



# CUCKOO TRAIL





Hello! Welcome to the **Cuckoo Line** or as you probably know it, the **Cuckoo Trail**. My name is **Koo**, once a friend of the station master and now your personal guide.



## HOW THE LINE GOT ITS NAME



In 1315, **King Edward II** granted the people of Heathfield the right to hold an annual market around April 14th. Legend has it that the oldest woman in the village, "**Dame Heffle**", would release a Cuckoo at the fair, signalling the arrival of spring. This tradition foretold the weather for the seasons ahead.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The story of **Heffle Fair** was celebrated in Jungle Book author Rudyard Kipling's poem "**Cuckoo Song**".



*DAME HEFFLE*



The Hailsham to Eridge railway, with Heathfield as a main station, earned the nickname "**Cuckoo Line**" among railway workers. Later, as the tracks became a bridle way, the name "**Cuckoo Trail**" was born, preserving the legend for future generations.



1849

First section of the single-track Cuckoo Line opened (Polegate & Hailsham branch).

1868

Groombridge to Uckfield Line opened.

1880

Hailsham to Heathfield line opened, along with Horam Station, originally named "Horemans Road for Waldron".

1881

New station opened at Polegate.

1894

Uckfield became Redgate Mill junction, marking the start of the Cuckoo Line proper.

1897

Steam train accident south of Mayfield resulting in injuries and a fatality.

**The Cuckoo Trail** follows the route of the former **Cuckoo Line**, which operated from 1880 to 1965 through Polegate, Hailsham, and Heathfield.

Along the way you'll find old bridges, tunnels and station platforms, offering a glimpse into the area's industrial heritage!

The Cuckoo Line played a vital role in the transportation of goods and passengers during its operational years.

## LET'S GUESS

What goods do you think the train carried?

- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> MILK   | <input type="checkbox"/> GOLD  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHEEP  | <input type="checkbox"/> COAL  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TIMBER | <input type="checkbox"/> FLOUR |



Original TV Gladiator 'Jet' officially opened the Cuckoo Trail on 20 May 1995!



## WORKERS ON THE CUCKOO LINE



This young man working at Horam Station would dash off on his bike during breaks to sweep nearby chimneys!

In Rotherfield, another worker crafted Dolly clothes pegs in the signal box between train duties!



## DID YOU KNOW?

Look!

Horam Station was used as a location for a fashion shoot by famous photographer **Lee Miller**, who lived at nearby Farleys House, visited by Picasso, Man Ray and Henry Moore.



1923

The railway passed to Southern Railway control.

1963

Closure of the Cuckoo Line recommended.

1965

Last passenger trains called at Horam.

1968

Official closure of the Cuckoo Line Railway.

1970s - 80s

Derelict tracks are lifted and the line used as a footpath.

1990

Construction of the Cuckoo Trail as part of the National Cycle Network.

PRESENT

The Cuckoo Trail is a popular destination for walkers, cyclists, wheelers and nature lovers.

This doesn't look like a train station. Hmmh, after the line closed it looks like nature has started to take over. I wonder, how many animals can you find along the Cuckoo Trail?

CUCKOO

WOOD PIGEON

ROBIN

WREN



WOODPECKER

BLACKBIRD

BLUE TIT

COAL TIT



DUNNOCK



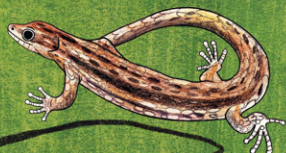
Cuckoos are known for laying their eggs in other birds' nests. These crafty birds keep other species on their toes.

LIZARD

WILD ORCHID

WILD GARLIC

If you are lucky, you may find us on rocks in wooded areas soaking up rays on hot summer days.



FROG



Take a deep breath as you walk through wooded areas, and you might catch a whiff of garlic in the air - that's wild garlic adding scent to the trail.

Which other animals can you find in a pond? Draw them!

RED CLOVER



These unique flowers can be found beside the grassy verges of the trail throughout summer months.

TOAD



BUMBLEBEE



If you listen carefully as you walk the trail, you might hear the rustle of leaves as little mice scurry around.

WOOD MOUSE



When people are asleep these sneaky critters come out at night to investigate!

Master of stealth you are unlikely to see us, but you will hear my hoots at night. Much like foxes and badgers, with keen eyesights and talons, we play a vital role in regulating rodent populations.

TAWNY OWL



Keep a look out for mushrooms on the ground. Many are poisonous, so don't eat them!

LONG EARED



BAT



FOX



BADGER



We are expert diggers and create underground dens called setts, which we live in for many years.

## DRAW YOUR FINDINGS

## THE BIG WORDSEARCH

B	A	D	G	E	R	V	B	I	N	M	P	J	S	Z	S	Q
Q	B	T	S	Q	G	Q	F	U	U	M	A	K	C	Y	Q	X
B	Y	R	S	O	U	D	J	E	M	T	S	T	D	M	C	K
G	X	G	P	E	C	Q	D	O	H	B	P	S	Q	V	B	I
Q	L	Y	Q	P	N	X	C	J	H	A	L	X	M	X	K	X
I	T	G	E	X	Z	Z	Q	U	Q	Q	I	E	L	D	Z	J
O	S	F	B	R	F	R	N	C	C	I	X	L	B	W	X	J
F	W	I	X	O	W	L	F	J	N	K	V	S	S	E	Y	D
R	S	A	B	E	Y	C	O	P	G	K	O	W	N	H	E	H
O	M	R	L	I	D	Z	O	J	Z	R	L	O	Q	N	A	S
G	Q	J	B	L	U	E	B	E	L	L	S	X	Q	I	P	M
F	P	O	L	E	G	A	T	E	O	V	O	H	A	M	L	L
S	I	N	J	H	C	W	O	O	D	P	I	G	E	O	N	N
K	F	V	H	F	X	C	F	W	R	E	N	O	N	E	H	Y
Z	A	O	Y	U	B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	I	E	S	B
T	U	I	X	G	X	A	U	H	D	Z	S	R	O	B	I	N
B	M	I	J	Q	Z	J	B	L	A	C	K	B	I	R	D	M

**CAN YOU FIND THESE WORDS HIDDEN IN THE PUZZLE?**

- BADGER
- BLACKBIRD
- POLEGATE
- HAILSHAM
- BLUEBELLS
- WOODPIGEON
- FOX
- BUMBLEBEES
- OWL
- WREN
- CUCKOO
- ROBIN
- FROG
- BUTTERFLIES



## SHARE WITH CARE Slow Down • Give Way

- Respect users and neighbours of the Trail
- Do not leave litter
- Clear up after your dog
- Use safe speeds
- Look & listen
- Don't block the path
- Use lights at night

www.wealden.gov.uk



### Enjoy Free family fun on the Cuckoo Trail using Augmented Reality!

Koo, the Cuckoo Line Manager has lost something very important!

Can you help her search the lost property at each of the stations along the trail?

You'll get to meet each of the animal station masters including Mr. Fox, Mrs. Bumble Bee and Tawny Owl in Augmented Reality, and can take selfies and videos with them.

Discover more at  
[www.explorewealden.co.uk/cuckoo-trail](http://www.explorewealden.co.uk/cuckoo-trail)



Keep an eye out for art installations including sculptures inspired by the area's natural and industrial heritage.

Travel in time through the remains of the Cuckoo Line, such as platform signs and station buildings, which offer a glimpse into the area's history!

During spring and summer, sections of the trail are adorned with vibrant wildflowers, creating a picturesque backdrop for leisurely walks or bike rides.



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