



Photo: High Weald AONB Unit

The High Weald 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' (AONB), is one of England's finest landscapes. Small, irregular fields were created when early farmers made clearances for their

crops and livestock, forming boundaries with strips or "shaws" of woodland between fields. Such fields are all around Hawkhurst.

From c.4300-1400 BC, Downs' and coastal plains' farmers drove their pigs into the woods to feast on acorns and beech mast. Their annual trek to their 'dens' formed tracks, known as droves. Steep sided sunken lanes can be found in North Hill Road, Sopers, Whites & Foxhole Lanes.

The typical timber-framed and weather-boarded buildings of the High Weald, are all around Hawkhurst and pay testimony to its wooded past.

In early Roman, Tudor and Stuart times, the Weald was the main iron-producing region in Britain with raw materials from the landscape. Charcoal was produced by "colliers" who lived in the woods. Place names, the remains of pits and charcoal hearths, the waste, called "slag", and some hammer and furnace ponds are all that's left today. Down Sopers Lane you can see a man made hillock from the waste and a dip on the left where the ore was excavated.

Today 70% of the woodland is classed as ancient – having existed continuously since at least 1600 AD. It has been maintained for centuries by coppicing, which entails cutting trees low to the ground every 10-15 years then allowing the stems to grow back. The wood is used to make fencing stakes, charcoal, hurdles and trugs.



Front cover images by David Aspinall



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The AONB covers parts of four counties – East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Surrey, in the rural heart of South East England. It is the fourth largest protected landscape in England & Wales, covering 1461 sq.km (564 square miles).

Footpaths & Bridle Paths:

There are locally produced maps of footpaths, bridle paths and walks available for sale in the library, Jemsons supermarket, Spar supermarket and at the BP Garage. The High Weald Landscape Trail runs through Goudhurst and Cranbrook to the North of Hawkhurst for more details please visit www.highweald.org

Getting There: TN18 4EY

From the A21 at Flimwell, take the A268 to Hawkhurst; from the A28, via Tenterden, turn onto the A268 to Hawkhurst; By train to Etchingham, or to Staplehurst followed by bus to Hawkhurst. For bus information visit www.travelline.org.uk or telephone 0871 200 22 33. National Express, daily service between London and Flimwell or Hurst Green, visit www.nationalexpress.com.

For accommodation information contact Tourist Information Centres or www.visitheartofkent.com or www.1066country.com. Online bookings available.

Village Events:

St. Laurence Festival: every year – see the website for exact dates
Village Fete: bi-annual – see the website for exact dates.
Flix 'n' Pix: 20th - 27th June, 2009 A week of feature films "with a difference" at Hawkhurst's renowned digital cinema, together with creative photographic and art displays in the village.
"Beefing it Up" - 2010 : A celebration of local food and local produce to mark the Centenary of the Oxo cube, which was created and launched by the Gunther Family at their Tongwood Estate in Hawkhurst.
"Ways & Means" - 2011 : Discover more of the dastardly smuggling activities of the Hawkhurst Gang, and other more respectable aspects of our heritage, including the origins of the Rootes Motors Group.
For more details on these events, visit www.hawkhurst-happens.org.uk
Hawkhurst is twinned with Oriolo Romano in Italy and Audruicq in France.



YOUR GUIDE TO
HAWKHURST
HERITAGE TRAIL,
ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS



HH100109



Partly funded by SEEDA via Kent Rural Towns

For more information visit
www.hawkhurst-happens.org.uk

Out and about around Hawkhurst: a 15 mile radius



NATIONAL TRUST

Batemans (B4)
Bodiam Castle (C4)
Sissinghurst Castle (D2)
Lamb House Rye (E4)
Scotney Castle (B2)
Smallhythe Place (D3)

ENGLISH HERITAGE

1066 Battle of Hastings, Abbey & Battlefield (C4)
Bayham Abbey (B2)

GARDENS

Bedgebury Pinetum (C3)
Broadview Gardens (B1)
Finchcocks (C2)
Great Dixter (D4)
Groombridge Place (A2)
Hole Park, Rolvenden (D3)
Idencroft Herbs (D2)
Marle Place (C2)
Merriments Gardens (C3)
Owl House (C2)
Pashley Manor (B3)
Scotney Castle (C2)
Sissinghurst Gardens (D2)
Sprivers (C1)
Walled Garden, Hawkhurst (C3)
Yalding Organic Gardens (B1)

GOLF COURSES

Battle (C4)
Beauport Park (C5)
Chart Hills (D2)
Cooden Beach (C5)
Cranbrook (C2)
Dale Hill (B3)
Hawkhurst (C3)
Highwoods, Bexhill (C5)
Lamberhurst (B2)
Leeds Castle (D1)
Neville (A2)
Rye (E4)
Staplehurst (C1)
Sedlescombe (C4)
Tenterden (E3)

SPORTS FACILITIES

Battle (C5)
Bedgebury Forest (C3)
Bewl Water, windsurfing (B3)
Bexhill (C5)
Cranbrook (C2)
Groombridge & Langton Green, rock climbing (A2)
Hastings, leisure centres (C5)
Hawkhurst, squash & tennis (C3)
Paddock Wood (B2)
Rye (E4)
Tenterden (E3)
Tonbridge (A1)

FISHING

Battle (B4)
Bells Yew Green (A2)
Bewl Water (B3)
Biddenden (D2)
Burwash (B4)
Cranbrook (C3)
Hastings (D5)
Hawkhurst (C3)
Horum (A4)
Horsmonden (C2)
Iden Wood (E4)
Tenterden (E3)

PLACES OF INTEREST

BATTLE (C4)
Museum
Yesterday's World
BEXHILL (C5)
De La Warr Pavilion
CRANBROOK (C2)
Museum
Union Windmill
HASTINGS (D5)
Fishermans Museum
Blue Reef Aquarium
Castle
Smugglers Adventure
HERSTMONCEUX (B6)
Castle
Science Centre
PADDOCK WOOD (B1)
Hop Farm Country Park
RYE (E4)
Harbour Nature Reserve
Heritage Centre & Town Model
Castle Museum
TENTERDEN (E3)
Kent + Sussex Railway
TONBRIDGE (A1)
Castle
ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS (A2)
Museum
Pantiles & Chalybeate Spring
Spa Valley Railway
WINCHELSEA (E4)
Court Hall Museum
WOODCHURCH (E3)
South of England Rare Breeds Centre

VINEYARDS

Biddenden
Carr-Taylor, Westfield (C5)
Chapel Down, Smallhythe (E3)
Lamberhurst (B2)
Sandhurst (D3)
Sedlescombe (C4)

LOCAL PRODUCE

Farmers' markets in:
Battle (C4)
Cranbrook (C2)
Rolvenden (D3)
Rye (E4)
Stonegate (B3)
Tenterden (D3)
Royal Tunbridge Wells (A2)
Wealden Smokery at Flimwell (C3)
Smokery @ Ticehurst (B3)
Farm shops and stalls abound

TOURIST INFORMATION

Ashford, Battle, Cranbrook, Hastings, Rye, Tenterden, Tonbridge, Royal Tunbridge Wells

Your Guide to the Hawkhurst Heritage Trail



The ancient Wealden village of HAWKHURST is widely known for its beautiful surroundings, long history, and the notorious “Hawkhurst Gang” of ruthless 18th century smugglers. Hawkhurst, today, consists of two districts: The Moor with its beautiful Parish Church and village green, and Highgate with its village shops centred on the attractive, almost two hundred year old, Colonnade. Explore the Hawkhurst Heritage Trail, of just under six miles, to discover some of our history.

Set in the inspiring landscape of the High Weald, Hawkhurst is within easy reach of the sea, of interesting historical towns like Rye, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Battle and Hastings, and of excellent countryside attractions including Bedgebury National Pinetum, Bewl Water reservoir and world famous houses and gardens.

Nearer at hand the village is surrounded by beautiful woodlands, orchards and pasture land, many criss crossed by public footpaths. Relax in a pub garden, sample some local food, come and discover Hawkhurst, the crossroads of the Weald.



Library

Start walking from All Saints' Car Park, Rye Road. (Parking here is restricted to two hours but additional car parking is available in Northgrove Road and further along the Rye Road at Fowlers Park). On the corner is: Library Wall. Charles E. Gunther gave this building to Hawkhurst as a fire station to the village in memory of his two sons, who were killed in the 1914-18 war. He lived at Tongswood and was a great benefactor to the village.



Dunk's Hall

Cross the road to Dunk's Hall and the cannon in the front gardens. This 1723 building was the gift of Sir Thomas Dunk, who lived at Tongswood. The centre section was a schoolroom with the master's accommodation attached. There were originally three almshouses on each side which were converted into 11 flats in 1970. The design of the 3-pounder naval cannon dates from about 1750 and was probably sold to an armed merchantman (Royal Navy cannons were larger). Opposite you will see All Saint's Church, designed by the famous Victorian architect, Sir George Gilbert Scott, which is now redundant.



Victoria Hall

Now, go past the library to the Victoria Hall. This was built, as a lecture hall, for Mr. Henry Maynard in 1875. It was subsequently a village hall and is now a smart digital cinema – the first of its kind in the country! A fine example of usage changing with generations.



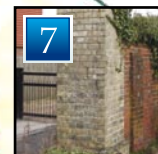
Colonnade

Cross the road to the Colonnade. This unique row of shops, each with living accommodation, was built in 1831.



Infant School

Turn right into Cranbrook Road, cross the road and opposite is the entrance to Northgrove Road. You will immediately see the infant school which was built for the village in 1869 by the Rev. Henry Jeffreys. It has had many subsequent uses including a hall for Toc H meetings, army cadet drill hall and is now converted for residential use.



Private Lunatic Asylum

A few steps further along Northgrove Road, on the right hand side is a pillar marking all that remains of the private lunatic asylum, owned by Dr. William Milstead Harmer. This burnt down in 1890.



Cottage Hospital

Continue along Talbot Road, turn left at the end and go up Highgate Hill, turning left at the traffic lights. Continue walking along the High Street for about 1 mile towards Flimwell. You will come to the Cottage Hospital. Built on the site of the Bull Inn and given to the village by Mrs. Margaret Adams of Springfield in 1877, at one time this hospital was even equipped with an operating theatre. It is now a community hospital with many facilities.

To return to the car park, retrace your steps along the High Street, past the traffic lights.



Gas Works

Continue skirting the green and at the end turn right into Talbot Road. The Gas Works plaque is on the Wish Valley Surgery building on the left side. The Hawkhurst Gas Company was set up, with investments from local people, in 1868.



Moor School

Return along Horns Road to the Moor and at the furthest end you will find the Moor School plaque. The Moor School for boys and girls was given to the village in 1863 by Col. Loyd of Lillesden. The school was closed in 2003 and the buildings developed for housing.



The Laundry

Cross the road by the pond and take the small lane by the beautiful 14th Century Parish Church of St. Laurence. Continue along Horns Road for about ¼ mile. The Laundry plaque is on the last house on the left before the Wealden Advertiser. The Horns Laundry was part of Col. Loyd of Lillesden's Estate (many Victorian estates had their own laundry), which later became a commercial laundry. The outward appearance of the original building has been kept despite conversion.



Hawkhurst Railway Station

Continue along Cranbrook Road a further ¼ mile past the Springfield industrial estate. Just after the garage at Gills Green and shortly before the sign for the business park, is the plaque in memory of the Hawkhurst Railway Station, opened in 1893. Losing trade to nearby mainline stations as well as cars, it was closed in 1961. The original engine shed, goods shed and signal box are still standing.



Collingwood House

Return to Highgate and go straight ahead at the traffic lights. Walk ¼ mile to the Moor and branch left onto the Hastings Road. Collingwood House is at the junction with Stream Lane. Sir John Herschel (1792-1871), the eminent astronomer and pioneer of photography lived at Collingwood House from 1838-1871. He is buried in Westminster Abbey. The house was built in 1810 by Mr. Jesse Gregson and was, at the time, known as Moor House.

Map Key

FIRE STATION

PUB

NATURE RESERVE

POST OFFICE

SUPERMARKET

FISH FARM

BANK

ALPACAS

CHURCH

PARKING

PETROL STATION