

# SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

From rolling hills to bustling market towns, the South Downs National Park's landscapes cover 1,600km<sup>2</sup> 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](https://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](https://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

# BREEZE BUSES

With the Breeze up to the Downs bus services out of Brighton you can speed out of the city and be in the South Downs National Park in minutes. Breeze bus services run throughout the year at weekends and bank holidays to both Devil's Dyke and Ditchling Beacon. Return tickets are valid on both routes. Devil's Dyke buses also run weekdays (mid Jun-Aug).

Visit [buses.co.uk/breeze-downs](https://buses.co.uk/breeze-downs) for route, timetable and ticket details.



On the  
Breeze Bus  
© SDNPA

## 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.

## SOUTH DOWNS WALKS

# DITCHLING BEACON AND DEVIL'S DYKE



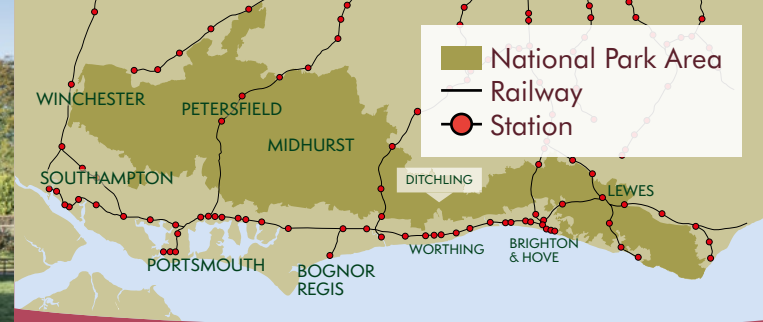
SOUTH DOWNS  
NATIONAL PARK



View from Devil's Dyke  
– South Downs Way  
© Sam Moore



The Donkey Wheel  
© Edward Mills



## POINTS OF INTEREST

### DEVIL'S DYKE

At nearly one mile long, the Dyke valley is the longest, deepest and widest 'dry valley' in the UK. Legend has it that the Devil dug this chasm to drown the parishioners of the Weald. Scientists however, believe it was formed naturally just over 10,000 years ago in the last ice age. The ramparts or walls of the Iron Age hill fort can be seen when you walk around the hill and the remains of the curious Victorian funfair can be found just a few minutes from the car park.

Venture into the valley during spring or summer and you will discover a living carpet of flowers and a myriad of colourful insects including several orchids, wild thyme, horseshoe vetch and birdfoot trefoil. John Constable described the panorama from Devil's Dyke as 'the grandest view in the world'. The area is now managed and cared for by the National Trust.

### SADDLESCOMBE FARM

Acquired by the National Trust in 1995, Saddlescombe Farm is a hidden gem on the South Downs Way. Documented in the Domesday Book, this unique example of a Downland farm recounts what life was really like throughout the last 1,000 years. Intriguingly, it was even once home to the Knights Templar.

One of Saddlescombe's most famous buildings is open all year and houses the donkey wheel, powered by a donkey or small horse, drew water from the 50-metre deep well and was the only reliable source of water for residents for centuries.

While visiting Saddlescombe Farm lookout for buzzards and red kites overhead and a variety of fungi near your feet.

Visit [nationaltrust.org.uk/saddlescombe-farm-and-newtimber-hill](https://nationaltrust.org.uk/saddlescombe-farm-and-newtimber-hill) for more information.

### PYECOMBE

This village is home of the Pyecombe Crook, the famous high quality shepherd's crook, coveted by bishops across Christendom. Pyecombe has a particularly attractive church – the Church of the Transfiguration – which dates from the late 12th century and contains a lead font which, so the story goes, was saved during the Civil War by being painted with whitewash by the villagers to disguise it from looting soldiers. A kitchen and toilets are available in the church for walkers.

### JACK AND JILL WINDMILLS

Jill, along with her neighbour Jack, stand atop the scenic South Downs with stunning views over the Weald.

When the wind is blowing Jill may be in operation and a guide available to explain the mysteries of milling. Jill has been restored by the Jack and Jill Windmills Society.

Visit [jillwindmill.org.uk/jjwelcome.htm](https://jillwindmill.org.uk/jjwelcome.htm) for more details.











### DITCHLING BEACON

Ditchling Beacon is located seven miles to the north of Brighton and just south of the village of Ditchling. At 248 metres above sea-level it is the highest point in East Sussex with fantastic views to the sea, across the Weald and along the South Downs.

Once the site for a warning beacon which was lit in times of imminent invasion, the site is also of archaeological interest with remains of an Iron Age hill fort.

## 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:** Devil's Dyke and Ditchling Beacon are served by the Breeze Buses. Visit [buses.co.uk/breeze-downs](https://buses.co.uk/breeze-downs) for full details.

**By rail:** The nearest railway station is Brighton. Visit [nationalrail.co.uk](https://nationalrail.co.uk) to plan your journey.

## CONTACT

South Downs National Park Authority:  
**01730 814810**

 @SDNPA  /SDNPA  
 southdownsnp

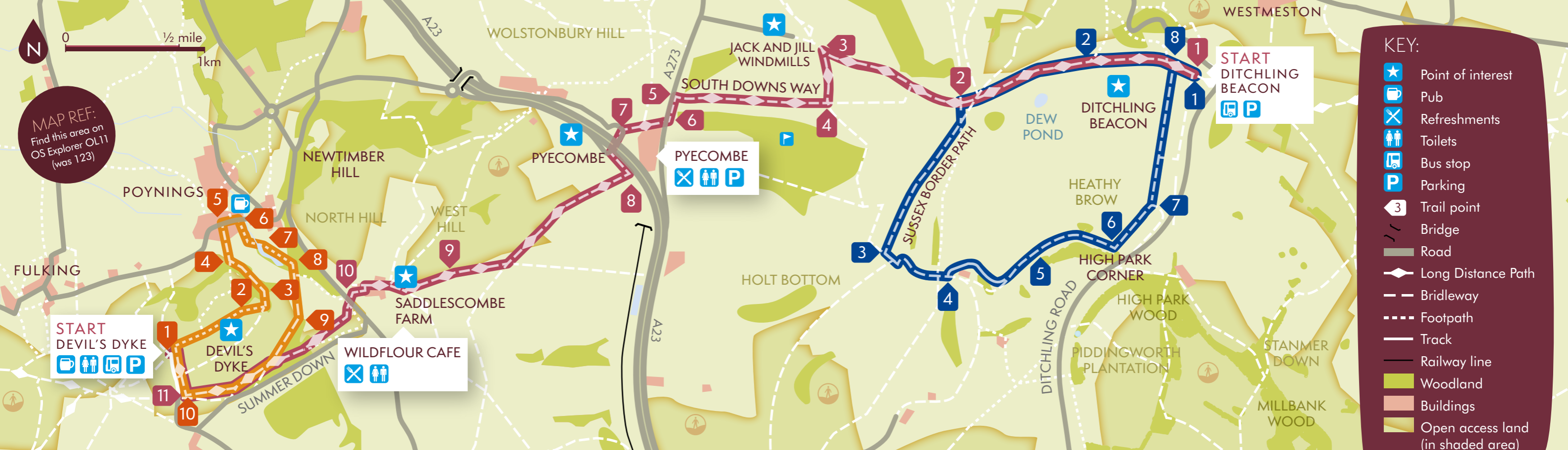
## SOUTHDOVNS.GOV.UK

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after use



## DEVIL'S DYKE CIRCULAR

**TRAIL:**  **ALLOW:** 1–1.5 hrs  
**DISTANCE:** 2.5 miles (4 km) **GRADIENT:** Some steep declines and moderate inclines.  
**PATH:** Loose surface, steep and uneven in some places. Some gates.

Soak up stunning views across the weald and out to the English Channel from the top of Ditchling Beacon and Devil's Dyke.

- From the bus stop head up past the Devil's Dyke pub (on your right). Follow the signposts through the car park passing through a metal barrier. Continue straight along the marked footpath.
- Continue straight at the crossroads of paths, over the stile and down the hill, turning left onto the bridleway.
- Continue along the bridleway through the wood. Caution steep track – slippery when wet.
- At the bottom of the steep track turn right past the gardens.
- At the road turn right and head into Poynings.
- Continue to the Royal Oak pub, then at the period garage turn right, keeping the small stream on your left and head through the gate.
- At the next gate turn left and cross the waterway. Continue along the path into the wood keeping the water on your right.
- Continue to the gate which leads to an open area and into the valley bottom of Devil's Dyke. For the best views follow the bridleway which leads up to the left side of Devil's Dyke.
- At the top of the slope the bridleway joins the South Downs Way. Turn right here and continue to the road.
- Turn right to follow the path alongside the road to return to the bus stop.

## DITCHLING BEACON TO DEVIL'S DYKE


**TRAIL:**  **ALLOW:** 3.5–4 hrs  
**DISTANCE:** 7 miles (11 km) **GRADIENT:** Some moderate inclines.  
**PATH:** Loose surface, uneven and muddy in parts, some gates.

- At the car park, with your back to the sea, turn left onto the South Downs Way (SDW) following the path through the gate.
- At the top of the rise, after the dew pond continue to follow the SDW.
- Turn left at the junction to continue to follow the SDW. Divert here to visit the Jack & Jill windmills.
- Turn right at the crossroads, following the SDW west. Be courteous to golfers as the trail passes through Pyecombe Golf Course.
- Take care crossing the busy A273. If you have time on your hands divert here to visit the National Trust hill fort at Wolstonbury Hill.
- Turn right onto School Lane into Pyecombe village. Visit the historic church for refreshments and toilets, or turn left for the Plough pub and mini-mart shop at the garage 200m down Church Lane.
- Turn left and follow the road over the A23, turning left again immediately after the flyover.
- Turn right passing Haresdean Farm following the SDW.
- Continue up West Hill keeping to the right hand track. Descend the hill and enter a sunken lane which exits into Saddlecombe Farm.
- Take care crossing the road and follow the SDW signs to continue on the route.
- At the road, turn right leaving the SDW and follow the path adjacent to the road to Devil's Dyke for refreshments and the bus stop.

## DITCHLING BEACON CIRCULAR

**TRAIL:**  **ALLOW:** 2–3 hrs  
**DISTANCE:** 4 miles (7 km) **GRADIENT:** Some moderate inclines.  
**PATH:** Loose surface, uneven and muddy in parts, with some gates.

- At the car park, with your back to the sea, turn left onto the South Downs Way (SDW) following the path through the gate.
- Continue on the SDW passing through three gates. Just after the Keymer post turn left through the gate, following signs to the Chattri, and continue on the Sussex Border Path.
- Pass through another gate, then at the junction of three metal gates, take the public bridleway to your left. Continue along the bridleway as it winds past the small wooded area on your right, then through another gate.
- Continue on the track passing two large barns on your right. Ignore the footpath on your left, then turn left through the gate and up the track to another gate.
- Continue along the grassy track, then pass through the marked bridleway gate on your right. Continue along the bridleway up the hill.
- Pass through the gate in the trees and follow the path uphill to a gate leading to a fenced track.
- Follow the track up to the junction with the SDW.
- On reaching the gate onto the SDW turn right to return to the car park.

 **Open Access Land**  
 Wherever you see this symbol you are free to leave the footpath to walk and picnic within the mapped area. Please be aware of livestock and wildlife.