



Canterbury's Woodland



Oak leaves

A Romantic Break in...

The Blean

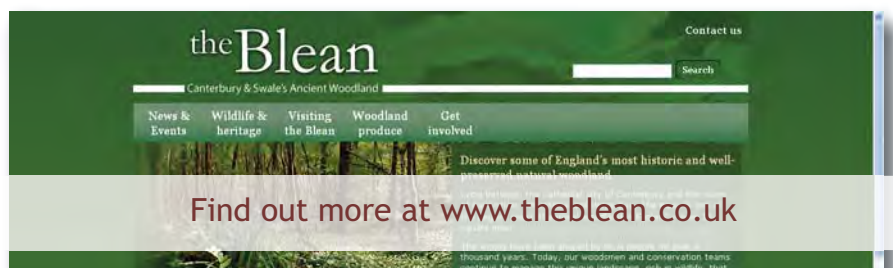
Canterbury's Ancient Woodland

This Country Break explores the woodlands and villages of **The Blean**, the area of ancient woodland between; Canterbury, Faversham, Whitstable, Herne Bay and the Marshes of Thanet.

Woodlands form the heart of **The Blean** covering over 3,000 hectares and it remains as one of the most extensive woodlands in the south east of England. This is ancient woodland and is particularly rich and diverse in wildlife, so much so that large areas are specially protected as Nature Reserves or Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

The Blean's very nature makes it superb for plenty of outdoor activities, but it really is a walking haven, with miles of footpaths (120 miles to be exact), accessible woodlands, good public transport, plenty of promoted routes and few busy roads. It is one of the few places where some truly car-free days out are possible.

The Blean provides a changing variety of experiences and sights through the seasons. Winter, spring, summer and autumn all bring a particular character to the Blean and it really can be a totally different place to visit depending on when you chose to come.



A Romantic Break

The colours and changing experiences in the Blean throughout the seasons can really add a certain something that enhances the romance in the air. Crunching through leaves in winter, admiring the autumn colours, gazing across orchards in summer, or just being there for the blossoms in Spring are all wonderful experiences to share with someone special.

Below are a few suggestions on how to experience the very best of the area throughout the year. During your stay check the local websites or local parish magazine (your accommodation and the local pubs may well have a copy) for details of fetes, fairs, courses and other country events.



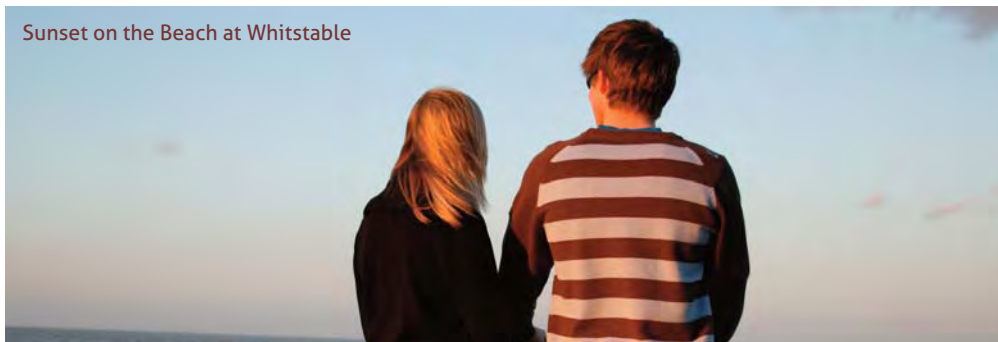
Getting There

The Blean is easily reached from Canterbury and the A2 or M2.

Several bus routes operated by Stagecoach cross the Blean between Canterbury, Whitstable, faversham and Herne Bay.

There are several rail stations all with connections to London and points beyond

Sunset on the Beach at Whitstable



Further Information

- www.theblean.co.uk
- www.canterbury.co.uk
- www.faversham.org.uk
- www.seewhitstable.com
- www.visitkent.co.uk
- www.kent.gov.uk/explorekent
- www.kentdowns.org
- www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk

Ancient Canterbury



Where to start...

Start with a walk in the woods and enjoy the autumn colours by trying **an Autumn Amble**? Its just a fantastic experience to share.

Details on page 3.





Autumn Colours in the Blean Woods

An

Autumn Amble

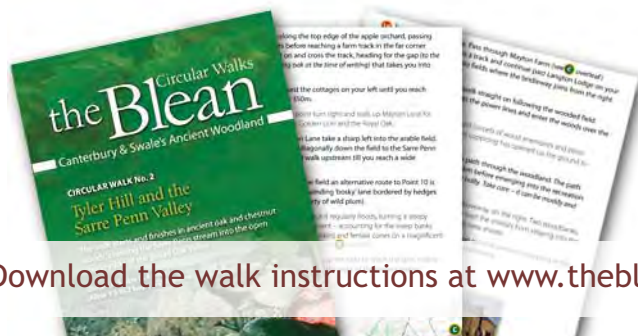
Through Tyler Hill & Canterbury

Start your day late (no reason to rush these things) in Canterbury and take the Route 5 Bus up out of the city to Tyler Hill, a small hamlet responsible for producing much of the medieval pottery in East Kent and as far afield as Northern France and Germany . The bus will drop you right outside the **Ivy House Pub** in the village.

The best way to catch a glimpse of the former tile-making industry as well as exploring the landscape of ancient oak and chestnut woods, which look fabulous in their autumn colours, is to follow the circular **Blean Initiative Walk 2 - Tyler Hill and the Sarre Penn Valley**.

This 3.4 mile easy route starts right at the Ivy House and takes you past the hollows where clay was extracted for the tile industry, then down to join the Sarre Penn stream (sometimes known as the Fishbourne), and following the valley eastwards towards Broadoak through orchards. The route then returns past historic rural buildings (like Mayton farm Oast) and through the woodland to Tyler Hill.

Again no need to rush, we estimate this walk is about 2.5 hours if you take your time and soak up the autumnal colours, crunch through the leaves and enjoy the wonderful views across the landscape to Canterbury and beyond...



Download the walk instructions at www.theblean.co.uk



Fly Agaric

Nothing beats a warm fire and some great food after an amble through the woods, so revive yourselves with lunch at the **Ivy House Pub**, who specialise in locally sourced produce.

When you've had your fill, step outside the door and take the Route 5 bus back to Canterbury.

Rest of the afternoon is yours to enjoy, you could visit **Canterbury Cathedral** (and spot the Tyler Hill tiles in the Corona Chapel and behind the altar in the crypt!), or simply wander the historic streets before a romantic dinner for two at one of Canterbury's restaurants or cafe's.

Of course there's nothing to stop you pushing the boat out with a romantic punting trip on the River Stour courtesy of **Canterbury Punting**.



Getting There

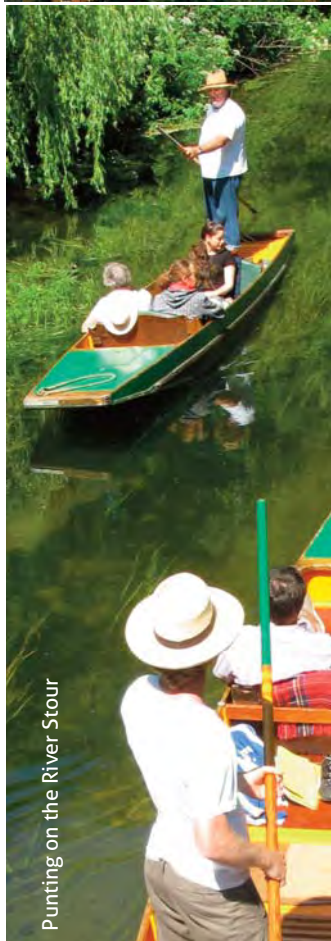
Canterbury is easy to reach from the M2/A2

Buses on **Stagecoach route 5** run hourly between Canterbury and Tyler Hill Mon-Sat and 4 times on Sun.

Regular trains run into **Canterbury East** and **Canterbury West** stations, including high-speed trains to and from London



Canterbury Cathedral



Punting on the River Stour

Further Information

- www.theblean.co.uk
- www.stagecoachbus.com
- www.canterbury-cathedral.co.uk
- www.canterburypunting.com
- www.canterbury.co.uk



Stream in Autumn



Sweet Chestnut

Extending your break...

Why not head west and spend a day enjoying the views from Victory Wood and the stunning Gardens at Mount Ephraim? Head to page 5 for full details of our **Trails and Teacakes** break.



View from Victory Wood

Trails & Teacakes

Western Blean & Mount Ephraim

Starting from a cosy B&B in Hernhill start your day with a bracing walk through (and up to the ridge!) of **Victory Wood**, with its wonderful panoramic views over the orchards to the Thames estuary.

There's plenty of points of interest and interpretation telling the story of the Battle of Trafalgar throughout the site, but if the views aren't enough then it's simple to wander further into Blean Wood to the west or Ellenden wood to the East for an hour or so of woodland rambling amongst the leaves.

Lunch can easily be sourced either at one of the picturesque and historic pubs in Hernhill, like the 250 year old **Three Horseshoes** or the even older (circa 1364) **Red Lion**.



Carving of Lord Nelson at Victory Wood



Walking the woods

After a lazy lunch spend the afternoon wandering the Edwardian gardens at **Mount Ephraim**.

Make sure to enjoy the tranquillity of the Japanese gardens, afterwards you could take on the challenge of the wildflower and grass maze or just relax on the Edwardian tea room terrace. At which point, although it's a bit wicked, why not treat yourselves to afternoon cream tea at the **Woodrose Tea Rooms**?

Should you really feel captivated and inspired, **Mount Ephraim** could also make a stunning wedding venue...!

For a romantic (and gastronomic) dinner we recommend the Dove at Dargate, Sheppard Neame pub & restaurant of the year 2010, and make sure not to skimp on the deserts!

Woodrose Tearooms on the terrace at Mount Ephraim



Gardens at Mount Ephraim

Further Information

- www.theblean.co.uk
- www.woodlandtrust.org.uk
- www.sheppardneame.co.uk
- www.theredlion.org
- www.mountephraimgardens.co.uk
- www.woodroserestaurant.co.uk
- www.doveatdargate.co.uk
- www.hernhill.net



Getting There

Hernhill is easy to reach from the A299 Thanet Way or the A2 via Boughton.

Buses on **Stagecoach route 638** run hourly between Faversham and Whitstable stopping at Hernhill Mon-Sat and 3 times on Sun.

Nearest rail stations are at **Selling** to the south or **Faversham** to the west.



Wild Mushrooms

Extending your break...

Enjoy the Autumnal colours? Why not come back and visit the Blean in winter, its a whole new experience...

Find out more on page 7 with our **Winter Wanders** break.



View of Canterbury in the snow

Winter Wanders

A walk in the woods & Canterbury

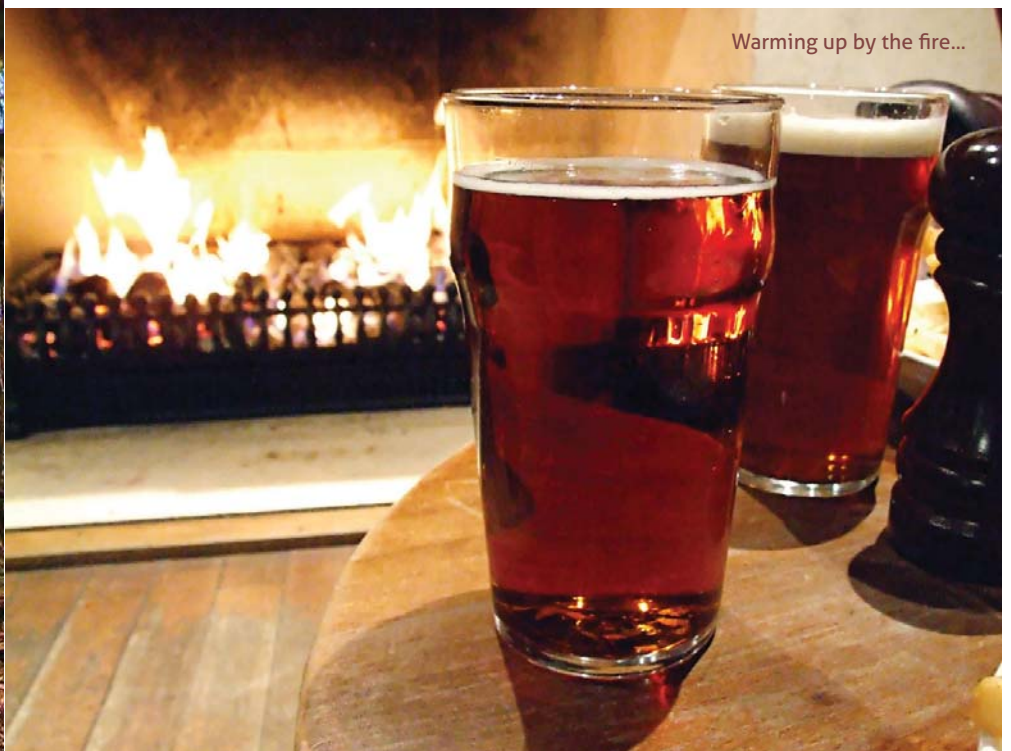
Just because the weathers colder doesn't mean there is any less to see or do, why not start your winter odyssey by booking a cosy B&B in **Boughton** as your base?

Once you're all checked in, wrap up warm and take an invigorating walk through **Thornden Wood**, follow the easy access trail through **Clowes Wood** or any one of the waymarked routes through **Blean Woods National Nature Reserve**.

Despite the season there's still plenty to see throughout the woodlands as you crunch your way through the frozen leaves, including birds wintering from Scandinavia. The best part of course is that wherever you decide to walk there will never be a country pub too far away, probably with a fire going and plenty of hearty warming fare on offer.



Veteran Beech Tree



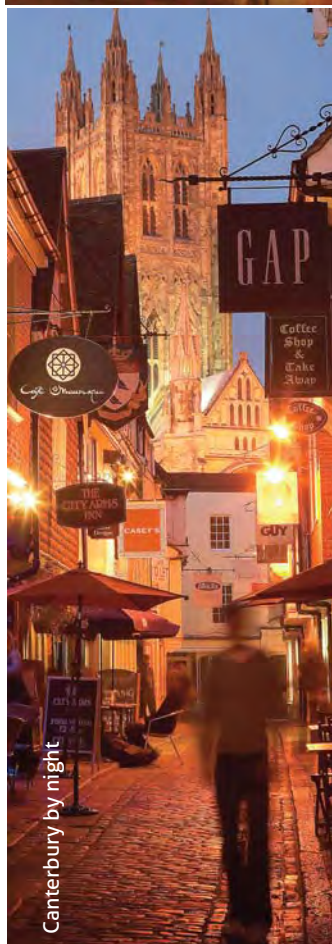
Warming up by the fire...

After lunch take a break from the outdoors and explore historic Canterbury, spend some time at **Canterbury Cathedral**, linger in the museums, browse the shops and warm up with a steaming coffee in one of the pictureque cafés.

Afterwards why not treat yourself to an evening out in Canterbury with dinner at any of the excellent restaurants?

But that doesn't have to be the end of your evening, you could always follow it up with a visit to the **Gulbenkian Theatre & Cinema**, the **Marlowe Theatre**, or if you happen to be there in December a stroll around the **Christmas Market** on White Friars square.

Night out at the theatre



Canterbury by night

Further Information

- www.theblean.co.uk
- www.boughton-under-blean.org.uk
- www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk
- www.rspb.org.uk
- www.kent.ac.uk/gulbenkian/
- www.woodroserestaurant.co.uk
- www.marlowetheatre.com
- www.canterbury.co.uk

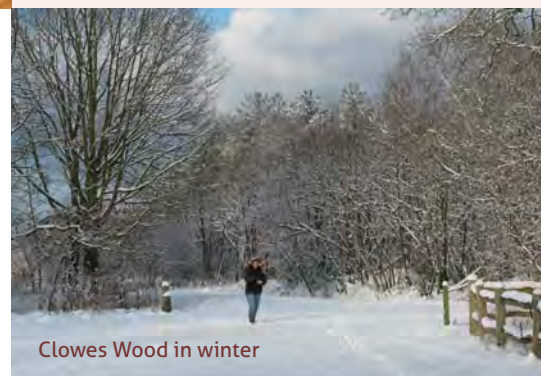


Getting There

Boughton is easily reached from the A2 and lies only minutes from the M2 itself.

Buses on Stagecoach **Route 3** operate between Canterbury Bus Station and Boughton three times an hour Mon-Sat.

The nearest rail station to Boughton is a few miles away at Selling.



Clowes Wood in winter

Extending your break...

There's plenty more to do in winter in the Blean, in fact we've designed a second day specifically to compliment this one. Find out more on page 9 where you can try our **Winter Warmer** break.



Coppiced Woods in Winter



Volunteering..

Winter Warmer

Volunteering and Coasteering

Head out early from Boughton for a spot of volunteering together with Kent Wildlife Trust at the **East Blean Woods**. There are a variety of opportunities for volunteering days at the reserve including getting to grips with fencing, ragwort pulling and bracken bashing.

Alternatively spend the morning at **Blean Woods**, where the RSPB organise a number of activities throughout the year, including guided walks, wildlife surveys and volunteering activities. They have an event calendar at their website with all the latest dates.

Fresh with the glow of spending the morning outdoors, get some fuel in you at one of the pubs in Herne or Herne Common, The **Smugglers Inn** is a good choice but there are plenty more.



Sparrow in winter

Afterwards head to the coast at **Whitstable**, for a bracing afternoon stroll along the beach.

Finish your day with a spot of shopping or browsing in Harbour Street, known for its pretty boutiques and shop fronts and the old town alleyways (including the wonderfully named "Squeeze Gut Alley") before (if in December) heading to the **Tankerton Christmas Market** at Whitstable Castle.

Once you are exhausted head back for dinner in Boughton, where you can choose from either the **Queens Head**, **The White Horse Inn** or **Martin's Restaurant** and enjoy a sound nights sleep...



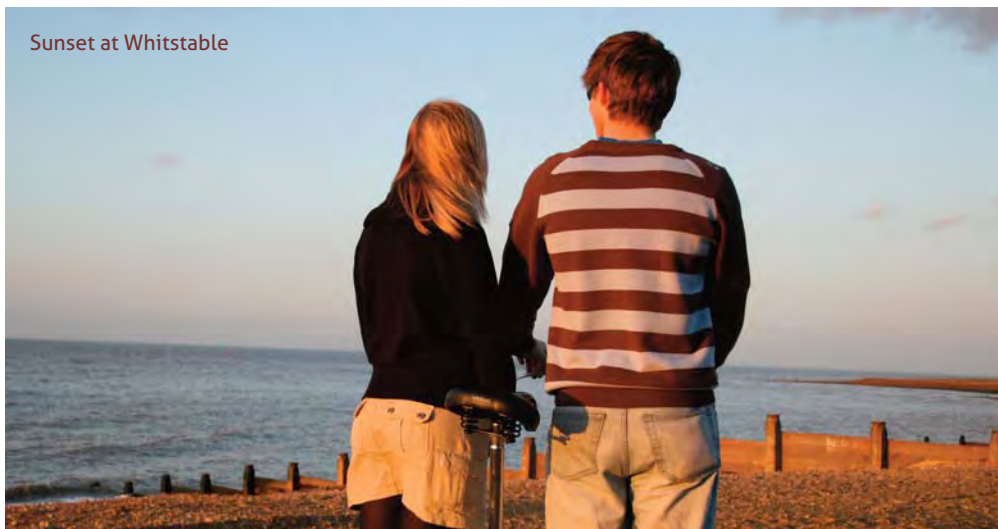
Getting There

Boughton is easily reached from the A2 and lies only minutes from the M2 itself.

Buses on Stagecoach **Route 3** operate between Canterbury Bus Station and Boughton three times an hour Mon-Sat.

The nearest rail station to Boughton is a few miles away at Selling.

Sunset at Whitstable



Further Information

www.theblean.co.uk

www.boughton-under-blean.org.uk

www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk

www.rspb.org.uk

www.smugglersinnhernebay.co.uk

www.seewhitstable.com

www.tankertonchristmasmarket.co.uk

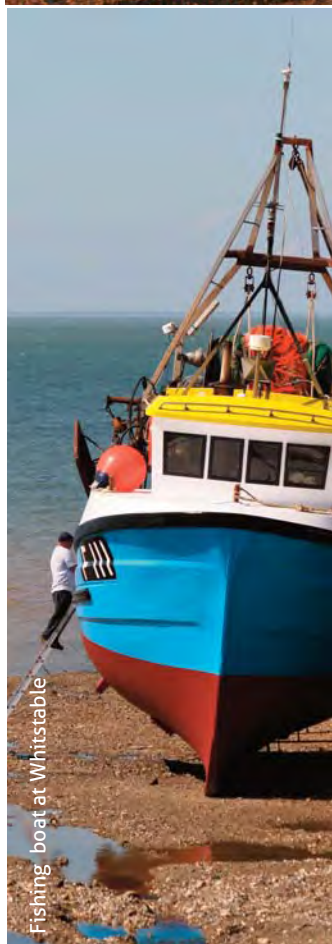


Robin

Extending your break...

if you fancy some more winter wonderment, why not explore more of the woodlands and enjoy Canterbury?

Find out more on page 7 where you can try our **Winter Wanders** break.





Summer evenings

A

Butterfly Sunset

Summer Afternoons in the Blean

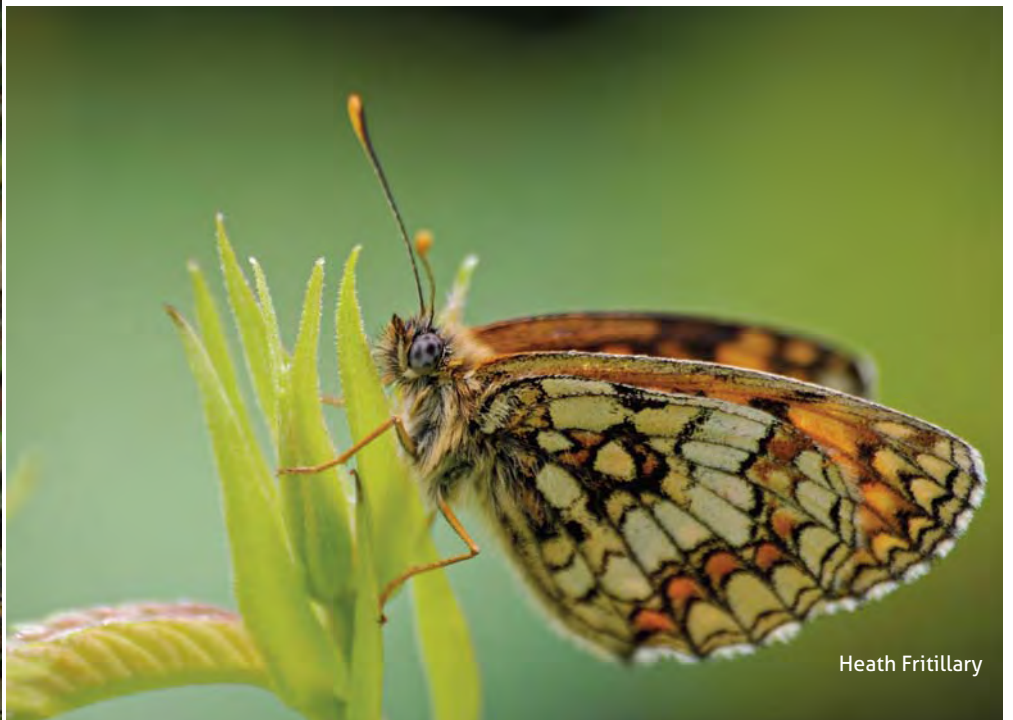
Late summer afternoons are a great time to experience the Blean, the long evenings mean you can take your time and enjoy the golden light as the sun sets.

For this kind of experience, don't make it complicated, simply take a bus from Canterbury or Whitstable (Route 4 or 6) out to the village of Blean. Once you arrive, take a stroll out of the village on one of a number of footpaths to enter the **Blean Woods National Nature Reserve**.

Wander by yourselves along one of the wide rides to see many different butterflies, dragonflies and other insects or check out the guided walks calendar and get a butterfly experience at the hands of the experts. Several guided walks run throughout the year including dedicated expeditions to find the rare Heath fritillary.



Blean Woods



Heath Fritillary

As the evening draws on you may also see nightjars and woodcock, and if you are really lucky bats, and the first of the summer's glow worms.

And what better way to finish the day, than with a sundowner and some great food at one of the pubs in Blean itself.

The **Royal Oak** offers delightful, secluded garden just made for summer alfresco drinking and dining, and the **Hare & Hounds** is a good spot for a glass of local ale before taking the trip back by bus to where you started.

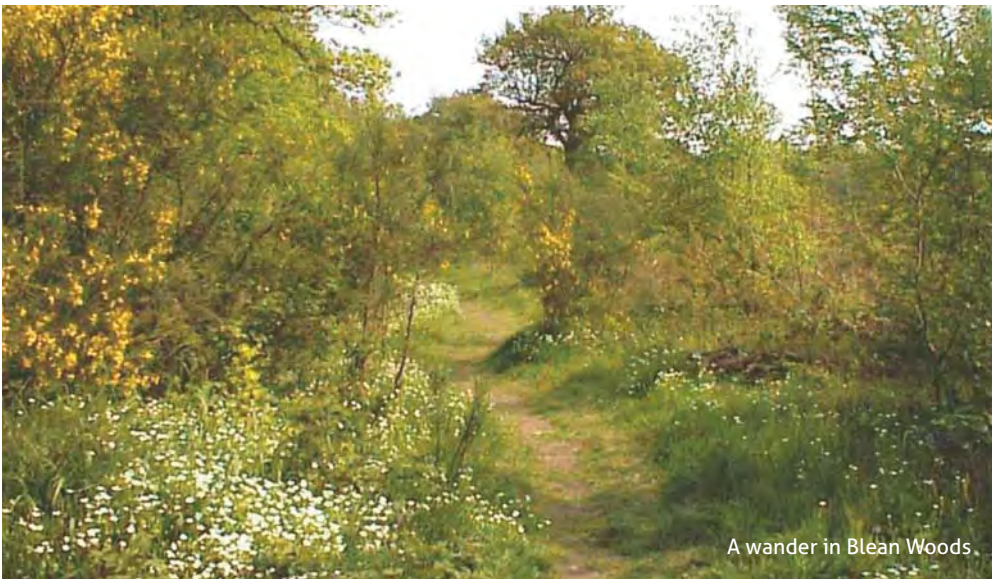


Getting There

Blean is easily reached from the A299 Thanet Way and lies only minutes from Canterbury.

Buses on **Stagecoach Route 4 or 6** operate between Canterbury and Whitstable stopping at Blean.

The nearest rail station to Blean is at Canterbury West, with connections to London.



A wander in Blean Woods

Further Information

www.theblean.co.uk

www.rspb.org.uk

www.royaloakblean.co.uk

www.stagecoachbus.com



Nuthatch

Extending your break...

For toher summer delights in the Blean try some fo the options listed in the **Family Fun Breaks Itineraries**.

We would reccommend the **Cycle to the Sea** and **Canterbury & Countryside** breaks.



Enjoying a sundowner



More Information

Listings & Details



Attractions

Name	Telephone	Website	Address
Canterbury Cathedral	01227 762862	http://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/	11 The Precincts, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2EH
Canterbury Punting	07786 332666	http://www.canterburypunting.co.uk/	Water Lane, Canterbury, CT1 2NQ
Victory Wood	01476 581111	http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/our-woods/pages/wood-details.aspx?wood=5571	Dargate Road, Yorkletts, ME13 9
Mount Ephraim Gardens	01227 751496	http://www.mountephraimgardens.co.uk	Hernhill, Kent, ME13 9TX
West Blean & Thornden Woods	01227 719506	www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/reserves/blean-complex/	Canterbury Road, Herne Common, Kent, CT6 7LF
Clowes Wood	01420 23666	http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/recreation.nsf/LUWebDocs-ByKey/EnglandKentNoForestClowesWood	Radfall Road, Tyler Hill, CT3
Blean Woods NNR	01227 455972	http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/b/bleanwoods/index.aspx	New Road, Rough Common, CT2 9PB
Gulbenkian Theatre & Cinema	01227 769075	http://www.kent.ac.uk/gulbenkian/	University of Kent Canterbury Kent, CT2 7NB
Marlow Theatre	01227 787787	http://marlowtheatre.com/	12 - 13 Sun Street, Canterbury, Kent. CT1 2HX
East Blean Woods	01227 719506	http://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/reserves/blean-complex/	Hicks Forstal Road, Hoath, CT3 4JS
Tankerton Christmas Market	01227 263595	http://www.tankertonchristmasmarket.co.uk/	Whitstable Castle

Food & Drink

Name	Telephone	Website	Address
The Ivy House	01227 472200	N/A	27 Hackington Road, Tyler Hill, CT3 9NE
The Three Horseshoes	01227 750842	http://www.shepherdneame.co.uk/pub/faversham/three-horseshoes.aspx	Staple Street, Hernhill, ME13 9UA
The Red Lion	01227 751207	http://www.theredlion.org/	Crockham Lane, Hernhill, ME13 9JR
Woodrose Tearooms	01227 751168	http://www.woodroserestaurant.co.uk	Mount Ephraim Gardens, Hernhill, Kent, ME13 9TX
The Dove at Dargate	01227 751360	http://www.thedoveinndargate.co.uk/	Plum Pudding Lane, Dargate, ME13 9HB
The Smugglers Inn	01227 741395	http://www.smugglersinnhernebay.co.uk	1 School Lane, Herne, CT6 7AN
The White Horse Boughton	01227 751343	http://www.whitehorsecanterbury.co.uk/	The Street, Boughton-under-Blean, Kent, ME13 9AL
Martin's Restaurant Boughton	01227 750304	http://www.martinsrestaurant.co.uk/	40 The Street, Boughton-under-Blean, Kent, ME13 9AS
Queens Head Boughton	01227 751369	www.thequeenshead-at-boughton.co.uk	111 The Street, Boughton-under-Blean, Kent, ME13 9BH
The Royal Oak	01227 760149	http://www.royaloakblean.co.uk	140 Blean Common, Blean, CT2 9JJ
The Hare & Hounds	01227 471594	N/A	4 Blean Hill, Blean, CT2 9EF

Walks & Rides

Name	Distance	Website	Start & End
Blean Initiative Walk 2 Tyler Hill & The Sarre Penn Valley	3.4 Miles	http://www.theblean.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/walk-leafletblean2.pdf	Tyler Hill

Romantic

Clowes Wood Easy Access Trail	3.2 Miles	http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure_and_culture/countryside_and_coast/explore_kent_documents/walks_documents/walks_for_all_documents.aspx	Brewers Road Clowes Wood
Blean Woods NNR Trails	5 waymarked trails: Black 8 miles Red 2.6 miles Green 1.8 miles - suitable for wheelchair users Brown 0.9 mile White (dog walk) 1.25 miles	http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/b/bleanwoods/facilities.aspx	Blean Woods NNR Rough Common Car Park

General Information

Name	Telephone	Website	Address
Hernhill	N/A	www.hernhill.net	N/A
Boughton-under-Blean Website	01227 751130	http://www.boughton-under-blean.org.uk/	N/A

For more in The Blean

and across East Kent...

Active

Family

Outdoors

Pick N' Mix

www.visitkent.co.uk/explore/coast-natural2.asp



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Country Breaks in East Kent