

Get involved in the South Downs National Park A quick and easy guide

From tranquil and unspoilt places and breathtaking views to busy market towns and famous historical sites, there is so much to do and see across the South Downs. Stretching from Eastbourne on the south coast, westwards to the historic city of Winchester, the South Downs National Park covers over 1,600km² of outstanding beauty.

You don't need to pay to use the footpaths and visit the breathtaking countryside of the South Downs, and many places are easy to reach by public transport.

Highlights include:

- Explore the Downs (a series of hills) on foot, bike or horse. There are hundreds of miles of footpaths and bridleways you can use all across the National Park.
- Challenge yourself with a 100-mile bike ride or walk along the famous [South Downs Way](#), a national trail that covers the whole length of the South Downs National Park. Or just join the trail for a short section.
- Join a guided walk with the South Downs Society (see www.southdownssociety.org.uk)
- Use easy-access footpaths to get into the South Downs, including at the Seven Sisters, Old Winchester Hill Iron Age Hill Fort, Devil's Dyke, Burton Pond near Petworth. Download [free walks leaflets](#) on the South Downs National Park Authority Website.
- Explore the Downs on [public transport](#). There are bus routes from Brighton, Eastbourne, Worthing and other towns to places like the famous white cliffs at Beachy Head (from Eastbourne), inspiring views from Devil's Dyke and Ditchling Beacon (from Brighton) or the ancient Iron-age hill fort at Cissbury Ring (from Worthing).
- Discover wildlife - birds, snakes and more - on the wetlands, including the [Arundel Wetlands Centre](#) and [Pulborough Brooks Nature Reserve](#).



White cliffs at Seven Sisters



Queen Elizabeth Country Park

- Visit elegant stately homes, castles (e.g. Lewes Castle and Arundel Castle) or Roman Villas (E.g. Bignor and Fishbourne).
- Hire bikes and ride out on rural tracks through forests and on open countryside. Places include [Seven Sisters Country Park](#), [Hassocks Train Station](#) and [Alice Holt](#).
- Get active and fit on a conservation project - more effective than any gym with the bonus of making a real difference to wildlife.
- Stay at one of the South Downs' Youth Hostels for budget accommodation in beautiful locations. www.yha.org.uk

How can I get more involved with the South Downs?

- Could you give a talk introducing the South Downs to a group in an urban area or your local community? The South Downs National Park Authority can assist and provide support materials.
- Help on a South Downs Stall at an urban event, such as the Southampton Mela.
- Do you have links with other communities, faith groups etc? Could you take information about the South Downs to any shows and meetings you are attending where people might be interested to find out more?
- Involved with community radio? Can you host a programme to let others know about the South Downs?
- Volunteer to do some conservation activities. There are opportunities to do this on a regular basis, or on a one-off project. Find out more about how you can be involved on www.southdowns.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteering or contact Ian Hartle, the South Downs Volunteer Coordinator on 01273 625242 or ian.hartle@southdowns.gov.uk
- Want to take a group out onto the South Downs, but unsure of where to go or how to find your way? Would your group would like to learn more about the birds, plants, history or geology of the area you visit? A South Downs National Park Ranger may be able to join you, or a volunteer from the South Downs Society. Contact the South Downs National Park Authority (below) or the [South Downs Society](http://www.southdownsociety.org.uk) on 01798 875073.
- The National Park runs regular polls and discussions about the future of the South Downs National Park on its online forum. If you would like to contribute to the debate and get involved, please visit: www.southdowns.gov.uk/get-involved/have-your-say/



Conservation Volunteering



For more information, contact Amanda Elmes, the Outreach and Learning Strategy Lead at the South Downs National Park.

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Or use the central South Downs National Park Authority contacts:

Telephone: 0300 3031053

Website: www.southdowns.gov.uk

