

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

From rolling hills to bustling market towns, the South Downs National Park's landscapes cover 1,600km² of breathtaking views, hidden gems and quintessentially English scenery. A rich tapestry of wildlife, landscapes, tranquillity and visitor attractions, weave together a story of people and place in harmony.

For your guide to everything there is to see and do in the National Park visit southdowns.gov.uk/discovery-map

 Keep up to date with the latest news and events from the South Downs National Park. southdowns.gov.uk/newsletter



YOUR COUNTRYSIDE CODE: RESPECT. PROTECT. ENJOY.

Respect other people

- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Keep to the paths unless on Open Access Land 

Protect the natural environment

- Take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs



FIND YOUR WAY

Follow the arrows on waymarkers.

Footpath		
Bridleway		
Restricted byway		
Byway		
Open access land		
National Trail Acorn		



TAKE THE LEAD

For a safe and fun visit with your dog please remember to keep them on a lead around livestock, horses and wildlife. Always bag and bin your dog poo – any public bin will do!

CONTACT



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 @SDNPA  /SDNPA  southdownsnp

SOUTHDOONS.GOV.UK

Cover photo: Ivon Hitchens, Curved Barn, 1922, oil on canvas, Pallant House Gallery (presented by the artist, 1979) © The Estate of Ivon Hitchens. All uncredited photos © SDNPA. Details correct at time of going to print. Please be aware that routes are shared with other users (vehicles, pedestrians, dogs, horses etc) and users of this route do so at their own risk. We do not accept any responsibility for loss, damage or injury, however caused, arising directly or indirectly from use of this leaflet. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013. SDNPA/The Way Design/August 2019. © SDNPA Crown copyright

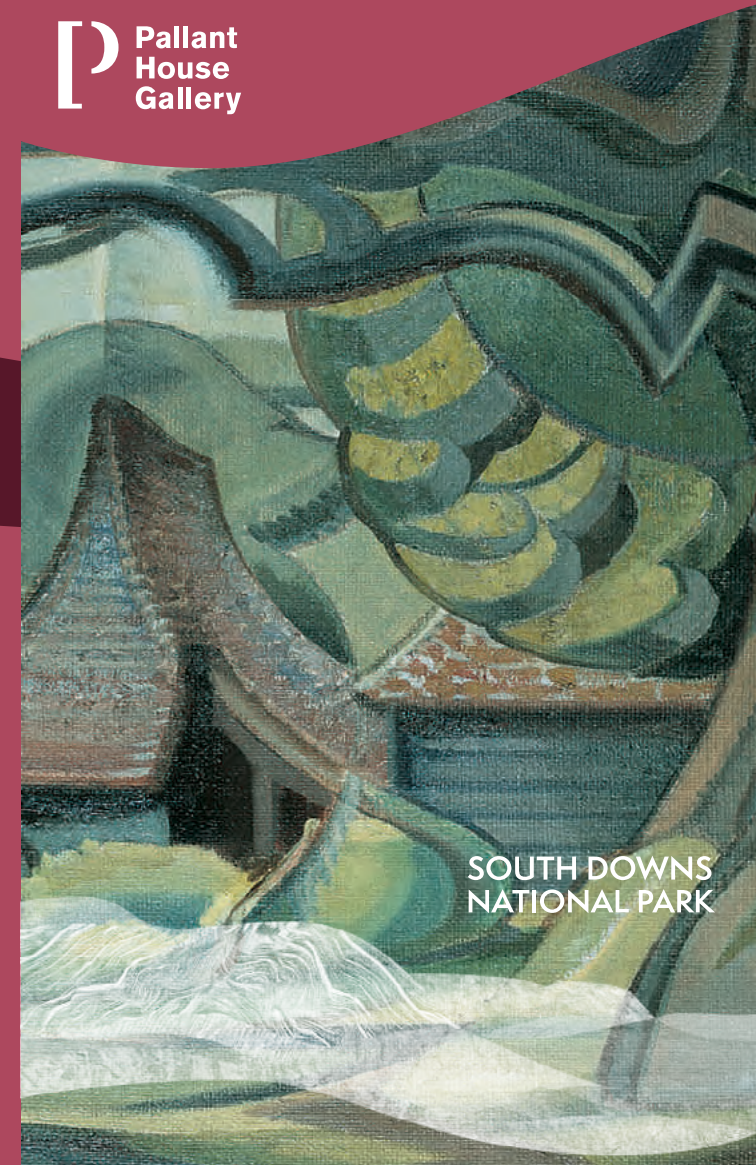


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SOUTH DOWNS WALKS LAVINGTON AND DUNCTON

IN THE FOOTSTEPS
OF IVON HITCHENS

 **Pallant
House
Gallery**



**SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK**

DISCOVER THE LANDSCAPES THAT INSPIRED ONE OF BRITAIN'S BEST LOVED PAINTERS, IVON HITCHENS

Modern British landscape painter Ivon Hitchens (1893-1979) lived and worked at Lavington Common from 1940 until his death in 1979. Painting in the **open air around his Sussex** home, Hitchens sought to capture the **essence of the place** and the resulting paintings, featuring swathes of bright colour, brought **him international acclaim** and a place in museums and collections around the world.

Hitchens' career in painting began in the innovative art world of the 1920s, alongside Ben and Winifred Nicholson, Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. He also drew inspiration from artists on the continent including Cézanne and Matisse and his work was always international in its outlook.

In 1940 Hitchens' London studio was damaged in the Blitz and so, having recently bought six acres of Sussex countryside and a gypsy caravan for £20, he moved his family to the verdant hills south of Petworth. The effect of the move on his work was

profound. Rarely has an artist so immersed himself in the scenery around his home. He dedicated the rest of his life to capturing the Sussex landscape, creating paintings that have captivated audiences ever since.

To start with, life in Sussex was basic, without electricity or running water. The family lived in the caravan whilst his studio and later a house were completed. Hitchens absorbed himself in the landscape, steering his wheelbarrow loaded with paints, brushes and canvases out into the countryside every day

- 'going humbly to nature to "see" what I could later paint'. Evolving his distinctive abstract style over decades, Hitchens could capture a sandy stretch of heathland with a sweep of oil paint or the plunge and froth of a millrace in a stroke of white.

In the 1960s Hitchens bought a converted railway carriage on the beach in Selsey and began to paint the light and space of the coastline. Yet he would always return to the Downs where he died in 1979, barely a month after completing his last painting.

British Landscapes: A Sense of Place is on at Pallant House Gallery until 1 Nov 2026

For more information visit: pallant.org.uk

Right image: Ivon Hitchens, Red Boat and Bushes, c. 1970, Oil on canvas, Private Collection © Estate of Ivon Hitchens

Left image: Photograph of Ivon Hitchens painting outside by George Garland, 1948, courtesy Estate of Ivon Hitchens





The **Serpent Trail** is a 64-mile waymarked route which 'snakes' its way from Haslemere to Petersfield through stunning heathland.

TO PETWORTH



LAVINGTON COMMON

DUNTON COMMON

HEATH END

UPPER NORWOOD

WESTERLANDS FARM

RIDLINGTON FARM

DUNTON

SCHOOL

DYE HOUSE LANE

DUNTON MILL

MANOR FARM

BLACK POND

WEST SUSSEX LITERARY TRAIL

BURTON PARK

NATURE RESERVE

BURTON PARK CHURCH

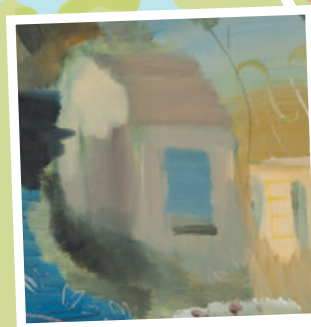
BURTON MILL POND

CHINGFORD POND



Ivon Hitchens, *Blue Door - Greenleaves*, c. 1943, Oil on canvas, Private Collection © Estate of Ivon Hitchens

Rather than the dramatic backdrop of the Downs, it was the woods and heathland around his house that enthralled Hitchens. Turning his back on the majestic line of hills he would direct his canvas instead to the changing light in a forest clearing or the reflections on a millpond – always exploring nature's shifting perspectives.



Ivon Hitchens, *House Among Trees*, 1943, Oil on canvas, Pallant House Gallery © Estate of Ivon Hitchens

EAST LAVINGTON

SEAFORD COLLEGE

WOOLAVINGTON DOWN



0 1/4 mile 1/2 km

MAP REF:
Find this area
on OS Explorer
OL10



Reflections on Chingford pond
© SDNPA Charlie Hellewell

KEY:

- ★ Point of interest
- P Parking
- NP National Trust parking
- Public house
- Refreshments
- Trail point
- Road
- Long Distance Path
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Restricted byway
- Woodland
- Buildings
- Open access land (in shaded area)
- Water

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF IVON HITCHENS

Enjoy a beautiful circular walk in the landscapes around Lavington Common and Duncton Mill that inspired Ivon Hitchens.

TRAIL:

DISTANCE:
5.6 miles (9km)

ALLOW: 3 hours

GRADIENT:
Fairly flat. One short hill.

PATH:
Uneven terrain. A mixture of sandy heathland paths and potentially muddy woodland tracks – two stiles.

1 The first half of the walk follows the **Serpent Trail**. Head out of the Lavington Common car park to the south (the track behind the circular walk sign) and join the **Serpent Trail**.

2 Cross the heathland of Lavington Common and go straight on as you approach woodland. Bear right still following the **Serpent Trail** and continue until you reach Heath End.

3 Turn left on the pavement and carefully cross the A285 by the Farm Shop. Taking the track almost opposite (**Serpent Trail**) continue until you reach Burton Park Road.

4 Take care crossing the road, stay on the **Serpent Trail** following the signs to Burton Park Farm.

5 At Black Pond leave the **Serpent Trail** (which turns left to the pond) and continue straight ahead towards the tiny Burton Park church (dating from 1075) before bearing right along the farm track.

6 Where the track bends right go straight ahead onto the footpath over grassland and through an iron gate by Chingford pond. This local nature reserve is a good place to see birds and dragonflies.

7 Continue along the path and follow the field edge. Climb through a copse with the trees on your right turning right at the end.

8 Follow the footpath to Dye House Lane and turn right past Duncton Mill, continuing until you reach the A285.

9 Turn left here for the Cricketers pub or carefully cross the road and turn right on the pavement towards Duncton Village. Then turn left at Willets Close and head over a stile past the school.

10 Cross the field behind the school up to a gate and turn left following the footpath down along the field edge before turning right at the fingerpost.

11 Turn left onto a farm track towards Ridlington Farm. After the barn, bear left onto the footpath crossing the field and through a small group of trees.

12 Emerge at Westerlands Farm. Turn right towards the buildings and turn left immediately after the house, heading up the road for approx. 500m.

13 Turn right onto a farm track near some houses and continue going straight through a kissing gate. Follow the footpath across Lavington Common until you reach Duncton Common Road. Carefully cross the road and return to the car park.