



Fritham New Forest Trail

A moderately demanding walk through ancient forest and open heath with some steep hill climbs. Tiptoe past an historic gunpowder factory

Essential Facts

- Route distance: 14.2 km (8.9 miles)
- Approximate time: 4 hours
- Approx. total ascent: 251 metres
- Start point Grid Ref: SU 230 141
- GPS Ref: SU 23012 14130
- Recommended O.S. Map: OL 22
- Toughness Rating: Hampshire 3

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

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CHALLENGE ?

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THE ROUTE

The walk begins at the Forestry Commission car park at Fritham, in the New Forest west of Southampton. From the car park, **S**, turn back towards the road and before reaching the car park entrance, turn left onto the cycle trail, signed Frogham.

Follow the dry gravel track as it descends gradually. To your right, you pass the site of Eyeworth Lodge and the former Schultze gunpowder factory. Keep following the trail into the woods as it bears to the left, ignoring the track to your right. Continue ahead for 600 metres, and then leave the cycle route where it bends to the right, **A**.

Turn left onto a pathway taking you gently uphill. Remain on this track as it forks right, **B**, ignoring any side paths. Continue in a southerly direction, rising to the top of the hill to enjoy extensive views over Fritham Plain.

The path swings towards the trees and merges with a major pathway entering Sloden Enclosure. Ignore this route and continue ahead for a few metres; the way is not clear on the ground or map! At the junction with a gravel track, take the grassy footpath into the woodland, keeping to the Enclosure fence on your right. Continue ahead.

The footpath crosses earthworks and continues past a forest clearing, veering left at the gate marked '58', on your right. Where a path merges from the left, continue on either of two parallel paths. Walk ahead, at all times ignoring side paths as you keep to the crest of the hill, and head towards the site of the Royal Hunting Lodge. There are no visible remains. Your route emerges from the woodland, and then descends the hill to a junction with a cycle trail, at **C**. Turn right, and follow the track. Continue through a gate, to enter Sloden Enclosure, first enclosed in 1775.

At the T-junction, turn left onto the gravel track. Continue ahead in a north-westerly direction, again ignoring side paths. The track passes through two gates, and then crosses a bridge before bearing right. Notice the carved bench, dedicated to Eric Ashby MBE, a naturalist and wildlife film-maker.

Keep to the main route, turning right at **D**. The gravel track continues through Alderhill and Amberwood Enclosures, swinging north-west to an Y-junction after 800 metres. Keep left and ahead, gently climbing Gaze Hill, before emerging through a gate onto open heath land. Continue in the same direction, through the heather, to shortly meet a gravel cycle trail, **E**. Turn right, then follow the track to the Enclosure gate '17', on your right, and the marker to Steephill. Leave the cycle route here, turning left.

Your walk continues ahead for about 3 km to Bramshaw Telegraph, a signalling station during the Napoleonic Wars. En route looking west, you pass a World War Two bombing range and military testing site, while to the east, Islands Thorns Enclosure was the site of a Roman pottery industry.

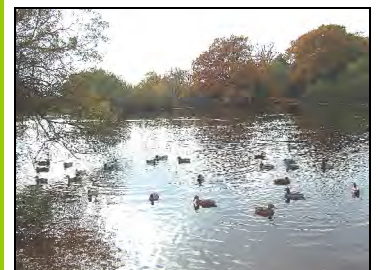
The track emerges at the B3080. Turn right along the road verge, for 700 metres, before turning right again, at **F**. Passing through the barrier, head towards the trees and continue walking in a south-westerly direction. Where three tracks converge at **G** (not reflected on the map!), turn abruptly left onto an indistinct pathway heading downhill into the valley. Ford the very shallow stream, which should not be a problem if wearing walking boots, and continue ahead. Turn right onto the cycle trail.



The Trail To Frogham



The Black Post Box



Eyeworth Pond
New Forest

The gravel path passes Eyeworth Pond and its car park, to emerge at a road, **H**. Turn left, then after 500 metres turn right into the car park, **S**. Notice the black post box at the entrance, erected to save the postman a journey to the gunpowder factory.

To avoid crossing the stream, continue ahead at **G**, and follow the gravel track ahead as it veers right between the holly bushes. The woodland path, muddy and indistinct in places, continues south towards Fritham. Passing Eyeworth Pond, rejoin the main route at **H**, continuing uphill and ahead, to return to **S**.

Refreshment

The Royal Oak
Public House
Fritham
Tel: 02380 812606
Real ale, lunches

Green Dragon
Public House
Brook, Bramshaw
Tel: 02380 813359
Bar food, coffee, real ale.
Restaurant and garden.

The Bell Inn
Public House
Brook
Tel: 02380 812214
Village pub with snacks
& meals



The Bell Inn

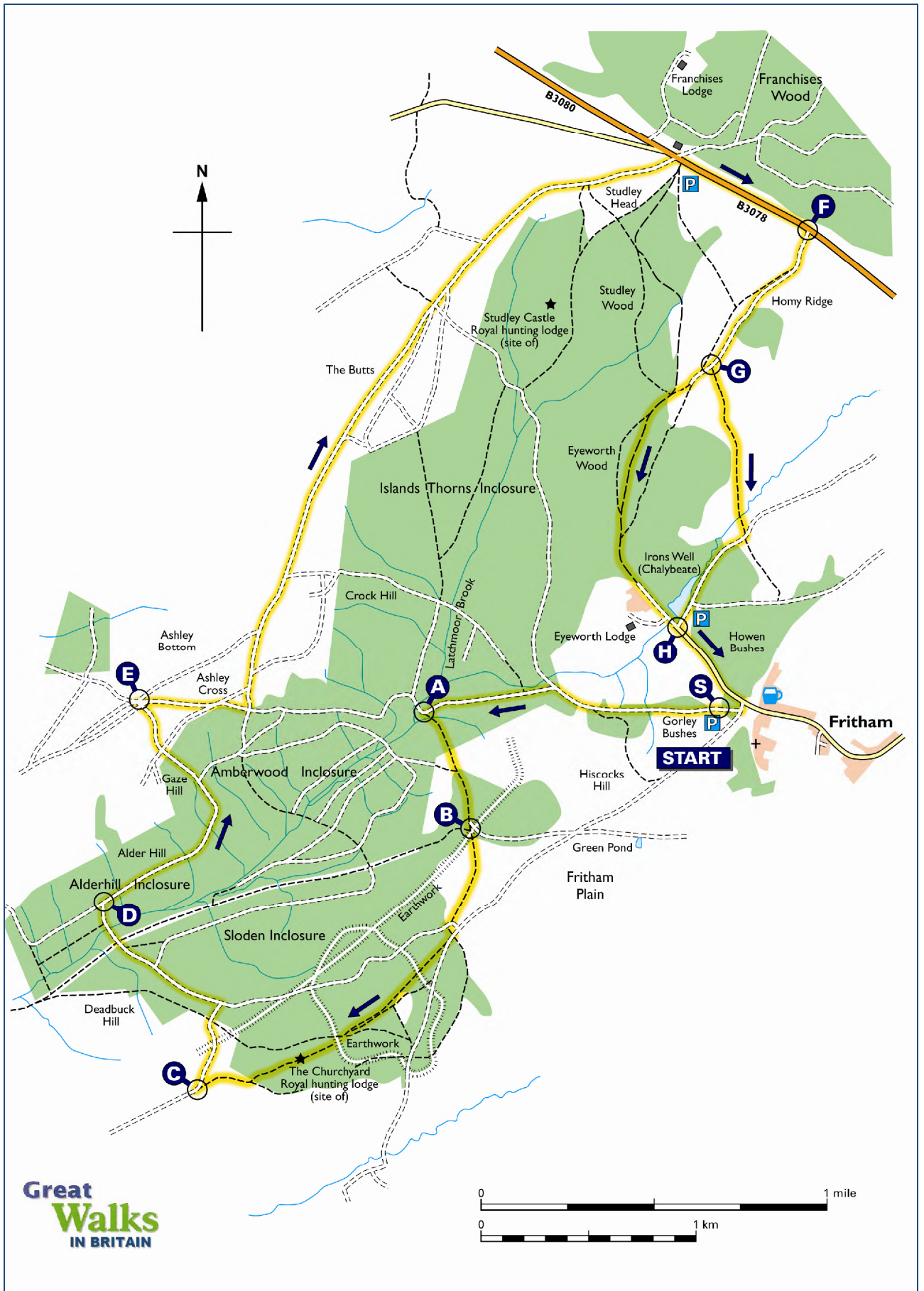
LOCAL INFO

Eyeworth Lodge, former Royal Hunting Lodge, was the site of a gunpowder factory in the mid nineteenth century. Taken over by Eduard Schultze, it began producing smokeless powder on an industrial scale from locally sourced components. Becoming a major employer in the region, production continued through the First World War, until 1923, when the factory was sold.

Eyeworth Pond, created for the supply of water to the factory, is now a haven for wildlife. Iron-rich waters were thought to cure leprosy in medieval times, and a 'holy well' existed where the pond is today.

FRITHAM NEW FOREST TRAIL G.P.S. WAYPOINTS

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF		CO-ORDINATES		ELEVATION: Metres
FRI S	S	SU	23012	14130	120
FRI A	A	SU	21628	14111	77
FRI B	B	SU	21834	13598	96
FRI C	C	SU	20575	12364	80
FRI D	D	SU	20125	13214	63
FRI E	E	SU	20306	14161	105
FRI F	F	SU	23422	16361	126
FRI G	G	SU	22959	15723	119
FRI H	H	SU	22806	14523	81



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MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	M6 Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	A23 Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	B2116 Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Hampshire & New Forest** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Hampshire may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route in the Brecon Beacons..