

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

From rolling hills to bustling market towns, the South Downs National Park's landscapes cover 1,600km² of breathtaking views, hidden gems and quintessentially English scenery. A rich tapestry of wildlife, landscapes, tranquillity and visitor attractions, weave together a story of people and place in harmony.


For your guide to everything there is to see and do in the National Park visit southdowns.gov.uk/discovery-map

Keep up to date with the latest news and events from the South Downs National Park. southdowns.gov.uk/newsletter



YOUR COUNTRYSIDE CODE: RESPECT. PROTECT. ENJOY.

Respect other people

- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Keep to the paths unless on Open Access Land 

Protect the natural environment

- Take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control











Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs



FIND YOUR WAY

Follow the arrows on waymarkers.

Footpath		
Bridleway		
Restricted byway		
Byway		
Open access land		National Trail Acorn 

TAKE THE LEAD

For a safe and fun visit with your dog please remember to keep them on a lead around livestock and wildlife. Always bag and bin your dog poo – any public bin will do!

GETTING HERE

By bus: There are regular services to Lewes, Offham and Cookebridge, visit traveline.info

By rail: Southern hourly service 7 days a week between London and Eastbourne stops at Cookebridge and Lewes. Visit nationalrail.co.uk



[SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK](https://southdowns.gov.uk)

CONTACT

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 @SDNPA  /SDNPA
 southdownsnp

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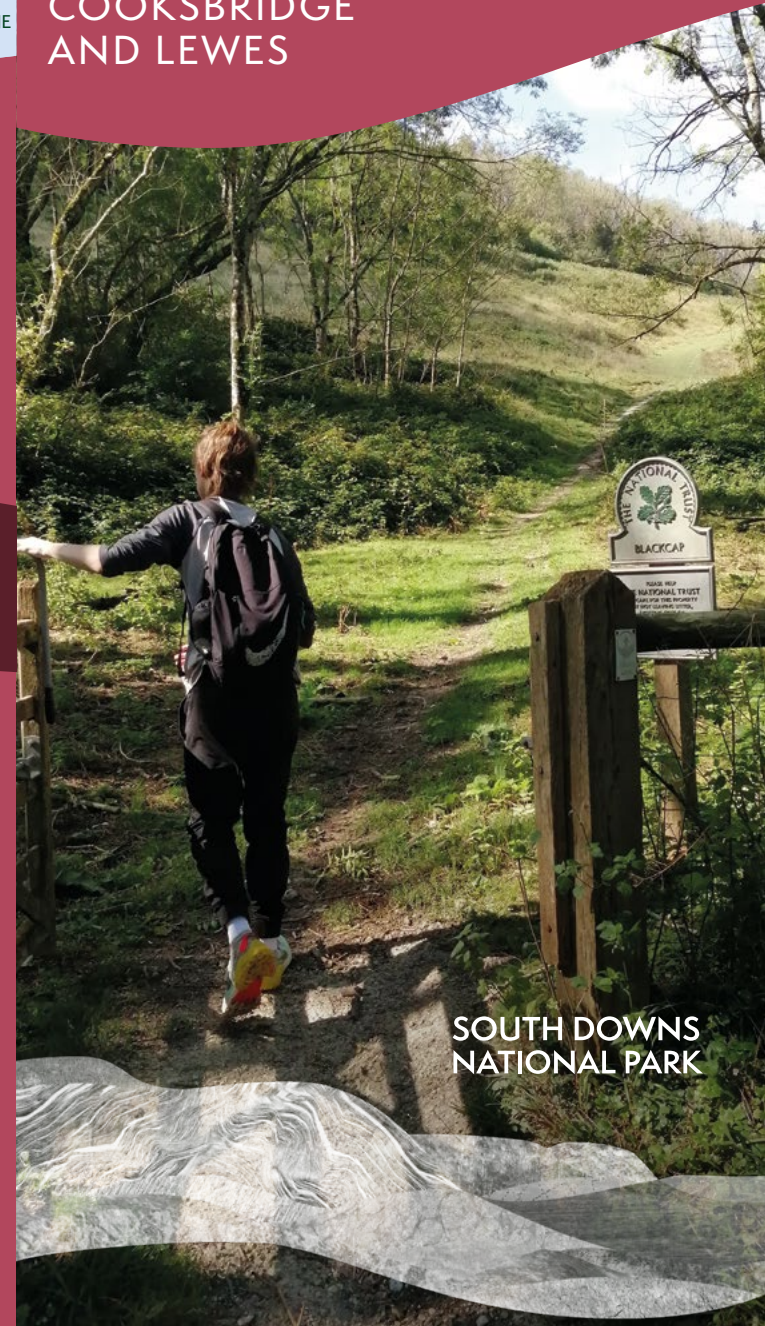
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SOUTH DOWNS WALKS

RAIL TO RAMBLE

COOKSBRIDGE AND LEWES



SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK



The River Ouse and Lewes

POINTS OF INTEREST

MOUNT HARRY BEACON

In use between the 16th and 19th centuries, the beacon was lit as part of a south coast defence system, warning local militia of potential invasion. The current brazier was erected to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth in 2002.

BATTLE OF LEWES 1264

The Battle of Lewes, where Simon de Montfort defeated King Henry III, took place on Offham Hill in 1264. This, along with the battle of Evesham the following year, helped to pave the way for our modern parliamentary system.

LEWES CASTLE

Built shortly after the Norman invasion to dominate and control the Sussex coast. Royal forces encamped here before engaging in the Battle of Lewes. The castle was later used as a prison and a warehouse for wool.

HARVEY'S BREWERY

The oldest independent brewery in Sussex. A family business for seven generations since John Harvey in 1790. Visit harveys.org.uk to find out more about this delicious locally brewed beer.

OFFHAM CHALK PITS

A hive of industrial activity during the 18th and 19th century. Here, the raw chalk of the South Downs and the River Ouse meet and both were part of the great chalk pit and lime industry which has shaped the landscape we see today.



View to Lewes from Offham chalk pits



Lewes Castle
© Mischa Haller / SDNPA

Two circular walks starting from either Cooksbridge or Lewes Railway Stations.

Enjoy downland views and the winding River Ouse or discover the historic market town of Lewes.

Complete the loops independently or merge to form one longer route of approximately 10 miles (15-16 km).



English's Passage, Lewes with Harvey's Brewery in the background

COOKSBRIDGE RAIL TO RAMBLE

TRAIL: 

DISTANCE:

6.6 miles (10.7km) to loop back to Cooksbridge

ALLOW: 3.5 hours

PATH:

Uneven, sometimes muddy. Take care crossing roads and the railway line. A number of stiles/gates.

GRADIENT:

Steep incline to Black Cap, one fairly steep descent to Offham.

1 Exit Cooksbridge Railway Station, turn right and immediately right again on the footpath parallel to the railway. Cross the stile into the field and head towards the stile in the roadside hedge. Turn left here and almost immediately right over a stile. Follow the path alongside the hedge.

2 Turn right over a small stream then cross the field to a stile, heading towards farm buildings. Go over two stiles to cross a farm track and then head across a field towards another stile. Turn left here towards the B2116.

3 Turn right passing Picketts to the path through the trees, up wooden steps and along the verge, carefully crossing the road opposite Courthouse Farm. Go through the gate and immediately right along the track, through another gate, turning left and then

bearing right, climb steeply to (National Trust) Black Cap.

4 Turn left along the grassy ridge, passing Mount Harry beacon. Go through a gate and bear right down towards a gap in the hedge. With the fence to your right pass through another gate.

5 Keeping the fence on your right, zig zag right and then left **(or if you are extending this walk and heading to Lewes, turn right and follow orange points 12 – 20)**. At the metal gate turn right and follow the path through woods to a kissing gate. Continue to the chalk pits bearing right until you reach the information board overlooking the chalk pit plateau and Lewes.

6 Retrace your steps and turn right down the path, through a kissing gate. Keep right, cross the former chalk pit (Treacle Mines)

and follow the sunken path, down past a wooden barrier and over a stile, to reach the A275 and the village of Offham.

7 Turn left and carefully cross the road, turning right with Offham church on the left. Fork right on to a track which winds down through trees. After about 500m turn left through a gate. Continue, going through the gate and under the railway bridge and a further gate to reach the River Ouse.

8 Turn left and follow the embankment to Ivors Lane. Turn left and take the footpath 200m on the right, keeping the hedge on your right. Pass between houses (narrow) and turn left on to Whitfeld Lane until you reach a T-junction with the Drove.

9 Turn right then take the footpath on the left. Walk across the field

towards a hedge gap. Continue with the hedge to your right to the railway line.

10 Turn right towards a stile and carefully cross the railway line (stop and look both ways before crossing). Go right to a small bridge over a stream. Continue between houses, cross Malthouse Way and follow the gravel path leading to the main road. Turn right back to Cooksbridge Railway Station.



MAP REF:
Find this area on
OS Explorer OL11
(was 122)

START
COOKSBRIDGE
🚶 🅑 🚗

OFFHAM
🚰 🚗



4

2

1

PICKETTS

3

B2116

COURTHOUSE FARM

A215

COPYHOLD FARM

10

HAMSEY

9

OFFHAM FARM

THE DROVE

OFFHAM

9

MOUNT HARRY BEACON

7

PILLBOX

HAMSEY PLACE

ASHCOMBE BOTTOM

5

8

8

12

10

11

6

OFFHAM HILL

Tumulus

CHALK PITS

OLD COACH ROAD

13

14

RIVER OUSE



5

8

12

10

8

11

6

OFFHAM HILL

OLD COACH ROAD

13

Tumulus

CHALK PITS

RIVER OUSE

A26

14

OLD LEWES RACECOURSE

BATTLE OF LEWES SITE 1264

6

LANDPORT BOTTOM

JILL'S POND

7

15

17

5

4

20

LEWES CASTLE

19

2

3

16

HEATH STABLES

18


RAILWAY LAND NATURE RESERVE

START LEWES

1



LEWES RAIL TO RAMBLE

TRAIL: 
See overleaf for map

DISTANCE:
5.75 miles (9.3km) to
loop back to Lewes.

PATH:
Uneven, sometimes
muddy. Take care crossing
roads. Multiple stiles.

GRADIENT:
Steep incline to Offham
chalk pits. Some of the
streets in Lewes are steep.

ALLOW:
3 hours

1 Exit Lewes Railway Station and cross the bridge. Turn right along Landsdown Place and Friars Walk, over the mini roundabout until you meet the traffic lights. Turn right into the precinct.

2 Continue over Cliffe Bridge until you get to North Court (a small alley way on the left).

3 Go through the alley and follow the brick pathway passing Harvey's Brewery.

4 Continue along the brick path winding left to meet the river Ouse.

5 Follow the riverside walk passing Tesco on your right until you reach Willey's Bridge.

6 Cross the bridge.

7 Turn right and follow the river bank passing through three gates until you reach a railway bridge.

8 Head away from the river under the bridge towards the woods. Pass through a gate, turn right and take the woodland path up to Offham village.

9 Turn left at the main road (A275) then right onto the footpath by Toll Cottage. Take the left fork and head up a steep path to Offham chalk pits.

10 Keeping left, cross the chalk pit plateau. Climb the hill through the kissing gate.

11 Turn left here for the information panel and view above the main chalk pit, or right to continue. Go along a wooded path and turn left at the iron gate.

12 Pass through a wooden gate, and following the path over the field, cross another path, until you come to the gate in the corner of the field.

13 Pass through the gate and the next gate, crossing the road by the old racecourse.

14 Keeping the fence on your right, head down around Jill's Pond, to the gate at the bottom of the hill.

15 Here, there is an information board about Landport Bottom and the Battle of Lewes. Continue downhill to the tarmac road.

16 Stay right, following the path. Continue past Heath Stables to the main road.

17 Carefully cross the road on to Spital Road and continue downhill towards Lewes Town Centre

18 Stay on the left pavement meeting Western Road. Continue on, passing the Greenwich Meridian plaque in the pavement, to the centre of Lewes.



















19 Turn right down Station Street towards Lewes Railway Station or to see more of Lewes continue past the War Memorial bearing right down (steep) School Hill to the traffic lights at the bottom.

20 Turn right here to retrace steps 1 and 2 to head back to Lewes Railway Station.

YOU CAN FIND THIS ROUTE ON OUTDOORACTIVE

Download the free OutdoorActive app from your app store. Once registered you can search for South Downs National Park to view all our routes. All our routes on OutdoorActive are available for FREE – you do not need to buy any maps to view our walks and rides.

KEY:

-  Point of interest
-  Viewpoint
-  Pub
-  Refreshments
-  Toilets
-  Parking
-  Bus stop
-  Trail point
-  Railway station
-  Bridge
-  A Road
-  B Road
-  Restricted byway
-  Bridleway
-  Footpath
-  Open access land
-  Woodland
-  Buildings