

# TOWN WALKS

All walks start at the Tourist Information Centre **TIC** at Lewes and take you out to the countryside. They link the historic heart of the county town to the superb countryside that surrounds it. The numbered and coloured routes (**Route 1**) on the **TOWN WALKS** map tie in with the **DOWNNS WALKS** routes on the reverse side of this sheet. The numbered **fingerpost symbols** **2A** on the maps indicate where the walk descriptions continue from one map to the other. Three of the walks link to the South Downs Way in both directions to lead you in or out of town as required. We hope you enjoy these walks around our very special town.

**♿** Most of the parks and areas of interest marked are well laid out with paths and suited to wheelchairs. Accessible public toilets are marked on the map.

### Key to map

- open space
- urban space
- playground
- public toilets, all with disabled access except Pinwell Road
- A B C** points of interest described in text
- public house
- viewpoint
- TIC** Tourist Information Centre

### 2A Key to numbered routes (SDW = South Downs Way)

- 1A, 1B - Lewes / SDW at Black Cap
- 2A, 2B - Lewes / SDW at Kingston Ridge
- 3A, 3B - Lewes / SDW at Southeaste Bridge
- 4 - Black Cap and Landport Bottom
- 5 - Ouse Valley Walk north
- 6 - Malling Down
- 7 - Mount Caburn
- 8 - Oxteddle Bottom
- other paths

### Route 1 (1.5km each way)

**Route 1A To the South Downs Way at Black Cap**  
With the TIC on your right, cross Fisher Street and walk along the High Street. Turn right into the cobbled Castle Gate entrance and walk into the precincts of Lewes Castle **A**, passing through two arches. At the end of the bowling green, you reach benches and a viewpoint north with an information board about the Battle of Lewes **B**. Continue down Castle Lane, a path to your left. Cross New Road at the bottom and follow the path down, alongside railings. Turn left along Paddock Lane past the Paddock Art Studios to the junction with De Montfort Road by the entrance to Baxter's Field **C**. Follow De Montfort Road to the end **D**. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 1A

### Route 1B From the South Downs Way at Black Cap

Join this route from Route 1B overleaf  
Go past Lewes Prison's wall, along Spital Road **D**. Take care crossing the main road as you enter the town. Cross over into De Montfort Road, and carry on at the end down Paddock Lane, immediately passing the entrance to Baxter's Field **C**. Just past the Paddock Art Studios, turn right up a path with railings, then at the road junction carry on up the rising path (Castle Lane). At the top is a viewpoint with an information board about the Battle of Lewes **B**. Turn right, through the precincts of Lewes Castle **A** past the bowling green, and through two archways. Turn left on the High Street.

### Route 2 (2km each way)

#### Route 2A To the South Downs Way on Kingston Ridge via the Priory ruins

With the TIC behind you cross the road and go down Station Street opposite. Stop by the interpretation panel, which tells the story of this street as it was in the 1790s. Continue down the hill, over the iron railway bridge **E** past the station and left into Mountfield Road. Turn right at the near side of the Lewes FC ground, known as the Dripping Pan. Before the end follow signs to The Mount **F**. Return to the path and turn right and follow the path to the Priory ruins **G**. Leave the park at the far end. Turn right and walk under the railway bridge to Southover High Street. Turn left, past Anne of Cleves House **H** to the Swan Inn. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 2A

### Route 2B From the South Downs Way on Kingston Downs to Lewes via the Priory ruins

Join this route from Route 2B overleaf  
Emerge by the Swan Inn on Southover High Street. Follow it along past Anne of Cleves House **H**. Turn right into Cockshut Lane, under the railway bridge and left into the park containing the Priory ruins **G**. Past the ruins, detour up The Mount **F**. Take the next left, past the end of the Lewes FC ground, known as the Dripping Pan. Turn left on Mountfield Road, then right, past the station and over the iron railway bridge **E**. Carry on up Station Street, and look at its interpretation panel, then reach the TIC.

### Route 3 (Footpath only; no cyclists or horse riders; 1km each way)

**Route 3A To the South Downs Way at Southeaste via the Railway Land**  
Leave the TIC and cross over the street, turn left and walk down the High Street, past the War Memorial to the top of Church Twitten by Lewes House. Turn right down Church Twitten **J** to All Saints Church. Turn left along Friars Walk, passing the Pinwell drinking fountain **K** by the Friends Meeting House. Continue to the mini roundabout and turn right into Court Road. Keep left, then at the end of the car park bear right and carry on through an old level-crossing gate to enter the Railway Land Nature Reserve and the Linklater Pavilion **L**. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 3A

### Route 3B from the South Downs Way at Southeaste via the Railway Land

Join this route from Route 3B overleaf  
The Ouse Way finally leaves the river in the Railway Land Nature Reserve **L**. Pass the six-sided Linklater Pavilion and turn right, under the old level-crossing gate, and turn left on Court Road, and left into Friars Walk, passing the Pinwell drinking fountain **K** by the Friends Meeting House. Turn right just after All Saints Church up Church Twitten **J** to the High Street and TIC.

### Route 4 To South Downs Way at Black Cap via Landport Bottom (1.5km each way)

This is an alternative route westwards, and can be continued to Black Cap. Follow Route 1A as far as Baxter's Field (junction of Paddock Lane and Bradford Road), turn right down Bradford Road, then left up the Avenue. Cross over Prince Edward's Road, go along Gundreda Road and right past Wallands CP School on a path, then turn left at the top of Hill Road, through a barrier to the A275. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 4.

**Route 5 to Hamsey (1km each way) and Route 6 to Malling Down (2.5km each way) and The Coombe (4.5km)**  
Leave the TIC and turn left. You soon reach the front of the Town Hall where a plaque in the wall commemorates execution of the Protestant Martyrs (1555-57). Continue left into Market Street and just after the Crown Inn turn left through the Market Tower **M**, if open, turning left at the other end. If the Market Tower is closed,

take the next road on the left (Market Lane). Continue along Market Lane, cross over Fisher Street and turn right. Continue left along Mount Pleasant and cross the zebra crossing. Keep to the right of the Elephant & Castle pub, along Abinger Place past the left side of St John's sub Castro church **N**, down St John's Hill to the L-shaped duck pond in the Pells, and past the entrance to Pells Pool **O**. Continue ahead alongside the pond to Willey's Bridge, but don't cross the river. Route 6 splits off at this point.

For **Route 5** north to Hamsey, turn left here and follow the river path. Continue this route at fingerpost 5 overleaf

For **Route 6** cross Willey's Bridge and take the path ahead under a disused railway bridge. Go past the playground, under the road bridge into Hereward Way, turn left into The Martlets, and right into Church Lane. Cross the A26 at the traffic lights and go up Mill Road to the end (roadside parking here) **P**.

For the old quarries in **Malling Down Nature Reserve** take the track ahead. Where two sets of power lines are above a gate, a path rising sharp right leading to steps in a former chalk pit (gates at the very top give access to the Downs).  
For the **Coombe** turn right just before the nature reserve sign, then right again through two gates to rise above the deep valley known as The Coombe. Go around the head of the valley near the golf course. The path bends right and down through a woodland on the other side of the valley. Keep on this track until reaching a gate up into grassland. Through the gate, keeping the hedge on

your right, follow to the corner of the field and bend left across corner past the Martyrs' Memorial **Q**. Turn right at the signpost and go steeply down to the road (Chapel Hill). Turn right and back, via the High Street, to the TIC.

### Route 7 to Mount Caburn via Chapel Hill (1.5km) and Route 8 to Oxteddle Bottom via South Street (2km)

Cross the road from the TIC, and turn left down School Hill (the main street). Cross at the traffic lights at the bottom and continue straight and cross the river at Cliffe Bridge, with its view of Harveys Brewery **R**. Follow Cliffe High Street to the end, past St Thomas a Becket Church. Reach a crossroads.

For **Route 7** continue ahead and go up Chapel Hill, opposite, to the golf course clubhouse at the top of the hill. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 7

For **Route 8** turn right along South Street as far as the Snowdrop Inn, then along the path beside the river. Cross the busy A26 at the traffic island and into the industrial estate opposite. Immediately turn right and follow this to the end just before the by-pass road bridge ahead. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 8

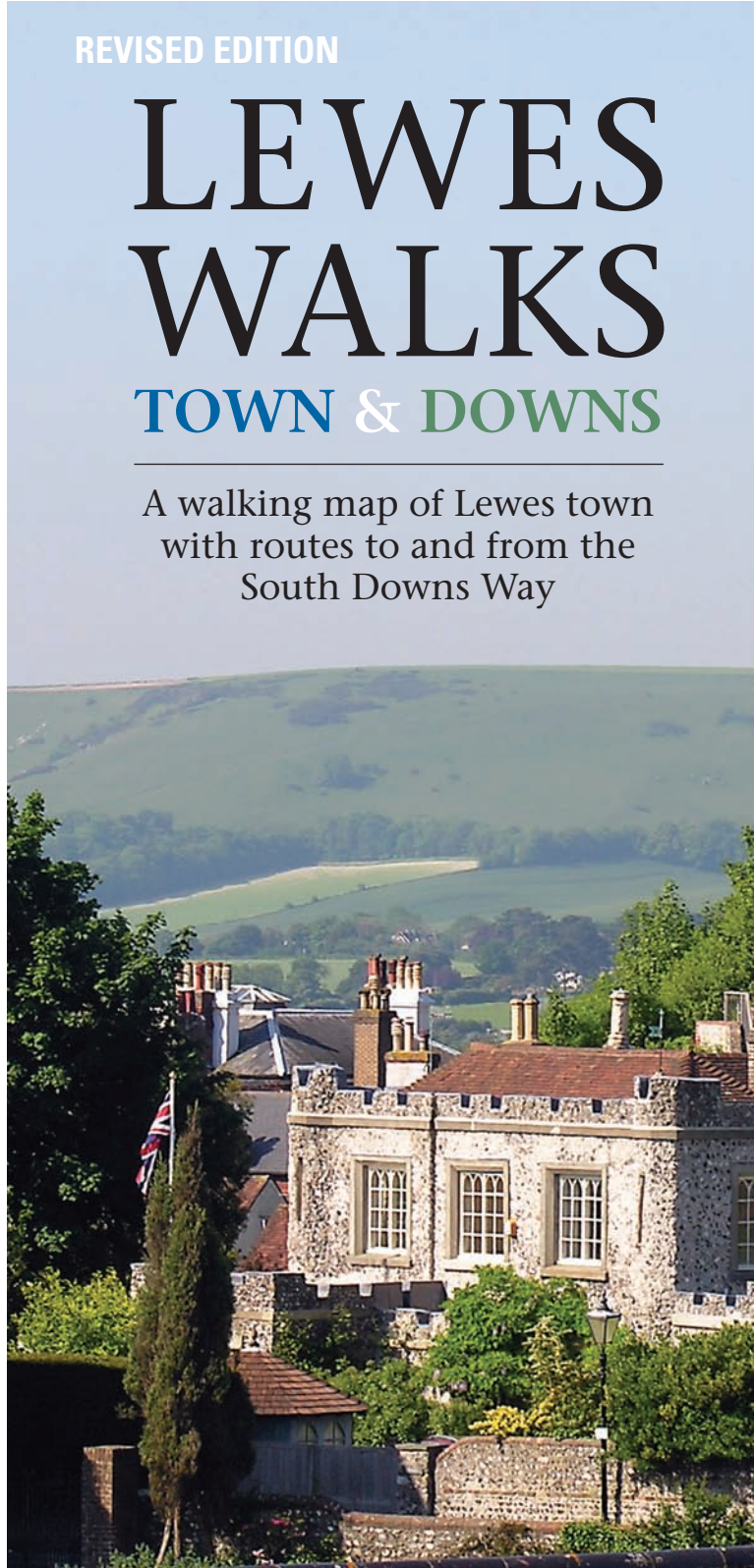
## Points of interest

Red letters within the text indicate these points on the routes.

- A Lewes Castle** Built on a manmade hill by the Normans soon after they invaded in 1066, the castle gives a far-reaching view over the town to the coast at Newhaven. The outer Barbican Gate was added in the 1300s. Barbican House Museum houses the town model and items of Sussex history. The bowling green, probably the former jousting ground in the bailey, is thought to be the oldest in the country.
- B Battle of Lewes viewpoint panel** This indicates the site of the battle, which took place in 1264 on the Downs near the prison and Spital Road.
- C Baxter's Field** With free access to the public (no dogs), this grassy space has glorious views of Lewes Castle.
- D Spital Road** Named after the old Hospital of St Nicholas. Lewes Prison, built in 1853, stands nearby.
- E Iron railway bridge** This is a reminder of Lewes' iron foundry heritage. The Harveys sign marks the brewery's old bottling plant.
- F The Mount** This manmade hill may date from the 16th century. It gives a fine view across down the Ouse Valley.
- G Priory ruins** Interpretation panels vividly evoke life in the Priory of St Pancras, created around 1077-80 by William de Warenne and his wife Gundrada. The Priory dominated the town physically, economically and spiritually until the Reformation in the 16th century. Some of the Normandy limestone was reused in the building of Southover Grange nearby which stands in delightful gardens (free access; refreshments).
- H Anne of Cleves House** A magnificently preserved example of a 15th-century Wealden hall house, given to Anne of Cleves as part of her divorce settlement from Henry VIII. It contains a wealth of local history exhibits and is open to the public.
- J Church Twitten** Lined with flint walls, it is one of Lewes' narrow parallel lanes. Known as twittens, they were created during King Alfred's time. All Saints Church, at the bottom end, is now a community arts venue.
- K Pinwell drinking fountain** This is close by the location of an ancient stream called the Pin Well. The old gate next to it is a vestige of the Friary and was originally located closer to the river. A painting on the doorway opposite recreates the scene.
- L Railway Land Nature Reserve** This wetland area was rescued from development by the Railway Land Wildlife Trust in the late 1980s. Formerly railway sidings, it now hosts a wide range of different flora and fauna. You can wander around the Heart of Reeds, designed by land artist Chris Drury. Above the chalk cliffs across the river you may spot peregrine falcons.
- M Market Tower** The area under the tower hosts a produce market every Friday. The painting of the radical, Thomas Paine, by Julian Bell and information panels tell of his life and influence during the French Revolution and American War of Independence. The Old Needlemakers opposite offers a café and a range of independent shops.
- N St John's sub Castro** The many fascinating graves in the churchyard include a monument to Finnish prisoners of the Crimean War who died in the Lewes Naval Prison.
- O Pells Pool** A large open-air swimming pool originally opened in 1860 and fed by spring water.
- P Malling Down Nature Reserve** Owned by the Sussex Wildlife Trust, this downland reserve has a range of chalk downland flowers and butterflies. The steep-sided valley known as The Coombe, is grazed by a variety of sheep breeds that have been brought in to keep the scrub at bay.
- Q Martyrs' Memorial** This obelisk, looking down over Lewes, commemorates the 17 Protestant martyrs who were burned for their beliefs outside the Town Hall between 1555 and 1557.
- R Harveys Brewery** A Lewes landmark, nicknamed the 'Lewes Cathedral'. Brewing has gone on here since 1838 under the same family. It uses locally sourced ingredients and its own water source. The brewery shop in Cliffe High Street is well worth a visit.



Illustrations and map artwork © Andy Gammon



For circular walks suggestions, see box overleaf

Discovers another way to explore the South Downs National Park. Leave the car behind and go on an adventure. Hop on a bus or train, then relax and take in the view. Visit [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info) 0871 200 22 33 to find the simplest route from door to door. There are plenty of opportunities to go for a stroll or pedal around in the countryside in the South Downs National Park. For easy-to-follow routes, visit [www.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk) and search for Walk and Ride Leaflets.

plenty to see and do. From bustling market towns to rural country parks, find out more at [www.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk). Looking for somewhere to stay? Go to [www.our-land.co.uk](http://www.our-land.co.uk) for accommodation that's been carefully picked to conserve and enhance protected landscapes.

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Thanks to our partners Lewes District Council, Lewes Town Council, South Downs National Park for their support. The map has been produced by the Lewes Town Partnership with support from our partners © LTP 2013.

Town text: Debby Matthews  
Downs text: Tim Locke  
Cover photos: Andy Gammon  
Design and map artwork: © Andy Gammon Art & Design, Lewes  
Print: Tansley Printers Ltd., Seaford, East Sussex

Useful information  
The Tourist Information Centre is at 187 High Street, Lewes, BN1 2DE tel: 01273 483448. It stocks a range of leaflets and books, and can arrange accommodation. To get there from the railway station, turn right out of the main entrance and walk up to the top of Station Street. For B&Bs visit [www.walesandb.co.uk](http://www.walesandb.co.uk). To find out what's on or to see: [www.visitlewes.com](http://www.visitlewes.com)

All efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information. However no responsibility is taken for any liability or loss, however caused, as a result of anyone relying on it. Feedback is welcomed. Contact us by email: [lewespartnership@mail.com](mailto:lewespartnership@mail.com) or by phone: 01273 477872. Company Limited by Guarantee number 477872





# DOWNS WALKS

Routes 1, 2 and 3 are links to the South Downs Way and start or finish in Lewes

**Route 1** (5km each way)  
**Route 1A To South Downs Way at Black Cap**  
 Join this route from fingerpost 1A overleaf  
 Cross the main road carefully, and take Spital Road opposite, with the prison wall on your left. 1 Turn right at the South Downs Way signpost. Keep to the main path, ignoring any side turns. 2 After 1.5km, at houses, keep forward at a junction, along a surfaced road, close to the former Lewes Racecourse A. Beyond the stables, the surfacing ends and the route continues along a track between fences, with horse jumps on the left, rising to a pylon just after a National Trust sign for Black Cap 3 Carry on across downland, past Mount Harry B on the track; you later see the summit of Black Cap (the route forks: take either route, up to Black Cap or left around its base). 300m after the Black Cap summit, go through a gate at a junction with the South Downs Way; left (signposted Housedean Farm) is for Kingston Ridge and Eastbourne; right is for Winchester.

**Route 1B From South Downs Way at Black Cap**  
 Leave the South Downs Way at the signpost for Lewes and 'Housedean Farm 3 miles', and go through the gate in front of the National Trust sign for Black Cap. The stables (which you soon reach) are briefly in view ahead in the distance. Either go up to the summit of Black Cap 3 or take the lower path to the right (they rejoin later), and continue past Mount Harry B. Go through a gate by a pylon, and follow the track. At end of horse jumps on your right, close to the former Lewes Racecourse A, and just before houses and stables on the right, fork right at the Lewes signpost, passing in front of the buildings, now on a surfaced road. 2 Where the road bends left, keep forward through gate to the left of the hedge and follow this track, ignoring minor side turnings, for 1.5km. 1 At a T-junction with a wider track, turn left, signposted Lewes. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 1B

**Route 2** (3.5km each way)  
**Route 2A To South Downs Way on Kingston Ridge**  
 Join this route from fingerpost 2A overleaf  
 As you leave Lewes from Southover, the Juggs Road C soon rises, then crosses a high bridge over the A27, and later becomes an unsurfaced track. 1 The track enters a field, with Ashcombe Windmill D in view ahead. After crossing the field, it goes through a gate and drops to a road. 2 Cross over the road and take the track opposite, past a line of houses at the edge of Kingston. Near the foot of the steep slope, the track divides. Fork left. 3 At the top of the slope, you join the South Downs Way near Castle Hill Nature Reserve E. Turn left for Southease, Alfriston and Eastbourne; turn right for Black Cap (9km), Ditchling Beacon and Winchester.

**Route 2B From South Downs Way on Kingston Ridge**  
 Leave the South Downs Way not far from Castle Hill Nature Reserve E, signposted to Lewes; if coming from Southease, pass the Greenwich Meridian hemisphere signpost after 2km, and reach the Lewes signpost 3km later; if coming from Black Cap, you pass a windpump on the South Downs Way, then go through a gate; 1km later, pass a patch of gorse bushes and a dew pond to reach the Lewes signpost. Either way, follow the track downhill. 3 You are now on the Juggs Road C; at the bottom carry on, soon past a line of houses at the edge of Kingston. 2 Cross over the road and take the track opposite, rising into a field, with Ashcombe Windmill D to the left. 1 At the far side of the field, the track leaves by a gate and continues. It becomes surfaced and crosses the A27 by a high bridge. Emerge at a road junction on the edge of Lewes by the Swan Inn. Continue into town along Southover High Street. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 2B

**Route 3** (6.5km each way)  
**Route 3A To South Downs Way at Southease Bridge**  
 Join this route from fingerpost 3A overleaf  
 The path alongside the Ouse is easy walking (no access for cyclists or horse riders.) Turn off at the Ouse Valley signpost just after the six-sided Linklater Pavilion. About 3.5km from Lewes, the Ouse Valley Way diverts right inland to Rodmell F; to continue towards the South Downs Way, keep walking along the river a further 1.5km to Southease Bridge. You can join the South Downs Way towards Firle, Alfriston and Eastbourne here or catch a train to Lewes from Southease station. Turn right for Southease G.

**Route 3B From South Downs Way at Southease Bridge**  
 Join this route from the South Downs Way between Southease village to the west and Southease station to the east; from the village G, turn left just before the river bridge; from the station turn right immediately after crossing the river bridge. Follow the riverside path. After 1.5km you reach the junction with the Ouse Valley Way from Rodmell. For Lewes, carry on along the river bank and follow it 5km into Lewes, keeping by the river all the way. Continue this route overleaf at fingerpost 3B

**Route 4** 4km to Black Cap  
**To South Downs Way at Black Cap via Landport Bottom**  
 Join this route from fingerpost 4 overleaf  
 Cross the A275, almost immediately turning right through a gate near a sign about the Bronze Age barrows you soon pass, and follow the curving grassy track alongside a broken line of a hedge (a medieval trackway) until rejoining the road at the top. Carry on past a tall wooden cross near the site of Lewes Racecourse A (just before which a gate on the left gives access to a glorious open hillside known as Landport Bottom), then turn right at the buildings, past stables and horse jumps to join Route 1A and continue past pylons to Black Cap, beyond which you join the South Downs Way.

**Route 5** 3km to Hamsey Church  
 Join this route from fingerpost 5 overleaf  
**To Hamsey from Willey's Bridge, along the River Ouse**  
 North of Willey's Bridge the scenery immediately becomes rural: you can follow the river path along to a road, and turn right for Hamsey H. An alternative route is to turn left after 1.5km by the concrete Offham TP Hut, under the railway, and turn right through woodlands to Offham. By Offham church, cross the A275 with great care and turn left, then right after the last house, and immediately left, up past a grassy terrace, and up past the abandoned Offham Chalk Pit J; soon after take the right-hand gate and carry on up to the racecourse buildings A and return by Route 1B.

**Route 6** (4km)  
**To Malling Down and The Coombe**  
 (See overleaf)

**Route 7** (3km each way)  
**From Lewes towards Mount Caburn**  
 Join this route from fingerpost 7 overleaf  
 Opposite the golf course clubhouse, go through the gate on the right, past the Southerham Nature Reserve sign, and carry along initially along the fence, then slightly downhill to a tall post, and then more steeply to a gate and down to the valley. Carry along the valley floor, through a gate and past a pond. At the fence, you have a choice of routes up: either take the stile to the left by the Mount Caburn sign, or take the gate to the right, where a path rises on the left side of the valley to a gate. Either way, turn right a short distance to Mount Caburn K. You can return the same way (remember to bear right uphill at the marker post just after passing the pond) or explore one of many other routes.

**Route 8** (1km)  
**From Lewes to Oxteddle Bottom**  
 Join this route from fingerpost 8 overleaf  
 Beyond the industrial estate, carry on 30m after the route turns left and becomes the rural Southerham Lane. Then take the yellow waymarked path left, up steps and over a stile. Follow the route through a field and woods and above the dry valley of Oxteddle Bottom, rising steadily on the main track. 200m before the golf course, either turn left up past a post to the golf clubhouse and down Chapel Hill to Lewes, or turn right down past the distant pond and up to Mount Caburn K.

Downs walks and photo from Kingston Ridge by Tim Locke

**Slow Sussex** & South Downs National Park

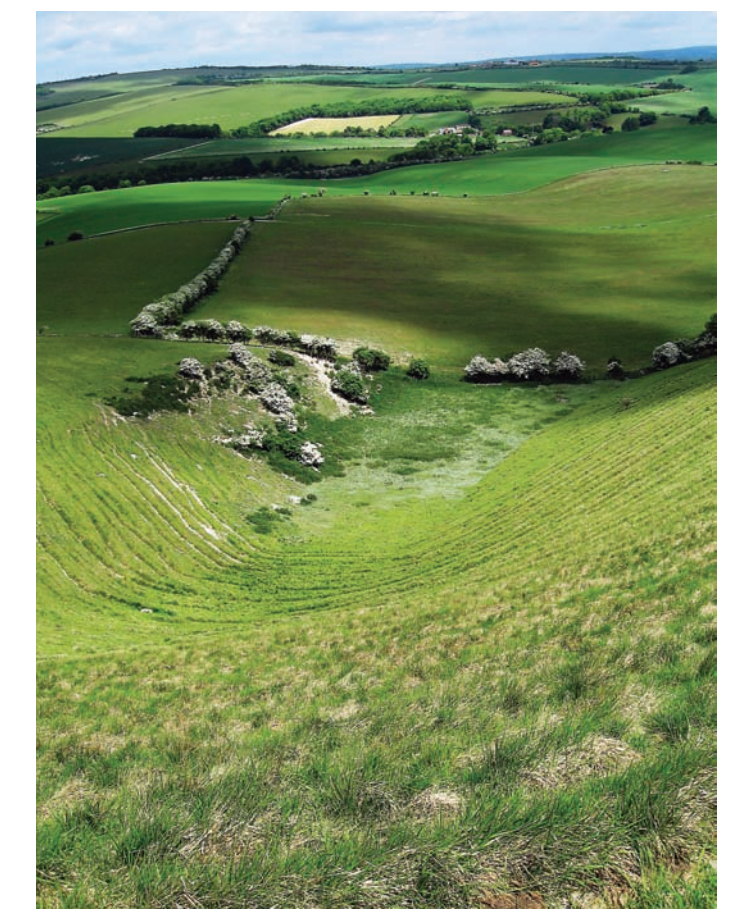
This Bradt guide by Lewes travel writer Tim Locke celebrates the special sense of place of Sussex and the South Downs National Park, and features the author's favourite places to visit, walks and pubs, along with interviews with locals and hand-picked places to stay that won't break the bank. Guide Book of the Year Finalist, British Travel Press Awards.

£14.99 from Lewes TIC, Skylark Bookshop and Lewes Castle.

## Points of interest

Red letters within the text indicate these points on the routes.

- A Lewes Racecourse** Horse racing took place here on the Downs for many years until the closure of the course in 1964. The houses you see occupy the site of the grandstand and booths have become stables; race horses are still trained here, and a tall wooden cross pays tribute to horses that have died during races.
- B Mount Harry** The beacon here is lit for such ceremonies as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012. It was from here that Simon de Montfort's forces gathered prior to the Battle of Lewes in 1264.
- C Juggs Road** This ancient track is so called because in centuries past it was used to transport fish in 'juggs' from Brighton over the South Downs to market in Lewes; it gives the Juggs Arms pub in Kingston village its name. From the top of the Downs you gain a spectacular view over Lewes, with Mount Caburn and Firle Beacon to the east.
- D Ashcombe Windmill** This unusual six-sailed windmill is very recent, due to be completed at the time of writing as a replica of Old Six-Sweeps that stood there until 1916 when the structure collapsed in a blizzard. The sails will generate electricity, with the surplus going to the national grid.
- E Castle Hill Nature Reserve** Encompassing valley slopes just to the south of the South Downs Way, this reserve gives a good idea of how much of the Downs would have looked before modern agricultural practices were introduced. It is a noted example of a grassland habitat, rich in orchids (the major site in the country for the rare early spider orchid) and has the largest UK colony of the rare warbiter cricket, in addition to chalkhill, Adonis and small blue butterflies.
- F Rodmell** From the River Ouse you can easily detour by the signposted path (the Ouse Valley Way) to the attractive village of Rodmell, where Monk's House was home to novelist Virginia Woolf until her suicide by drowning in the Ouse nearby in 1941; the house is owned by the National Trust and open to the public. The Abergavenny Arms, on the main road here, is usefully placed for walkers. A permissive path takes you behind Rodmell village towards Southease avoiding the busy road.
- G Southease** An idyllic triangular green spreads beneath the church, unusual in Sussex for having a round tower; inside are fragments of medieval wall paintings.
- H Hamsey** The tiny village has a remarkably unspoilt medieval church (still without electricity; key from nearby house).
- J Offham Chalk Pit** These abandoned chalk pits above Offham are now a haven for wildlife and give dizzying views from the top; part of the former buildings now house a pub, from where an inclined tramway, built in 1809, took trucks down the steep slope to a canal linked to the Ouse; the top section of the tramway, tunnelling beneath the road, is still visible.
- K Mount Caburn** A haunt of paragliders, the summit is marked by the prominent Iron Age and Saxon ramparts of a hillfort. Parts of the slopes from the Mount Caburn National Nature Reserve, an area of traditionally managed chalk downland which has the largest British population of burnt-tip orchids as well as numerous butterflies and the scarce forester moth. From here you can continue eastwards down to Glynde village and catch a train back to Lewes.



**DEDICATION**  
 This leaflet is dedicated to the memory of Paul Millmore, tireless campaigner for the creation of the South Downs National Park and the successful inclusion of Lewes town within it. Paul created the South Downs Volunteer Rangers Service and wrote the comprehensive South Downs Way National Trail Guide. Sadly Paul died just before the first anniversary of the new national park on April 1 2012. He will be sadly missed but his legacy lives on.

**KEY**

**2A** Key to numbered routes (SDW = South Downs Way)

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- other path

**A B C** points of interest described in the text

**2 2** location points on the map shown in text

**Pub** public house / railway station / camping

**CIRCULAR WALKS SUGGESTIONS**  
 The routes shown here can be linked together in various ways. For example you can follow 1A from Lewes to Black Cap, turn south on the South Downs Way and return to Lewes on 2B for a spectacular circuit (20km); where the South Downs Way crosses the A27, you can make use of buses to and from Lewes. Or take 2A to the Kingston Downs, turn south on the South Downs Way to Southease, and either return to Lewes by train from Southease station or walk back by 3B (total 19km).