



Cycling in East Sussex:
Avenue Verte Route Guide

Cuckoo Trail & Low Weald circular



As an alternative to the roller coaster roads of the High Weald, try this delightful ride. It follows the flatter lanes to the west of the Cuckoo Trail and the toughest climb is only 55 metres – a small challenge compared to some of the other rides.

Polegate – Arlington Reservoir

Make your way from Polegate north-west towards Abbot's Wood and follow the bridleway on a mixture of surfaces – at times it is a wonderful smooth, stone-based track and at others it can be muddy after wet weather. Before long you are on the lane network which leads into the village of Arlington. Shortly after crossing the Cuckmere River, keep an eye out for the bridleway to the right that takes you past Arlington Reservoir and onto Station Road, north of Berwick.

Short Cut to Hailsham

Instead of continuing to Ripe and Chalvington, continue on Station Road through Wick Street turning right at The Dicker fork when you reach St Bede's School. Continue past Michelham Priory, founded in 1229 and boasting England's longest medieval water-filled moat, and take the rough track about 800m on the left past the junction for Arlington. This becomes Hempstead Lane before you cross the A22 to reach Hailsham.

Arlington Reservoir – Golden Cross

Turn right from the reservoir onto Station Road and take the next left at Lower Wick Street, leaving the traffic behind as you head west to the villages of Ripe and Chalvington

with fine views of the South Downs. The land is a mixture of lush pasture and arable fields, surrounded by hedgerows and verges filled with wild flowers. Lovely old houses can be glimpsed at every turn of the road.

Golden Cross – Polegate

Take care crossing the busy A22 at Golden Cross and rejoin the network of quiet lanes through Chiddingly with the impressive Chiddingly Place at the far end of the hamlet. Through Stonehill, the route leads back to Horam on the A267. A gentle descent on the wonderful Cuckoo Trail south of Horam under a canopy of trees, takes you through Hailsham back to Polegate and the starting point.

Places of Interest ❖❖❖

Cuckoo Trail: Wildlife Art Trail Lying to the south of Hellingly bridge for 1/2 mile, there are a series of carved oak panels created by the Bentley Wildlife Carvers depicting animals, birds and plants that can be found on the Cuckoo Trail.

Abbot's Wood A total of 360 acres of mixed woodland gifted by Henry I to Battle Abbey and once overseen by the abbot (hence its name). Ancient ditches and banks can still be seen.

Arlington The church dates from Saxon times with the remains of a Roman building in the walls. Excavated items are on display inside.

Chiddingly Rumours persist of a secret tunnel from Chiddingly Place to the church, which is supposed to emerge either in front of the monument or at the base of the tower.

Starting point

Polegate

Distance

24 miles / 39 kilometres

Off road/rough sections

1. The Cuckoo Trail, a well-surfaced, traffic-free railway path between Horam and Polegate
2. A bridleway is used along the south edge of Abbot's Wood

Grade

Easy

Major climbs

The only climb worth mentioning (55 metres) takes you up from Chiddingly to Horam

Refreshments

Horam, Hailsham, Arlington, Ripe, Chalvington, Golden Cross, Chiddingly

Tourist Information Centres

Eastbourne Tourist Information Office: 0871 6630031
(calls charged at 10p per min from BT land lines)

Cycle Hire and Shops

Cuckmere
Cycle Company: 01323 870310
Eastbourne:
Phoenix Cycles: 01323 729060
Polegate:
Kontour Cycles: 01323 482368

Cycling in East Sussex

Cuckoo Trail & Low Weald circular



Avenue Verte

East Sussex
County Council

