

## CONSERVATION

Commoners still continue to graze sheep and cattle on the Forest (albeit at a much reduced level) and the Conservators also run their own flock of Hebridean sheep and Galloway cattle. **Friendly note:** Dog owners -please be vigilant in the areas where sheep and cattle are grazing and keep your dogs under close control.

These unique habitats are under threat and without the on-going conservation work they will disappear altogether. Our dedicated team of Rangers and volunteers have a year round programme of conservation works aimed at preserving the habitats that support these rare and endangered species.

### Why not help us and become a Forest volunteer?

From assisting in the Information Barn to being a volunteer or mounted Ranger, there's always something to do. If you care about this special place, why not join in our vital work?



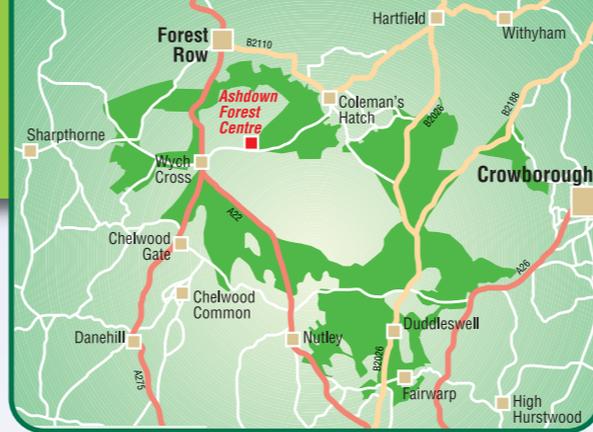
[www.ashdownforest.org](http://www.ashdownforest.org)  
01342 823583

## SO WHY NOT VISIT US

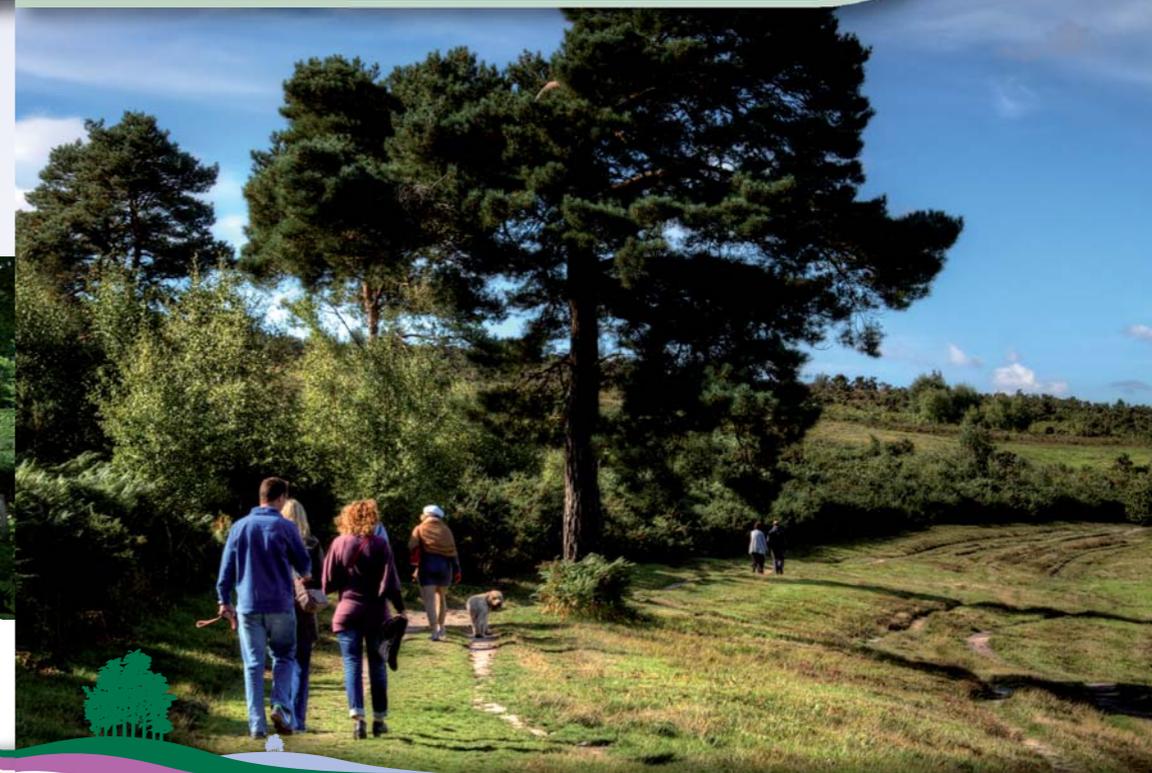
at the Ashdown Forest Centre,  
Wych Cross, Forest Row, RH18 5JP  
where, in our Information Barn, you will find an exhibition on the history and management of Ashdown Forest and where you can obtain maps, field guides, history and walks leaflets and see some short films?

Our Information Volunteers will be there to answer your questions and help you make the most of your visit. Entrance is free and opening times are 11am-5pm weekends throughout the year and 2pm -5pm weekdays from 1st April to the end of October.

Picnic tables are available in the garden until 4pm. Toilet facilities with disabled access can also be found at the Centre.



# WELCOME TO ASHDOWN FOREST



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All details are believed correct at time of production but we cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.

[www.ashdownforest.org](http://www.ashdownforest.org)

[www.friendsofashdownforest.co.uk](http://www.friendsofashdownforest.co.uk)

## HISTORY

Ashdown Forest was originally a royal hunting park, enclosed by a 38 km 'pale', consisting of a ditch and bank topped with a wooden fence. Records from the twelfth century onwards suggest that hunting red deer and roe deer was the main activity on the Forest for 500 years. In some places, the remains of the pale are still clearly visible.

Heathland would have been a component of the ancient landscape, maintained by the large herbivores migrating north as the ice retreated.

## MANAGEMENT

Through the centuries the Forest has changed hands several times and today it is owned by the Ashdown Forest Trust, with members of East Sussex County Council as Trustees. Since 1885 it has been managed by an elected and appointed Board of Conservators who balance the enjoyment of over one million visitors a year with the rights of the Commoners, wildlife conservation and the day to day life of local residents.



## HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

The traditional farming of the Commoners – grazing animals, cutting firewood and harvesting bracken – has maintained the heath. The 1500 hectares of heathland that remain include rare plant communities which support threatened animal species such as nightjar, Dartford warbler and silver-studded blue butterflies. In recognition of the ecological importance of Ashdown Forest and to ensure its protection, it is designated as a European Natura 2000 site and as a Site of Special

Scientific Interest under UK legislation. Ashdown Forest is also within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## THE FRIENDS OF ASHDOWN FOREST

The Conservators are responsible for managing and protecting Ashdown Forest. They are reliant on outside funding from organisations such as the Society of the Friends of Ashdown Forest. The Friends was formed in 1961 and since then has contributed significant sums towards the purchase of land, machinery for Forest management and information leaflets, films and interpretation panels. Their support of the Conservators and staff, is much valued.

### Why not become a Friend?

Becoming a Friend not only brings the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping this vital work, but also brings member benefits including a magazine and invitations to specialist walks and lectures.

You can join the Friends via the Forest Centre office on 01342 823583 or email: [ashdownfriends@aol.com](mailto:ashdownfriends@aol.com) or by visiting their website [www.friendsofashdownforest.co.uk](http://www.friendsofashdownforest.co.uk)



## LEISURE

An extensive network of paths and fire breaks is maintained on the Forest, allowing for quiet enjoyment of the area by walkers, dog owners, horse riders and by visitors simply seeking some peace. It is amazing to think that the Forest is only about 35 miles from central London. Another unique aspect of the Forest experience is that the 40 odd car parks are all free and offer bases from which to explore with some truly breathtaking views to both the South and North Downs.

