

## Exploring orchards



Exploring orchards is a pleasure at all times of year. Many are crossed by public footpaths and bridleways. In some it is possible to wander at will. The High Weald Landscape Trail, 1066 Walk and Tunbridge Wells Circular are just three of many promoted routes that pass through local orchards in the Weald.

Orchards are indicated on 1:25 000 Ordnance Survey maps by evenly spaced trees on a white background.



Orchards are a feature of the High Weald – a valued Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the rural heart of South East England. The High Weald is a historic countryside of small fields and scattered farmsteads among wooded, rolling hills, sunken hedge-lined lanes and river valleys.



### Further information

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## Are you doing your bit?

Fruit is good for us, and not just for our health. We could all do something to help to conserve orchards, keeping and creating them as places for fruit, people and wildlife.

### Eat your view!

Local fruit producers – particularly small, specialist growers – need our support. Buying local fruit and products:

- Helps to safeguard local jobs
- Saves energy by reducing the distance food has to travel
- Assists local and British fruit species to survive
- Sustains a local landscape feature

### Plant a new orchard

Many local people are now looking to establish their own orchards, and are seeking traditional varieties of fruit to plant either on their own land, or in a community orchard. Traditional apple trees of the Weald are full standards, grown on non-dwarfing rootstock. They can grow to be large trees, but are pruned back to a more compact shape. They yield well, and are visually attractive.

### Join a community orchard

In the past, orchards were the focus of village life, where families and people of all ages would come together for village meetings, festivals and fairs. Orchards are once more becoming a local community focus, a way of bringing together busy people, young and old, newcomers and long-standing residents. The Community Orchards scheme helps to preserve old orchards and to create new ones for the benefit of wildlife and enjoyment of local people. Contact Common Ground for further information.

### Care for an old orchard

An orchard may be large and productive or just a collection of a few trees in a pasture or garden. Sensitive management can balance the aims of fruit growing, amenity, landscape and wildlife. Even if the orchard is not currently producing fruit, careful pruning and remedial treatment can produce a good crop.



*You can buy local fruit and fruit products, such as juice and cider, in farmers' markets, local shops, at the farm/garden gate and on the internet. Such outlets offer some interesting and delicious varieties and often, if locally processed, do not include artificial ingredients. Best of all, you can often taste before you buy!*

*Relaxing after the harvest – or a bottle of cider!*

