

# Whitefield Moor: Short and Long Loop

Take in the scenery of Ober Water on this beautiful walk.



To A35

## Key:

- Trail Starting Point
- Whitefield Moor Short
- Whitefield Moor Long
- Point of Interest
- Car Park
- Trail Steps

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# Whitefield Moor: Short and Long Loop

## Take in the scenery of Ober Water on this short or long loop

Starting from Whitefield Moor car park, this walk passes along gravel tracks through a variety of habitats around Ober Water – including heathland with gorse and bog, grassland, natural and formerly enclosed woodland, and Ober Water stream itself.

Ober Water bridge is a great spot to look out for many of the birds, animals and plants of the New Forest, including kingfishers perching beside the forest stream. The walk also gives you a chance to look for red deer on the heath and woodpeckers in the woodland – keep your eyes peeled!

The ponies and other animals you see grazing all belong to people known as Commoners. Common rights are attached to properties in and around the New Forest rather than to any individual. Someone who makes use of the common rights attached to their property is known as a practising commoner.

The common rights have been in effect since 1069 after William the Conqueror named and designated the New Forest as a Royal Hunting reserve. To protect the game, he introduced Forest Law to the area removing the Saxon farmers and establishing the Verderers to prevent poaching. In exchange, the local population were given various rights including grazing their animals within the hunting reserve.

The five common rights are Pasture, the right to graze livestock, including ponies, cattle and donkeys and also some sheep (under a separate common right); Pannage or mast, the right to turn out pigs during the 'pannage' season in the autumn to feed; Estovers or fuelwood, the right to cut wood for fuel.

To protect the Ancient and Ornamental woodland, commoners who exercise the right of Estovers are now provided with firewood from timber plantations by Forestry England. The final two rights are no longer exercised for similar reasons. They are Turbary, the right to cut turf for fuel, and Marl, the right to dig clay to spread on and improve fields.



## Trail Overview

**Start/finish:** Whitefield Moor car park.  
Grid reference SU 274 026  
[what3words.com/solicitor.indoors.radiated](http://what3words.com/solicitor.indoors.radiated)

**Ordnance Survey map:** Explorer OL 22 New Forest.

**Distance:** 1 mile (1.6 km) or 1.6 mile (2.6 km) – Both under 1 hour.

**Local facilities:** Whitefield Moor car park has five accessible parking bays.

## Directions

### 1 Whitefield Moor

At the car park look out for the tall wooden trail head with the information board. From the trail head follow the signs down a gravel track towards woodland. Cross a wooden bridge then head right, past Puttles Bridge car park and continue along into woodland with the river on your right

### 2 Riverside walk

Follow the river through the woodland, looking out for the waymarkers which help you avoid the muddiest parts of the trail. The woods open out slightly as you come across the first river crossing. Turn right and go across the wooden bridge following the path onto heather covered heathland. For the longer walk keep going until you reach the second bridge

### 3 Heathlands and Lawns (Shorter Trail)

Follow the path across the heathland heading towards a tree line. Once past the tree line you enter the flat grassy areas known as 'lawns'. Head right at the marker post and follow the lawn back to the car park soon visible on the horizon

### 4 The Second Bridge (Longer trail)

Turn right across the second bridge and follow a tree lined path which eventually opens out. Turn right at the red-banded marker post keeping the tree line on the right and heading back to the car park over the grassy lawns.



**Accessibility:** A moderate gradient leads down to, and then back up from, the river with limited resting places. There are no gates along the trails but there are three bridges which can develop small lips when the surface becomes eroded. Whitefield Moor car park has plenty of room to accommodate visitors, including disabled parking, toilets and disabled toilets.