

Oast Houses

There are many oast houses to be found in this area, reflecting the former importance of the brewing industry. Most of the oasts you see today have been converted to private homes, but were once used as kilns for drying hops which had been grown on the farm. Their distinctive roundels (conical shaped roofs) topped with rotating cowls were designed to draw warm air from the fire below through the hops laid out on the first floor. When dry the hops were pushed through a hatch in the floor into huge sacks that were carted off to the nearest brewery. The beer would have been drunk locally. Nowadays, many British brewers find it cheaper to import mass-produced hops from abroad.



This map is not drawn to scale and is intended as a guide only. We recommend that it is used in conjunction with Ordnance Survey Explorer map 125, available from good bookshops and newsagents.



IDEN PARISH

Iden Moat (1 on map)

The moat was built around 1318 by Sir Edmund Pashley to protect his castle. At this time the River Rother was wider and ships could sail all the way up to here and beyond. It is believed that there was a wharf for unloading goods just to the north. Trade would have made the manor wealthy and the size of the moat along with the remains of stone buildings indicate a particularly grand site. Bodiam Castle, which stands today, is believed to have been copied from the castle which once stood here.



Orchards

Traditional orchards have been an integral part of the High Weald landscape for hundreds of years. Recognised by their tall trees and high branches many have been replaced by modern dwarf trees which, although easier to manage, offer far less wildlife value.

(2) on the map is a special project to recreate a traditional orchard under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Twenty-five varieties of apple, plum and pear trees have been planted with a wildflower and grass mix and it is open for you to enjoy at all times of the year.

Ponds

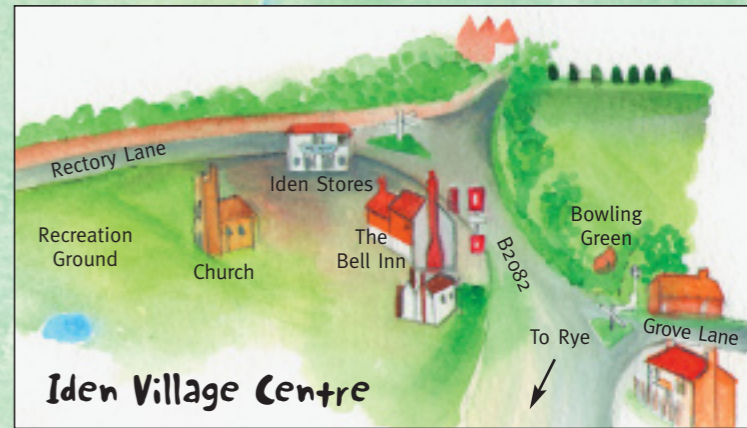
The countryside is dotted with hundreds of ponds. Once useful for providing water for livestock they are now important havens for wildlife. Most ponds, as part of a natural process, gradually fill with vegetation and sediment to become wet marsh, hollows and eventually dry land. All stages are important and some of the best ponds for wildlife demonstrate a number of these different phases. The Rye Bay Countryside Office has helped local villagers survey and restore some of the ponds in Iden. Look out for the noisy Marsh Frog from Hungary which has successfully colonised the area after escaping from the pond in the vicarage garden in Stone in the 1930s.

Royal Military Canal

Built between 1804 and 1809 the Royal Military Canal runs for 28 miles from Cliff End to Hythe. It is linked to the rivers Rother and Brede and was designed to act as a fortification against Napoleon's threat of invasion. It was fortified again during 1940 when Britain was last threatened by invasion. You can walk almost its entire length.

Key

- Public Footpath
- Public Bridleway
- Byway
- Countryside Stewardship Footpath
- Countryside Stewardship Bridleway
- Areas of interest with Countryside Stewardship Open Access
- Orchard
- Woodland



Iden Village Store

The village, unlike many, still has its own shop and post office. It was saved by the prompt action of local residents who raised the money to buy the property. It continues to be the hub of village life and provides many important services to the community. It should be safer now that it belongs to the village but support from new customers is always welcome.