

03 HAMPSHIRE FRITHAM & THE RUFUS STONE

▶ Distance: 7 miles/11.5km ▶ Time: 4½ hours ▶ Grade: Moderate



Visiting the Rufus Stone, just after Point 3.

PHOTO: TOM BAILEY



CHOSEN BY... NICK HALLISSEY

This walk pulls together some of the finest scenery in the New Forest, including both its archetypal landscapes of dense forestry and open heathland, as well as two very pleasant ponds. The walk has its apex at the Rufus Stone, which allegedly marks the site of an oak tree where King William II (known as Rufus, and son of the Conqueror) died after being accidentally struck by an arrow while hunting. There is still much mystery and disagreement about elements of the story: Accident? Murder? Conspiracy? A curse? Did it even happen here? But whatever the truth,

this is a gorgeous walk bookmarked by two fine pubs: the Royal Oak at the start/end point, and the Sir Walter Tyrrell (named after the accidental kingslayer) halfway round.

1 Start Leave village green and pass pub L. Head E on lane. After ½ mile, at first junction by village green, turn R on lane. At next junction by small green, take L fork and continue to reach Forest Road. Cross to far side and enter woodland, veering R on wide grassy path. Where path splits, take R fork over heathland, reaching edge of car park. Turn L on path roughly E, down between two plantations. Pass through gap in fence to reach crossing track at bottom.

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking Gorley Buses car park in Fritham, grid ref SU230141, postcode SO43 7HJ. Also street parking close to Royal Oak pub

Is it for me? Clearly marked heathland paths and forest tracks all the way; dogs on leads over access land. One stretch on quiet lanes

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town

Fordingbridge

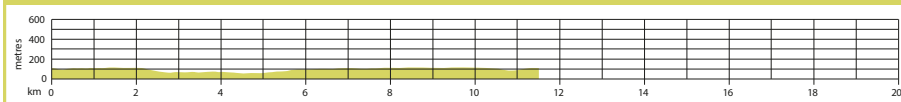
Refreshments Royal Oak pub at Fritham; Sir Walter Tyrrell pub at Upper Canterton (02380 813170)

Public toilets None

Public transport Very limited: Hampshire Community Transport bus 31 Minstead-Totton to Fritham on Tue and Fri only (bustimes.org)

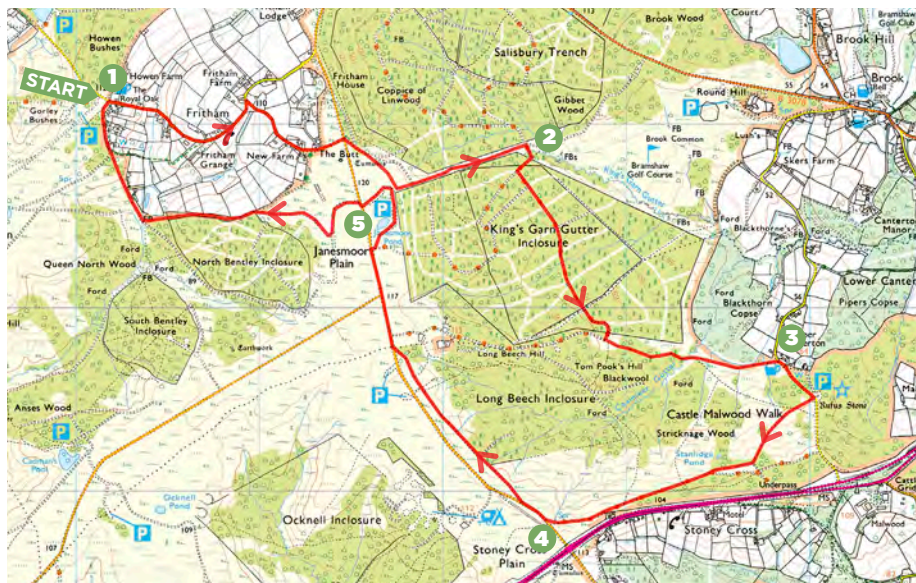
Maps OS Explorer OL22; Landranger 195

GRADIENT PROFILE



03 HAMPSHIRE
FRITHAM & THE RUFUS STONE▶ OS Explorer map OL22 ▶ Buy maps at: [ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop](https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop)

©CROWN COPYRIGHT 2022. ORDNANCE SURVEY MEDIA 004/22



2 **1¼ miles/2.8km**
Turn R, pass through gate and continue on track which soon veers R. At first junction, turn L on broad track into King's Garn Gutter Inclosure. Continue for just over ½ mile, eventually passing through gate. As track veers sharp R to join metalled track, turn L on path heading into woodland. Path becomes prominent and stony, passing through clearings and down to cross Coalmeer Gutter (ford). Pass through next clearing and continue on main path, ignoring forks. Path opens onto wide heath to Sir Walter Tyrrell pub.

3 **3 miles/5km**
Turn R on lane (or L if

exiting pub) and follow to small open green, R, home of the Rufus Stone marker. Turn R, heading SW over clearing then passing through gap in bushes. Continue uphill over heathland to reach crossing track. Turn R and follow track, parallel to A31. (Detour R to scenic Stanlidge Pond if desired.) Continue on track for just under 1 mile, to reach Forest Road.

4 **4½ miles/7.1km**
Turn R and follow path beside road for 1 mile, crossing access track to Beechwoods campsite and continuing to reach access track to scenic Janesmoor Pond. Circle round pond, then at far end, cross grass back to road.

5 **5½ miles/9.3km**
Cross road and follow track on far side (W). Just after track veers sharp L, take first metalled track R and follow round north edge of North Bentley Inclosure. Track becomes enclosed and descends through woods. Cross footbridge. Turn R, climbing on track which then passes L of large white house. Follow track uphill to reach Fritham village green and car park. **CW**

VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:
[walk1000miles.co.uk/cwroutes](https://www.walk1000miles.co.uk/cwroutes)

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



© Country Walking August 2022

DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING

