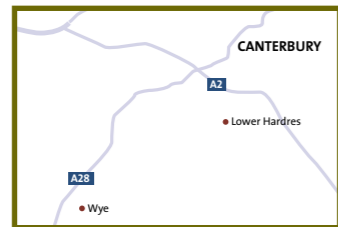
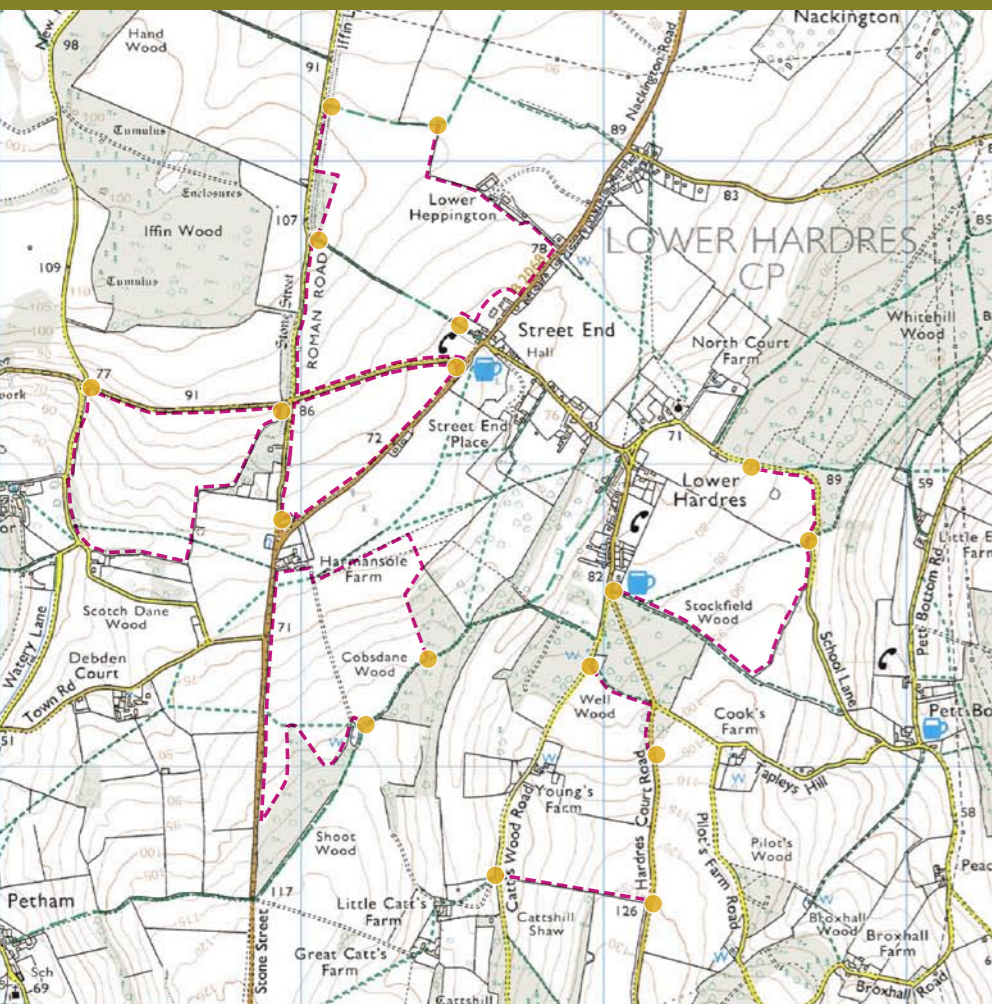


SITE MAP



Scale 1:25 000
 Use with OS Explorer 150
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- Entry/exit points
 - Permissive access route
 - Footpath
 - Bridleway
 - Byway open to all traffic
 - Road used as public path
- Take care crossing Stone Street!**



The Kent Downs is a nationally important landscape on a par in terms of landscape quality and the protection afforded to it as the well-known National Parks. The Kent Downs AONB covers nearly a quarter of the county of Kent and within it is some of the most outstanding landscape that England has to offer. The Kent Downs extends from the White Cliffs at Dover to the London and Surrey borders. There are 41 AONBs across England and Wales, all protected by Government legislation to ensure their conservation and enhancement.

Cover: Horse riders using permissive bridleway

Discover picturesque bridle routes around Lower Hardres

Explore the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Defra – Department for Food, Farming and Rural Affairs.

The Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) is run by Defra. The aim of the Scheme is to improve the natural beauty and diversity of the countryside. By paying farmers and landowners over a 10 year agreement to manage their land in environmentally sympathetic ways the scheme is able to target threatened habitats such as chalk grassland and hedgerows.

Further Information

- Kent Downs AONB**
01303 815170
www.kentdowns.org.uk
- Defra**
01233 813667
www.defra.gov.uk
- Public Rights of Way report line**
0845 3450210
www.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccess
- Public Transport Information**
0870 6082608
www.traveline.org.uk
- National Rail Enquiries**
08457 484950

This leaflet is one of a series. Contact Kent Downs AONB for copies of the other leaflets.

Please note that public access provided under Defra's Countryside Stewardship schemes is permissive only and no new rights of way are being created. Existing public rights of way are not affected. The landowner reserves the right to close or withdraw permissive access areas/routes at any time. In the event of temporary closure notices will be posted on site. Please follow the Country Code and observe any other requirements notified on site. Do not disturb wildlife, livestock and please keep dogs on leads when livestock are present. This is working farmland so please take care; people using the access sites do so at their own risk.



A series of permissive off road bridle routes to make circular rides or create links to public bridleways near Canterbury.





THIS LEAFLET PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCED HORSE RIDING around Lower Hardres in the eastern part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Skylarks

The skylark can be found on all farm types though their numbers are highest on lowland arable and mixed farming systems. The UK skylark population has fallen by 52% since 1970 largely due to changes in agricultural practices such as a move from spring to winter cereals, as well as intensified grassland management.

Skylarks can benefit from:

- Mid-field areas in which to nest and feed to avoid predators. Skylarks can produce up to 3 broods of chicks per year.
- Seeds and weeds throughout the year to provide food for adult birds.
- Insects and spiders in the spring and summer. Skylark chicks are fed exclusively on insects and spiders for the first week of life. These also make up an important part of the diet of adults from April until August. Insects are collected from crops, set-aside and pasture.



View near Lower Hardres



Horse riders using permissive bridleway

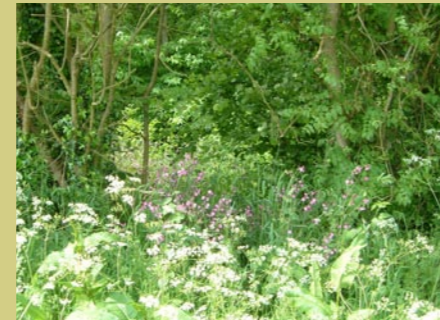


Map board, Lower Hardres

Use the map to identify the permissive routes to create circular rides or link to the public bridleway network for a longer distance route. The landowner also allows access to walkers and cyclists.

The land at Street End Farms is in Defra's Countryside Stewardship Scheme. The aim of the Scheme is to improve the natural beauty and diversity of the countryside through a 10 year agreement with the farmer. The farmer can also receive payment for allowing permissive public access. This has enabled the farmer here to create valuable access for the public on foot, horseback and bicycle.

Secluded dry valleys, woodland, hedgerows and parkland are characteristic features of this part of the Kent Downs AONB. Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) plays an important role in enabling these features to be conserved and enhanced. On this farm CSS achieves this through support for the establishment of arable field margins, re-creation of some grassland to enhance the character of a secluded dry valley, planting new hedgerows and the management of existing grassland to maintain the parkland setting.



Hedgerow on field margin



Skylark

In winter months look out for areas of stubble on the farm. Farmers can receive payment through CSS to provide winter feeding habitat for a range of farmland birds such as linnets and yellowhammers. During the spring and summer, some areas of the fields are left fallow (uncropped) to provide good breeding conditions for birds such as skylarks which prefer nesting in open fields.



Field margins provide a buffer zone between the arable crop and the field boundary where natural regeneration of grasses and herbs create undisturbed habitats for the benefit of small mammals and ground nesting birds.

The tussocky grass also provides a habitat for insects which feed on crop damaging pests in the growing season.



View near Lower Hardres

The name of the Hardres family is perpetuated in the twin villages of Upper and Lower Hardres (pronounced 'hards'), on the Roman road, Stone Street. The family owned this area for 700 years after the Norman Conquest. It is said that Thomas Hardres, who was knighted for his valour at the Siege of Boulogne in 1544, brought back the town gates and erected them at Upper Hardres, though there is little evidence of their existence today.

The farm is now owned and managed by the Baker White family who have been here since 1860. In the past the focus of the farming business was on land and woodland whereas now opportunities for diversification are sought and land is managed through contract farming, set-aside and Countryside Stewardship Scheme. There used to be a jersey dairy herd on the farm with more mixed farming with some land let to tenants. The use of the farm buildings has changed and now there are two livery yards, a carpentry business, a plumbing business and a hairdresser!

The original use of this building near Lower Hardres is unknown