



WORK AND PLAY IN YOUR NATIONAL PARK

This month:

- **Marking 70 years of public service** We celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by planting over 12,000 life-giving trees – and, with your help, we can plant even more!
- **Step back in time 750 years** Discover more about a new audio-visual trail in the National Park that tells the story of one of the most important battles in English History.
- **Have your say** Tell us what you think the future of Shoreham Cement Works should be.
- **WIN a free day-out!** Kick off your summer with a celebration at a country estate oozing with charm.

As always please send your comments and ideas to us at newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk

Over 12,000 trees dedicated to Queen

Queen Elizabeth has always been a faithful supporter of nature and it's fitting that one of the South Downs National Park's most visited country parks is named after her.

To celebrate this very special moment in history, over 12,000 trees have been planted in the South Downs – and all of them are dedicated to Her Majesty.

As part of the Trees for the Downs campaign, 30 sites across Hampshire, West Sussex and East Sussex have received new trees for the Queen's Green Canopy.

Each tree will provide a home for wildlife and help with the National Park's dedicated nature recovery drive.



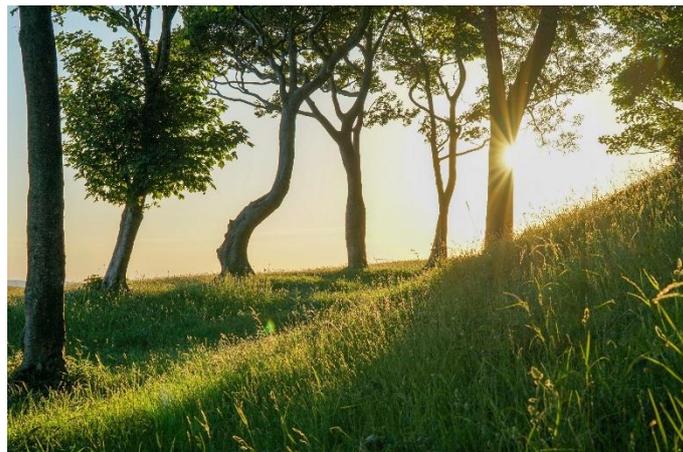
But none of the planting would be possible without the generosity of the public.

Scores of donations to the South Downs National Park Trust have paid for these Jubilee trees – and

the charity is now fundraising to plant more trees this year dedicated to the Queen.

Trees for the Downs is planting iconic species including black poplar, oak, field maple and disease-resistant elms.

Sonia Lorenzo-Martin, who oversees woodlands in the National Park, said: "These life-giving trees are such a wonderful celebration of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II and will be teeming with life in a few years!"



"Trees are amazing. They provide clean air for us to breathe, enrich our soils and provide a vital habitat for so many birds, mammals and invertebrates. Planting more trees is a key component of the National Park's "ReNature" drive to create more space for wildlife to flourish. Your donation will mean we can plant many more Jubilee trees this year and help nature thrive."

Donate at www.southdownstrust.org.uk/trees-for-the-downs

The tree planting has been made possible thanks to generous donations from the public, as well as support from Aspal of London, Cinven, Jude's, Nyetimber and South East Water. Hillier, Frank P Matthews and Peter Shallcross have pioneered the disease-resistant elms for the initiative.



Celebrating the majesty of our flora and fauna



Biodiversity in all its weird and wonderful forms is majestic.

Yet, there are some species that are just a little bit more regal than others!

To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, National Park Ranger Kate Dziubinska looks at some of her favourite stately names from the flora and fauna of the South Downs.

Duke of Burgundy Butterfly

Small and orange and brown, the Duke of Burgundy is found only in central and southern England and more isolated colonies in the southern Lake District and the North York Moors. It's a stunning butterfly with attitude and will chase off any other species including dragonflies which dare enter its territory!

Its recovery in the South Downs has been a major conservation success for the National Park.



Dame's Violet



Also known as Sweet Rocket, this plant is originally from central Europe and has 15-20mm violet or white, four-petalled flowers.

This plant is named in Gilbert White's History of Selborne,

1768-1793 'June 3 1792' among other plants flowering on that day. It was also said to have been 'cultivated by dames of baronial castles'.

King Alfred's Cakes

King Alfred's cakes are named after the poor baking skills of King Alfred, who famously resisted the advance of the Danes from his capital in Winchester and, in doing so, laid the foundations for England and the English language. According to legend, King Alfred was hiding from the Danes and was given shelter by a peasant woman, who

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he promised to keep an eye on her cakes. As it was, he forgot all about them and they subsequently burned. It's said he then scattered them throughout the forest to hide his mistake! This fungus can be found primarily on beech or ash and looks like lumps of smooth charcoal.



Monarch Butterfly



The Monarch is the largest butterfly seen in the British Isles and is also one of our rarest migrants. Known for its ability to travel large distances, the migrations in North

America are one of the greatest natural phenomena in the world - where the adult butterflies can migrate from as far north as Canada to the overwintering grounds in Mexico, the west coast of California and Florida. The total number of records for the British Isles is less than 500.

Crowned Earthstar Mushroom

Earthstars sprout across the UK in autumn and are among Britain's most bizarre-looking fungi. The crowned earthstar is often found in hawthorn hedges and its short-stalked spore sac reaches a height of between 5 and 7cm. Earthstars are inedible, and some are poisonous, so purely for admiring and taking pictures of!

Queen Anne's Lace

A true roadside stunner, this wildflower is more often known as cow parsley. It's a hardy plant popular with pollinators and grows just about anywhere.



Its quirky name harks back to a folk tale that the flowers would bloom for Queen Anne and her ladies in waiting and reflect the delicate lace they wore.

Kingfisher

Could a bird look more majestic?

The Kingfisher's beautiful, metallic blue and orange plumage stands out prominently, and its fast, swooping motion is incredible as it dives towards water to collect fish. A truly royally resplendent resident!

Do you have a favourite creature with a royal connection? Do let us know ☺

If anyone has taken a picture of a Crowned Earthstar Mushroom and is happy to share it please do email us!

New business scheme leads green recovery



An exciting new business initiative has launched, aimed at tackling climate change, helping nature and kickstarting a green recovery for the region's economy following the pandemic.

Our South Downs has been created to provide an innovative network where businesses and organisations can connect with each other, share services and products, and work together towards sustainability.

The initiative has been launched by the South Downs National Park Authority's Enterprise Team and is open – and free to join – to all businesses in and around the National Park.

There are currently just under 8,000 businesses within the National Park, with tens of thousands more in surrounding towns and cities across Hampshire, Sussex and Surrey. With 19 million visitors a year, the National Park area already contributes around £5.8bn to the UK economy.

The initiative has a number of key elements to help businesses:

- Launching this autumn, businesses will be able to join an internationally-recognised "Green South Downs" certification scheme that champions sustainability.
- Free business mentoring session from the Association of Business Mentors.
- Members can access a free downloadable toolkit of business resources provided by Sussex Innovation Centre.
- A regularly-updated online portal.

Nick Heasman, Countryside and Policy Manager, who leads Our South Downs, said: "Our South Downs could not be launching at a better time. Sustainability is higher on the agenda than ever before for business leaders and we hope this new initiative will help organisations work towards a greener, more prosperous future and really strengthen their environmental credentials."

Our South Downs is an important part of the National Park Authority's journey towards achieving its nature recovery targets by 2030 – increasing the amount of land managed for nature from the current 25 per cent to 33 per cent. A climate change target of net zero for the National Park by 2040 is also key.

To find out more about joining Our South Downs visit the brand-new website at oursouthdowns.co.uk

Take a step back 750 years to famous battle



A fascinating walking trail that delves into one of the most important battles in English history has been launched in the South Downs National Park.

The audio-visual trail allows people to step back in time 750 years to find out more about the Battle of Lewes – an event that laid the foundations for parliamentary democracy.

Taking in stunning downland views and the beautiful town of Lewes, the trail navigates Landport Bottom, where the battle was fought on 14 May, 1264.

As they stroll around the site, walkers will be able to watch six short films on their phones, accessed via QR codes or NFC tags. Each unique film, produced by The Company and incorporating experts and reenactors, tells the story of the battle from a different perspective.

Local actor Mark Williams, best known for playing Arthur Weasley in the Harry Potter franchise, narrates the films, taking walkers into the heart of the fighting and the politics that went with it.

The history of the battle is well-researched and continues to be celebrated in Lewes today. On 14 May 1264, two armies clashed on the hills above Lewes town. At stake was King Henry III's right to rule without taking advice from his subjects. The rebel army, led by Simon de Montfort, fought and won the battle against the King's army, and de Montfort effectively took control of the country's government. In 1265, he summoned a council – or parliament – where, for the first time in English history, elected representatives from towns sat alongside knights and churchmen, to discuss affairs of state.

A special ceremony took place at Landport Bottom last week to mark the opening of the trail, with Mayor of Lewes, Cllr Shirley-Anne Sains, cutting the ribbon. The trail has also been supported by Lewes Town Council, The Chalk Cliff Trust and The Battlefields Trust.

There were some mighty roars and high-energy clashes as a mock battle took place with historical re-enactors and children from Wallands Primary School, complete with inflatable swords.

Cllr Sains said: "This is a wonderful initiative and something that is uniquely Lewes."

The films are accessed via small plaques and information lecterns around the Landport Bottom site.

New coastal path opens



Stunning sea views, blissful rural scenery and vibrant coastal towns are some of the delights of a new section of the England Coast Path.

The first complete section in Sussex opened last month, giving walkers new opportunities to connect with nature and all the wellbeing benefits of a coastal ramble with all of that fresh sea air.

The 33-mile (53km) route goes from Shoreham-by-Sea to Eastbourne and takes in the iconic chalk cliffs of the National Park.

Trevor Beattie, Chief Executive of the National Park Authority, said: "This is wonderful news and a fantastic opportunity for walkers to get out and explore.



"The path goes over Seaford head, crosses the Cuckmere at Exceat Bridge and then follows the South Downs Way through Seven Sisters, providing another easy-to-follow walking route into the Country Park.

"This route will form a key part of the 2,700-mile-long England Coast Path, which will become the longest walking route in the world."

Jim Seymour, Area Manager for Natural England, said: "At a time when the benefits of connecting with nature are clearer than ever, it's fabulous that we are opening up this 33-mile-long section of footpath across the South Downs and along the east and west Sussex coast.

"I have personally felt the value of walking a section of this route recently with my family."

Look out for a host of wildlife along the route including migratory and nesting birds such as lesser whitethroat and fulmars, wildflowers including birds' foot trefoil and thrift, and plenty of butterflies and insects.



This new stretch of trail is also a vital link in the South East section of the England Coast Path.

Once complete, the whole of the South East Coast Path will run from Shoreham-by Sea to the London Borough of Bexley.

For more information visit the [England Coastal Path information page here](#).

Have your say on key site



A public consultation is under way to seek views on the future redevelopment of the Shoreham Cement Works site.

The South Downs National Park Authority is holding an eight-week consultation as it works up a planning blueprint for the 44-hectare site that will guide any future development.

The derelict site in West Sussex is located in the narrowest part of the National Park and offers exceptional opportunities for an exemplar, sustainable mixed-use development.

The cement works were built by the concrete industry pioneer, Oscar Faber. Large-scale cement production began on the site at the end of the 19th century and the current buildings were completed in the late 1940s, until chalk extraction and cement production ended in 1991.

The principle of creating a strategic development that is compatible with the special qualities and statutory purposes of the National Park was established in the South Downs Local Plan, which was formally adopted in 2019.

The Authority is now seeking views on the Issue and Options version of the Area Action Plan (AAP), which is effectively a "mini Local Plan" for the site. The consultation includes 28 questions, covering a wide range of topics, including housing, cultural heritage, leisure, and employment.

Ian Phillips, Chair of the National Park Authority, said: "The site is one of the largest brownfield sites in the south of England and remains a landmark, with its chimney visible for miles around and impressive topography displaying the geology of the South Downs.

"The site offers exceptional opportunities for both nature and people as part of a visionary development proposal."

The National Park Authority does not own the site but the final AAP will be the agreed masterplan that will guide any future planning application from a developer.

Tim Slaney, Director of Planning at the National Park Authority, added: "We look forward to the public having their say on the future of this important site."

The consultation runs until 2 August. Take part by visiting this [consultation web page](#).

See some [FAQs here](#).

A busy summer ahead as our rangers go on tour!



Our ranger and engagement teams are going on tour!

It's going to be a busy summer for the National Park as our teams set up an information kiosk at destinations across the South Downs.

We currently have almost 40 pop-up engagement events planned and we can't wait to start meeting people.

These small pop-ups are such a great opportunity for people to learn more about the National Park, its biodiversity, landscape, and heritage.

Our information stand is crammed with walking leaflets and ideas for days out and it's also a great opportunity to chat to rangers face-to-face and find out more about these amazing sites in the National Park.

Nature will top of our talking points this year. As part of our #ReNature campaign, which is aiming to create new habitat for wildlife to flourish, we'll be sharing tips on how to help nature thrive, whether out exploring the countryside or at your home or garden.



We'll be chatting about "Happy South Downs" which is all about having a great day out, while also keeping nature happy by doing some simple things, such as not dropping litter and keeping dogs on leads

around livestock or ground-nesting birds.

If you do see us out and about, come and say hello – you'll be greeted with a friendly face and do ask away with your questions about the National Park.

Let's hope for some pleasant sunny days. Wherever you go in the South Downs this summer, make some happy memories!

**Joshua Esan,
Engagement and
Events Officer**



"He was a larger-than-life character who loved nature"



Warm tributes have been paid to a champion for nature who was dubbed Chichester's own "David Attenborough".

Richard Williamson passed away peacefully last month at the age of 86.

Most of his life was dedicated to the conservation and understanding of nature. Richard moved to Chichester from Norfolk in 1963 to work as the manager of Kingley Vale Nature Reserve – arriving on his BSA motorbike with a couple of tins of baked beans and £5.

While Kingley Vale was his base, his role with saw him work on reserves across the South Downs, including Castle Hill and Lullington Heath in East Sussex, until he retired, aged 60, in 1995.

For 57 years, he had been sharing his love of the flora and fauna of the region, along with his favourite walking routes, with readers of the Chichester Observer in his weekly column "Nature Trails".

Paying tribute to Richard, Trevor Beattie, Chief Executive of the National Park Authority, said: "Richard was a great champion of the South Downs and was also instrumental in the designation of Chichester Harbour as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. He had undertaken a number of editing and writing tasks for the National Park Authority.

"One of these on our website introduces some great audio recordings about his discoveries at Kingley Vale, including clearing thousands of bombs from the Second World War and finding an ancient human jaw bone.

Richard's passing reminds me of the words of another great larger than life character of Sussex, Hilaire Belloc: "Write as the wind blows and command all words like an army!"



Claire Kerr, Countryside and Policy Manager at the Authority, added: "I was starting off in my career in nature conservation and vividly remember Richard as a larger than life character dedicated to his site management role at the amazing Kingley Vale National Nature Reserve."

Just before he died, Richard's new book of bird poems "Flights of the Mind" was published.

To listen to audio recordings of Richard about Kingley Vale, visit our [website](#).

Hold the front page!



Calling all young writers!

This year the South Downs National Park Authority are hosting a creative competition with a renaturing theme for children and teenagers, in partnership with the **MADhurst Festival 2022**.

We're inviting children between 5 and 16 years old to become 'ReNature Reporters' and to investigate what amazing things are happening in their local communities to help nature.

Is someone building a minibeast mansion in their garden? Has your community allowed wildflowers to grow by the roadside? Perhaps there is a new wildlife pond nearby? Or maybe you've started your own project to help nature – we want to hear about all of it!

To enter, children should create a newspaper front page with a catchy headline telling us all about their findings and ReNaturing ideas.

The front page can include photos, drawings and up to 250 words of writing, and should be no larger than A3 in size.

We're encouraging all children to imagine what they could do to give wildlife a helping hand, and even better if you can include a ReNaturing project you've already done!

There are three age categories:

- 5-8 years
- 9-11 years
- 12-16 years

Children may enter individually or in a group of up to four. They may only enter once in each category.

A prize will be awarded to the winner of the child in each age group, and the winner of each of the group entry categories will win a prize too. A highly commended certificate will be awarded to the runners up in each age group.

The deadline for entries is midnight on 30 June 2022 and the winners will be notified by the end of July.

A prize giving will be held at the South Downs Centre Open Day on 6 August 2022. More details on the open day in next month's newsletter!

Download an entry form on the **website page**.



Win a day at jamboree!



Surrounded by ancient forest and rolling downland, Stansted House is one of the most charming destinations in the National Park.

In 1983 the 10th Earl of Bessborough gave Stansted Park, his family home, its beautiful contents and arboretum to the public and ever since visitors have been marvelling at this magical place.

Stansted will once again be running its popular **Summer Jamboree** event – and we've got two family entry tickets (covering two adults, two teenagers (14 to 16), children get in free) to give away!

Visitors can enjoy a range of entertainment while being immersed in the sumptuous history of the estate.

Highlights will include Napoleonic re-enactments, live jazz, forest school sessions, archery, circus workshops, the Stansted Maze, Marco The Magician and the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas

The weekend features cricket matches between the Royal Lancers, I Zingari and Stansted Park's very own team. Grab some lunch, and perhaps a glass of Pimms, pull up a deck chair, sit back and watch the game unfold!

Weather permitting, there will also be hot air balloon rides at £10 per person.

The family fun takes place over the weekend of 2 and 3 July from 10.30am to 6pm daily.

To be in with the chance of winning tickets, please email "jamboree" to **newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk** by **midnight on Wednesday, 15 June**. Entries after this time cannot be accepted 😊

South Downs area comes top

Congratulations to everyone who took part in the City Nature Challenge last month!

People were encouraged to make their walks a little wilder and spot the amazing animals and plants on their doorstep for the 5th International City Nature Challenge.

Brighton & Hove, together with the surrounding downland from Littlehampton to Beachy Head, was one of 14 UK "lead cities" taking part in the four-day event.

Participants were able to record local wildlife using the iNaturalist app.

The Brighton area came first in the UK for the number of species recorded, at 1,251.

It came third nationally for the number of wildlife observers at 178.

Celebrating the Park's marvellous museums



Anne of Cleves House in Lewes

Museums are as important for the future as they are for preserving the past.

They play a vital role in conserving our local culture, harbouring artefacts, discoveries, artistic creations, and writings that are vital for both regional and national identity.

But they are so much more than just historical treasure troves and windows to the past!

Museums have the power to make you think, inspire the soul and take a step back to look at the world from other perspectives. So many exhibitions are about looking forward, as well as back, and that's certainly true in the South Downs National Park.

In the fast-paced world of the internet and social media, you can research and see high-resolution images of practically anything connected with arts and heritage.

Yet nothing can quite replicate the mind-expanding feeling you get being inches away from an amazing object or painting, or perhaps walking through a beautifully-preserved downland house and being completely immersed in its magical charm.

As we mark International Museums Day, which this year has the theme "the power of museums", we look at some of fantastic world-class museums in the South Downs.

For nature lovers....

Gilbert White's House and Gardens

Over 250 years ago Selborne and its surrounding landscape inspired Gilbert White's life-long investigation of the natural world, culminating in his world-famous book *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*. The museum tells Gilbert White's story within the walls of his family home and his unique 18th century garden.

What better place to start your exploration of the natural world?

For craft enthusiasts...

Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft

It might be surprising that a village the size of Ditchling warrants a museum dedicated to the art and craft created by local artists. But Ditchling is no ordinary village.

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Throughout the 20th century it attracted artists and craft workers of national repute. This museum provides the opportunity to see the works in the place where they were made.

For literature fans....

Jane Austen's House

As Alfred, Lord Tennyson wrote in 1870: 'Miss Austen understood the smallness of life to perfection. She was a great artist, equal in her small sphere to Shakespeare...'

It was in this inspiring Hampshire cottage that Jane Austen's genius flourished and where she wrote, revised and had published all six of her globally-beloved novels.

If you're interested in social history....

Weald and Downland Living Museum



This is a museum in a picture-perfect setting for those who want to see, touch and even smell what life was really like for people living in years gone by.

The museum has a rich variety of working buildings that represent the crafts and trades of inhabitants of the South Downs and Weald region. Sense the immense power of the water mill, imagine being a pupil in a Victorian classroom or feel the heat from the roaring fire in a Tudor kitchen! Over 15,000 artefacts in the collection cover a range of topics, including agriculture, lifestyle and rural crafts.

If you're interested in industrial heritage...

Amberley Museum

Discover the working past of the south at this fascinating museum a short walk from the railway station. The museum covers 36 acres of exhibits, ranging from transport to traditional crafts and visitors can see craftspeople working at their trades, including pottery, blacksmithing, broom-making, and walking stick making.

If you're a fan of Tudor history

Anne of Cleves House

Enjoy an insight into Tudor and Elizabethan life at Anne of Cleves House in Lewes.



This stunning timber-framed medieval house dates back to the 15th century. It was given to Anne of Cleves at the end of her short-lived marriage to Henry VIII – although she never lived there. You can even dress up as a King or Queen and find your inner regality!

If you're a science buff

Winchester Science Centre and Planetarium

The Planetarium is epic. A massive screen is all around you to make you feel like you're flying through space. Visitors can see a fantastic full-dome film show or an out-of-this-world live show, learning some fantastic space facts.

With the National Park's International Dark Sky Reserve on its doorstep, the centre offers a great introduction to astronomy and stargazing.

Things to do in the South Downs this June

Please follow the links as booking may be necessary. Find these and more events across the National Park and submit your own events at southdowns.gov.uk/events/



- Sample home-grown produce as Stansted House will be hosting its annual [garden show](#) from 10 to 12 June.
- [The Sussex Gin and Fizz](#) Festival returns on 11 June. Join Visit Lewes for their annual celebration of Sussex-made gins and sparkling wines in the beautiful surroundings of Southover Grange Gardens, Lewes.
- Explore the rhythm, power, and emotion of humanity's oldest instrument – the drums – in a [workshop](#) at Butser Ancient Farm on 11 June.
- Celebrate [Sussex Day](#) on 16 June at the Weald and Downland Living Museum. From Sussex food and drink to crafts, folk songs and games, there will also be a chance to learn about the history of the county.
- Spend the [summer solstice](#) on 21 June watching the sunset in the Pleasure Garden at Petworth House when the grounds are open from 7pm to 10pm.
- Go and see a wide collection of emergency vehicles, vintage and modern and watch demonstrations from West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. [Amberley Museum](#) will be hosting the special weekend on 18 and 19 June – and dads get free entry on Father's Day (only on 19 June)

YOU SAY:

Do you have a story you want to tell about the National Park? A burning issue that you think needs to be addressed? Or would you like to pen your own article about why you love the South Downs? Please let us know!



To submit a comment for our newsletter please email newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk. For a fast and direct response to your questions please email info@southdowns.gov.uk

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