

Introduction

The Hangers Way is a 21-mile long-distance walking route that will take you from its start at Alton Railway Station, out into the lush Hampshire countryside, along a series of steep-sided wooded hills, known as "The Hangers", through the pretty market town of Petersfield to finish at Queen Elizabeth Country Park, owned and managed by Hampshire County Council and the Forestry Commission. This is the largest of Hampshire's parks and sits at the foot of the dramatic Butser Hill, the highest point of the chalky South Downs.

The Way has been divided into eight sections, each providing a really good day out. Choose between quiet villages or bustling market towns, meadow picnics or cosy pubs, steep hills with exhilarating views or cool, peaceful woodland.

The route passes through the famous village of Selborne, once home to Gilbert White, the 18th century naturalist and author of "The Natural History of Selborne". There are several places where you can stop along the way for refreshments.

The Hangers are probably the richest woodlands on English chalk. Here the chalk that covers the central and northern parts of Hampshire abruptly ends in a scarp slope giving way to farmland.



Detail from Selborne Church window

Under the deeply shaded canopies, a specialised group of flowers and wildlife thrives: fungi, insects and rare molluscs such as the cheese snail. But in the sunny clearings and glades, very different kinds of wild flowers can be found. Early purple orchid, nettle-leaved bellflower, bird's nest orchid, wild garlic and stinking hellebore are just a few. Also in these sunny spots, look for some of the many rare insects and butterflies such as the grizzled skipper, Duke of Burgundy fritillary or white-letter hairstreak.

This steep and undulating route always has a surprise around the corner, whether it is the fantastic autumn colours of the woodland, the sudden appearance of a stunning view framed by the trees, or catching sight of a passing fox or grazing roe deer. It is sheltered from wind and rain in the winter, and cool and shady in the summer. Sheep idle away their time in the sloping meadows, and most villages come complete with mellow pubs and ancient churches.

Local fare

Hampshire boasts a wide range of fine local products such as watercress, trout, beef and lamb, wine, cheeses, handmade chocolates and many more. For a guide to producers, call 01962 845999 or visit www.hampshirefare.co.uk on the web.



Duke of Burgundy butterfly

History

In addition to the local fare, the Hangers Way has many historically interesting sites and places to visit along its route dating from the prehistoric period to the recent past.

There are many Bronze Age burial mounds in the area at Hawkley, Wheatham Hill, Petersfield Heath and War Down. Evidence of Roman settlement is also frequently found in the area at Alton, Buriton and in Queen Elizabeth Country Park.

Alton lies on the main road from Winchester to London, in use since Roman times. In 1070 King William gave an estate at Alton to Hyde Abbey in Winchester in exchange for land in Winchester on which to build a palace. Later Edward II granted the town a nine-day fair, and the town would have benefited greatly from the trade along this major route.

During the English Civil War, the royalist Colonel Boyle and his men took up a defensive position in the church and churchyard of St Lawrence in Alton when parliamentarian Waller attacked and took the town in 1643. Colonel Boyle, and as many as 60 of his men were killed there.

Adjacent to Priory Farm near Selborne is the site of Selborne Priory, founded in 1233AD by the Bishop of Winchester and suppressed 200 years later. The site where it stood is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.



View towards Hawkley

How to follow the Hangers Way

Hangers Way

Selborne 5 miles

The route stretches between Alton and Queen Elizabeth Country Park in Hampshire.

The route is well sign posted with the logo of a tree on a green arrow.

Maps

This leaflet does not provide navigation details. The route is shown on the following Ordnance Survey maps:-

Explorer maps at 1:25,000 scale
133 Haslemere & Petersfield
120 Chichester



The route is indicated on these maps with a green diamond and the name of the route (Hangers Way).

Further information and a detailed route description is available on the web:

www.hants.gov.uk/walking/hangers



Reproduced from the OS mapping with the permission of the controller of HMSO ©HCC LICENCE No LA100019180

Further information

Publications

For information about the other ten long-distance walks or for leaflets about the following, tel: (01962) 870500, or visit your local Hampshire County Council Information Centre or Tourist Information Centre.

Long-distance walks
Finding Your Way
Guided Walks
Discover Hampshire
Accessible Countryside in Hampshire
Defence of the Realm

Useful websites

www.hants.gov.uk/walking
www.hants.gov.uk/countryside
www.visit-hampshire.org.uk
www.traveline.org.uk
www.metoffice.co.uk

Useful contacts

Hampshire County Council
Information Centre Winchester 01962 870500
Met Office (weather information) 0870 900 0100
The Traveline 0870 608 2608

Tourist Information Centres (TICs)

Alton 01420 88448 www.visit-easthampshire.org.uk
Petersfield 01730 268829 www.visit-easthampshire.org.uk

Recreation & Heritage Department
Hampshire County Council, Mottisfont Court, High Street,
Winchester Hampshire SO23 8ZF.

Other long-distance walks



- 1 Avon Valley Path
- 2 Clarendon Way
- 3 Solent Way
- 4 Test Way
- 5 Hampshire Millennium Pilgrims' Trail
- 6 Oxdrove Way
- 7 Wayfarer's Walk
- 8 South Downs Way National Trail
- 9 Staunton Way
- 10 Hangers Way
- 11 St Swithun's Way

Available in alternative formats
01962 870500

©Hampshire County Council. 2004

walking in Hampshire

Hangers Way

A 21 mile
long-distance walk from
Alton to Queen Elizabeth
Country Park, Petersfield



DESIGN: 03 3330 CORPORATE GRAPHICS TEAM 01962 813802 PRINT BY HAMPSHIRE PRINTING SERVICES ON REPEAT OFFSET RECYCLED PAPER



Hampshire
County Council

Alton to East Worldham

Distance: 2.5 miles (4km)

Time: 1 hour

The Hangers Way begins at Alton Railway Station. This main-line station is also used by the Mid-Hants Railway (Watercress Line), which runs restored steam trains.

Alton lies on the main road from Winchester to London, which has been in use since Roman times. Before you leave the town, why not visit the Curtis Museum's local history display or the Allen Gallery's outstanding ceramic collection?

Follow the boundary of Monk Wood, where it is possible to see ancient earthworks and continue along farm tracks until you reach East Worldham.

Here you can see a 15th century effigy of the wife of poet Geoffrey Chaucer.

Accommodation: Alton TIC 01420 88448

Refreshments/places of interest:

The Three Horseshoes, East Worldham 01420 83211

The Curtis Museum & Allen Gallery, Alton 01420 82802

Mid-Hants Railway 'Watercress Line' 01962 733810

Transport: Alton

Stagecoach 13, 28, X64, 72, 201, 205, 210

- 0845 121 0180

National Express 08705 808080

South West Trains 08457 48 49 50

East Worldham

Stagecoach 72 0845 121 0180

East Worldham to Selborne

Distance: 3.5 miles (5.5km)

Time: 1-2 hours

From the church, the Way descends downhill with stunning views ahead. The distinctive conically shaped hill to the south is St John's Hill, partially capped with woodland. It is thought this hill was an Iron Age settlement site and is also where King John had a hunting lodge. Passing Binswood, the route starts climbing and you enter your first Hanger, Wick Hill.

Continue through deciduous woodland before descending to join Oakhanger stream which snuggles under the shelter of the impressive Selborne Hanger. This length of the stream is reputed to be haunted by the ghost of a monk.

Accommodation: Alton TIC 01420 88448

Refreshments/places of interest:

The Selborne Arms, Selborne 01420 511247

The Queens Hotel, Selborne 01420 511454

Gilbert White's House, Selborne 01420 511275

Transport: Selborne

Stagecoach 72, X72, 272 08451 210180

Selborne to Noar Hill

Distance: 2 miles (3km)

Time: 1 hour

Although a small village, Selborne has many attractions. It was once home to Gilbert White, the famous 18th century naturalist and author.

There is also The Oates Museum, devoted to the remarkable Oates family, and in particular, Frank Oates (a Victorian explorer) and Captain Lawrence Oates who accompanied Scott to the South Pole.

Continue on out of the village and past Galley Hill, once the site for the local gallows. The path climbs gently up High Common Nature Reserve and round to Noar Hill Hanger. This area of chalkland is rich in wild flowers and wildlife. The route now drops steeply down through woodland to the tiny parish of Empshott.

Accommodation: Alton TIC 01420 88448

Noar Hill to Hawkley

Distance: 3 miles (5km) **Time:** 1-2 hours

The Way takes you past idling sheep and green pastures to Hawkley Hanger, where there are the remains of a Bronze Age burial mound. In 1774 a dramatic event occurred here which Gilbert White described as, a large part of "the great woody hanger at Hawkley was torn from its place and fell down, leaving a high freestone cliff naked and bare, and resembling the steep cliff of a chalk pit".

Continue along this hanger until you come to Hawkley. The church here was constructed on the site of an ancient chapel, and its tower can be seen across the fields approaching the village.






Accommodation: Petersfield TIC 01730 268829

Refreshments:

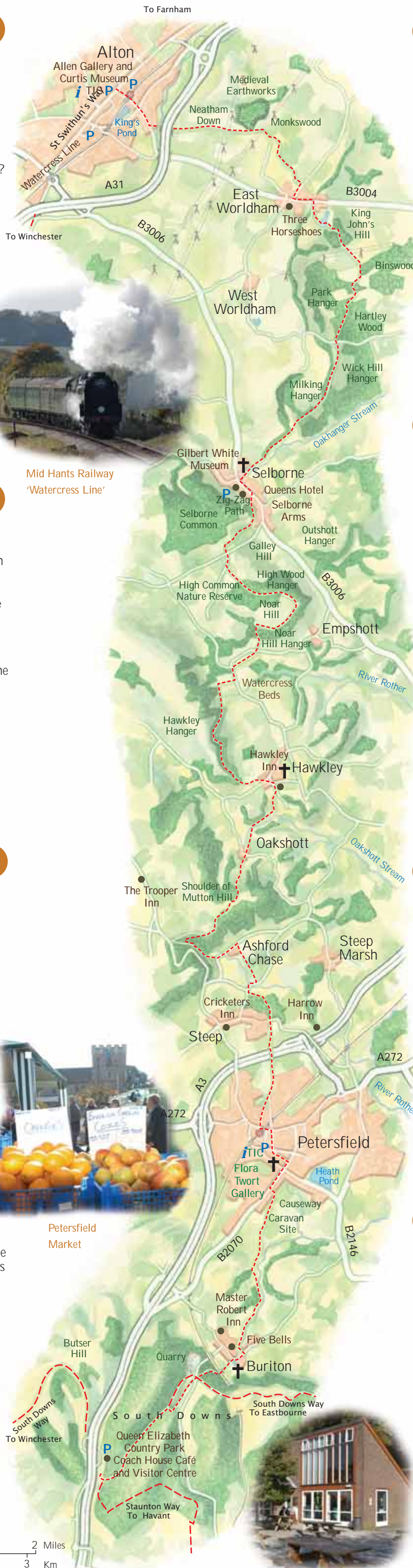
Hawkley Inn, Hawkley 01730 827205

Transport: Hawkley

AMK 2 01428 751675

-  Trail
-  Other long-distance trails
-  Train Station
-  Parking
-  Tourist Information Centre

0 1 2 Miles
0 1 2 3 Km



Hawkley to Steep

Distance: 3.5 miles (5.5km)

Time: 1-2 hours

Leave Hawkley and cross a stream to reach the medieval hamlet of Oakshott.

Continue along the Way and climb the steepest ascent of the whole path, from Oakshott up to the Shoulder of Mutton Hill. In a clearing on the hill is The Poet's Stone, dedicated to the memory of local poet Edward Thomas who was killed at the Battle of Arras in 1917.

Walk along to Ashford Hill, down into Lutcombe Bottom and along a boggy valley to arrive in Steep. The scenery is such that this area is known as 'Little Switzerland'.

Passing through the churchyard of All Saints Church, some tombs of Jane Austen's family can be found.

Accommodation: Petersfield TIC 01730 268829

Refreshments:

The Trooper Inn, Froxfield 01730 827293

The Harrow Inn, Steep 01730 262685

The Cricketers Inn, Steep 01730 261035

Transport: Steep

Minerva Accord 95 01243 753100

Steep to Petersfield

Distance: 1.5 miles (2.5km)

Time: 30mins

Walking out of Steep the route passes the grounds of Bedales, famous both nationally and internationally as an innovatory public school.

Once you have crossed the A3, you come into the busy market town of Petersfield. Worth a visit just off the Square is the Flora Twort Gallery and the Physic Garden in the High Street.

The nearby heath features many burial mounds and dates back to the Bronze Age. Today, it is a popular recreation area with fishing, a children's play area and a boating lake.

Accommodation: Petersfield TIC 01730 268829

Places of interest:

Flora Twort Gallery, Petersfield 01730 260756

Petersfield Physic Garden, Petersfield 01730 269060

Bedales Gallery & Theatre, Petersfield 01730 304236

Transport: Petersfield

AMK 01428 751675

Minerva Accord 95 01243 753100

Solent Blue Line 023 8061 8233

Stagecoach 0845 121 0170

National Express 08705 808080

South West Trains 08457 48 49 50

Petersfield to Buriton

Distance: 2.5 miles (4km)

Time: 1 hour

The path now runs south across small fields and along hidden shallow valleys to the village of Buriton. From here you can see the imposing scarp slope of the South Downs.

In the graveyard of St Mary's Church is the unmarked grave of the eminent 17th century botanist, John Goodyer. His reputation was so great that during the Civil War a royalist general ordered his men "... on all occasions to defend and protect John Goodyer, his house, servants, family, goods, chattels and estates of all sorts from all damages, disturbances and oppressions whatever".

Accommodation: Petersfield TIC 01730 268829

Refreshments:

The Five Bells, Buriton 01730 263584

The Master Robert, Buriton 01730 267275

Transport: Buriton

Minerva Accord 95 01243 753100

Stagecoach 38 0845 121 0170

Buriton to Queen Elizabeth Country Park

Distance: 2.5 miles (4km)

Time: 1 hour

Queen Elizabeth Country Park sits at the foot of Butser Hill, the highest point of the South Downs. On your right is War Down, where there are seven Bronze Age burial mounds.

Finally, you will arrive at the Visitor Centre which has a shop and café. From here why not explore two more long-distance paths, the Staunton Way and the South Downs Way?

Accommodation: Petersfield TIC 01730 268829

Refreshments/places of interest:

Queen Elizabeth Country Park Café 023 9259 6345

Queen Elizabeth Country Park 023 9259 5040

Transport: QCEP

Stagecoach, 38 0845 121 0170

First, 45B 023 9286 2412

Queen Elizabeth Country Park Café