

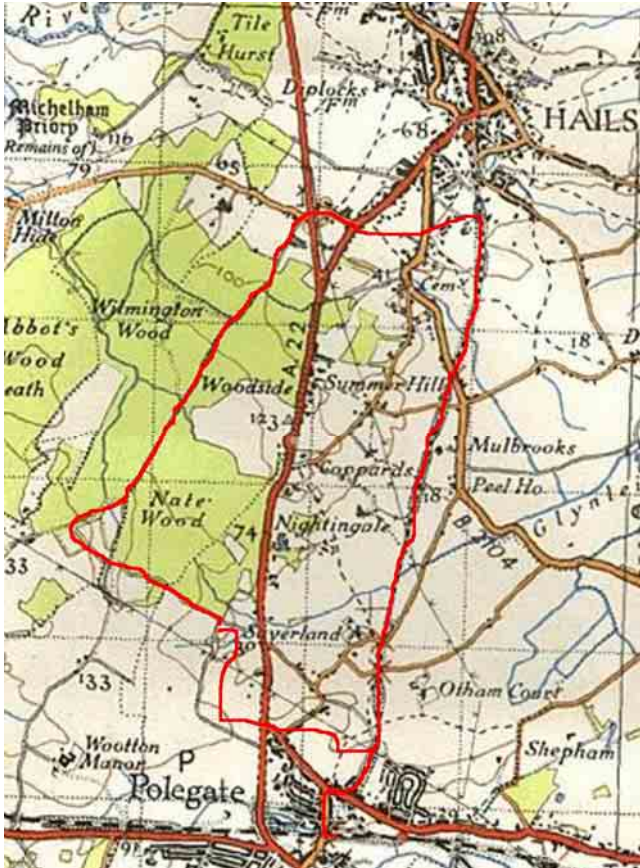
ACCESSIBLE RAMBLES IN SUSSEX Eastbourne area

last revised 21/05/2010

Please read the introduction before reading this section

EASTBOURNE/HAILSHAM/POLEGATE AREA

WOODS AND OLD RAILWAYS- between Polegate and Hailsham grades 2 and 4



Note: We use 1940's maps for copyright reasons. This area has changed considerably since then. Both Polegate and Hailsham have grown considerably, a bypass has been built north of Polegate, the A22 has grown and its route slightly changed and Polegate station has moved. We recommend you use one of the maps below in addition to this map.

Researched: 14/3/10

Summary: A trip on the old Cuckoo line railway, an quick exploration of the suburbs of Hailsham and a woodland wander. No serious ascents but a nasty crossing of the A22

Map Landranger 199, Explorer 123

Grid reference: Polegate station TQ581048
Crossing of A22 TQ579086

Public Transport: Train to Polegate station, various buses to Polegate and to Hailsham.

Car parking: At Polegate the best parking is at the beginning of the Cuckoo trail 583051 Outside of school pick up and drop off times there is room in the street for a number of cars. There are quite a lot of double yellow lines, but search nearby streets. An alternative is to park in Polegate station car park. At TQ579086, the crossing of the main road, there is plenty of street parking.

Accessible toilet: Not yet researched.

Refreshments: A wide variety of shops, pubs and cafe's in Polegate and Hailsham. Cafe at Loom Mill on the Cuckoo trail.

Grade: 2

Length: 11km

Details: If starting at Polegate station go west from either platform to reach Polegate High Street. Turn right along the High Street and, at the end turn right, following the cycle route signs. Follow

the route to the next left. In this road you can park your car. Straight ahead you can see the start of the Cuckoo Trail.

Travel straight along this for 3.5 km. The surface is tarmac and, after crossing the Polegate bypass you pass easily through quiet fields and past interesting wooden sculptures. On weekends you will have lots of company. This is a popular route. After roughly 2km you pass the Loom Mill Craft centre on your right (level access, believed to have accessible toilets- phone 01323 848007 to check). This centre has various craft stalls and a cafe .



After 3.5 km the trail comes to an end and joins the pavement of a road. (Turn right here and then next left for Hailsham centre.)

You are going to want to go left so take the first dropped kerb you find and travel in the road. Immediately after the first turn right you will find a footpath on your left. Take this. Almost immediately the route divides.

Walkers can take the left hand path and cross the next road keeping

straight ahead.

Wheeled ramblers should take the turn on the right to avoid an awkward bit of street furniture. At the first road junction turn left and very quickly find the other path where it crosses the road. . Turn right down this path.

The path passes through the backs of gardens and crosses another road. Finally it ends at a further suburban road. Turn right to meet a more major road. Turn left down the major road but about 10 metres further down you will see a footpath going off to the right. Cross the road and take this. Follow the path to its end. The path crosses a suburban road and you keep straight ahead on it. Towards the end there is another piece of street furniture designed to deter cyclists, but you can squeeze between the posts, which are just under a metre apart.

You come into a suburban road. Keep as straight ahead as you can (The road twists.) until you come to a main road (buses to Hailsham and Polegate). Turn left along this main road and then take the first on the right- a suburban road with houses on the north side and trees and scrub to the south. Follow this road to its end. Go past the metal bollards and slightly to the left.

You are now facing the A22, which is a dual carriageway at this point (2 lanes each way). You need to cross to the road which you can see at the other side. The traffic does move fast but, except on sunny bank holidays, there are gaps and there is a wide grassy central reservation. You are at the brow of a small hill, so you can see and be seen. If this crossing worries you then you might want to start the ramble here so you can chose another route if you don't fancy it. I have crossed here several times walking slowly and am alive to tell the tale.



Having crossed the A22 to the road opposite, turn left almost immediately down Robin Post Lane. You will go down this lane for about 2 km. For most of its length it is a crushed stone route through the delightful Abbots Wood. This wood is spectacular at bluebell time (April-early May). You may want to explore some of the trails that turn off to the left and the right. The Forestry Commission, who own the wood, say that there are disabled facilities, but I can't find a map of the wood, let alone details of easy access trails. More details at

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/recreation.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/EnglandEastSussexAbbotsWoodAbbotsWood> or ring 01420 520212

After 2km you will come to a four way junction. Turn left down a path signposted as a bike route. Follow this for just over a kilometre. This route can be muddy after heavy rain but the condition should be good enough for those on wheels-if it is not report this to East Sussex County Council. This is supposed to be a bike route!

At the end of this route you arrive at the busy A22 again, but there is no need to cross it. Instead turn right and follow the bicycle route under the main road and then alongside a minor road and then the Polegate bypass to arrive again at the bridge of the bypass that you crossed at the start of the ramble. If you started at Polegate turn right here to return to the start. If you started at Hailsham turn left here and follow the instructions from the second paragraph.

BEACHY HEAD BONANZA grade 3?



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Researched: 28/12/09

Grid reference: TV555960

Map Landranger 199, Explorer 123

Summary: An exhilarating ramble with wide views taking in some of the most famous scenery in England.

Public Transport: Brighton and Hove buses run along the road from Birling Gap to Beachy Head and onwards. They also run along the A259. Note that buses EITHER run along the A259 OR via Beachy Head. Check that you are on the right bus. The route runs from Brighton to Eastbourne and the buses are wheelchair accessible. There is no public transport at Butts Brow although the very intrepid could catch Stagecoach buses from Eastbourne to Polegate at the bottom of the steep hill.

Car parking: At both ends of the route and at Beachy Head and other points in between.

Accessible toilet: Not yet researched

Refreshments: See details

Grade: 3?

Length: 11 kilometres

More details:

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=265&type=full&servicetype=Inline> or ring 01323 415200



SEVEN SISTERS PARK AND FRISTON FOREST grades 1, 2,3 and 4

Researched: 28/12/09

Grid reference: TV 520994

Summary: Flat ramble of about 2km each way to the sea. Mostly surfaced, but grass at the last part and a pebbled beach makes access to the sea at the end very difficult. Steeper rambles in Friston Forest. Note that the country park is managed by East Sussex County Council and the forest by the Forestry Commission, so you have to ask the right organisation for information.

Public Transport: Brighton and Hove buses from Eastbourne and Brighton- wheelchair accessible.

Car parking: on the south side of the main road and also to the north in Friston Forest. Friston Forest may be a better bet for those with trailers.

Accessible toilet: at visitor centre

Refreshments: cafe at the start point. Access not yet checked

Grade: 1 for the ramble to the sea, 1-3 for routes in Friston forest “access for all” map available from visitor centre

Length: 2km each way to the sea, various in Friston forest

More details: 01323 870280 or www.sevensisters.org.uk for the country park. We hope to have further information about rambles in Friston Forest shortly.

THE CUCKOO TRAIL

Researched: 28/12/09

Summary: A trail along an old railway track between Hampden Park (Eastbourne) and Heathfield. Largely flat and well surfaced but at one or two other places old bridges are not in place and the route comes down to the road. Typically there is a climb of about 15 metres at 1 in 12. The section south of Polegate is partly next to a dual carriageway and not so attractive. At Heathfield there is a steep climb to the village. Perhaps the most attractive section is between Polegate and Horam.

Grid reference: TQ 584052 (start of trail at Polegate) TQ578217(end of trail at Heathfield)

Public Transport: Railway stations at Polegate and Hampden Park. For bus services see www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk

Car parking: Car parking on the trail at Hailsham, Heathfield and at Loom Mill.



Accessible toilet: not yet researched

Refreshments: Most services Forest Row, Polegate, The Loom Mill between Hailsham and Polegate, Hailsham, Horam and Heathfield

Grade: 1?

Length: 21 km each way.

More details: <http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/walks/cuckootrail/> or ring 0345 60 80 190

HERSTMONCEUX RAMBLE grade 4

Researched: approx 2002 by East Sussex County Council or the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit

Grid reference: TQ634126

Summary: A 3 kilometre walk through rolling Wealden countryside.

Public Transport: See Details

Car parking: See details

Details <http://www.highweald.org/site.asp?PageId=27&SiteId=65> Note that the map can be found as a download at the bottom of the description. Or phone 01580 879500

SHORT ROUTES

At Beachy Head there is a short peace path with fine cliff top views. Details at <http://www.visitsouthdowns.com/files/1053/Beachy%20Head.pdf> or phone 01323 737273

Routes we have not researched yet. Would you like to research them?

The old coach road between Firlie and Berwick, with links to the cycle route to Berwick Station