

Habitat care

Cannock Chase, which forms part of the Cannock Chase AONB, includes the largest surviving area of lowland heathland in the English Midlands. The bulk of Cannock Chase was first notified in 1951 and later designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1987 because of its rare heathland and associated woodland habitats.

Over time the extent of the heathland habitat has reduced in size, in common with all other lowland heathland habitats in the UK, but Cannock Chase supports such a unique and scarce range of wildlife that it was given enhanced recognition as a Special Area of Conservation in 2005 under European legislation because of its high nature conservation importance.

Plants such as common heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*), western gorse (*Ulex gallii*) and wavy hair grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*) support a wealth of butterflies, beetles, birds and mammals, including the European nightjar and five different species of bat found in the associated woodlands.

The Chase has an extensive network of bridleways which enable riders to experience some of the most picturesque off-road riding in England and riders are warmly welcomed.

Please help us to protect this very special place by:-

- Using only bridleways and designated concessionary routes for horses so as to avoid damaging valuable habitats and disturbing wildlife
- Avoiding riding on private land
- Planning alternative routes when ground conditions are especially wet to avoid churning up the paths
- Always show consideration when meeting other visitors especially children and older people.
- Phytophthora disease is found in heathland on Cannock Chase. This can be spread to other sites or your own land. If your horse inadvertently steps off the tracks please wash and brush hooves to remove mud and diseased spores.

Following these guidelines will preserve the very special nature of Cannock Chase, whilst ensuring a pleasurable experience for all visitors.



How You Can Help

- Act as the eyes and ears of the AONB
- Consider ways of conserving and enhancing the AONB
- Act in environmentally friendly and socially responsible ways when visiting the countryside

If you want advice or feel you can help, please contact:

Cannock Chase AONB Unit
Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford. ST16 3AQ
01785619186 / 07583868784
cannockchase@staffordshire.gov.uk



cannockchase.aonb



CannockAONB

About The British Horse Society

As the largest equestrian charity in the UK, The British Horse Society works day in, day out, tackling issues such as equine welfare, protecting equestrian access rights in the countryside, safety for horse and rider, and delivering the very best in education.

The Society's thriving and active community of staff and volunteers is committed to improving the lives of horses everywhere.

If you would like to report path problems, please contact: rightsofway@staffordshire.gov.uk

Should you or someone you know require it, this leaflet can also be produced, on request, in large print. Please telephone 0300 111 8000.

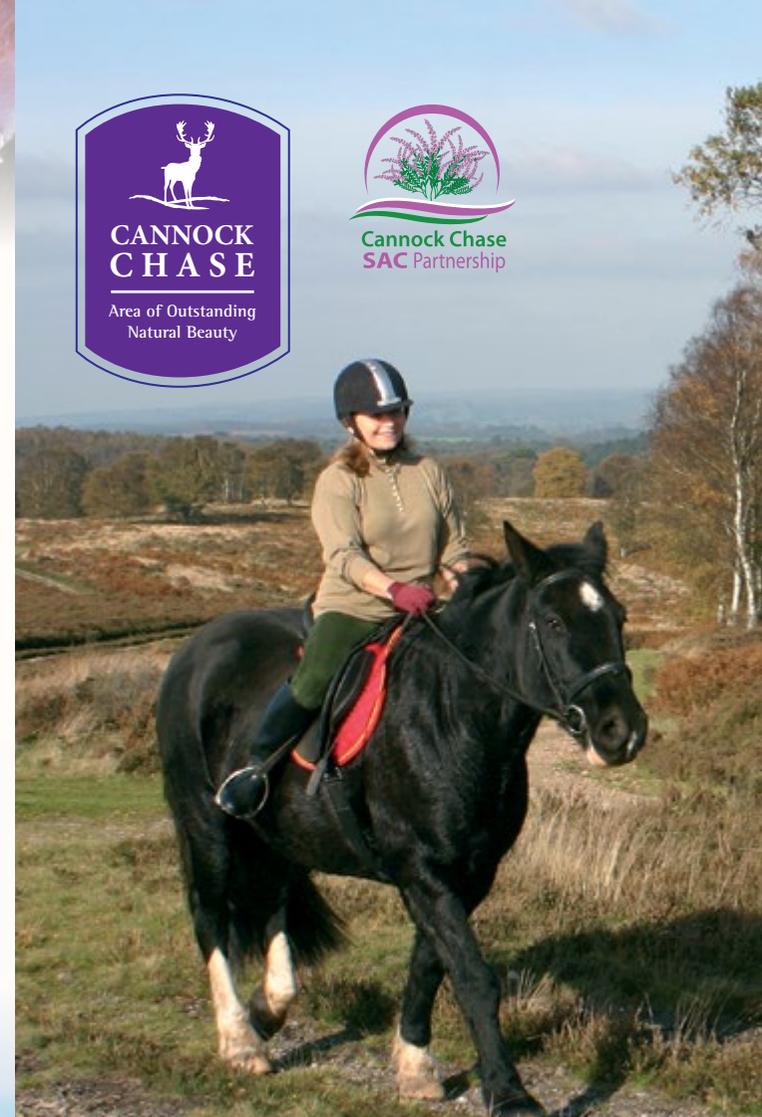
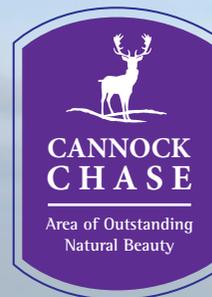
Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is supported by: Defra, Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase Council, Stafford Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, South Staffordshire Council, AONB Parish and Town Councils, British Horse Society, Cemex UK Operations Ltd, Country Land and Business Association, Forestry Commission, Friends of Cannock Chase, Hanson Aggregates, National Farmers Union, Natural England, Ramblers, CASS Young Carers, Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Swinnerton Cycles Forest Centre Ltd, Walton Chasers, West Midland Bird Club.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



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Two riding routes starting at Milford Common





Milford Common 14 km ride PURPLE ROUTE

1. Leave car park and turn right. At the roundabout turn left and then left again at Lazer Lane (marked as a bridle path (BP)). Continue through two gates onto Walton Lane. At the T-junction turn left then at the Green take the right fork onto Oldacre Lane.
2. The BP continues 400 metres on your left, turn left up the hill. At the top bear right following the BP and then left through the barrier (before Chase Vista car park). Turn right onto the tarmac track (BP) and follow the BP all the way along Chase Road until you reach Chase Road Corner car park. Follow the BP sign (to the right of the car park) southwards to the road (Camp Road). TAKE CARE, Phytosphthora disease hot spot.
3. The BP continues 10 metres down the road on your left. This is the Heart of England Way (HoEW). Follow the HoEW into the valley and straight up until you meet the barrier at Rifle Range Corner. At the barrier turn left and ride along the gravel path until you meet the car park.
4. Turn into the car park on your left. Go through the barrier at the end of the car park and turn right. Continue along the path past the trig point and the historic rifle range mound heading northwards downhill. Upon reaching the bottom of the valley turn right.

5. Cross the stepping stones on your left and turn right following the BP sign. Continue along this track until you meet the crossroads and then turn left. The track bears to the right rising to the old military railway track crossroads. Turn right through the Military railway track. At the end bear right and follow the HoEW back to Milford Common car park.

Milford Common 17km ride BLUE ROUTE

1. Leave car park and turn right. At the roundabout turn left and then left again at Lazer Lane (marked as a bridle path (BP)). Continue through two gates onto Walton Lane. At the T-junction turn left then at the Green take the right fork onto Oldacre Lane.
2. The BP continues 400 metres on your left, turn left up the hill. At the top bear right following the BP and then left through the barrier before Chase Vista car park. Turn right onto the tarmac track (BP) and follow the BP all the way along Chase Road until you reach Chase Road Corner car park. Follow the BP sign (to the right of the car park) southwards to the road (Camp Road). TAKE CARE, Phytosphthora disease hot spot.
3. The BP continues 10 metres down the road on your left. This is the Heart of England Way (HoEW). Follow the HoEW into the valley and straight up until you meet the barrier at Rifle Range Corner. At the barrier turn left and ride along the gravel path until you meet the car park.

4. Turn into the car park on your left. Go through the barrier at the end of the car park and turn right. At the trig point turn right. Take the second track on your left (Abrahams Valley). Follow Abrahams Valley to Seven Springs car park. Go into car park and come out on the right hand side barrier. Take the right hand track to the stepping stones.
5. Cross the stepping stones on your left and turn right following the BP sign around the edge of Brocton Coppice. Continue along this track until you meet the crossroads and then turn left. The track bears to the right rising to the old railway track cutting crossroads. Turn right through the Military railway German Cutting. At the end bear right and follow the HoEW back to Milford Common car park.

