

NDW on Google Trekker

In the summer of 2015 the North Downs Way was captured by the Google Trekker; a panoramic Google Street View camera mounted on a backpack designed to go “off-road” to map areas Google has never been before. The North Downs Way applied to Google as the 1st UK National Trail to undertake this to highlight to the public the wonderful landscapes and communities the trail runs through.

The North Downs Way is one of only 15 designated National Trails in England and Wales with diverse appeal and many unique features. Starting in Farnham, passing through 153 miles of stunning and varied countryside, the North Downs Way passes through the protected landscapes of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Kent Downs AONB. This makes the trail a great place for a family day out, short walks, life-changing long distance walks, often finishing with a fantastic, rural, rustic pub lunch. The North Downs Way provides tranquillity from the daily grind, lying just south of London it's easily accessible by train for the urban populations of South East England and London and for overseas visitors access is straight forward from London airports.

Inspiring Walkers

The Google images will encourage people to explore the trail from the comfort of their homes and to inspire them to put on their shoes and walk the trail. This will attract many more visitors to the communities and businesses along the trail and will have a positive impact on visitor economy.

Business opportunities and the visitor economy

The launch of the Google images will present opportunities to businesses along the trail to engage, and work with The North Downs Way in order to promote their products and services to visitors. All businesses and organisations should think about the potential that this presents and to contact the North Downs Way Manager, Peter Morris with ideas and proposals.

Launch Event

Farnham, Surrey

The route begins at the impressive new start sculpture in Farnham, Surrey designed locally by FdK Design www.fdk.co.uk and built by the Utopia Forge in Guildford www.utopia-forge.com. The start sculpture was officially opened by Farnham Town Mayor Cllr Pat Frost and Cllr Mike Band, Mayor of Waverley on the morning of 17th March 2016.

The images of the entire trail can be viewed at <http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/north-downs-way/google-trekker>

Background Information

National Trails are long distance routes, all are open to walkers and some are specifically designed and managed for horse riders and mountain bikers. There are 15 completed National Trails in England and Wales. **National Trails** are designated by government and are managed to the highest standards by dedicated staff and volunteers