

A BOOT UP THE HAMPSHIRE HANGERS

REPRINT

Mike Cope

The Hampshire Hangers are a belt of ancient woodland that clings to the steep slopes of the Chalk and Upper Greensand scarps, that stretch from Langrish to Binsted. The term 'hanger' is derived from an old English word 'hangra', meaning a wooded slope.

The area around the Hampshire Hangers has inspired many writers and artists. Selborne is associated with the eighteenth century curate Gilbert White, author of the 'Natural History of Selborne', and one of the founding fathers of natural history recording. Steep was where Edward Thomas found the inspiration and material for the majority of his poetry. Jane Austen spent the last eight years of her life at Chawton, writing and revising her great romantic comedies.

The village of Selborne lies at the heart of the Hampshire Hangers. Of the ten selected walks in this book, six of the routes are along the Chalk Hangers to the south of the village, and the remaining four are largely confined to the Upper Greensand Hangers to the north and east. They range from 4½ - 9¼ miles and suit the needs of families, groups of friends or individuals looking for a gentle stroll or a longer walk, and reflect the many varied facets of the area – its people, its history, and its landscape and will help first time visitors to experience some of the great scenery the area has to offer. Many of the walks feature a pub along the route.

Halsgrove's new-format guidebook, containing maps, photographs and useful information will ensure a great walking experience. Packed with colour, the book is an ideal reminder of a visit to the Hampshire Hangers



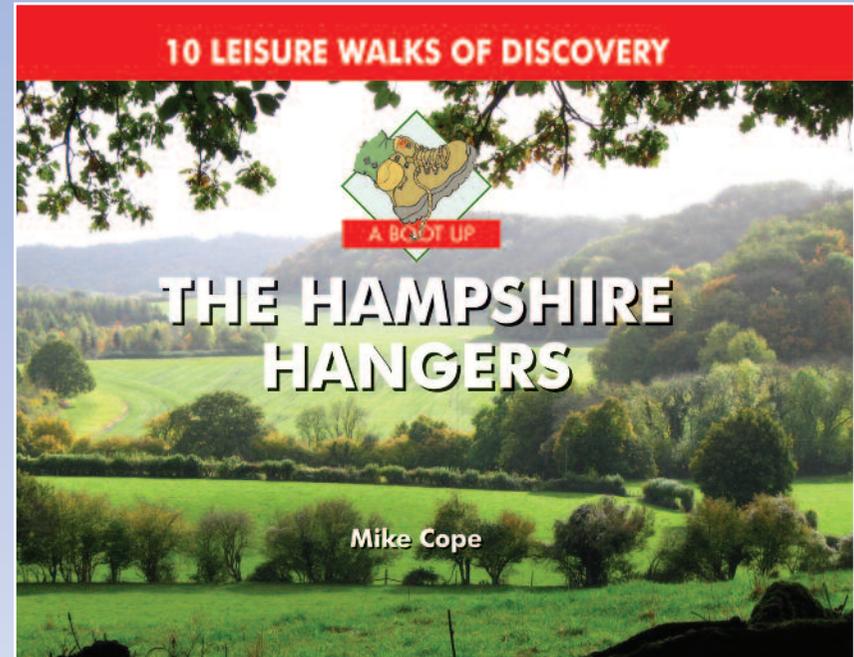
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Cope lives in Woking, Surrey and has been walking the Surrey countryside on a regular basis with local and national walking groups for over 20 years. He is a freelance writer for *Country Walking* magazine, and has published over 30 walking routes for Surrey, Hampshire and Staffordshire. In 1995, he became a member of the Edward Thomas Fellowship, and has been captivated by the Hampshire Hangers countryside ever since. He has a Ph.D. in analytical chemistry, and when he isn't walking or writing, works as a lab manager for a multinational pharmaceutical company.

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The Rhenish Helm bell tower of Hawkley church



Grassed-over chalk pit on Noar Hill



Left: View from the top of the Zig Zag Path



Detail from St Francis window in Selborne church



Above: Footbridge near St John's Hill

Below: Admiring the view from the Shoulder of Mutton Hill

Example of a double-page spread.

1

11 Go left along enclosed path, cross a stile and then bear right along tressid lane near horse paddocks. Cross another stile and when you reach a main road, turn left.

12 Take the first right along Bell Hill Ridge road. When this tarmac tapers off, keep ahead along enclosed path.

The grounds of Beales School

Sheep and Ashford Hanger

13 At the next junction, bear left along the Hangers Way. When you reach a road, turn left along it, and keep ahead at the next right hand bend, over Sheep House Nursing Home.

14 Re-cross the A2 at the footbridge, then go immediately right. Keep ahead along an enclosed path, past the playing fields of Beales School, until you reach Sheep church.

In the church of All Saints, Sheep there are two memorial windows, designed and engraved by Laurence Whistler, to commemorate the centenary of Edward Thomas's birth. The windows were dedicated in 1978 by the poet R.S.Thomas.

2

The Warren and Hoppersnapper Hanger

Explore hanging woods that tumble down the slopes of a deep chalk comb on this 5 1/2 mile circuit

The White Horse has - at 255 metres above sea level - a Hampshire's highest peak. In 1914, Edward Thomas said it was the setting for one of his finest prose poems: 'Up in the Wind'. In the lower half of the poem, the 'cockney' 'bombed' expresses her indignation for the wind that keeps her steady at night and her wail when it blows the sign down. The reason for her being there is a chronicle of coincident, personal destinies and demographic shifts. Despite not having a signboard, every message to find their way by the 'Up with no wind'.

By the Largest Day Beer Festival, which takes place on the nearest weekend to the Solstice.

Signpost near Hawkley Hanger

Level: 100
Length: 5.5 miles (8.5 km)
Terrain: Some slight descent, around the Warren one can achieve some of Hampshire's highest
Park and view: The White Horse (100m) on a road, from here
Start with 53 714295
Postcode: GU26 1DA
Public Transport: Train to start, but Central line has bus 93 stops at Mount Corner
Refreshments and facilities: The White Horse Inn and several Pubs here, also a cafe in the local

