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This leaflet has been produced by the Chiltern Conservation Board, the body charged with conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB. If you would like to know more about the Chilterns or the work of the Conservation Board, visit the website www.chilternsaonb.org.

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An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Did you Know?
The Chilterns stretch from the Thames in Oxfordshire through Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire to Hitchin in Hertfordshire. The centre of the Chilterns is only 15 miles from Trafalgar Square.

The Chilterns is home to England's largest population of red kites, a spectacular bird of prey re-introduced in the 1990s.

One fifth of the area of the Chilterns is covered by woodland, three times the average for England.

The beechwoods were planted mainly in the eighteenth century to provide timber for the furniture industry.

The Chilterns is a stronghold of rare flowers such as the Chiltern gentian and the Military orchid.

The chalk in the Chilterns used to be at the bottom of the sea - it was formed between 70 and 95 million years ago from the shells of tiny sea creatures.

The Chiltern Hills have been protected as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) since 1965.

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Some of the rare chalk streams in the Chilterns have sections which only flow in winter.

There are over 2000km of footpaths and bridleways in the Chilterns and over 70 routes for walking, cycling and horse riding.

The Chilterns often provide locations for tv and films, for example, The Vicar of Dibley, Midsomer Murders, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang and The Dirty Dozen.

John Milton completed Paradise Lost in his cottage in Chalfont St Giles.

In the first Harry Potter film Harry's broomstick was made out of Chilterns wood.