

The Forest Way Ranger

The Forest Way is owned by East Sussex County Council and is managed by the Rights of Way and Countryside Management Service. The site has a dedicated Ranger who works with a team of trainee Rangers and volunteers undertaking maintenance work such as surfacing, installing stiles, gates and fences. Equally important is the habitat management work such as coppicing and thinning trees, pond restoration and grassland management, which help make the site a diverse mosaic of habitats and an important wildlife corridor. If you would like to speak to the Ranger or you are interested in becoming a volunteer, you can contact us on 01273 482670.



Contact information

You can contact the Countryside Management Service at:
Transport and Environment Department
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent
Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1UE tel: **01273 482670**
e-mail: countryside.management@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

For information about the National Cycle Network you can contact **Sustrans** on 0117 929 0888.

How to get there

Forest Row, Hartfield, Withyham and Groombridge are served by regular bus services. There are train stations at East Grinstead and Eridge. For information on time-tables and routes, contact the **Traveline** on 0870 608 2 608 or **National Rail** enquiries on 08457 48 49 50.

There is a public car park and toilets at Forest Row. There is also parking available in Groombridge (see map). To further explore the rights of way network in the area, the 1:25000 Ordnance Survey Explorer map No. 135 Ashdown Forest, includes all of the Forest Way.

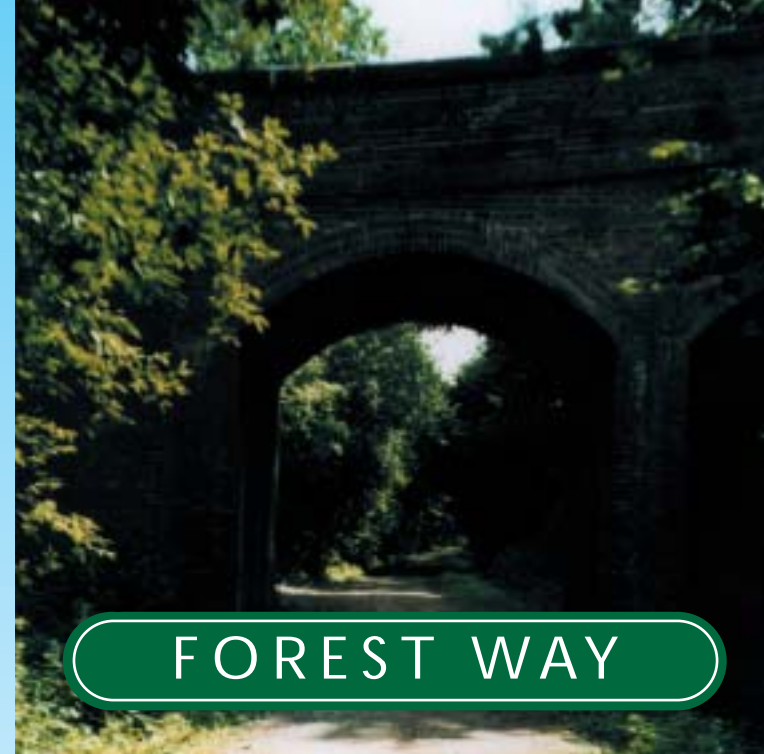
Visitor information

Sussex Country Information
Centre (North)

c/o Ashdown Forest Llama Park,
Wych Cross, Forest Row,
East Sussex RH18 5JN
tel: **01825 713862**
e-mail: ticnorth@wealden.gov.uk
www.sussexcountry.com



FOREST WAY



Forest Way Country Park is more than the abandoned, undisturbed railway track that you may see at first glance...



The Forest Way takes you deep into East Sussex countryside, designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Walk or ride the Forest Way and take in the delights of the great outdoors. 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.

Forest Way is here for everyone as a pathway into our countryside.

The History of the Railway

The line was opened in 1866 as a continuation of the line from Three Bridges. Although becoming a busy commuter line, it eventually fell under the axe of the Beeching cuts in 1966. Ironically, Dr Beeching lived near Forest Row and regularly travelled up to London on the line when he was Chairman of British Rail.



The Forest Way Code

Litter - please take it home

Flowers - admire and study but please leave for others

Access - please respect adjoining owners' property and use only recognised paths and routes.

Horse riding - please refrain from galloping.

No motor vehicles allowed.

Cycling along Forest Way

Forest Way is part of the National Cycle Network - a 10,000 mile project designed by Sustrans and chosen by the Millennium Commission as a major project to mark the Millennium.

When cycling please remember:

- to give way and leave plenty of room to walkers, horses and people with disabilities
- to carry a bell and use it; never assume people can see or hear you approaching
- take care crossing the A22, B2026, and B2188
- don't expect to cycle at high speeds, be prepared to slow down and stop if necessary
- slow down at junctions and bends
- cycle carefully and responsibly.

National Cycle Routes
Regional Cycle Routes
County/Unitary Auth boundary
District/Borough boundary



Forest Way's Circular walks

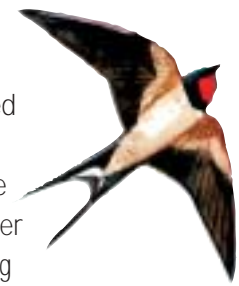
Trails leading off Forest Way into the surrounding countryside can take walkers closer to some of the local landmarks.

Follow the arrow above the disc on the waymark posts to enjoy these enchanting walks.



Swallows

with their distinctive forked tail streamers and glossy blue-black plumage can be seen from April to October and are likely to be nesting in nearby barns and buildings. Take a moment to admire their agile graceful flight as they feed on insects on the wing.



Badgers are nocturnal mammals seldom seen during the day. Look out for tracks and excavations. They live under ground in 'setts', which can often be hundreds of years old. Badgers are protected by law and must not be disturbed.



Groombridge originally meant 'servant's bridge'. Local tradition suggests that it owes its origin to a Saxon named 'Gromen', who built a moated stronghold where Groombridge now stands.

East Grinstead

link to the Worth Way A22

Main route:
9 1/2 miles / 14 1/2 km

Orange walk:
3 1/2 miles / 5 1/4 km

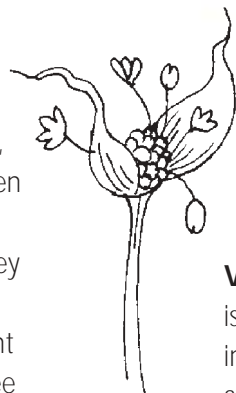
Green walk:
2 3/4 miles / 4 1/2 km

Red walk:
3 1/2 miles / 5 3/4 km

Purple walk:
4 3/4 miles / 7 3/4 km

Forest Row village began as a series of lodges to house Royal hunting parties visiting Ashdown Forest. It later developed as a coaching halt on the London to Eastbourne road, but did not gain full parish status until after the coming of the railway.

Foxes are elusive mammals, which can sometimes be seen during the day in both rural and urban environments. They live in underground 'earths' and use a strong musky scent to mark their territories - see if you can catch a whiff!



Wild garlic is found growing in large colonies and carries a distinctive garlic smell. It looks its best between April and June when it produces an abundance of white flowers.

Hartfield's name also records Ashdown Forest's past as a Royal hunting ground. Derived from the Saxon word 'feld' meaning open land, Hartfield is literally 'open land where harts (deer) graze'.

Withyham lies at the point where the rivers Withy and Ham converge. Withyham means 'withy meadow' or water meadow where coppiced willows grow. This pleasant hamlet boasts a cluster of quaint tile-hung houses of which the earliest is dated 1507.

The Forest Way lies in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



- Forest Way
- Roads
- Footpaths
- Bridleways
- NCN cycle route
- Toilets
- Parking
- Pubs
- Bike hire



Trees and Wildlife of a river valley

You may notice that many of the trees along Forest Way and in the surrounding fields are Alder or Willow. This is because you are in the floodplain of the River Medway and these trees like the wet ground -

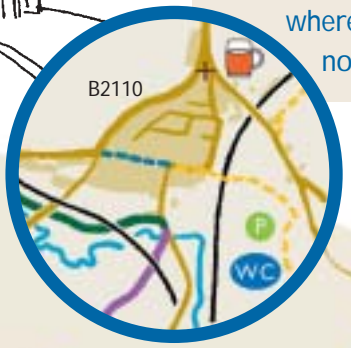
large areas to either side of the Park can be flooded for weeks at a time. The river also attracts birds: look out for Mallard and Moorhens along the river and even the occasional Heron.



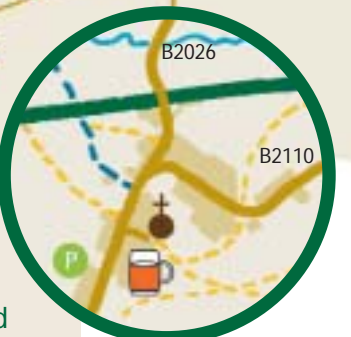
A26

B2188

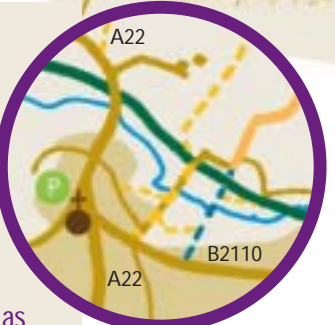
Groombridge



B2026



B2110



B2110

A22