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| FOOTPATHS | BIKE PARKS |
| BRIDLEWAYS (CYCLING & WALKING) | CAFÉS ON ROUTES |
| TRAFFIC-FREE | PUBS ON ROUTES |
| MAIN ROADS | WC |
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2cm TO 1 KM | 1.25 INCHES TO 1 MILE

COASTAL CULTURE TRAIL

Linking the Sussex seaside towns of Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings, the Coastal Culture Trail (www.coastalculturetrail.com) is about 18(29km) miles end-to-end. You can travel by train, bus, walk or cycle.

It's especially suited to cycling as much of it is on promenades and paths separated from roads. It's scenic, fairly flat and surprisingly quick - no more than two hours from Hastings to Eastbourne on a normal bike, and less if the wind is behind you!

Fortunately, the Trail follows the railway line and Southern Rail allows cycles – so you can always get the train back.

The route from Hastings to Bexhill is fantastic for families as it is entirely separated from traffic. The stretch from Bexhill to Eastbourne is on quiet(ish) roads, and only suitable for over 12's.

BIKE HIRE AND DROP-OFF

You can hire a bike from **The Bexhill Bicycle Hire Company** and **Let's Bike - Eastbourne** and lock it up at one of the designated bike racks at Jerwood Gallery, De La Warr Pavilion or Towner Art Gallery. Just hand the keys in to their reception.

Here are sections of the trail with average cycling times.
HASTINGS TO BEXHILL 40 MINS 6 MILES (9.7KM)
From Jerwood Gallery ride along Hastings prom to St Leonards and continue on the beach-side path. A café is handily located next to the trail at Glyné Gap. Bexhill prom begins at the foot of Galley Hill, and takes you directly to the De La Warr Pavilion.

BEXHILL TO NORMANS BAY 30 MINS 4 MILES (6.4KM)
Quiet residential roads connect Bexhill with Cooden Beach. Sluice Lane runs along the beach, then veers inland across farmland – once marshes notorious for smuggling. Take care on the sharp bends by the Star Inn.

NORMANS BAY TO PEVENSEY BAY 15 MINS 2.5 MILES (4KM)
Normans Bay Caravan Park has a shop, outside seating and WCs. Coast Road runs past rows of beach chalets to Pevensey Bay.

PEVENSEY BAY TO EASTBOURNE 35 MINS 5.5 MILES (8.8KM)
After Pevensey Bay a shared path runs alongside the A259 and continues through Eastbourne's Sovereign Harbour to Langney Point. From there, a cycle path skirts the beach to Fisherman's Green, where cyclists must join the busy Marine Parade for the final mile to Eastbourne town centre and Towner Art Gallery.

CUCKOO TRAIL

Built along the course of an old railway and sloping gently from north to south, the Cuckoo Trail is a safe and traffic-free route through lovely countryside. It forms part of National Cycle Network.

HAILSHAM TO POLEGATE 45 MINS
Handily located on the trail, halfway between Hailsham and Polegate, the Old Loom Mill is a good place for refreshments.

POLEGATE TO HAMPDEN PARK 30 MINS
Skirting Polegate, the track follows the A22 and emerges by a Health Club. Reach Hampden Park station on shared paths.

HAMPDEN PARK TO EASTBOURNE SEAFRONT 30 MINS
You can reach Eastbourne seafront on shared paths, but take care crossing the busy roads. You emerge on the seafront and join the Coastal Culture Trail route at Sovereign Centre swimming pool.

1066 COUNTRY WALK

PEVENSEY TO BATTLE 17 MILES 7 HOURS
Linking Pevensey Castle with Battle and Rye the 1066 Country Walk is a scenic route on well-signposted paths. It meanders across the Pevensey levels, through undulating farmland and ancient woodland. Stroll past ancient flint-walled farms, oast houses and windmills, and find refreshment in cosy village pubs.

EASTBOURNE

Spread out beneath the protective arm of the South Downs and fringed by shingle beaches, Eastbourne's setting is majestic. It may have a reputation as a genteel, slightly haughty Victorian seaside resort, but the town is evolving – it is one of the fastest-growing in Britain, with more than 100,000 inhabitants. It also has a surprisingly rich history.

Bronze-age beginnings

The largest Bronze-age settlement so far discovered in Europe was built on a massive oak platform above marshy ground in what is now Shinewater Park, easily reached from the Cuckoo Trail. To find out more visit The Pavilion, next to Eastbourne's Redoubt Fortress.

Old Town

A mile inland, St Mary's church and a cluster of buildings such as The Lamb Inn are reminders of a medieval, rural past. The railway's arrival in 1849 spurred local landowners into action, notably the Cavendish family, who built a spacious, upmarket resort.

Healthy and active

Fashionable Victorians flocked to Eastbourne to "take the waters" in bathing machines. Then, as now, health and wellbeing were buzzwords. The epicentre was Devonshire Park with its grass tennis courts, bicycle hire, rollerskating rink and concert hall.

Eastbourne has long had a lively cultural scene, with theatres, cinemas, Towner Art Gallery and various music venues. The town is working to rejuvenate them, and promote itself as gateway to the South Downs National Park and as a base for all kinds of sports and leisure activities – from stoolball to windsurfing.

Redoubt Fortress & The Pavilion

Royal Parade, BN22 7AQ
01323 410300
eastbournemuseums.co.uk

Eastbourne Heritage Centre

2 Carlisle Road, BN21 4BT
01323 411189
eastbourneheritagecentre.co.uk

Leaf Hall Community Arts Centre

51 Seaside, BN22 7NB
01323 325764
leafhall.co.uk

He built a Bicycle Boulevard on the seafront - from the sailing club to Galley Hill. Bikes could be hired from a chalet, now you can hire them from The Bexhill Bicycle Hire Company.

Ahead of the curve

One of the first places in Britain to allow mixed bathing, Bexhill was an early adopter of buses and its Bicycle Boulevard became Britain's first motor-racing venue. Find out more at the splendidly eclectic Bexhill Museum.

Bexhill Museum

Egerton Road, TN39 3HL
01424 222058
bexhillmuseum.co.uk

BEXHILL

An easy-going, slightly eccentric seaside town, Bexhill has something of a "vintage" vibe – with its many second-hand shops, events such as the Roaring 20s Festival and a cycle group that likes to ride penny farthings on the prom. The magnificent De La Warr Pavilion enables Bexhill to punch well above its weight, culturally.

For centuries a small hilltop village clustered around a Saxon church (Old Town), Bexhill developed as a garrison in the late 1700s when there was a real fear of Napoleonic invasion. Once the railway arrived in 1846, it was only a matter of time before someone developed a resort to cater for the new fashion for sea swimming.

Earl De La Warr

In Bexhill, it was Reginald Sackville, the 7th Earl De La Warr. Rather than emulate nearby Hastings or Eastbourne, he apparently modelled it on the French Riviera!

Bicycle Boulevard

When the safety bicycle appeared in the 1880s, cycling became all the rage and the Earl took full advantage.

TOWNER ART GALLERY

TOWNER ART GALLERY, DEVONSHIRE PARK, COLLEGE ROAD, EASTBOURNE BN21 4JJ

townereastbourne.org.uk

01323 434670

Open Tuesday–Sunday 10am–5pm

Admission Free

Occupying a bright, airy building with curved walls that echo the nearby chalk cliffs, Towner Art Gallery has brought a splash of modernity to Eastbourne since 2010. A second-floor café has splendid views across Devonshire Park to the South Downs.

Four or five exhibitions a year are shown alongside rotating displays of its extensive collection, which grew from a holding of 22 paintings left to Eastbourne by alderman John Chisholm Towner in 1920. Modern British Art is well represented, including the most significant body of work by Eric Ravilious.

DE LA WARR PAVILION

MARINA, BEXHILL ON SEA TN40 1DP

dlwp.com 01424 229111

Open daily 10am–5pm (6pm summer)

Admission free

Soaring above Bexhill's seafront like a great white ocean liner, the De La Warr Pavilion is a Modernist masterpiece that feels astonishingly fresh and contemporary for an 80 year-old.

It owes its existence to the 9th Earl de la Warr, Bexhill's socialist mayor, vegetarian and pacifist who raised public funds and made the case for culture-led regeneration half a century before anyone thought of the Bilbao Guggenheim.

Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff's 1935 creation houses contemporary art exhibitions, live music, comedy and film, while the second floor café offers superb sea views. In the foreground are the twin classical domes of the King George V Colonnade, built in 1911 to celebrate the coronation and now home to several shops and cafés.

JERWOOD GALLERY

ROCK-A-NORE ROAD, HASTINGS, TN34 3DW

jerwoodgallery.org 01424 728377

Open Tuesday–Sunday 11am–5pm

Adults £9 (local residents £4.00)

Children £3.50 (local residents £1.50)

Family £20.00

Coated in glistening dark-glazed tiles, Jerwood Gallery crouches among the tarred fishermen's net huts of Hastings Old Town. It opened in 2012 and houses a collection of modern and contemporary British art, including works by LS Lowry, Ben Nicholson and Walter Sickert.

The stylish first-floor café provides great views of Hastings' famous beach-based fishing fleet, but only for those who have paid to visit the gallery, which is privately funded.

INDEPENDENT BIKE SHOPS

EASTBOURNE

Black Bikes/Easy Pedal Bikes (eBikes)

Enterprise Centre, Station Parade, BN21 1BD, 01323 730535

Cycleman

46 Rosebery Ave, Hampden Park, BN22 9QB, 01323 501157

Evolution Cycles

23a Cavendish Place, BN21 3EJ
01323 737320

Let's Bike - Eastbourne

255 Southbourne Road, BN22 8RE, 07875 591648

Phoenix Cycles

219 Seaside, BN22 7NR
01323 729060

Tri Store

49 Grove Rd, BN21 4TX
01323 417071

POLEGATE

Kontour cycles
74 High St, BN26 6AA
01323 482368

HAILSHAM

M&S Accessories
5 George St, BN27 1AD
01323 845409

PEVENSEY

Cycle Tech

Unit 3, the Drill Hall, Eastbourne Rd, Westham, BN24 5ND, 01323 660 150

BEXHILL

Ziggi Bikes/The Bexhill Bicycle Hire Company

15 Wickham Avenue, TN39 3EP
01424 272088

HASTINGS & ST LEONARDS

Bell's Bicycles

4 George St, Old Town, Hastings, TN34 3RJ
01424 716541

Cyclelife

120 Queens Rd, Hastings, TN34 1RP, 01424 445923

Handsome Bicycles

1 Harold Place, Hastings, TN34 1JA, 01424 722815

Hastings Cycles

St Andrews Market, Hastings, TN34 1SJ, 01424 444013

High Tide Cycles

6 Marine Court, St Leonards, TN38 ODX, 01424 424576

Seaside Cycle Hire

Adjacent to Pelham Place car park, Seafront, Hastings
07580 426 200

LOCAL CYCLE GROUPS

Volunteer groups are campaigning to make it safer and easier for anyone to get around the area by bicycle. Bexhill and Hastings groups lobbied successfully for cycling on their seafront promenades – negotiations grind on in Eastbourne.

Bike Lab in Hastings is a free to access, volunteer run, community bicycle workshop on Wednesdays, 6pm–8pm.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT!

Bespoke Cycle Group

Eastbourne
bespokecyclinggroup.org

Bexhill Wheelers

Bexhill, bexhillwheelers.org.uk

Classic Cycle Group

Bexhill, classiccyclinggroup.co.uk

Hastings Urban Bikes

Hastings and St Leonards
hastingsurbanbikes.org

Bike Lab Hastings

bikelabhastings.org.uk

1066 Cycle Club

Battle, 1066cycleclub.org

PEVENSEY CASTLE

With massive walls that loom over nearby houses and fields, Pevensey Castle is still a formidable sight. It was here, on a September afternoon 950 years ago, that Guillaume le Bataard landed his fleet of 700 longboats. Within days, Norman invaders marched to Hastings, set up a fort and prepared for Battle.

Now run by English Heritage, Pevensey Castle is a wonderfully atmospheric place to visit – and easy to reach on foot or by bike. Enjoy exploring the ramparts, and the far-reaching views to the sea and across the Pevensey Levels.

Pevensey Castle, Castle Road, BN24 5LE
englishheritage.co.uk

BATTLE

Scene of a certain skirmish on 14th October 1066, the small town of Battle is still dominated by the abbey that was built to commemorate King Harald's death, and the end of Anglo-Saxon rule.

Battle Abbey will play a major role in events marking the 950th Anniversary of the most important date in English history, along with other venues in the area.

Battle Abbey, High Street, TN33 0AD 0370 333 1181

HERSTMONCEUX

The village of Herstmonceux is perhaps best known for its rambling 15th century moated castle. Completely restored in the 1920s, the castle and grounds became the home of the Royal Observatory until 1989.

Herstmonceux Castle is now an international study centre, owned by Queens University. Its beautiful gardens are open in spring and summer. Both it and excellent Observatory Science Centre can be reached on foot or by bike along quiet lanes.

Observatory Science Centre, Wartling Rd, BN27 1RN

01323 832731 the-observatory.org

MARSHES AND FARMLAND

Behind Eastbourne and east of Hailsham are the Pevensey Levels, a peaceful expanse of fields criss-crossed by channels lined with swaying reeds.

Distinctive and highly atmospheric, the wide skies are framed by the South Downs, and pierced by the silver dome that housed the giant Isaac Newton Telescope – now part of the Observatory Science Centre. Look out for marsh harriers and listen out for nightingales.

LANDSCAPES AND WILDLIFE

This corner of Sussex has surprisingly diverse landscapes that support all sorts of wildlife. And by walking or cycling through them you can be truly immersed. While you are unlikely to see wild boar in the ancient woodland near Battle, short-snouted seahorses in the waters off Beachy Head or the rare fen raft spider on the Pevensey Levels, it is somehow good to know they are there.

Beachy Head's towering chalk cliffs are where the South Downs cascade into the sea. The famous viewpoint is just a 45-minute walk (up) from Eastbourne promenade. From there, walkers and mountain-bikers can follow the South Downs Way across the billowing hills to Hampshire. In summer, grasses, wildflowers and blue butterflies shimmer and larks burble overhead.

SHINGLE BEACHES

The shingle beaches that are the constant companion of anyone travelling the Coastal Culture Trail are, it turns out, an internationally rare habitat – home to a variety of colourful and highly specialised plants such as viper's bugloss, sea kale and red hemp-nettle. Look out for common seals in outer Sovereign Harbour