Cuckmere Haven is a popular tourist destination where you can engage in long walks, or water activities on the river. The beach at Cuckmere Haven is next to the famous chalk cliffs, the Seven Sisters.

In the Second World War, the site was studied by the Luftwaffe as they flew missions to identify potential landing sites for the invasion of the UK mainland. As a result, the British constructed a series of counter-landing defences, of which numerous pillboxes, anti-tank obstacles, ditches and tank traps survive. In addition to the permanent land-based constructions, the river was heavily mined.

Cuckmere Haven (also known as the Cuckmere Estuary) is an area of flood plains where the river Cuckmere meets the English Channel between Eastbourne and Seaford. The river is an example of a meandering river, and contains several oxbow lakes.

https://www.queensu.ca/bisc/current-students/getting-around
How far?
40 minutes’ ride. Drop off and pick up point – the car park.

What’s there?
The Cuckmere Estuary, where the River Cuckmere meets the sea, is known as Cuckmere Haven. This beautiful spot, where the river meanders snake-like through a wide flood plain to the English Channel, is best after a period of dry weather because the paths can be muddy. The water, which forms several oxbow lakes, and its water meadows provide a habitat for a wealth of wildlife, including herons, geese and swans.

Between the 16th and 18th centuries the beach and river up to Alfriston were used by smugglers.

Pill box defences, which can still be seen, were built at the back of the beach during World War II.

The Seven Sisters cliffs were used for spectacular shots where Harry Potter walks up the hill to find the boot that transports him to the Quidditch World Cup.

The beach at Cuckmere Haven was used for the opening scene in Kevin Costner’s Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves.

When can I go there?
Depending on demand, around once a month.

Who do I ask if I want a special trip?
E-mail minibus@bisc.queensu.ac.uk

A word of warning: If you decide to walk along the Seven Sisters, do NOT go near the edge of the cliffs. They are very unstable and large chunks can fall at any time. If you see a crack in the ground, you are too close – move away immediately. Stay on the footpaths and enjoy the views in safety.

The BISC will not be responsible for anyone who ignores this warning.