

## Visit the south coast in 2021 and explore the extraordinary outdoors



*L-R: Chale and Blackgang, Isle of Wight; Botany Bay, Broadstairs; Margate Harbour*

For travel inspiration across the south coast, visit [Englandscoast.com/en](https://englandscoast.com/en), the browse-and-book tool that guides you along the coast and everything it has to offer, from walking routes and heritage sites to places to stay and family attractions. You can plan a trip, build an itinerary and book directly with hundreds of restaurants, cafes, pubs and accommodation including hotels, B&Bs and campsites.

“The South Coast offers some of the most diverse range of activities and attractions anywhere on our coastline,” says Samantha Richardson, Director National Coastal Tourism Academy which delivers the Discover England-funded England’s Coast project.

“Post lockdown, many of us will want to retrace our steps along cliff-top walks of the South Downs, explore the world’s first arts Geo-Tour on the soon-to-be launched Creative Coast or hop back to the Isle of Wight, now designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Equally, many of us have had time to draw up a bucket-list of must-see attractions, cycle paths and water sports lessons existing right on our door-step – places we’ve never yet visited!”

**Whether the wonderful south coast is on your doorstep, or you’re planning a trip later in 2021, here are some highlights coming to the region this year, and ways to plan your trip with [Englandscoast.com/en](https://englandscoast.com/en)**

### **Explore the glorious South Downs in National Parks Week, 17-25 April 2021**

National Parks Week invites us all to celebrate the beauty and diversity of our national parks, and to discover the many opportunities to get outside – such as walking, cycling, water sports, horse riding, camping, and climbing. The [South Downs](#) – Britain’s newest National Park, (2011) spans the coast from Eastbourne to Winchester, offering fantastic hiking, mountain biking, charming villages and breath-taking coastal views along the South Downs Way National Trail.

### **Fossil hunting on the newly-designated UNESCO Isle of Wight**

Recently becoming the sixth region in the UK to be named a **UNESCO Biosphere Reserve**, nature thrives on the idyllic Isle of Wight, where dramatic coastline, clean beaches, dense woodland and glorious wildlife abound year-round. Look to the wildlife of the past as you comb the island’s beaches for signs of prehistoric life – it has more dinosaur remains than anywhere else in northern Europe, and the swamps and rivers which once swept across this part of southern England helped preserve the island’s remains extremely well. In August 2020 dinosaur remains found on Compton Bay by the University of Southampton were discovered to belong to a new species of dinosaur – the Vectaerovenator inopinatus, which belonged to the same family as the T Rex.

**Book with England’s Coast:** Felicity the Fossil Guide and her team, invite children and adults alike to discover a prehistoric world of fossil trees and dinosaur footprints on Brook Beach on a two-hour expert

guided fossil hunt on the island's south west coast. Budding fossil finders can even keep their found treasure! <https://englandscoast.com/en/listing/island-gems-fossil-trips>

### **An art and culture renaissance in the south east**

2021 offers a wealth of artistic, cultural and heritage highlights along the south east coast and marks the launch of the [Creative Coast](#), a new cultural experience fusing art and landscape with and the world's first arts Geo-tour, from May to November 2021. Margate's [Turner Gallery](#) celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with new exhibitions from Steve McQueen and Barbara Walker; the bicentennial of John Keats' death – the poet wrote and holidayed in Margate in 1816-17; the May launch of the world first Art GeoTour and seven new outdoor artworks across the region from leading contemporary artists from the [Creative Coast](#) which celebrates the creative coastlines across Kent, Essex and Sussex; the launch of a Dicken's themed holiday cottage, [Fagin's Cottage](#), in Broadstairs, which will allow families to step back in time with Victorian furniture, costumes, memorabilia, books, games and artwork; the opening of a new Crab Museum in Margate with quirky interactive exhibits and a café and gift shop; and the Antony Gormley ANOTHER TIME sculpture confirmed to be staying in Margate for another 10 years.

**Book with England's Coast:** Stay at the [Cliftonville Townhouse Boutique B&B](#), a contemporary bed & breakfast with character, with rooms from £99 per night (two sharing).

### **Enjoy an award-winning Sussex sparkling stay in a luxurious 'Amazing Space' in West Sussex**

Visit a truly fascinating vineyard on an estate dating back to 1822 in Funtington, Chichester. [Ashling Park Estate](#) vineyard in West Sussex is a heavenly retreat boasting trophy winning sparkling English wines, gin distilled from Pinot Noir grapes grown on the estate, an infinity tasting terrace overlooking sublime views of the vines, pop-up eatery 'The View', and luxurious cabin accommodation designed and built by Will Hardie of Channel 4's Amazing Spaces.

### **Discover wonderful wildlife in Portsmouth**

Taking off in popularity during the first lockdown, the birdwatching trend is set to continue into 2021 with advocates touting its benefits to mental health and connecting with nature. [Farlington Marshes](#) in Portsmouth is host to varied species such as kingfisher, short-eared owl, brent geese and lapwings, and a staggering number of migratory wildfowl. The Reserve comes to life particularly during the winter months when birds such as wigeons, teals and redshanks flock to the marshes in their thousands. Make it a wildlife-themed weekend based in Portsmouth, where you can also discover all manner of local flora and fauna at the [Portsmouth Natural History Museum](#), with interactive exhibits, a working beehive and a butterfly house. Visit the England's Coast website to explore more ideas across [Portsmouth](#) and book directly.

### **A warm welcome to walkers in White Cliffs Country**

Taking its name from Dover's iconic chalk coastline, a walk through White Cliffs Country will be an absolute tonic to enjoy post-lockdown. With a huge variety of coastal and countryside routes, all with stunning panoramic views, Dover is the ideal spot for adventurous ramblers. From 26-31 August 2021, it will host the White Cliffs Walking Festival, with a programme of organised walks and events (restrictions permitting). Find out more and plan your [Dover visit with England's Coast](#).

## **January 2021**

**England's Coast advises visitors to adhere to the national lockdown and plan their travels for post-lockdown when it is safe to do so. Details can be found on the Gov UK website:**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

**Press:** For further information, high-res images or to **discuss a commissioned press trip**, please contact Lizzie Cooper or Jackie Franklin at [Travel PR](#) on 020 8891 4440 or [l.cooper@travelpr.co.uk](mailto:l.cooper@travelpr.co.uk) / [j.franklin@travelpr.co.uk](mailto:j.franklin@travelpr.co.uk).

**For more information on England's Coast visit** [www.englandscoast.com/en](http://www.englandscoast.com/en) or contact Sheron Crossman, National Coastal Tourism Academy Marketing & Communications Manager: [Sheron.crossman@coastaltourismacademy.co.uk](mailto:Sheron.crossman@coastaltourismacademy.co.uk).

**Notes to editors:** The England's Coast project is delivered by the National Coastal Tourism Academy, whose partners include: The Yorkshire Coast, Visit Scarborough, The North York Moors National Park Authority, Visit East Yorkshire, Visit Lancashire, Visit Cumbria, This is Durham, Visit Northumberland, Visit Essex, Visit Thanet, Dover/White Cliffs Country, Creative Coast Kent, Visit Brighton, Experience West Sussex, Visit Portsmouth, Discover Gosport, Visit Isle of Wight, Coast with the Most -Bournemouth/Christchurch/Poole, Somerset and Exmoor National Park – The Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership, P&O Ferries, Hornblower City Cruises Poole.

**About the Discover England Fund:**

- In November 2015, the Government announced a £40 million Discover England Fund; an unprecedented opportunity for English tourism. The Fund aims to deliver world-class bookable tourism products joined up across geographies and/or themes, including integrated transport solutions to provide an end-to-end customer experience.
- The Fund supports the growth of one of England's most successful export industries, inbound tourism. Tourism is an industry that delivers jobs and economic growth across the English regions – contributing some £106bn each year to the economy and supporting 2.6 million jobs.
- The Fund supported a number of pilot projects in year one (2016/17) that tested product development approaches.

In years two and three, 2017-19, the fund supported:

- o A number of large-scale collaborative projects to be delivered over the two-year period 2017-2019 that will create a step-change in bookable English tourism product for international consumers,
- o A smaller funding pot for new one-year pilot projects (in year two), and
- o Continuation funding for existing year one projects that demonstrated early learnings (in year two).

In Year four (2019/20) an extended period was granted for delivery of the large-scale projects to ensure delivery and/or amplification.

In year five (2020/21) additional funding allocated by HM Treasury includes grant funding to existing projects, marketing and distribution activity led by VisitBritain/VisitEngland and evaluation and research.