

# Places of interest to visit

**The following pages give information on various places of interest in the area. For more information on activities and attractions contact details of local Tourist Information Offices are given below.**

Sussex Country (North) Information Centre  
Ashdown Forest Llama Park, Wych Cross, Forest Row RH18 5JN  
Tel: 01825 713862

Sussex Country (South) Information Centre  
Boship Roundabout, Lower Dicker, Hailsham BN27 4DP  
Tel: 01323 442667

Royal Tunbridge Wells Tourist Information Centre,  
The Pantiles, Royal Tunbridge Wells.  
01892 515675

Cuckfield Information Centre  
Church Street, Cuckfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH175JZ  
Tel: 01444456900

Lewes Information Centre  
187 High Street, Lewes BN7 2DE  
Tel: 01273 483448

Eastbourne Information Centre  
Cornfield Road, Eastbourne BN21 4QL  
Tel: 01323 411400

**Wealden also has various fully serviced literature racks, located throughout the district. These are regularly stocked with leaflets on Wealden's attractions. The racks are located at the following sites:**

Crowborough Town Hall  
Crowborough Council Offices  
Hailsham  
Mayfield  
Heathfield  
Uckfield  
Forest Row  
Horam

## **Castles, Stately Homes and interesting Houses**

### **MICHELHAM PRIORY**, Upper Dicker, Hailsham

Tel: 01323 844224

Michelham is set on an island in the beautiful Cuckmere Valley and is surrounded by the longest medieval moat in England. Enclosed by tranquil gardens, the historic buildings include part of an Augustinian Priory that evolved into a splendid country house, a 14th Century gatehouse, watermill and a stunning Elizabethan Barn. Exhibitions include; smithy, rope museum, physic herb garden, licensed restaurant and tearooms, and a picnic and play area.

Open: Tues-Sun - Mar to Oct and open daily in August & on Bank Holiday Mondays.

### **BODIAM CASTLE**, Nr Robertsbridge

Tel: 01580 830436

Soak up the wonderful atmosphere of this magnificent medieval castle. With its spiral staircases, battlements and drawbridge, history really comes alive. Enjoy a picnic on the banks of the ancient moat.

### **PEVENSEY CASTLE**, Pevensey

Tel: 01323 762604

Step back in time into the shoes of William the Conqueror at this ancient and historic castle, dominating the mysterious marsh landscape. It is from here that William marched on Hastings and Battle.

### **BATEMANS**, Burwash.

Tel: 01435 882302

Rudyard Kipling lived at Batemans for 34 years. His rooms and study have been preserved exactly as they were when the writer was alive and they still give the impression that he has just left the room! This lovely old house is set in gardens that Kipling designed himself, and include a recently restored working watermill.

**Close to Crowborough.**

### **LEWES CASTLE & BARBICAN HOUSE MUSEUM**, Lewes

Tel: 01273 486290

The imposing castle and barbican at Lewes, built shortly after the Norman invasion of 1066, tower over the county town, offering spectacular views from the top. The museum houses an interactive touch-screen history of the area and 'The Story of Lewes Town'.

Open all year (closed Mondays in January and 24-26 December).

Tuesday to Saturday: 10am-5.30pm, Sunday, Monday and Bank Holidays: 11am-5.30pm (Lewes Castle closes at dusk in winter).

## Churches

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### **MAYFIELD CHURCH**, Mayfield

Tel: 01435 873484

St. Dunstan's is located next to the remains of the Arch Bishops of Canterbury's Palace in the attractive High Weald village of Mayfield. The church was founded by St. Dunstan, who is said to have attacked the Devil that was trying to tempt him whilst disguised as a woman! Now a grade I listed building, the present church was built between 1410 and 1420, with parts of the original stone building still visible. Situated in the tower is a ring of eight bells, the oldest dating from 1602.

The church is open between 9.00am and 5.00pm daily.

**Close to Crowborough.**

### **ROTHERFIELD CHURCH**, Rotherfield

Tel: 01892 852391

Founded over 1200 years ago, St Deny's church is one of the oldest in Sussex. The present building dates from around 1060AD, and has a wealth of interesting features such as the medieval wall paintings in the chancel arch and Nevill Chapel, early box pews and the late Norman octagonal stone font whose cover was made locally in 1533. Tours of the church can be booked for individuals and groups.

The church is usually open between 9.00am and 5.00pm.

**Close to Crowborough.**

### **WADHURST CHURCH**, Wadhurst

Tel: 01892 782083

Showing a strong link to the ancient Wealden Iron Industry. St Peter & St Paul's church has the largest collection of iron memorial tablets in the country. Made by illiterate craftsmen, there are many spelling mistakes on these high status objects! The church also has some stained glass windows in the design of William Morris School.

The church is open between 8.00am and 5.00pm daily.

**Close to Crowborough.**

### **BERWICK CHURCH**, Berwick

Tel: 01323 870512

The ancient village church of St Michael and All Angels was mentioned in the Domesday Book. Of particular interest are the Bloomsbury Murals painted by Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant in the 2nd World War.

The church is open all day, every day.

## Museums and similar

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### **THE OBSERVATORY SCIENCE CENTRE**, Herstmonceux

Tel: 01323 832731

Hands on science for all the family at the former home of the Royal Greenwich Observatory with a lovely rural setting. Experience the Discovery Park and the many experiments suitable for all ages. Cafe, gift shop, picnic area and free parking. Telescope Tours daily and Special Events throughout the year. Open 22 February - 2 March 10am - 5pm, 12 April - 2 November 10am - 6pm. Last admission 1 hour before closing.

See GARDENS & GROUNDS OF HERSTMONCEUX CASTLE below. It's at the same location and a joint ticket is available.

**BENTLEY WILDFOWL & MOTOR MUSEUM**, Halland, Nr Lewes

Tel: 01825 840573

Motor Museum with over 100 exhibits. Wildfowl over 130 different species. Craft workshops with demos. Adventure playground. Woodland activity trail. Tearooms serving lunches and cream teas. House and gardens. Minature steam railway (April - September weekends only).

Signposted off the A22, A26 and B2192, 7 miles North East of Lewes.

OPENS DAILY

**Close to Crowborough.**

**FILCHING MANOR MOTOR MUSEUM**, Polegate

Tel: 01323 487838

Home to some of the rarest racing machines in the world and set in 28 acres (11 hectares) of formal gardens, the exhibits in this fifteenth-century Wealden hall-house include a 1907 Corbin 'Vanderbilt Cup' racer, Sir Malcolm Campbell's 'Bluebird' speedboat, Alfa Romeos and Bugattis.

Open: Thu - Sun Easter to May + Oct, daily May - Sep, weekends only Nov - Easter

## Gardens

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**SHEFFIELD PARK GARDEN**, Nr Haywards Heath

Tel: 01825 790231.

Take time to explore this beautiful 18th century garden laid out by the famous landscape gardener Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Admire colourful reflections in the four lakes. Savour a kaleidoscope of colours whatever the time of the year. Stunning displays of rhododendrons and the national collection of Ghent azaleas follows spring's glorious shows of daffodils and bluebells. Later in the year, the garden is dramatically transformed by a blaze of autumn hues.

**Close to Crowborough.**

**WAKEHURST PLACE GARDENS**, Ardingly

Tel: 01444 894000

'Kew Gardens in the country'. 170 acres of splendid woodland, wetland and ornamental gardens. Visit the heart of the £80m Millennium Seed Bank project. Gift-shop in 16thC mansion, restaurant and garden shop. Every season brings a new experience. Regular garden and themed tours. Guided walks of the Loder Valley Reserve. No dogs. Children under 17 admitted FREE.

**Close to Crowborough.**

**GROOMBRIDGE PLACE GARDENS & THE ENCHANTED FOREST**, Groombridge

Tel: 01892 863999. Ring for admission prices (around £8)

Extensive formal gardens and an enchanted forest walk.

Open 9am -6pm 1st April to 1st November.

**Close to Crowborough.**

**SCOTNEY CASTLE GARDEN**, Lamberhurst

Tel: 01892 891081

On the A21, 5 miles south of Tunbridge Wells.

Owned by the National Trust, Scotney is surely one of the most romantic gardens in England with its spectacular displays of azaleas and rhododendrons surrounding the moated ruins of a 14th century castle. 770 acre estate of woodland open throughout the year.

Open: 22 March to 9 November 2003, Wed-Sun & Bank Holiday Mon, 11.00-18.00.

Castle open: May to 28 September 2003. Closed Good Friday.

Admission: adult £4.40, child £2.20, family £11.00. Disabled access.

**8 miles south east of Royal Tunbridge Wells**

**BEDGEBURY NATIONAL PINETUM**, near Goudhurst.

Tel: 01580 211044

Bedgebury Pinetum is home to the national conifer collection – the largest collection of evergreen conifers on one site in the world. The Pinetum occupies over 100 hectares, including streams and landscaped lakes.

Open: all year, daily from 10.00. Admission: adult £3.50, over 60s £3.00, child £1.50, family day ticket £9.00

**13 miles east of Royal Tunbridge Wells.**

**PASHLEY MANOR GARDENS**, nr Ticehurst

Tel: 01580 200888

Pashley Manor Gardens offer a sumptuous blend of romantic landscaping, imaginative plantings and fine old trees, fountains, springs and large ponds. This is a quintessentially English Garden of a very individual character, with exceptional views to the surrounding countryside.

Opens: 5th April-27th September, 11am - 5pm, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday & Bank Holiday Mondays. **Situated on the B2099, between the A21 and Ticehurst.**

**GARDENS & GROUNDS OF HERSTMONCEUX CASTLE**, Herstmonceux, Hailsham, East Sussex

Tel: 01323 833816

This 15th Century moated castle is set in beautiful parkland and superb Elizabethan gardens. Visit the Gift Shop, Tea Room, Visitor's Centre, Children's Woodland Play Area and Nature Trail.

Opening times: Daily 18 April - 26 October 2003, 10am - 6pm (last admission 5pm) (closes 5pm during October). The castle is not open to the public. Guided tours are conducted from Sunday to Friday (extra charge), subject to availability and extra charge. The OBSERVATORY SCIENCE CENTRE is also located here.

**BATEMANS**, Burwash (see details in section on Castles, Stately Homes and interesting Houses).

**Close to Crowborough.**

## Wildlife

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**WILDLIFE AND WETLANDS TRUST**, Arundel

Tel: 01903 883355

The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust is the largest international wetland conservation charity in the UK. The new visitor centre at Arundel is surrounded by ancient woodland and overlooked by the town's historic castle. The wetlands at Arundel are home to many rare species of wetland wildlife. This is complemented by the work on show in the new 'Eye of the Wind' wildlife art gallery.

Open daily 9.30 - to 5pm (4-30pm in winter) Closed Christmas Day.

Also this is a great opportunity to also visit other attractions in Arundel, including the Castle and Cathedral. Well worth a day trip!

**BENTLEY WILDFOWL & MOTOR MUSEUM**, Halland, Nr Lewes (see info in section above).

**Close to Crowborough.**

**DRUSILLAS PARK**, Alfriston just off the A27 near Eastbourne

Tel: 01323 874100

'The Best Small Zoo in England' with a wide selection of animals all in naturalistic settings. Exciting hands on activities throughout the park. Over an acre of playground with masses of swinging, jumping and climbing fun. Plus indoor Toddler Village, Train,

Zoolympics, Restaurant, Gardens. New in 2003 - Prairie Dogs. Fully accessible for wheelchairs.

## Walks and water

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### **WILDNERNESS WOOD**, Uckfield

Tel: 01825 830509

Wilderness Wood is a unique family-run working woodland in the beautiful wooded hills of the Sussex High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are 60 acres of varied woods to explore, with trails to suit all ages that explain how the wood is grown and used.

Harvested wood is made into garden furniture which can be bought direct from the on site workshop. Children's adventure play area, tea garden, picnic areas and barbecues. You can take your own food, purchase charcoal and have a barbecue. Good for families. Open daily all year from 10am-dusk. **Very good value.**

**Close to Crowborough.**

### **ARLINGTON RESERVOIR**, Berwick

Tel: 01323 870810

Arlington Reservoir is an award winning conservation site, surrounded by beautiful Downland scenery. A newly waymarked pathway around the perimeter of the reservoir has been recently opened. Named 'The Osprey Nature Trail' after a frequent summer visitor, the trail and its accompanying information leaflet, enable visitors to learn more about the surrounding habitat and the use of various conservation techniques, and to easily locate the bird hide and sanctuary area. **FREE (but with pay parking).**

Situated approx. 1/2 of a mile off the A27 Lewes to Eastbourne Road, sign posted to Berwick.

### **ARDINGLY RESERVOIR**

There is a road that sweeps across the northern end of the reservoir from Ardingly to Balcombe. At the Balcombe end of this road there is a nice wooded part of the reservoir bank with perfect spots for picnics.

Ardingly Reservoir is situated off the B2028, Haywards Heath to Ardingly Road. Follow the signs to the reservoir. **Close to Crowborough.**

### **BEWL WATER**, The Estate Office, Bewl Water, Lamberhurst, Kent, TN3 8JH.

Tel: 01892 890661

Visitor Centre, Gift Shop, Waterwise exhibition, Self-Service restaurant, passenger boat trips, picnic areas, waterside walks, woodland playground, cycling, flyfishing, watersports.

**Close to Crowborough.**

### **ABBOTS WOOD**,

Abbot's Wood is a mixed woodland of approximately 360 hectares, offering waymarked forest trails, an adventure play area and barbecue/picnic sites. **FREE (but with pay parking).**

Abbot's Wood is signposted off the A22 between Hailsham and Polegate. It is also signposted off the A27 at Wilmington (Abbots Wood is north of the A27).

### **FOREST WAY**, East Grinstead to Groombridge

Tel: 01273 482670, Countryside Management Service

The Forest Way takes you deep into East Sussex countryside, the flat, tree-lined track winds through a peaceful, historic countryside of small fields and scattered farmsteads among wooded, rolling hills for mile after mile. It is particularly accessible for people with disabilities.

The Forest Way runs from East Grinstead to Groombridge passing through Forest Row, Hartfield and Withyham. **Close to Crowborough.**

**HIGH ROCKS**, nr. Royal Tunbridge Wells

Tel: 01892 515532

This ancient national monument dates back million of years. Impressive outcrops of sandstone rock are inter-linked by eleven bridges and provide scenic walks in a tranquil woodland setting covering several acres. **2 miles west of Royal Tunbridge Wells.**

Open: all year, 10.00 – dusk. Admission: adult £2.00, child £1.00.

## Children

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**DRUSILLAS PARK**, Alfriston (see section above on wildlife).

**KNOCKHATCH ADVENTURE PARK**, Hailsham

Tel: 01323 442051

Adventure Park with Playgrounds, Rowing Boats, Giant Sky Leap Slide, Birds of Prey, Reptiles and Animals, Dry Slope Toboggans, Crazy Golf, Inside Adventure Play, Trampolines, Play Barn, Nature Trail and lots more. At extra cost and weather permitting Go-Karts for all ages, Laser Adventure Game, Rodeo Bull. Tearoom, Burger Bar. Attractive 110m slope for skiing and boarding.

**GROOMBRIDGE PLACE GARDENS & THE ENCHANTED FOREST**, Groombridge.

(See section on gardens)

**ASHDOWN FOREST LLAMA PARK**, Wych Cross, Nr Forest Row, East Sussex

Tel: 01825 712040

Escape to the fascinating world of the llama in the heart of Ashdown Forest.

Beautiful countryside and walks. Llamas, alpacas, goats and sheep. Tearoom and picnic area

Museum. Gift and alpaca knitwear shop. Adventure play area

Open daily 10.00am - 5.00 pm

**Location: on A22, four miles south of East Grinstead.**

**Close to Crowborough.**

**HEAVEN FARM**, Furners Green, Uckfield, Sussex TN22 3RG

Tel: 01825 790226

170 years of farming life in the heart of the Sussex Weald

This is a unique place to visit, where you can walk along the bluebell nature trail through beautiful and peaceful Sussex woodland. Visit the craft shop and at weekends, the ancient farm museum. And then finish with a traditional Sussex cream tea in the stable tea rooms.

**Close to Crowborough.**