

What is Changing Chalk?

Changing Chalk is a partnership of organisations working together to deliver 18 interconnected projects to restore the fragile chalk grasslands of the South Downs, bring local histories to life, and provide new wellbeing activities in the outdoors. We're working with farmers, landowners, local authorities, conservation and community organisations, and research institutions. But we also need individuals like you to help us achieve our ambitious goals.

The South Downs have been a place to live, work and play for thousands of years. Together we can make sure they will be enjoyed for thousands more.

To find out more about each project go to nationaltrust.org.uk/changing-chalk-partnership, or visit the websites of the individual partners (details below).

Led by



in partnership with

Brighton & Hove City Council Brighton & Hove Food Partnership Buglife Lewes and Eastbourne Councils Natural England Railway Land Wildlife Trust South Downs National Park Authority Sussex Wildlife Trust The Living Coast Biosphere

with support from

Historic England Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Writing Our Legacy



THE LINBURY TRUST

Thank you to National Lottery players, players of People's Postcode Lottery, and The Linbury Trust for making Changing Chalk possible.

Want to find out more?

There are lots of ways you can get involved with Changing Chalk and help secure the future of the Downs. To find out more and discover ways you can get involved – from attending walks, talks and events to volunteering on projects – scan the QR code or visit: nationaltrust.org.uk/changing-chalk-partnership



Got a project of your own in mind?

The Changing Chalk Community Grants Scheme supports local, community-led initiatives that will contribute to the overall vision and aims of Changing Chalk.

For more information, go to nationaltrust.org.uk/changing-chalk-community-grants-scheme

Get in touch

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Map and illustrations by Elaine Gill

Changing Chalk

connecting nature, people and heritage

Discover the Downs on your doorstep



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Together we are Changing Chalk.

Nature & Conservation

The chalk grassland of the South Downs makes this area very special. One of the most biodiverse habitats in north-western Europe, it is home to an array of beautiful yet threatened plants, and endangered Downland birds, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles. Did you know you can find up to 40 different species of flowering plants in just one square metre of chalk grassland, including rare orchids.

This wonderful habitat once adorned much of our Downs, stretching from Eastbourne to Winchester in a near unbroken tapestry. However, much of the ancient chalk grassland was ploughed up during and after the Second World War, with just the hard-to-reach steep banks, hill tops and escarpments left untouched. Nearly 80 years on, little remains of the original unimproved chalk grassland that is so vital to the rare and internationally important ecology that calls the Downs their home.

Changing Chalk projects are working across the eastern Downs in different ways to restore these remaining fragments and link them up once more. We're improving the landscape for Downs inhabitants by reducing scrub levels, introducing conservation grazing with sheep,

cattle and ponies, creating wildflower corridors to support local wildlife, and reinstating lost dew ponds. In time we hope to provide a safe haven for iconic Downs species such as the Adonis Blue butterfly, the frog orchid and the rare Wart-biter Bush-cricket.



Hearts & Histories

People have lived and worked on the Downs for over 6,000 years. Look carefully and you'll see the signs of human activity – from Bronze Age burial mounds, Iron Age hillforts and a lost medieval village to a motte and bailey castle, a Victorian funfair and WW2 airstrip. Wherever you travel on the Downs you have a visual story of the UK's past. Part of this story are the Gypsy and Traveller communities who have long travelled, worked and settled in the South Downs and whose rich cultural heritages helped to shape the landscape through trade, stories, music and art.

The Changing Chalk projects want all local people to explore the richness of their heritage and create a legacy for future generations. For some Black, Asian and ethnically-diverse people in the South Downs this is by telling their stories through writing and the creative arts inspired by local walks. For other local people, it has been through excavations and exploration of the Eastbourne area and by getting involved in monitoring and caring for the 227 scheduled monuments in the eastern Downs, from Shoreham in the west to Eastbourne in the east.



Connecting Towns and Downs

Learning about the place we live and getting out in nature is wonderful for our physical and mental wellbeing. Many of the Changing Chalk projects are about linking people and the environment, whether by encouraging people out on to the Downs, helping people make their own connections to the landscape, or by bringing a little of the magic of the Downs into the cities of the area to enhance biodiversity and support wildlife.

Changing Chalk partners run a variety of free activities including outdoor therapeutic sessions and themed nature walks where you can learn about the amazing animals, intriguing insects and fantastic flora of this area. Schoolchildren and adults alike are engaging with local farmers to understand where their food

comes from and the importance of good animal husbandry and land management. Young people are developing countryside

management and employability skills while learning about the South Downs on their doorstep, empowering them become future guardians of the landscape.



Get involved

If this iconic landscape is going to have a future, it's vital that local people feel that it's theirs to enjoy and want to play a part in looking after it. Changing Chalk has already brought together many people who are discovering a love for the South Downs, but we're always looking for more people who want to get involved: to learn new skills, make new friends, and help to safeguard the rich heritage of the eastern South Downs.

Volunteering opportunities across the partnership's 18 projects include nature conservation, history and archaeology, community participation, and administration. You can find out more by going to nationaltrust.org.uk/volunteering-changing-chalk





Skylark



Yellowhammer



Corn Bunting



Linnet



Kestrel



Horseshoe Vetch



Adonis Blue



Bee Orchid



Frog Orchid



Burnt-Tip Orchid



Early Spider Orchid



Sheep's Fescue



Quaking Grass



Chalkhill Blue



Silver-Spotted Skipper



Hornet Robberfly



Large Scabious Mining Bee



Wart-Biter Bush-Cricket



Yellow Meadow Ant



Bloody-Nosed Beetle



Snowy Waxcap



Blackening Waxcap



Spangle Waxcap



Parrot Waxcap



Scarlet Waxcap



Common Rock-Rose



Dwarf Thistle



Kidney Vetch



Harebell



Gorse



Round-Headed Rampion

Main areas of chalk grassland

Chalk grassland areas being restored by the Changing Chalk partnership

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Mill Hill | 7 Wolstonbury Hill | 11 Landport Bottom |
| 2 Fulking Escarpment | 8 Blackcap and Ashcombe Bottom | 12 Lullington Heath |
| 3 Southwick Hill | 9 Castle Hill National Nature Reserve | 13 Gayles Farm - Wildlife Corridor |
| 4 Devil's Dyke | 10 Castle Hill Local Nature Reserve | 14 Crowlink |
| 5 Newtimber Hill | | 15 Butts Meadow - (Little Sheepdown) |
| 6 Waterhall | | 16 Mount Caburn |

Heritage Features

Discover sites that show OVER 6000 years of human activity on the Downs

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| 1 Truleigh Hill | 3 Edburton Motte and Bailey Castle | 12 Landport Bottom Barrows |
| 2 Thundersbarrow Hillfort | 4 Perching-Deserted Medieval Settlement | 13 Mount Caburn Iron Age Hillfort |
| | 5 Devils Dyke Iron Age Hillfort | 14 Litlington White Horse |
| | 6 Bronze Age Camp and Romano British Farmstead on Wolstonbury Hill | 15 Frog Firle Farm |
| | 7 Ditchling Beacon Hillfort | 16 Long Man of Wilmington |
| | 8 Stanmer Park | 17 Combe Hill Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure |
| | 9 Hollingbury Hillfort | 18 Butts Brow |
| | 10 Whitehawk Neolithic Camp | 19 Cuckmere Haven WW2 Defences |
| | 11 Lewes Priory | 20 Belle Tout Iron Age Fort |
| | | 21 Former WW2 RAF Friston (now Gayles Farm) |



Gateways to the Downs

Easier access points to the Downs from the towns

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Mill Hill | 6 Ditchling Beacon |
| 2 Truleigh Hill | 7 Lewes Railway Land |
| 3 Devil's Dyke | 8 Castle Hill Newhaven |
| 4 Southwick Hill | 9 Birling Gap |
| 5 Waterhall | |

Trails

- South Downs Way
- Sussex Border Path
- Monarchs Way

Chalk grassland

Reconnecting Dew Ponds Project

