

# Three beautiful walks...

## LAKESIDE WALK

**Distance: Approx. 1.5 miles, 3000 steps | Allow 30 minutes**

This is a gentle walk with beautiful views of the lake and resort and plenty of wildlife to enjoy. Be mindful of tree roots, rabbit holes and also cars along the Forest Mere drive.

### Directions:

Exit from the Fitness Reception and turn right along the narrow tarmac path through the wooden gates and Car Park C. Bear left passing the main entrance to Car Park D.

Keeping the wooden chalets on your left and a large rhododendron hedge on your right, follow the tarmac drive into the woods. As you approach Crouch House take the public bridleway (Sussex Border Path) on the left just before the brick wall.

Pass under or around a fallen tree (detour path to your left). Re-joining the main path continue straight ahead taking care through often wet and muddy patches. The path then becomes quite sandy with many exposed tree roots. Glimpses of the lake can be seen between the trees and rhododendron bushes on your left. Beyond the partial barbed wire fence to your right fields and outbuildings form part of the Liphook Equine Veterinary Hospital. Carry on your way until you reach the brick columns and entrance to Home Park on the right.

Head left down the drive and enjoy views of a smaller section of Folly Pond to the left. Herons often nest in the tops of the trees on the far side of this part of the lake at certain times of the year. They can sometimes be seen in flight in the early hours of the day. Just before reaching a T-junction in the drive, another short bridleway will appear on your left-hand side. You can choose to use this route (cutting off the corner) but take care over uneven ground and more tree roots. The path soon joins the main Champneys drive. Remember to look out for traffic on your right as you emerge from the wood. (Should you prefer not to use this shortcut then simply continue to the T-junction, turn left and pass between the Champneys signs.)

Head alongside the lake with rhododendrons bordering the drive to the right and enjoy a breathtaking view of the resort across the water. As the drive gently inclines, take the right fork passing Car Parks A & B. Return through Car Park C and the wooden gates, bearing left at the end of the tarmac path to bring you back to the Fitness Department and the starting point of your walk.

*Please remove muddy footwear before entering the building. You are encouraged to use our boot room facility to clean your outdoor boots and trainers. Thank you.*

## COUNTRY HIKE

**Distance: Approx. 3 miles, 7000+ steps | Allow 60 to 90 minutes**

A varied walk with something of interest for everyone. Some gentle gradients but mostly on the flat. Paths can be wet in winter but alternative routes are available. The route follows public bridleways or footpaths throughout.

### Directions:

Turn right out of the main reception and follow the drive down to the mere (lake). Take the first bridleway on the left (opposite the lake). Continue straight ahead on this path (ignoring a fork to the right) until you reach a crossroad of paths.

Take a right turn (ignore left fork) and make your way past three privately owned cottages on your right. Note these are spaced apart along the route. At a green gate the path divides. Continue straight ahead. At the next fork take the right path, then bear left between the silver birch trees. Stay on this path with a barbed wire fence to your right and continue your walk through the wood.

Then veer left a little away from the fence to join a rough stony track with two houses in front of you. Turn left past 'Woodside' and a barn marked 'private'. Stay on this main track pausing for a moment to admire the llamas and alpacas often to be seen grazing in the field to your right.

Walk up a slight incline and through the opening to the left of the gate ahead of you. Continue up the lane past other houses, 'Wrights Cottage' and 'Hollywood', then a little further on 'Woodland View' and 'Horseshoes'.

You have now reached a green with the Deers Hut pub ahead of you on your right. Bearing left join the tarmac drive. Turn left and head uphill. Ignore footpaths to the left by a small grassy, brambly island and take the larger track immediately after, also to the left. This is signed 'Shipwrights Way' and directly opposite an Old Thorns speed/ramp sign. Continue uphill with views of the Old Thorns development appearing to the right, along with 'Weavers Cottage' and 'Nut Tree Cottage' signs. Stay on this wide track passing further houses on your right including 'Sweet Briar Farm'. Enjoy views of the golf course also a little further ahead on your right.

Ignoring other paths, continue gently upwards towards a seven-bar metal gate. Go around the gate to a sandy clearing. Ahead and to the right you will see MOD signs and other gates (Longmoor military training area). Don't go through the top gate. Instead bear left and use the kissing gate (right) to lead you downhill. Follow this uneven track taking care over exposed tree roots (especially if wet!). Turn left upon reaching the fence. Mind the stones and eroded ground as you continue downwards.

At the next little crossing of paths bear right and follow this main path as it inclines very slightly (ignore right gate) before bringing you further down the hill. At the bottom take the left fork in the path, then turn right, and immediately left through the rhododendron bushes. This will bring you out into Car Park B. Follow the drive around to the right and return through Car Park C and along the path leading back into Champneys resort.

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## FLORA THOMPSON HIKE

(Whole route: approx. 6 miles, 2½ hours, 13000 steps)

(Shortcut back to Champneys 1: approx. 3¼ miles, 1¼ hours, 7000+ steps)

(Shortcut back to Champneys 2: approx. 4 miles, 1¾ hours, 9000 steps)

### FLORA THOMPSON HIKE | SHORTCUT 1

Exit from the Fitness Reception and turn right along the narrow tarmac path through the wooden gates and Car Park C. Bear left passing the main entrance to Car Park D. Keeping the wooden chalets on your left and a large rhododendron hedge on your right, follow the tarmac drive into the woods. As you approach Crouch House take the public bridleway (Sussex Border Path) on the left just before the brick wall. Pass under or around a fallen tree (detour path to your left). Re-joining the main path continue straight ahead taking care through often wet and muddy patches. The path then becomes quite sandy with many exposed tree roots. Glimpses of the lake can be seen between the trees and rhododendron bushes on your left. Beyond the partial barbed wire fence to your right fields and outbuildings form part of the Liphook Equine Veterinary Hospital. Carry on your way until you reach the brick columns and entrance to Home Park on the right.

Cross straight over the tarmac drive to join the public bridleway opposite. Take the right fork a little ahead. Follow the path for a few minutes passing under an old brick arch (railway bridge). Immediately bear right. At the next split of the path either route is okay, but you will need to weave around fallen trees. Continue ahead. Another fork will soon appear. Bear right and pass through the small wooden lever gate. The path gently inclines. Carry straight on. A few minutes later, having passed through another small wooden lever gate, you will have reached a large, tarmacked area and junction of ways. The entrance to Chapel Common will be on your left. With your back to the gate, follow the drive directly opposite the Common (other drives to the right lead to private dwellings).

Nearing the end of this wide, tree lined drive, notice the patch of woodland to your right. During the month of May, beautiful bluebells can usually be seen growing here. Turn right at the T-junction ahead. (FYI, a left turn along this country road leads into Rake, adjacent to the Primary School.) Carry straight on, passing a lovely old house on the left. Ignore the next left turn in the road. You will soon reach Langley Road railway bridge. Crossing over leads to another junction of paths.

At this point a quicker route back to Champneys is available:

SHORTCUT 1 - Follow the main track bearing right. Some Shetland ponies can often be seen on the right. Ignore the track to 'Queens Arbour'. Follow the bridleway past 'Derby Cottage' and 'Allington Cottage', both on the left, and enter the woods by a large tree trunk post. Carry on ahead and a few minutes later at the next crossing of paths, go straight over. Mind the stones, tree roots, and very uneven terrain, especially when wet! Ignore a path off to the right. A little further on, fork right to avoid a seasonal large puddle!

At the finger post (with white arrow on blue disc) bear right and immediately right again between the rhododendron bushes, emerging into Car Park B. Mind the kerb! Bear right along the drive returning through Car Park C and the wooden gates. At the end of the tarmac path turn left.

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## FLORA THOMPSON HIKE | SHORTCUT 2

If continuing with the whole route, bear left a little at the large junction of paths and you will see a short track leading to a double garage with green doors. Take the slightly uphill path to the left of this track (the path on the far left is private). At the top of the incline (gate on right) take the left fork in the path. A little further on, take another left fork. This will soon re-join the path running alongside on the right.

Carry on ahead enjoying views away to the right. Pass through a small metal lever gate and continue uphill in the same direction. Notice Longmoor military training area signs on the left. (Don't worry, it's perfectly safe for you to walk here if you stay on the path!) Enjoy this beautiful woodland. You will shortly pass another metal lever gate to the right and further MOD signs to the left.

Continue along this bridleway still heading steadily upwards. Take care over the embedded stones at the top of this little rise, especially when wet!

After the next slightly steeper climb, notice a radio mast towering above you to the left and more lovely views to the right. Pause at the larger metal gate to admire the scenery. Go past a smaller metal lever gate on the right and further MOD danger signs on the left. For this walk carry on straight ahead towards a large 7-bar metal gate crossing the path.

(FYI, the fork to the left leads to the top of Weavers Down close to the mast, but be warned, it is a much steeper path, very rutted, and uneven. An alternative safer route to the top amongst the trees can be found from this side of the 7-bar gate and left of the Longmoor military training area black and white fold down sign.)

To continue our main walk, go through the small metal lever gate to the right of the large gate. This will bring you to a sandy clearing.

There is another opportunity here to take a quicker route back to Champneys:

SHORTCUT 2 - Bear right through the kissing gate and head downhill. Follow this uneven track taking care over exposed tree roots, especially if wet! Turn left on reaching the fence. Mind the stones and eroded ground as you continue downwards. At the next little crossing of paths bear right and continue along this main path as it inclines very slightly (ignore right gate) before bringing you further down the hill. At the bottom take the left fork in the path, then turn right, and immediately left through the rhododendron bushes. This will bring you out into Car Park B. Follow the drive around to the right and return through Car Park C and the wooden gates. At the end of the tarmac path turn left.

## FLORA THOMPSON HIKE | FULL ROUTE

Carry on straight ahead for the next section of the Flora Thompson Hike, and around a second large gate in front of you. Alongside this wide track parts of Old Thorns golf course will soon come into view on the left. Continue in the same direction heading downhill ignoring other paths on each side. A little further along, notice a few houses on the left including 'Sweet Briar Farm'. You will also overlook the Old Thorns complex on the left and pass 'Nut Tree Cottage' and 'Weavers Cottage' signs. The bottom of the track joins Old Thorns tarmac drive. Walk a few paces right further down the hill and then bear right by some wooden posts.

The Deers Hut pub can be seen away to the left with picnic benches on a little green. Continue to bear right in front of a row of cottages, past 'Woodland View' and follow the wide track ahead. Ignore a narrow path to the right. After passing 'Hollywood' and 'Wrights Cottage' you will reach a gate crossing the path. Go around the gate and ignore a small path on the right. Llamas and alpacas can often be seen grazing in a field to the left. Carry on along this wide stony track and past a barn on the left marked 'private'.

Directly opposite 'Woodside' you will see a signed bridleway on the right. Enter the woodland here. Immediately keep left on the main path and pass under a low branch. Mind the exposed tree roots. Bear left again and stay on this path. Keep right and follow the path a little further along and around the bend until it joins the path running alongside the barbed wire fence (low branches on your left).

Carry on straight ahead keeping to this more defined path as it meanders to the right. Again, this path will soon re-join the path running alongside the fence. Step over a fallen tree keeping to the left.

A large property will soon appear on the left. Go past the green gate on your left and straight on. Pass a small cottage on the left with views of fields and possibly horses, and then a third larger cottage signed 'Boundary'. At the gatepost marked 'private' take the right fork. Keep walking in the same direction until you reach a crossroad of paths.

Now turn left. Views of Forest Mere will emerge to the right. The end of this path will join the Champneys main drive. Turn right, and please keep right passing Car Parks A & B. Return through Car Park C and the wooden gates, bearing left at the end of the tarmac path to bring you back to the Fitness Department. WELL DONE, YOU MADE IT!