

Cycling East Sussex

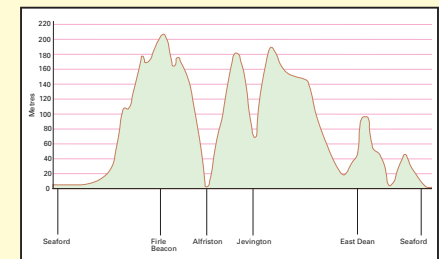
Seven Sisters off road circular



Tour de la Manche



- Circular Route (On Road)
- Traffic Free Sections
- National Cycle Network (On Road)
- A Road
- B Road
- Minor Road (arrow indicates steep hill pointing downhill)
- Railway (with Level Crossing)
- South Downs Way
- Follow Road Sign as Marked
- Church
- Pub
- House of Interest
- Railway Station (with name)
- Take Care!
- Tourist Information Centre
- Car Parking



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David Sellman

Seven Sisters



Mark Mercer

Alfriston



David Young

The Downs

Starting at Newhaven town this route turns right along Drove Road until, just before the roundabout, there is a pedestrian crossing across the A259. The cycle track opposite (be careful at the entrance to Sainsbury's) leads to Avis Road, which you follow as far as Denton Drive. The route turns right into Denton Drive and after 500m left again into Heighton Road. Just after the Hampden Arms public house, it turns right on to the bridleway that leads up on to the Downs. Following the South Downs Way from the masts on Beddingham Hill and passes Firlle Beacon and Bostal Hill before dropping down to the highly popular village of Alfriston with its numerous tea shops. The South Downs Way continues crossing the Cuckmere River and climbing a broad, sunken stone and chalk track. The views opening up behind you are a good excuse for a breather!

The broad stone track ahead of you swings up and to the right around the rim of the spectacular dry grassy valley with ever better views back to Alfriston and across to Bostal Hill behind. You are now standing on the head of the Long Man of Wilmington! Look out for clumps of cowslips on this superb roof-of-the-world section with views out to sea and the sound of skylarks up above.

Descending to Jevington, the route regains height allowing you to enjoy the reward of panoramic views over Eastbourne and out into the English Channel. Signs point the way to Beachy Head. Make a beeline for the dramatic Belle Tout Lighthouse, well worth a detour for the fabulous views of the white cliffs of the Seven Sisters. Turning inland and crossing the busy A259 at East Dean you wiggle your way through the village to gain access to Friston Forest with its broad forest tracks taking you back to the Friston Forest Visitor Centre. Take extreme care along the narrow and busy A259 to the eastern edge of Seaford* and the start of the safe, quiet roads and cycle paths carrying National Cycle Network Route 2 along Seaford seafront and back to Newhaven.

**For a shorter route, cutting out Seaford and Newhaven and avoiding this busy road, go north on the minor road from Exceat and join the South Downs Way to the east of Alfriston.*

Newhaven The fort was built in the 1860s as a coastal defence and is now a museum with barrack rooms. Ferry point to Dieppe in France.

The South Downs The chalk grassland that makes up the South Downs is an internationally rare habitat

- it is the result of hundreds of years of grazing by sheep and can support up to 50 different types of grass and herbs per square metre.

Alfriston A carefully preserved village in the Cuckmere Gap - the Star Inn, dating from the 15th century, boasts many wooden carvings and a ship's figurehead. The 14th-century Clergy House was the first property to be acquired by the National Trust in 1896 for just £10.

Jevington In the churchyard is the copper model of a square-rigged schooner once sailed by a Chinaman buried here.

Beachy Head The windswept chalk headland rises 534ft from the lighthouse below and marks the eastern end of the South Downs ridge.

Birling Gap For centuries Birling Gap was a landing place favoured by smugglers. Between Birling Gap and Seaford are the great chalk cliffs known as the Seven Sisters.

Friston At one time the small church of St Mary in Friston served as a landmark for mariners and smugglers alike.



Ian Chamberlain

Beachy Head



Mark Mercer

Cuckmere Haven



Mark Mercer

Friston Forest