



FUTURE GUARDIANS OF CANNOCK CHASE Guide for Leaders



**Cannock
Chase**
Area of Outstanding
Natural Beauty



Cannock Chase
SAC Partnership



Girlguiding
Staffordshire county

Welcome from the County Commissioners

Dear unit leaders, parents and carers,

Welcome to a new local activity pack and badge for Girlguiding groups in the Staffordshire region!

The **'Future Guardians of Cannock Chase'** activity pack and badge has been designed to help raise your units' awareness and appreciation for the wonderful landscape they have on their doorstep and to encourage them to care for the environment.

Cannock Chase is a nationally important landscape. It offers great natural and historic beauty as well as plenty of opportunities for people to enjoy the open air, peace and tranquillity. It was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1958 for its heaths, forests and historic parklands. Around 20% of Cannock Chase is internationally designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), mainly because of its large areas of heathland habitat.

So familiar to those who live and work here, it is easy to take Cannock Chase for granted. Yet, it is a precious and fragile place that needs great care. It faces a number of challenges ranging from the impacts of climate change to the accidental harm caused by the people who come to enjoy it. This harm includes eroding plant life and disturbing wildlife by straying from paths, and various anti-social behaviours from littering and starting wildfires to illegal mountain biking. There is also a general lack of awareness of the area's importance and special qualities, how fragile it is, and what each of us can do to help to look after it and protect it for future generations.

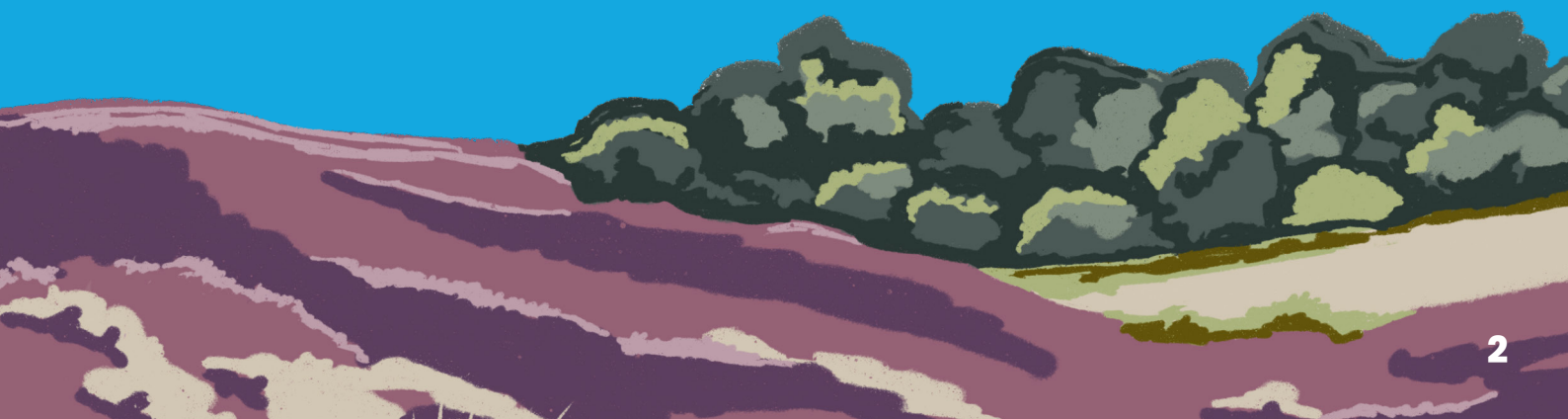
The activity pack and badge are the joint initiative of the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership and Cannock Chase SAC Partnership. Their aim is to inform and inspire our young people, so that they become the **'Future Guardians of Cannock Chase'** and help look after this wonderful landscape for current and future generations.

This guide explains more about the activity pack and badge. It also gives you an introduction to Cannock Chase to give you a sense of what is special about the place. More information about the Chase can be found from the sources listed at the back.

We hope you will give this exciting initiative the support it deserves and encourage your units to get involved.

Cat Kerr and Alison Holmes
County Commissioners

Staffordshire Girlguiding
March 2023



Future Guardians of Cannock Chase activity pack and badge

A new activity pack and badge has been launched in Staffordshire! Its aim is to encourage Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers to get outdoors, explore the wonderful countryside on their doorstep, and understand more about Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The online pack (which can be found at <https://girlguidingstaffordshire.org.uk/resources/badge-challenge/>) offers over 40 fun and imaginative activities to choose from in order to earn a specially designed '**Future Guardian of Cannock Chase**' badge. The activities can be carried out with either parents/carers or your unit.

By working towards this badge, units will explore some of Cannock Chase's wonderful landscapes and find out lots of amazing facts. They will also learn how to guard this precious place so it stays safe for us all to enjoy in the future.

The activities are arranged into a number of different themes:

- Animals and Habitats
- The Chase Through Time
- Peace and Tranquillity
- Our Chase, Our Future
- Our Changing Climate

In addition, there is a page for Rangers' activities and an outdoor trail to complete.

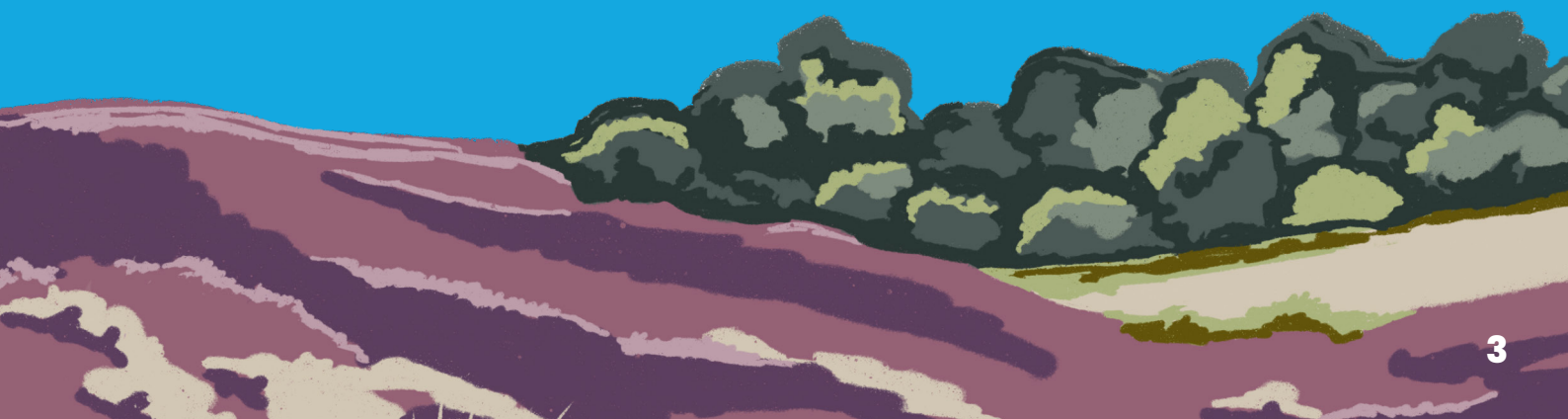
To earn their badge:

- **Rainbows:** Try any 4 activities from the pack and carry out the Outdoor Trail
- **Brownies:** Try 6 activities from the pack, including some from at least three different themes.
- **Guides:** Try at least 8 activities from the pack, including at least one from each theme.
- **Rangers:** Try at least 3 activities from the Rangers section.

Sharing what you've done with others in your unit is encouraged!

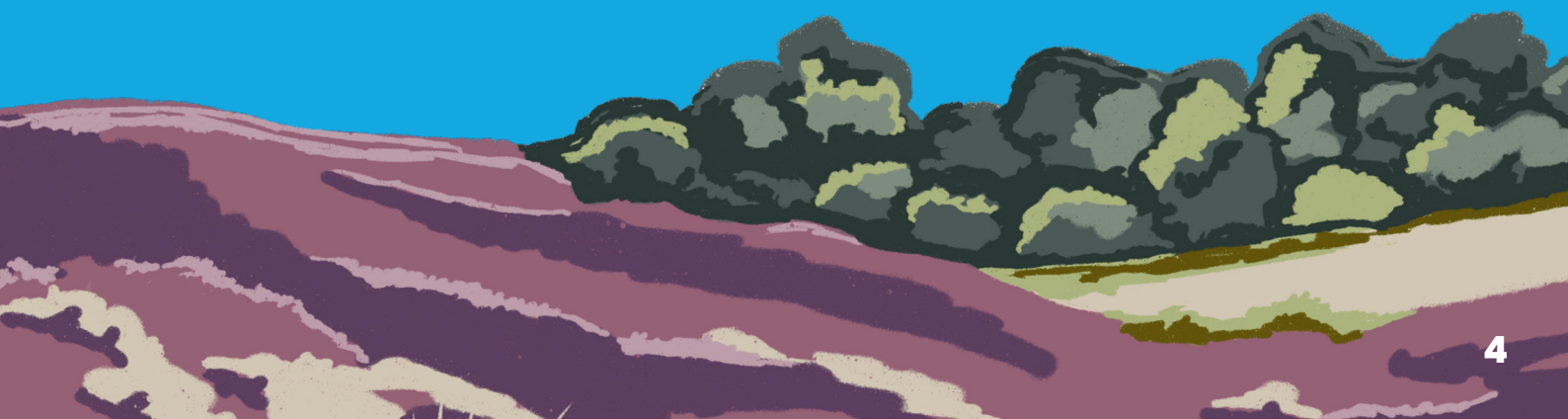
The badges can be ordered from county.admin@girlguidingstaffordshire.org.uk

The Future Guardians of Cannock Chase activity pack and badge is not time limited. Feedback on the pack's popularity and the individual activities is welcomed, and can be sent to the Cannock Chase AONB Team at cannockchase@staffordshire.gov.uk Ideas for additional activities are also encouraged!

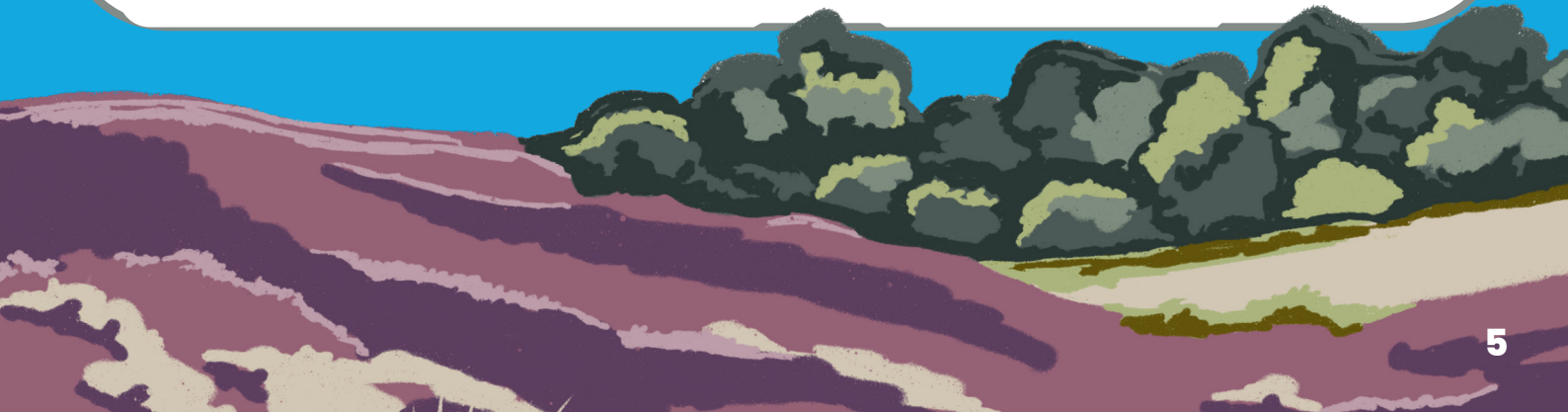
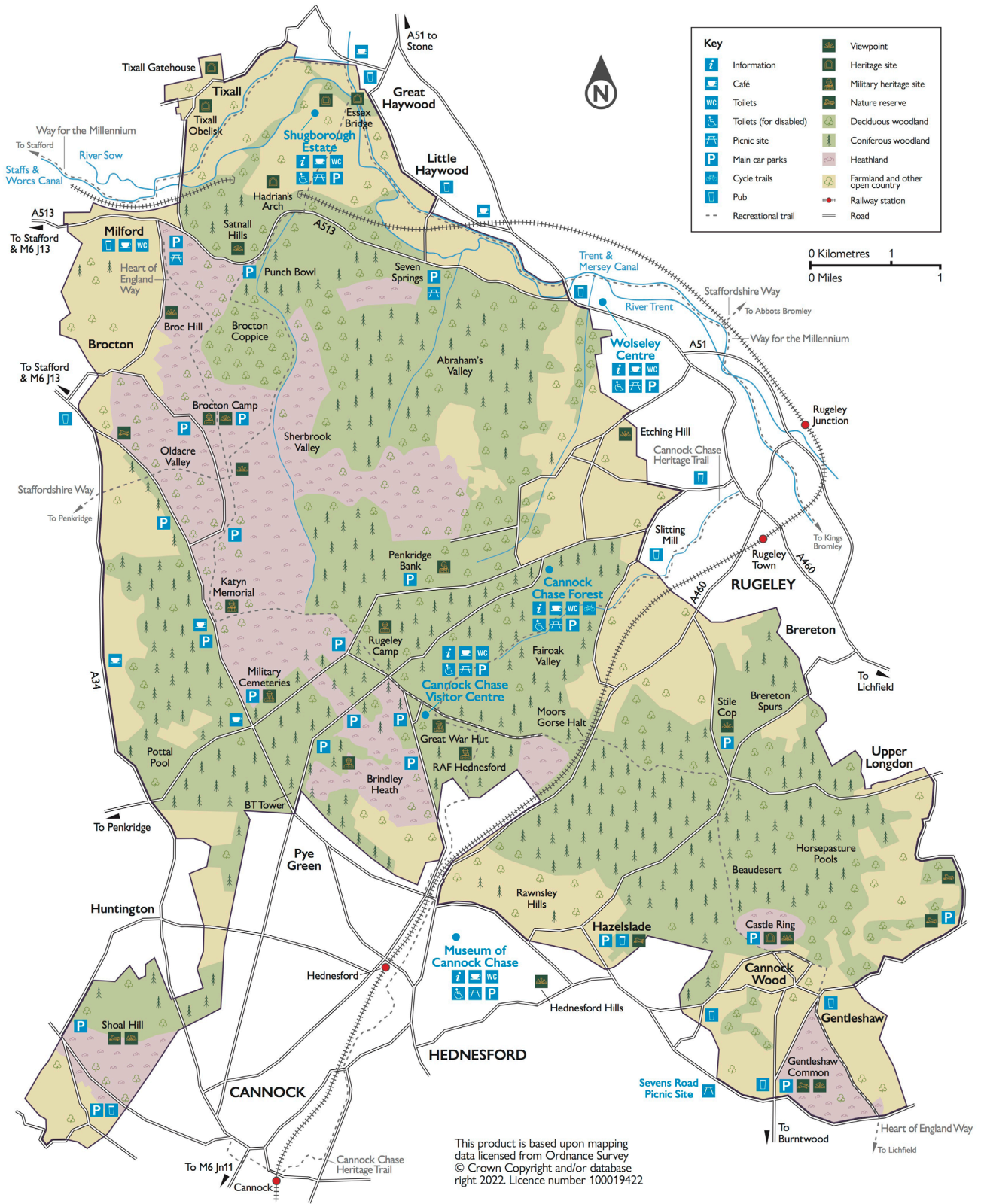


Cannock Chase – at a glance

- Cannock Chase is one of England's finest landscapes – protected since 1958 for its outstanding natural beauty.
- Small but beautiful – covering just 69 km² (26 sq. miles) Cannock Chase is mainland England's smallest AONB.
- Around 20% of Cannock Chase is legally designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for its heathlands. This is the highest legal environmental protection in the UK.
- The Cannock Chase SAC is one of the best remaining areas in the UK for European Dry Heath and has its own rare flora species – The Cannock Chase Berry. It is also home to several protected wildlife species.
- Cannock Chase is a 1,000-year-old medieval hunting forest.
- 58% is open access land where the public has the right to roam on foot. The Chase offers 157 kms of public rights of way, including sections of long-distance paths such as the Heart of England Way and Staffordshire Way.
- 63% is forest and heath; 37% is farmland and other land uses.
- 9,200 people live in the AONB.
- Cannock Chase is an escape for over 2.5 million annual visitors, with a range of site users enjoying its natural beauty, peace and tranquillity.
- Cannock Chase boasts over 1,000 cultural heritage assets including two of the largest Great War training camps in England.
- It has a proud industrial history of mining, charcoal and glass and iron making.
- Within the AONB you can find 7 scheduled monuments; 66 listed buildings; 2 registered parks and gardens; 5 conservation areas covering historic villages and canals.



Cannock Chase



A national landscape

Cannock Chase is one of England's finest landscapes, designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) since 1958. It is part of a Worldwide Protected Landscape Family that includes our own National Parks and those of North America and elsewhere. The importance of Cannock Chase is highlighted further by its designation as a Special Area of Conservation in around 20% of the area.

Wild and beautiful

At just 69 square kilometres (26 square miles) Cannock Chase is mainland England's smallest AONB but is packed with landscape, nature and heritage interest.

Forest and heath form most of the raised centre of the Chase, fringed by historic parklands and enclosed farmlands. The views from and to the heathland plateau are inspiring and extensive. Castle Ring Iron Age hillfort is the highest point at 242 metres (794 feet). The peace and tranquillity of the area contrast with the busy surrounding towns and cities.

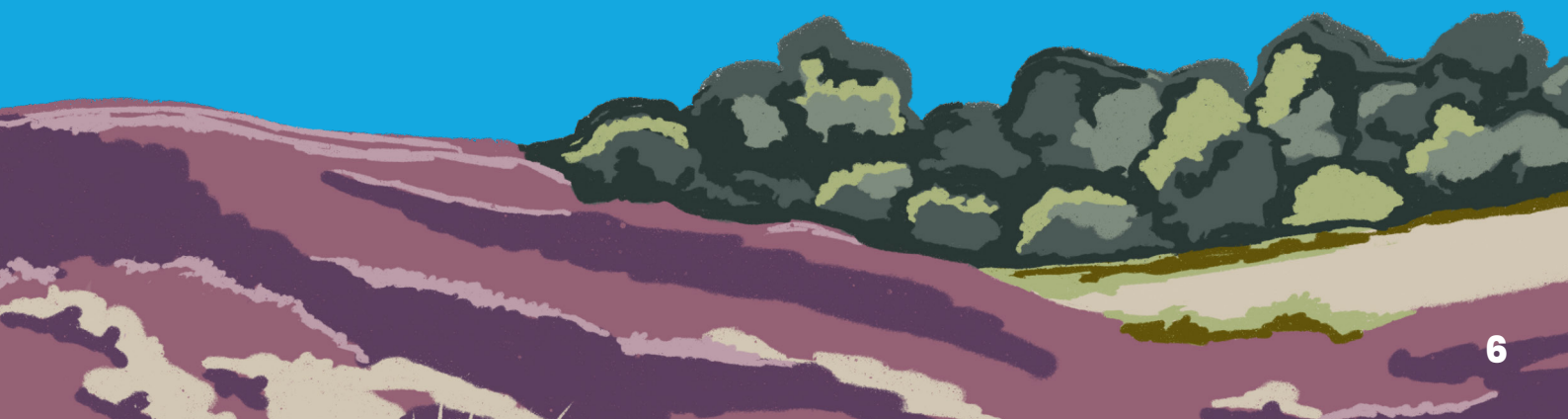
Cannock Chase has the largest surviving area of heathland in the Midlands, and is important internationally. It is a stronghold for endangered wildlife including nightjar, woodlark, adder, bog bush-cricket, white-clawed crayfish and our own Cannock Chase berry. Around 20% of the Chase is a Special Area of Conservation and protected by law.

The Chase is a 1,000-year-old medieval hunting forest created for William the Conqueror. Its rich cultural heritage includes 7 scheduled monuments, 66 listed buildings, 2 registered parks and gardens and 5 conservation areas. Extensive use for military training and an industrial history of mining, charcoal and glass and iron making have all left their mark in the landscape.

A landscape for everyone

Cannock Chase is easily accessible, and is a great place to get outdoors, enjoy the fresh air and be active.

Unusually for a protected landscape, large parts of Cannock Chase are owned by public authorities and charitable organisations. Cannock Chase Country Park, owned and managed by Staffordshire County Council, is one of the largest country parks in the country. In addition, Forestry England own and manage Cannock Chase Forest. In total, around 58% of the AONB is open access land where the public has a right to roam on foot.



There are six visitor centres/hubs, acting as gateways to the area. They help to make sure that everyone can find out about the Chase, where they can go and what they can do. They also explain how people can help to protect this beautiful landscape and keep it special.

Cannock Chase can be explored by walkers of all abilities, all year round. However, this is open countryside and for longer walks visitors will need stout shoes or boots and waterproof clothing in case the weather turns. People with restricted mobility, older people, and families with small children can enjoy shorter walks from most of the visitor centres/hubs.

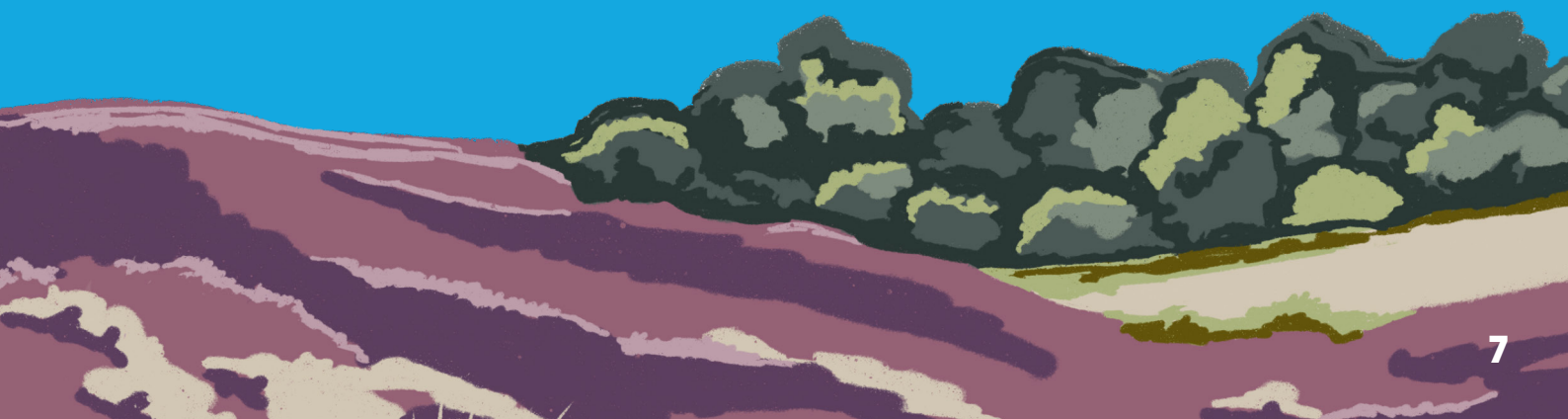
Gently curving hills and a network of bridleways and designated cycle trails make for varied family cycling across the Chase. Mountain bikers can test their skills and stamina on two red-graded (difficult) trails along with the intermediate 'Perry's Trail' and an innovative 'Pedal and Play' park for young riders making Cannock Chase Forest a great place for cyclists of all ages and abilities.

One of the best ways to see many parts of the Chase is on horseback. The network of bridleways provides some of the most extensive and attractive off-road riding in England. Local trekking centres can offer tuition and guided rides in a safe environment.

A lived-in, working landscape

Cannock Chase makes an important contribution to the local economy and many people depend on it for their livelihoods. There are over 170 businesses in the AONB and some 5,000 businesses within three kilometres of the boundary. The Chase is an important source of food and other agricultural products, as well as timber, craft products and firewood. The 2,700 hectares of Cannock Chase Forest managed by Forestry England produce 19,000 tonnes of timber each year. Sand and gravel is still quarried here. Cannock Chase also supports a range of tourism related industries.

The Chase is home to 9,200 people who live in the communities of small villages that help to shape its character. A further two million people live within 30 kilometres of the boundary.



Benefits of Cannock Chase for people and society

Cannock Chase provides people with multiple environmental, social and economic benefits. Nowadays, these are called 'ecosystem services', and many of them go unnoticed. In addition to providing food, timber and other natural resources, and supporting jobs and the local economy, Cannock Chase:

- Provides a stronghold for some of the nation's most important and threatened wildlife sites and habitats.
- Includes some of the country's most important historic heritage, with over 1,000 known cultural heritage assets and internationally important military remains.
- Has inspired generations of writers, painters and other artists, and continues to provide cultural and creative opportunities that enrich people's lives.
- Helps to improve people's health and well-being.
- Regulates the climate by absorbing and storing CO2 and other harmful gases, creating oxygen and helping to reduce surface run-off from rainfall.

Proud to protect Cannock Chase

The Cannock Chase AONB Partnership and SAC Partnership work together with local authorities, landowners, statutory advisors and representatives of local communities and user groups to look after this nationally important landscape and SAC. We do this through conservation projects, education, and awareness raising.

We want everyone to be proud to protect the Chase. It is fragile, however; some behaviours can cause accidental but significant harm. A short video produced by Sustainability Matters with ecologist Mike Dilger describes the challenges - [Sustainability Matters with ecologist Mike Dilger - Cannock Chase AONB, are we loving it to death? - YouTube](#)

The Cannock Chase Code has been developed to help everyone's visit to be safe and enjoyable.

We can all help to protect Cannock Chase by:

- Following the Cannock Chase Code
- Supporting the AONB partnership, SAC Partnership and other organisations that look after Cannock Chase
- Using local produce and supporting local businesses

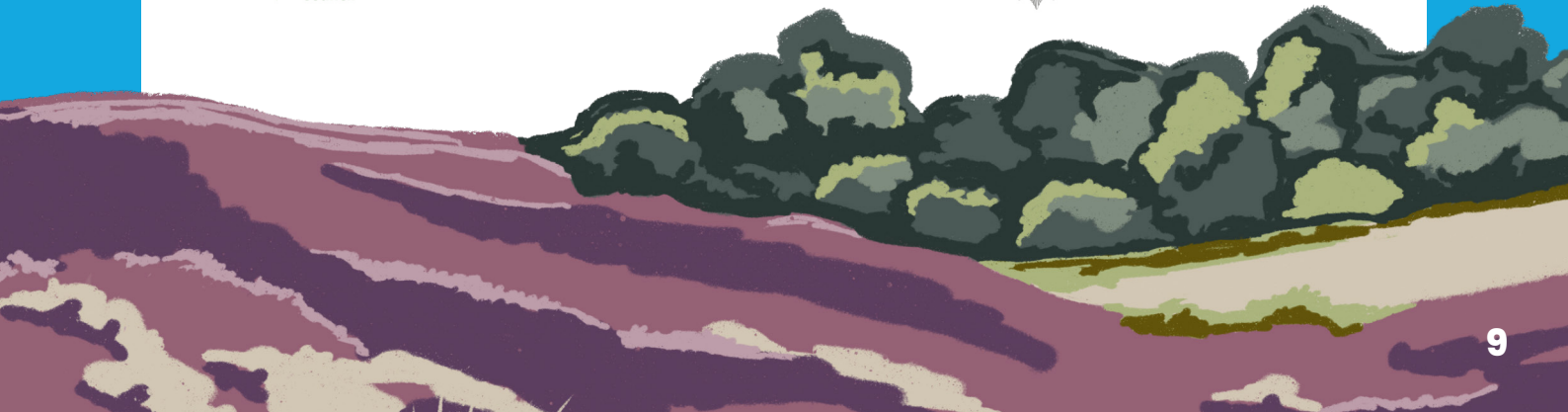


protect · respect · enjoy

 <p>Don't approach or feed deer</p>	 <p>Don't approach or feed farm animals</p>	 <p>Take litter and dog waste home</p>	 <p>No naked flames, fires or barbecues</p>
 <p>Only use permitted cycle tracks</p>	 <p>Use bridleways when horse-riding</p>	 <p>Protect wildlife by keeping to paths</p>	 <p>Keep your dog under control</p>
 <p>Park only in car parks</p>	 <p>Beware – people and animals on roads</p>	 <p>Use sustainable transport</p>	 <p>Think! Stay safe. Keep out.</p>

Be a Chase Champion – Follow the Cannock Chase Code

SUPPORTED BY



Find out more

Cannock Chase AONB Partnership

www.cannock-chase.co.uk

Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Partnership

www.cannockchase.org.uk

Cannock Chase Visitor Centre, Staffordshire County Council, Marquis Drive,
Hednesford WS12 4PW

www.staffordshire.gov.uk

The Museum of Cannock Chase, Cannock Chase Council, Valley Road,
Hednesford WS12 1TD

www.museumofcannockchase.org

Shugborough Estate, National Trust, Milford ST17 0XB

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/shugborough-estate

The Wolseley Centre, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Wolseley Bridge ST17 0WT

www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk

Cannock Chase Forest, Forestry England, Birches Valley, Rugeley WS15 2UQ

www.forestryengland.uk/cannock-chase-forest

Cannock Chase War Cemetery and German Military Cemetery

www.cwgc.org

Enjoy Staffordshire

www.enjoystaffordshire.com

Bus and train timetables

www.traveline.info

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