A circular trail, marked by purple arrows on posts, takes you through the different stages in the transformation of grassland and woodland. Distance - 1 mile.

Jacob's Post (Ditchling Common Country Park)

Jacob's Post was left as a reminder of the crime of Jacob Harris, a travelling pedlar, who murdered Richard Miles, landlord of the Royal Oak, his wife and their maid on 26th May 1734. Jacob's Post is accessible from Ditchling Common Country Park.

For more information on Weirwood, Ditchling Common and Jacob's Post Ken McManamon 01273 482670

Chailey Common Local Nature Reserve

Chailey Common was recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 and was used over a long period of time for cutting wood and bracken for fuel, and grazing livestock. Jessie Leamy 01273 482670

Walking Groups

If you prefer to walk with other people, the walking groups offer a number of led walks. For a copy of the walks programme please contact the group directly.

The Ramblers Association

www.ramblers.org.uk

Ashdown Rambling Group

01342 321734

Beachy Head Ramblers Group

01323 732227

Hailsham Ramblers

01323 845569

Heathfield and District Ramblers

01892 852153

High Weald Walkers

01892 523821

www.highwealdwalkers.org.uk

Lewes Footpath Group

01273 474357

www.lewesfootpathgroup.org.uk

Mid Sussex Ramblers

01273 843715

Newhaven Ramblers

01273 515610

Plumpton and District Footpath Society

01444 471357

Ringmer Ramblers

01273 814271

Uckfield Country Walkers Club

01825 763849

Wadhurst Footpaths Society

01892 782108



Other Useful Information

Exploring East Sussex

East Sussex County Council's biannual programme of guided walks and environmental events with something suitable for everyone regardless of their age or interests. www.eastsussex.gov.uk
Contact:- Vicky Pannell
01273 481654 or email vicky.pannell@eastsussexcc.gov.uk to obtain a copy.

The East Sussex Walking Strategy

East Sussex County Council published a Walking Strategy in 2002. The Strategy aimed to promote walking as an every day form of transport by looking at what discourages people from walking and making the situation on the streets better for pedestrians. The County Council is aiming to produce a revised Walking Strategy by mid-2005, to take account of the Government's emphasis on social inclusion and the promotion of physical activity as a way of improving health. Better information on pedestrian safety and a new section on public rights of way (footpaths) will also be included. For more information 01273 482281

Rural Ways

Rural Ways is the gateway to getting out and about in the countryside of the South East. Here you will find easy to follow information on the wealth of recreational activities that this superb and diverse landscape has to offer. www.ruralways.org.uk
E: info@ruralways.org.uk

East Sussex County Council's Voluntary Ranger Service.

Volunteering is a great way to learn new skills, meet new people and get fit whilst working in some of the most beautiful countryside in East Sussex. Contact Cathy Abel
01273 482670 or email cathy.abel@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)

Green Gyms provide health benefit through practical conservation work. For more information go to www.btcv.org.uk or contact Tim Hills 01424 446395.

Leisure Development at Wealden District Council

Aims to encourage leisure activities throughout the district. Walking, cycling and horseriding support economic regeneration as well as promoting health and social benefits to participants. 01892 602756 or email: helen.markwick@wealden.gov.uk

Contact Details:-

Rural Ways

www.ruralways.org.uk

Sussex Downs and Weald
Primary Care Trust
Health Promotion
01273 403691
www.sussexdownsandweald.nhs.uk

Wealden District Council
www.wealden.gov.uk

Lewes District Council
www.lewes.gov.uk

East Sussex
County Council
www.eastsussex.gov.uk

Disabled Rambling
in Lewes and Wealden
01435 869252

School Travel Plan
Co-ordinator, ESCC
01273 481542

Sussex Downs and Weald 
Primary Care Trust



 **Wealden**
District Council