

Welcome...



Amberley Mount © Cath Harris

The South Downs National Park is Britain's newest National Park, rich in landscape, culture and wildlife. Discover ancient woodland and enjoy spectacular views as you explore the open downs and heathlands. You'll also find bustling market towns and peaceful rural villages, historic houses and the remains of ancient settlements.

Get involved

Get active!

Whether you prefer hiking, walking on the beach or biking in the forests, there's an outdoor activity for everyone in the National Park. Whether you're a total beginner or a dedicated fitness fan looking for a new challenge, you can find great trails by searching for Walk and Rides at **southdowns.gov.uk**

Great days out

There's always something going on in the National Park – from big events to fun family days out and foodie trails. Find out more at **southdowns.gov.uk/enjoying**

Have your say

Whether you live in, work in, visit or are just passionate about the National Park, joining our online Forum is the ideal way to raise topics, join in discussions, post photos, take part in surveys or simply find out about what's going on. It only takes a moment to sign up. Just visit **southdowns.gov.uk/forum**

Discover another way to explore

Fed up with traffic? Tired of the kids fighting in the back? The good news is, days out in the National Park don't always have to involve the car. In fact, sometimes the best adventures begin with trying a new way of travel. There are plenty of ways to get around using public transport, so grab your bike or hop on a bus or train, then relax and take in the view. Find out more at **southdowns.gov.uk/discover**. For public transport information, visit **traveline.co.uk** or call **0871 2002233**. For train timetables, visit **nationalrail.co.uk** or call **08457 484950**.

Looking for your local ranger?
There are a number of area offices across Hampshire and Sussex. For information, please use the contact details below.

Contact us:

South Downs National Park Authority
Hatton House, Bepton Road, Midhurst,
West Sussex GU29 9LU

Tel 0300 303 1053

Email info@southdowns.gov.uk

 @SDNPA
 /SDNPA

www.southdowns.gov.uk



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Your guide to the South Downs National Park

Cowdray ruins © Rebecca Saunders



About the South Downs National Park

The South Downs National Park covers an area of over 1,600 square kilometres in south east England, stretching from Winchester to Eastbourne.



Lewes market
© Nick Robinson



Weald & Downland Museum
© W&D Museum



Canoeing at Cuckmere © cvcc

A living, working landscape, the South Downs National Park has been farmed and cultivated for generations. Home to over 112,000 people, it includes the distinctive market towns of Petersfield, Midhurst and Lewes. The area is loved and protected for its special qualities – its beautiful and diverse landscapes of rolling chalk Downlands and the ancient woodlands,

heathland and rivers of the Western Weald. The South Downs National Park also includes 20 kilometres of heritage coastline including the iconic cliffs of Seven Sisters and Beachy Head.

The South Downs National Park Authority works in partnership with local people, land owners, land managers, farmers, businesses, visitors,

other Local Authorities and organisations to promote the purposes of the National Park. We all have a shared responsibility for helping to protect and enhance the landscape, wildlife and cultural history of the area. Find out more at southdowns.gov.uk or for regular updates, like us on facebook or follow us on Twitter.



© Stewart Garstide

National Park purposes and duty

There are 15 National Parks in the UK. Known as Britain's Breathing Spaces, National Parks are areas of spectacular landscape that include mountains, meadows, moorlands, woods, coasts and wetlands. Mostly farmed landscapes supporting living, working communities, National Parks are areas of protected countryside that everyone can visit and enjoy.

All National Parks have common statutory aims and socio-economic responsibilities, as set out in the Environment Act of 1995.

The South Downs National Park Authority itself does not own any land, so it works in partnership with individuals, land owners, local authorities and other organisations to deliver its purposes and duty:

- **Purpose 1:** To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- **Purpose 2:** To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.
- **Duty:** To seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park.

For more information about Britain's National Parks, visit nationalparks.gov.uk



Pyramidal orchids
© J. Mycock

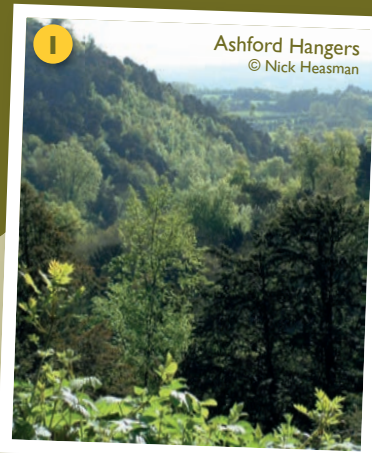


Adonis blue © Neil Hulme



Sunset © Warren Peters

The South Downs National Park



Ashford Hangers
© Nick Heasman



Walking at Old Winchester Hill
© Anne Purkiss



© Andy Gattiker

The South Downs Way

The South Downs Way is one of 15 National Trails in England and Wales and the only to lie entirely within a National Park. The 160 kilometre (100 mile) long trail follows the old routes and droveways along the chalk escarpment and ridges of the South Downs, from the historic

city of Winchester to the seaside town of Eastbourne. The undulating route allows walkers, cyclists and horse riders to get away from it all, whether they're planning an interesting day trip or a longer trek. For more information, visit nationaltrail.co.uk/southdowns



Chapel Common © Anne Purkiss



Long Man of Wilmington
© Joan Barham

Key

- South Downs National Park
- South Downs Way
- South Downs Way (footpath only)
- Railway stations
- Railway
- Countryside sites
- Settlement



Devil's Dyke © David Russell

Getting out and about

You can explore many places in the National Park on over 3,000 kilometres of rights of way, plus there are also Country Parks such as Queen Elizabeth Country Park in Hampshire and Seven Sisters Country Park in Sussex. There are also other countryside sites, open access land and woodlands open to the public.

Please keep to designated rights of way or open access land at all times. Look out for these symbols as your guide:



National Trail Acorn Identifies 15 long distance routes in England and Wales. All are open for walking and some trails are also suitable for cyclists, horse-riders and people with limited mobility.

Open access land Some areas have a right of access where you may walk freely without staying on paths. Check the Open Access pages at naturalengland.org.uk for details and maps. Right of access may be suspended at any time for a range of reasons. Check the website or call **0845 100 3298** for the latest information. A 'negative' access symbol (with a line through it) may be used to mark the end of area-wide access.

Looking after the National Park

The South Downs National Park offers wonderful opportunities for outdoor recreation in a beautiful, varied and natural environment, where people work, live and manage the land. Here are some easy ways to help respect, protect and enjoy the landscape:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow signs. Always look for a signpost to show you where you can go – tracks without these signposts aren't public Rights of Way;
- Leave gates and property as you find them. A farmer will normally leave a gate closed to keep livestock in, but may sometimes leave it open so they can reach food and water. If walking in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates;
- Protect plants and animals. Discover the beauty of the natural environment but remember not to damage or pick wildflowers;
- Slow down. When riding a bike or driving a vehicle, slow down for horses, walkers and livestock and give them plenty of room. By law, cyclists must give way to walkers and horse-riders on bridlevays;
- Support the rural economy. For example, by buying your supplies from the local shops;

- Respect the needs of local people. For example, don't block gateways, driveways or other entry points with your vehicle;
- Be a responsible dog walker. Keep your dog under control, and if necessary, use a lead. Stay away from machinery and people working, and please ensure that your dog does not chase livestock, especially sheep. Remember, if a farm animal chases your dog, it is safer to let them off the lead;
- Please don't litter. Dispose of rubbish in a bin or take it home. The same goes for dog mess – please don't leave bags of mess on the path.

Learn more about the Countryside Code at southdowns.gov.uk

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