



# The Sundeved Trail

A walking trail from Ballegård to Ullerup Forest



## The Dikes and Hedgerows project

The Sundeved Trail is part of the Dikes and Hedgerows Project. Partially financed by the EU and the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, this project centres on bringing focus to the dikes and many hedgerows that characterise the Sundeved landscape.

## From Alsion to Aabenraa

The Sundeved Trail connects the Alssund Trail with Aabenraa Municipality's network of paths and trails to Varnæs. The Alssund Trail follows the beautiful Alssund sound from Alsion to Ballebro.

The 5.8-kilometre-long Sundeved Trail runs from the Alssund Trail past the manor house at Ballegård. From the road, you can view newly constructed stone dikes, which serve as a habitat for amphibians and other small animals.

The route follows the tunnel valley floor and Ballegård Møllebæk brook to Blans. Here, by the village shop, the trail turns, leading on to a new tunnel valley. The marsh of Skotmose and Junker Dam are still divided into small meadows by hedgerows that used to belong to the small farmsteads dotted along the road.

At the entrance to Ullerup Forest from the Brobølvej road, you can see a protected earth dike covered with an impressive and varied hedgerow consisting of oak, hazel, willow and ash. From here, you can also see a new replanting project creating a natural environment for birds, insects, and small animals.

The Sundeved Trail ends just outside Ullerup Forest at Brudehøj. The town of Aabenraa is a mere stone's throw from here.

Sønderborg Municipality  
Land, By og Kultur  
Rådhusvej 10  
DK-6400 Sønderborg  
[www.sonderborgkommune.dk](http://www.sonderborgkommune.dk)





### The Sundeved Trail

The route from the Alssund Trail at Ballegård to Ullerup Forest is 5.8km long and follows the Ballegård Møllebæk brook to Blans, continuing on to Ullerup Forrest. The trail ends at Brudehøj, just a few hundred meters from where Aabenraa Municipality's route of walking trails to Varnæs begin. The trail runs through a tunnel-valley landscape with a rich flora and fauna – not least represented by the many hedgerows and dikes that criss-cross the fields and forests.

### Ballegård

The trail passes the former grange at Ballegård, built by the Ahlefeldt family, who also lived at Gråsten Palace. Here, 200m of new stone dikes have been erected. Stone-built dikes and cairns provide many animals with good nesting sites and make a good home to spend the winter. Reptiles and amphibians are cold blooded, and on sunny days they love nothing better than the warm surface of the stone dikes.

In the spring of 2015, the course of the Ballegård Møllebæk brook was diverted south of the Møllesøen lake. Removing obstacles in the watercourse has created direct access to the sea, allowing fish to swim up the brook. For amphibians, the new natural environment at Ballegård is ideal. Mølledammen, the wet meadow, the brook, and the surrounding dikes together make a perfect living habitat and offer a safe place for wildlife to spend the winter.

### Bats



Four species of bat have been recorded in the area around Ballegård: the serotine bat, the common pipistrelle, the Daubenton's bat, and soprano pipistrelles. The brook, the hedgerows and the large old trees offer the perfect habitat for bats in their hunt for insects and places to hide.

### Ballegårdalen and Kajbækdalen tunnel valleys

The trail leads through the two tunnel valleys of Ballegårdalen and Kajbækdalen, south and west of Blans.

Ballegård is beautifully located at the foot of the valley. From here, you can experience the geology of the valley landscape, and there is a lovely view from the Ballebrovej road through the valley and out to the Alssund sound.

By the village shop in Blans, the trail passes the marsh of Skotmose and Junker Dam. The tunnel valley south of Blans is still divided into small meadows bordered by hedgerows. The human-planted vegetation originates from a time before the 1960s when Blans consisted of a cluster of small farms dotted along the road – each of which owned a piece of the meadow in the valley. This valley is a tributary valley of the Kajbækdalen tunnel valley. From the Brobølvej road you can enjoy a view all the way down to the end of the valley.

### Junker Vigge from Varnæs

Junker Dam – one of the meadow areas in the Kajbækdalen valley – is said to be named after Junker Vigge from Varnæs Vold, which many years ago was a castle. The romantic tale of this young landed nobleman's love for Virgin Ida from Helnæs can be explored through the local place names, at the maple tree that marks the lover's grave in Varnæs churchyard, and through the portrait of Junker Vigge embedded in the walls of Varnæs church.

### The hedgerows and old dikes

The area's many hedgerows are a prominent feature of the Sundeved landscape. These bear witness to how the land was divided up in the past, and they tell the history of local agricultural practices.

Most of the hedgerows and dikes date back to a period at the end

of the 18th century known as *Udskiftningstiden*. During this period, people moved out of the densely populated villages to be closer to the arable land, which lay further away from the villages.

When the owner of the former Blansgård Manor – the last reigning Duke of Glücksburg – died in 1779, all of his possessions, including the manor, were taken over by the state. It is from this time that the many widely spread farmsteads that pepper the Brobøl area were established.

Hedges and dikes were used to mark the boundaries of the newly established farmsteads and formed barriers between different types of crop or woodland. At the entrance to Ullerup Forest from the Brobølvej road, you can see a protected earth dike covered with an impressive and varied hedgerow consisting of oak, hazel, willow and ash.

Dikes and hedgerows are important means by which animals and plants can spread and move across an arable landscape, and the dikes and hedges of this area are inhabited by a great number of different species. Hedgerows offer animals a good hiding place and are a rich source of food for wildlife. A stone and earth dike can also offer sun-warmed surfaces for cold-blooded animals, and the area's many stone cairns serve as good places to build nests and spend the winter.

At Ullerup Forest, you can follow a new renewal project in which species of the local trees and bushes that abound in the local hedgerows are being planted. This new planting is being carried out in a way that gives each area its own special character – one area is focusing on birdlife, one on insects, another on small animals, and yet another is aimed at the area's game birds.

### Sundeved

The following is a description of Sundeved from volume 2 of J.P. Trap's work *'Slesvig. 1864'*: *Sundeved is one of Schleswig's most fertile landscapes: the surrounding sea, the undulation of the moraine-clay hills, the numerous large and small forests, and the hedgerows separating one man's land from the next all together combine to make this a place of true beauty.*

### Ullerup Forest

Ullerup Forest is owned by the farmers and parish council of Ullerup. Private woodlands in Denmark may only be accessed via the marked trails and the existing roads. Here, you may pick berries and mushrooms, and you can gather branches, twigs and leaves that lay on the forest floor. You must only pick and collect things that you can reach from the trail and for your personal use only. So pick yourself a bunch of sweet woodruff and a handful of raspberries at the edge of the wood. Once dried, a bouquet of sweet woodruff will smell of newly mown hay for the rest of the year whenever the weather is slightly damp. Or why not use the fresh young shoots to flavour your food? The trail's route through Ullerup Forest passes several streams and brooks, the water of which is so clean that you may be lucky enough to spot a trout.

### Prehistoric remains

Evidence of the past is scattered all across the Sundeved landscape. There are five prehistoric barrows in Ullerup Forest – four round tumuli and one long barrow. The trail passes close by one of these burial mounds, but please remember that this is a listed structure.

In the forest, a dike is clearly visible from the trail. This dike marks the boundary between two plots of woodland. Close to where the trail exits the forest to the west is Brudehøj. This well-preserved stone-age long barrow was listed for protection by the Prussians just before the outbreak of World War I.