



Weavers Down and Foley Manor

Distance: 15 km=9¼ miles easy-to-moderate walking
or **two** walks of 9 km=5½ miles and 7 km=4½ miles
add 2¼ miles=3¾ km for a start and finish at Liss Station
splittable as **two station-to-station** walks of 10 km=6½ miles each

Region: Hampshire, W.Sussex

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Author: Botafuego

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Refreshments: The *Deers Hut*, Liphook

Last update: 26-sep-2023

Map: Explorer 133 (Haslemere)

Problems, changes? We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org

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Heath, woodland, parkland, hills, views, surprises

In Brief

This is a radiant circular walk of wonderful originality, mainly in East Hampshire, with a section in West Sussex, taking you through unmapped parts of the hilly heath of Weavers Down, then round paths and lakes near Liphook. It holds several surprises along the way. It can be accessed by **train** from **Liphook** or, by an interesting extra 1-mile "hop", from **Liss** station.



The short eastbound walk is a delightful **pub walk** from the *Deer's Hut*, an iconic inn outside Liphook. The **full walk** takes you through the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Longmoor Camp. The MoD allows you freedom to roam at any time. You may see friendly troops very occasionally but their exercises are always "dry" and this is *not* a danger area. Longmoor and Weavers Down are a popular area for families and their children, riders, joggers and, of course, walkers, many with their dog.

Mar-Sep 2023: access to the Longmoor walk was barred for military training until an unspecified date. → It is important to check opening times from our webpage www.fancyfreewalks.org/MOD.html.

This walk can be enjoyed as two separate shorter walks. The **Longmoor** walk (9 km=5½ miles) visits the heath and forests of Longmoor but omits the pub and the area around Liphook. The **Deer's Hut** walk (7 km=4½ miles) begins at the *Deers Hut* inn and visits Weavers Down and Foley Manor only.

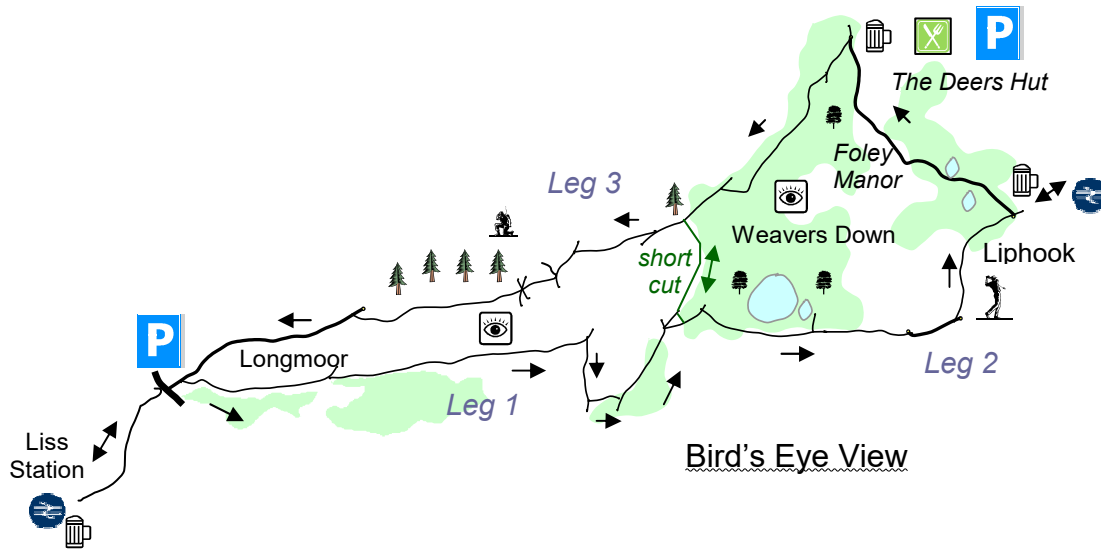
You can also treat this walk as **two linear** station-to-station walks:

The **Westbound** walk begins at Liphook Station (start Leg 2 section [5]) and takes the Liss Station Hop at the end of Leg 3.

The **Eastbound** walk begins at Liss Station, to the start at the Forest Road car park and leaves at the end of Leg 2 Section [4] (follow the blue text to the *Links* pub and onwards to the station).



The going is easy with only a little mud, so walking shoes are adequate. There are **no stiles** and no nettles. Your dog is very welcome.

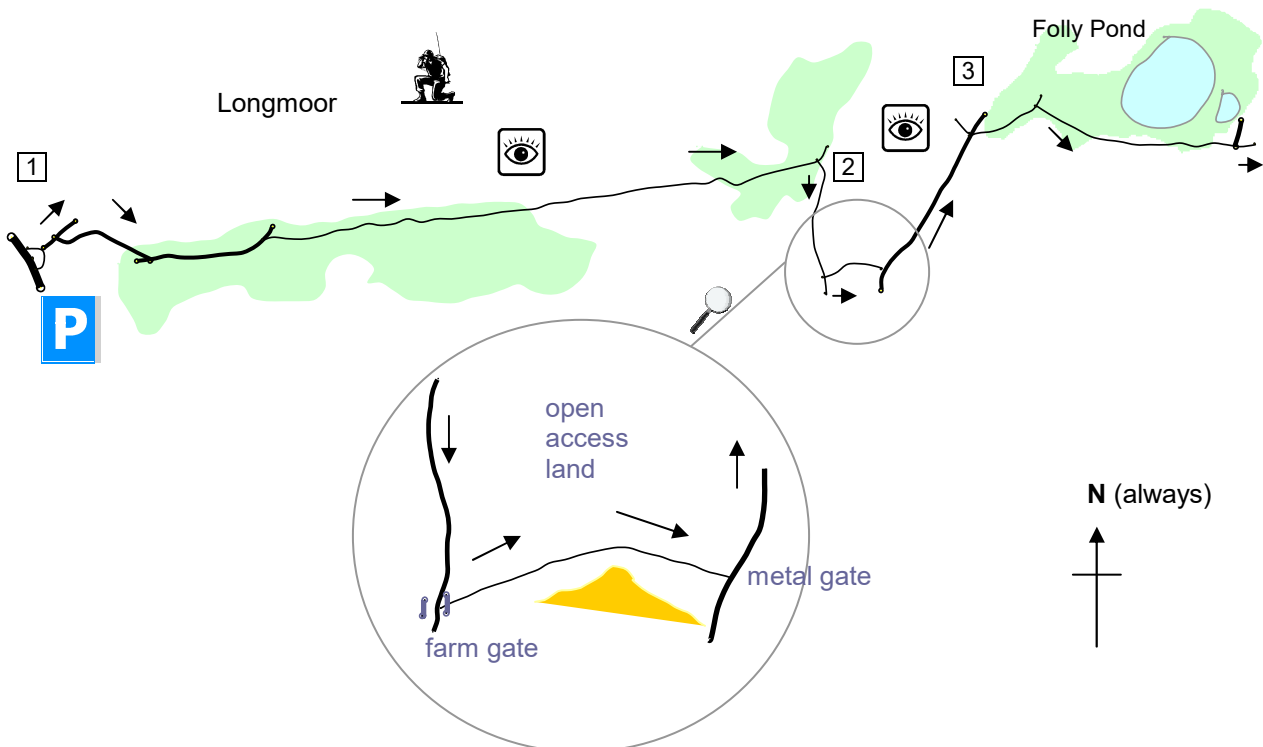


The **full walk** and the **Longmoor walk** begin at the **Forest Road** car park, grid ref 782293, www.w3w.co/grub.thumbnail.trick, postcode **GU33 7RB**, 1 mile=1½ km south of Greatham off the A3. This unnamed car park is marked on the OS map. It is on the left (east) side, about 750m (800 yds) after crossing the A3. The **Deer's Hut** walk begins at the *Deer's Hut* inn, postcode **GU30 7NY** near Liphook, Hants. There is a large car park adjoining and, although there is no notice saying "for customers only", you must make use of the pub facilities, before or after the walk (or both). For more details see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk

For the **Deer's Hut** walk, skip forward immediately and start at **Leg 3**.

Leg 1: Forest Road to Folly Pond 5½ km=3½ miles



1 Leave the car park through the metal gate beside a large steel single-bar barrier onto the main sandy track. You are on the course of the old railway and you will see more of it on the return leg. After just 40m turn **right** on another track by an information board. *Longmoor is a nature reserve with so much dry heathland acting as a haven for rare butterflies, birds and other fauna.* Keep to this main track at all times as it snakes for a while, bends right and then turns left at a fence. You will be walking in a straight line beside the fence and under wires for nearly 2 km total, enjoying the fine views to the left over the heath and further across Hampshire. [Some walkers prefer the](#)



[wide grass verge.](#) Where the main track veers left in about 1.8 km after a long gradual ascent, **leave** it by keeping straight ahead on a less prominent path. The path descends to a small hidden pond and forks. The right fork is a woodland path; the left fork stays under the wires; both ways quickly join up again. Carry straight on, eventually passing a private large metal gate on the right, after which the main path bends left past a second small metal gate. Go very sharp **right** here through the gate, almost doubling back. You are now in West Sussex. [You are also on part of the Shipwrights Way, a 50-mile path running from Alice Holt Forest to Portsmouth.](#)

2 Follow this wide footpath, keeping the fence of an extensive beautiful heathland on your left. In 400m, the path comes to a fence ahead with a gate on each side. [The heath is in fact a vast area of access land and this walk used to go left here, across the right-hand corner of the heath and out through a kissing gate at the other side \(which you can still do\), but it has now become rather hard to navigate.](#) Keep straight on for another 150m to reach a 3-way fingerposted junction by tall trees and houses. Turn sharp **left** and fork left on a wide track. *You are walking on the Sussex Border Path (SBP) a long-distance path running from Rye in the east to Emsworth in the west, with another section from East Grinstead down to near Brighton. It passes through some of the most remote and peaceful parts of Southern England.* In 750m, you come to a 4-way junction.

Decision point. [If you are doing the shorter Longmoor walk, skip to near the end of this text and do the Folly Pond Express \(north\).](#)

Fork **right** at the junction. The path becomes narrow and sunken and meets a house, *Crouch House*, on the right.

[The Deer's Hut walk re-joins the main walk here.](#)

3 Keep **right** by the wall of *Crouch House*. The path is much wider now and rhododendrons are rife. About 400m after the house, you are close to the large Folly Pond on your left. [\(If you would like a quick look at the pond, take this little diversion: turn left on a path at a clear break in the trees. This is just before where the path crosses a stream by a plastic pipe. Keep ahead to the edge of the pond where the rhododendrons permit. Return the same way.\)](#) At the brick pillars by the gate to Home Park, keep straight ahead. (The tarmac lane on the left leads past a limb of the lake.)

Leg 2: Folly Pond to the Deers Hut 4 km=2¼ miles

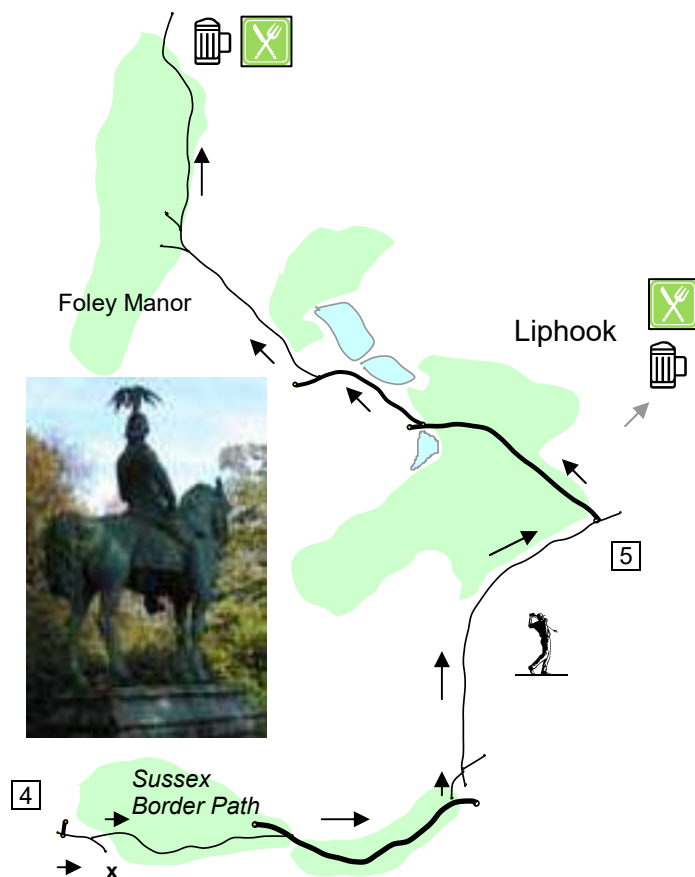
- 4 Follow this path through woods for 80m to a fingerpost. Take the **left** fork here, going past the fingerpost, thus leaving the SBP. On meeting a farm drive for *Stocklands*, cross straight over and continue ahead beside a wooden fence on your right. This path winds through woodland where a footpath soon joins you from the right. After about 300m, you meet a tarmac lane coming in from your left. Veer **right** on the lane. In about 400m, 50m before the lane goes over a railway bridge visible ahead, turn **left** at a fingerpost on a bridleway. Your bridleway bends right and, in 50m, turns **left** at a T-junction. Continue on the bridleway, immediately ignoring a signed footpath that forks right. Keep to the left of a long golf course, soon going through woodland, shortly going over a swanky new footbridge. Soon you are on a golfers' path and a wide track, back into Hampshire. At a markerpost, turn **left** by the gatehouse of Foley Estate onto an elegant driveway. (However, if you would like refreshments, you can continue straight ahead to the outskirts of Liphook where you will find in about 350m the excellent *Links pub (Fullers)* which has a high-class menu as well as panini and sandwiches. Return by the same route.)



- 5 The driveway eventually curves left and passes a small pond. At the next junction, if you have never been this way before, is a real surprise.

Hugh Rose was brought up in Berlin and perhaps his Prussian military training helped to make him one of the most able commanders in Syria, the Crimean War and India, known for his ruthless pluck. After helping put down the Mutiny he became commander-in-chief of India. He was raised to the peerage in 1866 as Baron Strathnairn. His extraordinary life story reads like the best of J.D. Farrell and Bernard Cornwell. His equestrian statue by Onslow Ford once stood at the intersection of Knightsbridge and Brompton Road in London but it was ignominiously evicted by a renovated Underground station in 1931. The owner of Foley Manor in 1964 thought the statue would add a bit of class to his gateway and bought it from Westminster Council.

Fork **right** on another driveway which passes some delectable lakes on the right. At a Y-junction, keep **right**, avoiding another private entrance to Foley Manor. *Foley Manor became a top-drawer commuter residence with the coming of the railway to Liphook in the mid-1800s, changing hands several times.* Follow the drive for 400m past a house, *Foley Hatch*, where the drive then



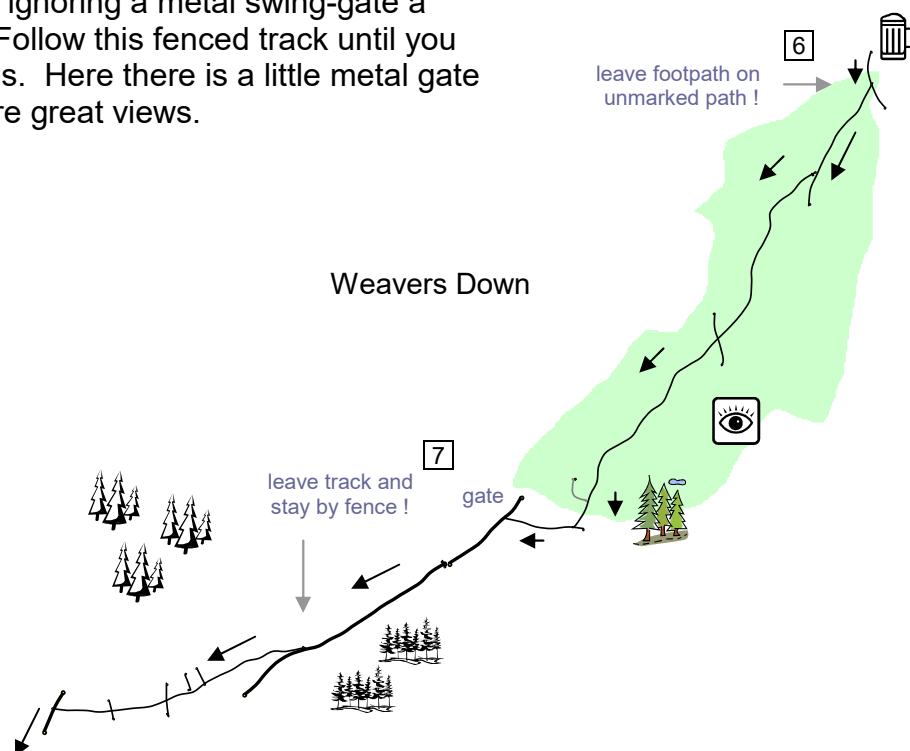
becomes a track. You soon arrive at fingerpost by another house, *Woodside*. Ignore the bridleway on your left and continue straight ahead. After around 300m the path arrives at a large metal gate : continue straight ahead, passing to the side of the gate. Follow the woodland track passing a meadow on your right. You join a drive coming from *Stagwood Lea* and, after some more houses, reach the *Deers Hut* pub (Greene King). A piece of sculpture here indicates that you are on part of the *Shipwrights Way*, a 50-mile long-distance path running from *Alice Holt Forest* to *Portsmouth*.



The Deers Hut was built as a Queen Anne Hunting Lodge in the late 1600s. Today, as well as providing good ales and food it is slap bang in the centre of a fine outdoor leisure area and is hugely popular.

Leg 3: Deers Hut to Forest Road 5½ km=3½ miles

- 6 With the pub on your left, follow a track running close to houses on your left. (If you did *not* start at the *Deer's Hut*, this means retracing your steps a short distance.) In only 80m (15m after *Woodland View*), fork **right** uphill on an unmarked, rather steep and rugged, path, thus leaving the official footpath. *Don't miss this path! The route used here is a million times better than the official track.* In 100m, your path goes over a narrow crossing path. In just over 100m more you reach a very obvious fork in the path. Take the **right** fork. Follow this twisty but always beautiful path for some distance, through the spectacular heather of *Weavers Down*. Avoid all minor turnings off and strive ever upwards, passing a fine stand of scots pines on your left. Finally, more than 1 km from the start of this path, you arrive at the top of a hillock crowned by tall pines. From here you have breathtaking views left (summer foliage permitting) including the *Folly Pond* and much of the route of this walk. Continue to the edge of the hillock and veer **right**, staying on the level, up through more pines. You soon reach a fence ahead. Turn **left** here on a major wide track. You are back on the national bridleway. In 150m you pass through a new, wide metal gate which leads to an open sandy area. Walk straight ahead to pass through the smaller of two metal gates [**see below*], ignoring a metal swing-gate a little way to its left. Follow this fenced track until you come out of the trees. Here there is a little metal gate on your left with more great views.



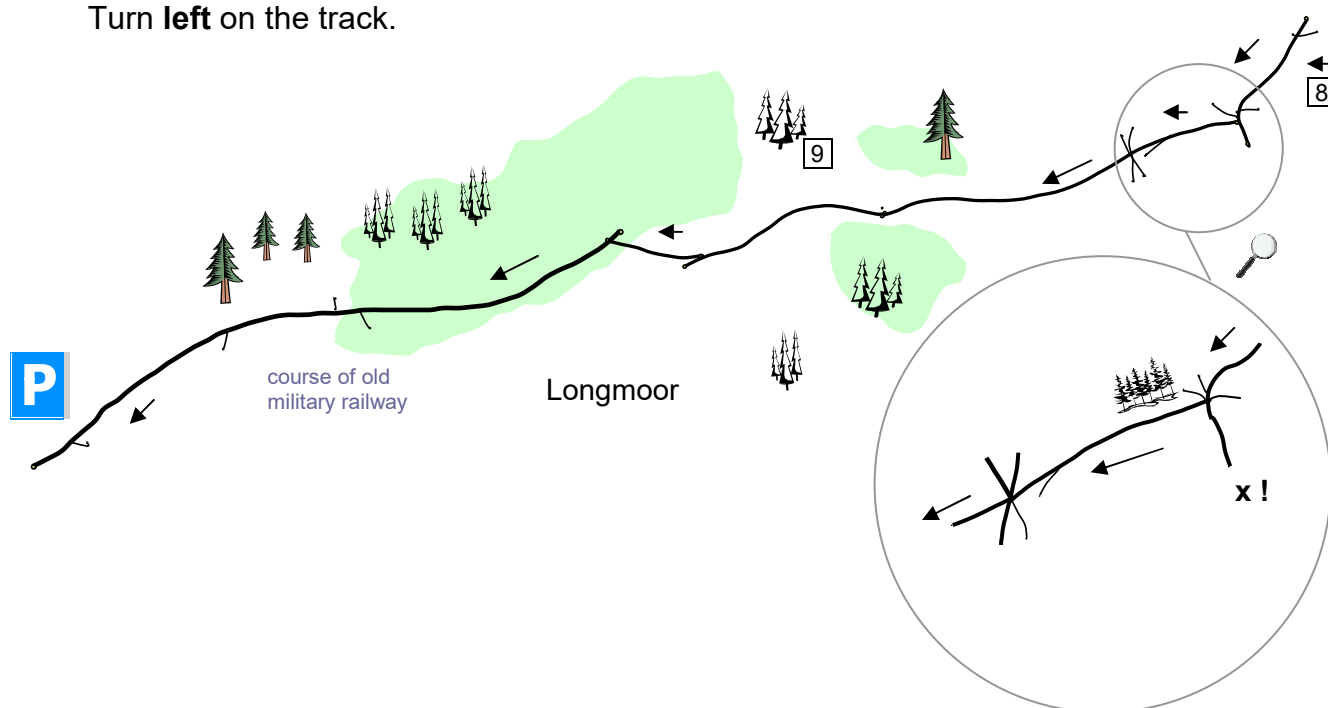
[* Feb 2023 There was a MoD warning sign about increased military action; but public bridleways are **not** affected; walker took the kissing gate to the **left** and followed the path to a T-junction, turning **left** back onto the original path, coming down from the left turn at the gate.]

Decision point. If you are doing the shorter **Deer's Hut** walk, skip to near the end of this text and do the Folly Pond Express (south). Otherwise ...

Ignore the little metal gate and continue ahead on a wide level sandy track.

The **Longmoor** walk re-joins the main walk here.

- 7 In another 250m, your track comes to a fork with the start of a fence on your right. Fork **right** here, thus leaving the broad track, following a mossy green path beside the fence. This path widens as vehicle tracks join it from the steep slope on your right. After 400m or so, your track begins to rise. After another 200m you reach the top of the hill and a broad crossing track. Turn **left** on the track.

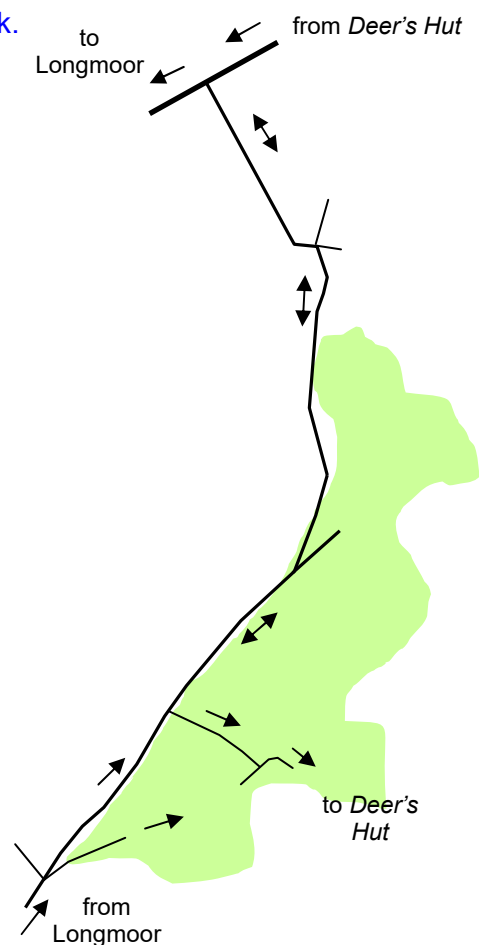


- 8 In 200m the track reaches a junction of several sandy tracks. Turn smartly **right** here on another track, with a pinewood on your right and four lone-some pines on your left. Ignoring minor turn-offs, proceed for 200m to a major junction of four very wide tracks. Cross over the first straight track and take the track directly opposite, the one which curves right. This track will take you for nearly one km, with land falling away on your right. **The hills in the distance are the Hampshire Hangers (see several walks there in this series).**
- 9 After 700m or so, the track descends and curves right. Ignore a very sandy track ahead uphill and stay on the main track as it zig-zags downhill, crosses an open area and wheels right at the bottom to a T-junction. This is the course of the old railway which ran as far as Liss Station. *Longmoor Military Railway was built in 1903 to instruct soldiers in railway matters.* Turn **left** on the track. After a straight walk of over 1 km, you finally reach the car park where the walk began.

Folly Pond Express (South) 1 km= ⅔ mile

Take this route if you are doing the shorter **Deer's Hut** walk.

Turn **left** through the gate and follow the sandy path downhill with great views to your right over Longmoor (as visited on the other optional part of this walk). Continue following a wire fence on your right. After 200m, the path curves left and you arrive at a crosspaths just before some overhead wires. Avoid the narrow sunken path ahead by veering **right** here, still on a wide path. Your path winds its way through heather and goes down through birch trees, still with a wire fence on your right. After 250m, you meet a path coming from the left along a dense line of rhododendrons. Veer **right** on this wide bridle-path, passing a 2-way fingerpost. Continue for nearly 300m and look for a post on your left with blue arrows. *Care! - easily missed.* Turn **left** here on a clear unmarked path through the undergrowth. In 100m this path leads to the entrance to *Crouch House*. Turn **left** here on a bridleway. Now re-join the main walk at Leg 1 section **3**.



Folly Pond Express (North) 1 km= ⅔ mile

Take this route if you are doing the shorter **Longmoor** walk.

Use same map as South. Ignore the path squarely left but take the **left** fork. Follow the wide path gently downhill. In 200m you pass a post with blue arrows on your right. In nearly 300m more, by a dense bank of rhododendrons, you pass a 2-way fingerpost. Fork left here, thus leaving the official bridleway, going through silver birches, following a wire fence on your left. The path winds up through heather and bracken and passes under some wires. Shortly after, you come to a junction with a narrow sunken sandy path on your right. Ignore this path and the path straight ahead and veer **left** on a wide sandy path uphill. Follow this path, fairly steeply up, soon with the wire fence on your left again. Head for a mobile phone tower and, long before reaching it, go through a modern metal gate onto a wide sandy track. Turn **left** on the track. Now re-join the main walk at Leg 3 section **7**.

Liss Station Hop 1¼ km= 1 mile

Take this route, in either direction, if you are starting or finishing in **Liss Station**.

Start: from Liss station, turn **right** on the main road and immediately turn **right** at a signpost marked *Public Footpath* and *Riverside Railway Walk, Local Nature Reserve*. Follow the track beside the railway. *This is the dismantled railway path, built by Royal Engineers to connect to Longmoor.* Soon you pass an adventure playground on your left. After about 500m, you

come over a crossing path with a bridge on each side. *There is a bench seat here and a piece of sculpture belonging to the Shipwright's Way – each piece is different, this one being "fish".* Soon you pass over the first of three unusual wooden bridges. *These bridges were built by the Royal Engineers and named after three officers – Briggs, Nightingale and Rose.* There are several other smaller bridges over side streams, connecting other hamlets to the path. After the third bridge it is only a short distance to a wooden gate, leading out to the road. Cross straight over into the Longmoor car park.

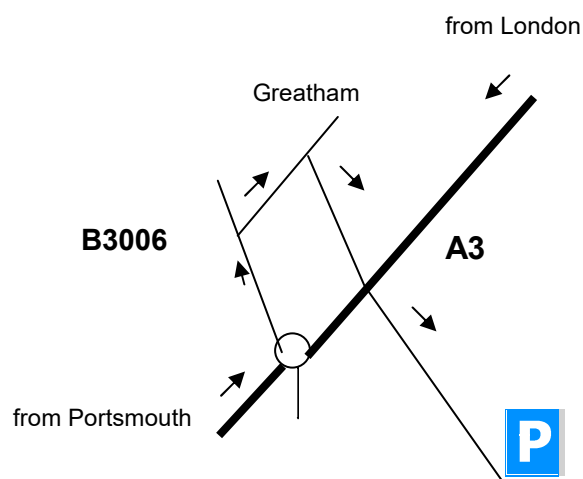
Finish: your route is identical in reverse. You come over those three big elegant wooden bridges ("Rose", "Nightingale" and "Briggs"). Finally, turn **left** on the main road to the station. Liss has a pub, the *Whistle Stop*, and some cafés.



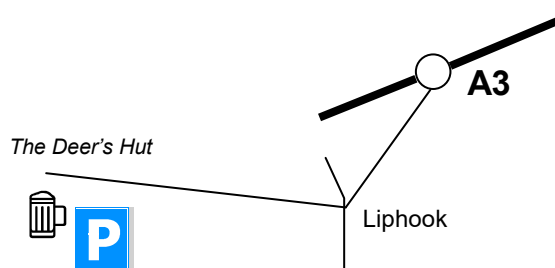
Getting there

By car:

For the **Forest Road car park Longmoor**, take the A3 to the junction with the B3006: *Liss, Selborne*. Turn off in the direction of Selborne but in 800m=½ mile turn **right** on the Petersfield Road, direction **Greatham village**. In 270m=300yds turn **right** on Forest Road. In well under 1.5 km=1 mile, find the car park on the left, 100m before the start of houses.



For the **Deer Hut**, take the A3 and turn off for Liphook. At the first roundabout in the centre of town, take the road opposite to the right (at "2 o'clock") signposted *Greatham, Griggs Green, Bohunt Centre*. The *Deer's Hut* is 1 mile on the left.



By train: **Liphook station** is less than 1 km from the walk. Walk up Station Road, turn **left** on the Portsmouth Road, fork **right** on a footpath by the *Links Inn*, turn **right** at the gatehouse of Foley Manor and pick up the walk at Leg 2 section [5]. For **Liss station**, see the **Liss Station Hop**.

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