



Tour de la Manche

## Seven Sisters off road circular off National Cycle Route 2

**Starting point:** Newhaven Town train station.

**Distance:** 33 miles / 53 kms

**Offroad/rough sections:** Almost all offroad - mountain bikes are essential and the ride should only be attempted when the tracks are dry. The mud is very sticky through the winter months and after prolonged rain at any time of the year.

**Grade:** Strenuous (over 800m of climbing)

**Climbs:** Nine in total - six climbs of 40m - 100m, one climb of 115m (up to the Long Man of Wilmington), one of 150m (Birlinging Gap to Beachy Head) and one of 215m to the top of Firl Beacon.

**Refreshments:** Seaford, South Highton, Alfriston, Jevington, Birling Gap, East Dean, Friston.

### Tourist Information Centres:

Eastbourne: 01323 411400

Seaford: 01323 897426

**Cycle Hire:** Cuckmere Cycle Co: 01323 870310

**Sports and Cycles in Seaford:** 01323 893130

### Cycle Repair Shops:

Evolution Cycles - 01323 737320

Heath Cycles - 01323 73340



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## Cycle East Sussex Coastal Routes

### East Sussex County Council

T&E, County Hall,  
St Anne's Crescent,  
Lewes,  
East Sussex,  
BN7 1UE

Tel: 01273 481000

Fax: 01273 479536

[www.eastsussex.gov.uk/cycling](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/cycling)

For more information on routes or the interactive mapping in your area visit Sustrans:

[www.nationalcyclenetwork.org.uk](http://www.nationalcyclenetwork.org.uk)



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Project part-financed by the European Union

MAP  
& GUIDE





When coming out of the station, turn right along Drove Road until, just before the roundabout, you come to a pedestrian crossing. Use it to cross the A259 and continue on the cycle track opposite (be careful at the entrance to Sainsbury's) to get to Avis Road, which you follow as far as Denton Drive. Turn right into Denton Drive and after 500m left again into Heighton Road. Just after the Hampden Arms public house, turn right on to the bridleway that leads you up on to the Downs. Follow the South Downs Way from the masts on Beddingham Hill, past Firle Beacon and Bostal Hill then drop down to the highly popular village of Alfriston with its numerous tea shops. Continue along the South Downs Way to cross the Cuckmere River and start climbing on the 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. Descend to Jevington, regain height and enjoy the reward of panoramic views over Eastbourne and out into the English Channel. Follow signs for Beachy Head then 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. Turn inland to cross the busy A259 at East Dean and 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.

*\* There are plans to create a safe alternative to the busy A259 in the future. 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.



# Cycle East Sussex

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East Sussex  
County Council



- 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

