



Devil's Dyke, South Downs,  
West Sussex, BN1 8YJ

TRAIL  
**Walking**

GRADE  
**Moderate**

DISTANCE  
**3 miles (5km)**

TIME  
**1 hour 30 minutes**

OS MAP  
**Landranger 198,  
Explorer 122**

### Contact

01273 857712  
devilsdyke@nationaltrust.org.uk

### Facilities

Leaflets available at Devils  
Dyke car park information  
board

Toilets are located in the Devil's  
Dyke pub, in the car park, and  
at Hiker's Rest tearooms

The Hiker's Rest serves  
organic food and drinks (open  
weekends only, 11-4pm.  
Closed 28 Dec - 1 Mar)

**National  
Trust**

[nationaltrust.org.uk/walks](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/walks)

# Devil's Dyke histories and mysteries walk

Explore ancient chalk downland  
and the deepest dry valley in the  
country.

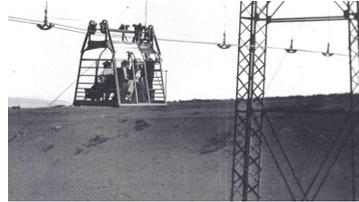
Discover where the Devil and his  
wife are said to be buried and  
watch kestrels soar above you.  
Visit an ancient farmstead with  
over 1,000 years of history and  
experience stunning views over  
the Sussex countryside.



## Terrain

Allow about 2.5 hours for this 3 mile (4.8km) figure-of-eight walk including a visit to the Hiker's Rest tea-rooms at Saddlescombe Farm. This is a challenging walk with some fairly steep ascents and descents. Some people may find the escarpment path a bit exposed but the views are spectacular. Dogs are welcome but must be kept on leads, as livestock in surroundings fields. No dog bins so please take dog litter home.

## Things to see



### Devil's Dyke

Devil's Dyke is the longest, widest  
and deepest dry chalk valley in  
the country. Legend has it that  
the Devil dug the valley to drown  
the parishioners of the Weald.  
Scientists, however, believe it was  
formed in the last Ice Age. Delve  
into the dyke to really appreciate  
its grandeur (direction 1).

### The Great Cableway and Devil's Graves

When descending into Devil's  
Dyke, look out for the concrete  
footings of two pylons on the  
top of the slopes to the left and  
right. These originally supported  
Britain's first cable car, which was  
built here in 1894. The ride took  
Victorian day-trippers across the  
328yd (300m) wide valley and  
was a great attraction in its day.  
The Devil and his wife are said  
to be buried at the bottom of the  
Dyke. Legend has it that if you run  
backwards seven times around  
these humps, whilst holding your  
breath, the Devil will appear  
(direction 2).

### Saddlescombe Farm and Donkey Wheel

A hidden hamlet in the South  
Downs, the farm has over 1,000  
years of stories to tell and  
was once home to the Knights  
Templar. Take in the atmosphere  
with a visit to the Hiker's Rest  
tea-rooms. The Saddlescombe  
Donkey Wheel is a wooden  
well-house containing a large,  
broad wheel. For centuries the  
wheel was turned by a donkey or  
pony, raising drinking water from  
150ft (45.5m) below the Downs  
(direction 5).



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## Start/end

Start: Devil's Dyke car park,  
grid ref: TQ258110

End: Devil's Dyke car park, grid  
ref: TQ258110

## How to get there

By foot: Footpaths from  
Brighton 5 miles (8km), Fulking  
and Poynings both 1 mile  
(1.6km) or use the South  
Downs Way

By bike: Cyclepath from Hove  
off sustrans National Cycle  
Network route 20 plus others  
including the South Downs Way

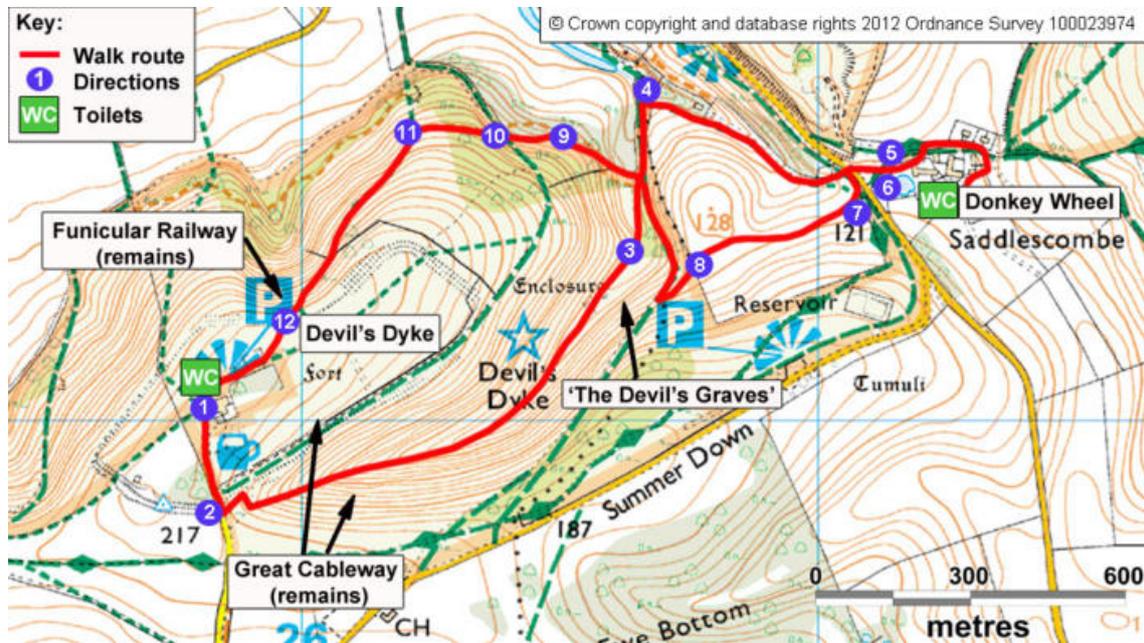
By bus: Service 77 from  
Brighton daily in high summer,  
weekends and bank holidays  
for rest of the year. See  
Brighton and Hove travel  
information for details

By train: Brighton station is 7  
miles (11.2km) from Devil's  
Dyke, catch the 77 bus outside

By car: 2 miles (3.2km) north of  
A27 Brighton bypass. Nearest  
postcode BN1 8YJ

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1. From the car park at the pub, go back towards the big Devil's Dyke pub sign and onwards past the bus turning circle. Follow the path alongside the road. On your left is a gate with a sign on a post. Look at the banks on either side of the road - these are the remains of the ramparts of the Iron Age hill fort.

2. Head straight down into the valley for 55yd (50m or 1 min), then make a sharp hairpin bend right and go through a gate which leads into the deep valley. (From here, look up to your right on the side of the valley and you can see the concrete footings of the Great Cableway.) Walk to the bottom of the valley, follow it as it curves left and you can see the 'Devil's Graves' ahead (two humps in the ground). Continue round to the left until you reach a fence across your route.

3. Go through the small bridle gate in the right-hand end of the fence, continue along the bridle path for 130yd (120m or 3 mins) and turn sharply right up a steep footpath which leads to a stile.

4. Go over the stile and follow the path up the incline which then takes you along the edge of a field, with telegraph poles in it. Head up the tarmac track and through the gate at the top.

5. Cross the road and go into Saddlescombe Farm, past the pond on your right. The Hiker's Rest tearoom is in the courtyard after the first barn on your left. After tea you can visit the Donkey Wheel (one of only four in the county). Go left out of the tearooms with the barn on your right and the cottages ahead on the left. At the end cottage there is a stile on your right leading to the small, square black wooden-clad building with a steeply-pitched slate roof.

6. Return to the tearoom and continue on the second-half of this figure-of-eight walk. This time the walk takes you up through woods which lead to fabulous views. Retrace your steps out of the farm, back across the road and back through the gate at the top of the tarmac track.

7. Turn left immediately, walk past the trough and then turn right above the fence and ditch. Walk beside the ditch for 55yd (50m or 2 mins). Go straight over the field, coming away from the ditch. You will be able to see a view of the Dyke Valley that you walked earlier. At the top of the slope you reach a stile.

8. Go over the stile and turn immediately right down a very steep bank. If the weather is wet this can get muddy, you can avoid this by continuing along the path then do a hairpin bend turning right and going down into the valley. You can see the bridle gate you went through earlier.

9. This time take the stile at the left-hand end of the fence and climb the steps up through the wood. Follow the path to a crossroads.

10. You will see six steps across the path, go up these and follow the path through the woods until you reach a kissing gate.

11. Go through this gate, up a steep incline which has 63 steps. It is worth it. Halfway up, have a look through the bushes to your right - the view is amazing. You can see the village of Poynings

below. Take care following the narrow path up and across the escarpment. The views continue to be stunning, with Fulking village in the distance. If you are lucky you can spot birds and hang-gliders soaring above you. If you look carefully at the ground, there is a wide gully crossing this path - this used to be the site of the funicular (steep grade) railway. Continue up this path until you reach another kissing gate above you on your left.

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12. This is the last gate on the walk; you can either head straight back to the pub car park, or follow the fence left to see the remains of the funicular railway station. Have a pub drink, enjoy the view outside and take a look at the stone lookout with a map of the whole area and a telescope nearby. In the car park there is a National Trust information board with ideas for other great walks and things to do in the area (directions 11 and 12).

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