



Beachy Head & The Seven Sisters

A long and sometimes strenuous walk comprising cliff tops, forest, a meandering river and shingle beach - with stupendous coastal views. There is a somewhat shorter option.

Essential Facts

- Route distance: 21.3 km (13.3 miles)
- Approximate time: 6 hours 30 mins
- Optional shorter route: 17.5 km (10.9 miles)
- Approx. total ascent: 320 metres
- Start point Grid Ref: TV 590 959
- GPS Ref: TV 59078 95981
- Recommended O.S. Map: Explorer 123
- Toughness Rating: Sussex 4

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

**Up For A
CHALLENGE ?**

Take a Great Walk and HELP
your favourite charity with

A Donation
An Individual Walk
A Team Effort

Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

Park beside the Beachy Head Countryside Centre for this great day's expedition. The car park gets very busy in summer (fee payable).

From the Countryside Centre, **S**, cross the road and turn left, descending a little to a defined path. The path bears right to a footpath sign. Here, follow directions for Jevington along a grassy path until you reach the road fork at **A**. Cross directly and you will see a sign for Willington Hill. Follow the path upwards towards a trig point on the horizon. Pass this on the left keeping ahead to the A259 at **B**. This is part of the South Downs Way (SDW) which affords fantastic views at several points.

Crossing the road, follow South Downs Way signs through Eastbourne Downs golf club. Keep ahead on this well marked path (beware cyclists and golf balls!) for 4 km, leading you down a gentle hill into the lovely village of Jevington.

At the main road, **C**, turn right. With Jevington Tea Gardens on your right, follow the road for a few metres before taking a left turn at a South Downs Way sign, opposite The Hungry Monk restaurant.

Follow Church Lane to the delightful church. Now take the path to the left signposted Alfriston which takes you steadily uphill. After about 0.5 km turn left onto a bridleway at a path crossroads. Continue upwards to a gate, keep ahead through a small paddock and leave by another gate opposite.

Cross the horse gallop and turn left onto a track by a footpath sign. Follow this for just under 1km and where the paths cross, turn right by the sign for Friston Forest at **D**.

Following signs for West Dean, keep ahead for 1 km to a crossroads at **E**. This is the beginning of the shorter route.

————— OPTIONAL SHORTER ROUTE —————

Turn left at **E**, following bridleway sign for Friston. Keep ahead descending and cross gravel track. At sign continue over private gallop downhill through woods. Keeping a wall to your right, at a footpath sign cross tarmac track to gate **J**. Walk field to gate opposite. Cross road and stile and bear left across field. Exit via stile into woods keeping ahead to steps in a wall. Cross wall and main road to track between church and pond. Enter the churchyard through swing gate on your left at **K**.

Keep ahead through the churchyard crossing two stiles into a lovely field. Descend into East Dean, exiting via gate, leading to road. Keep ahead passing the Tiger Inn on left, then take the right fork signposted No Through Road. Leave the road at bridleway sign **L** keeping ahead to a gate climbing steadily. At a waypost keep ahead, aiming for a red roofed barn. Pass this on right continuing to a gate. Cross to another gate and a South Downs Way sign at **I**. Now follow the original route.

For the main route, at **E** keep straight ahead, and where the track forks at **F**, take the right hand track to a gate marked access land. Cross the field to another gate and a sign to Westdean. Keep ahead on a wide path which becomes a gravel track. After about 300m leave the gravel on a mud path which leads to a gate.

Pass this and follow the track with a house on the right then uphill and a house on the left. This track leads you down into Westdean. Keep ahead through this pretty village to a crossroads. Turn left, pass a noticeboard at **G** and climb the steps directly in front. Continue ahead for a spectacular view of the River Cuckmere. Cross the wall, exit a gate and drop down to the Seven Sisters Country Park Visitor Centre.



Beachy Head



St. Andrews Church



Jevington Village

Leaving by a gate, you will see a sign for Birling Gap pointing across the road. If you visit the centre please return to this point. Cross here (beware fast motorists!) and go through a gate onto a concrete path which follows the river. Leave the concrete through a gate following a Cycle Path sign taking you to the beach, **H**.

At the shoreline turn left and continue to the imposing Seven Sisters. On reaching them, take one of the 'chalk scar' paths to begin the return leg. Navigation is now easier as you follow the cliffs to Birling Gap. As you hike this beautiful headland you will cross several stiles but the path is very clear.

Approaching Birling Gap, go through a gate and turn right at a South Downs Way sign at **I** (Beachy Head 3 miles) and follow the track to Birling Gap. Following the cliffs, leave Birling Gap via the steps passing the Coastguard building making your way to the Belle Tout lighthouse.

Keeping ahead past the lighthouse you can soon see the welcome sight of the Beachy Head pub, **S**, and a well earned drink !

Refreshment

Jevington Tea Gardens Tea Rooms High Street, Jevington Tel: 01323 489692 Drinks, teas and food, garden	The Beachy Head Public House Beachy Head Tel: 01323 728060 Bar and meals
Exceat Farmhouse Restaurant & Tea Seven Sisters Country Park Tel: 01323 870218 Licensed restaurant, tea rooms, garden	Tiger Inn Public House The Green, East Dean Tel: 01323 423209 Olde worlde pub and restaurant
Birling Gap Hotel Hotel Birling Gap, Seven Sisters Tel: 01323 423197 Restaurant, bar, garden	Grimaldi Restaurant Restaurant The Green, East Dean Tel: 01323 422384 Lunches and evening meals



The Tiger Inn

LOCAL INFO

Both Beachy Head and The Seven Sisters have extremely well appointed visitor centres at which you can brief yourself on the local history and flora and fauna of this spectacularly beautiful area.

Beachy Head Countryside Centre

Visitor Centre, car park and toilets
Beachy Head Road, Beachy Head
01323 737273

Seven Sisters Visitor Centre

Visitor Centre, car park, toilets
Exceat, Seven Sisters Country Park
01323 870280

Belle Tout lighthouse came to worldwide attention in 1999, when it was “lifted up” and moved approximately 50 feet inland to save it from crashing into the sea. First lit in 1834, its oil burning lamps could be seen for miles. But mists shrouding the lighthouse brought its demise with its final shutdown and sale in 1902. A replacement was built nearby at the base of the cliffs.

**BEACHY HEAD & THE SEVEN SISTERS
G.P.S. WAYPOINTS**

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF		CO-ORDINATES		ELEVATION: Metres
BHC S	S	TV	59078	95981	154
BHC A	A	TV	59003	97516	139
BHC B	B	TV	58500	98580	157
BHC C	C	TQ	56269	01334	67
BHC D	D	TQ	55383	00913	147
BHC E	E	TQ	54487	00538	112
BHC F	F	TQ	53949	00072	94
BHC G	G	TV	52335	99680	8
BHC H	H	TV	51673	97722	2
BHC I	I	TV	55230	96273	41
BHC J	J	TV	55036	98903	52
BHC K	K	TV	55137	98189	111
BHC L	L	TV	55494	97557	55



MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Sussex & The South Downs** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Cambridgeshire may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route in the Brecon Beacons.