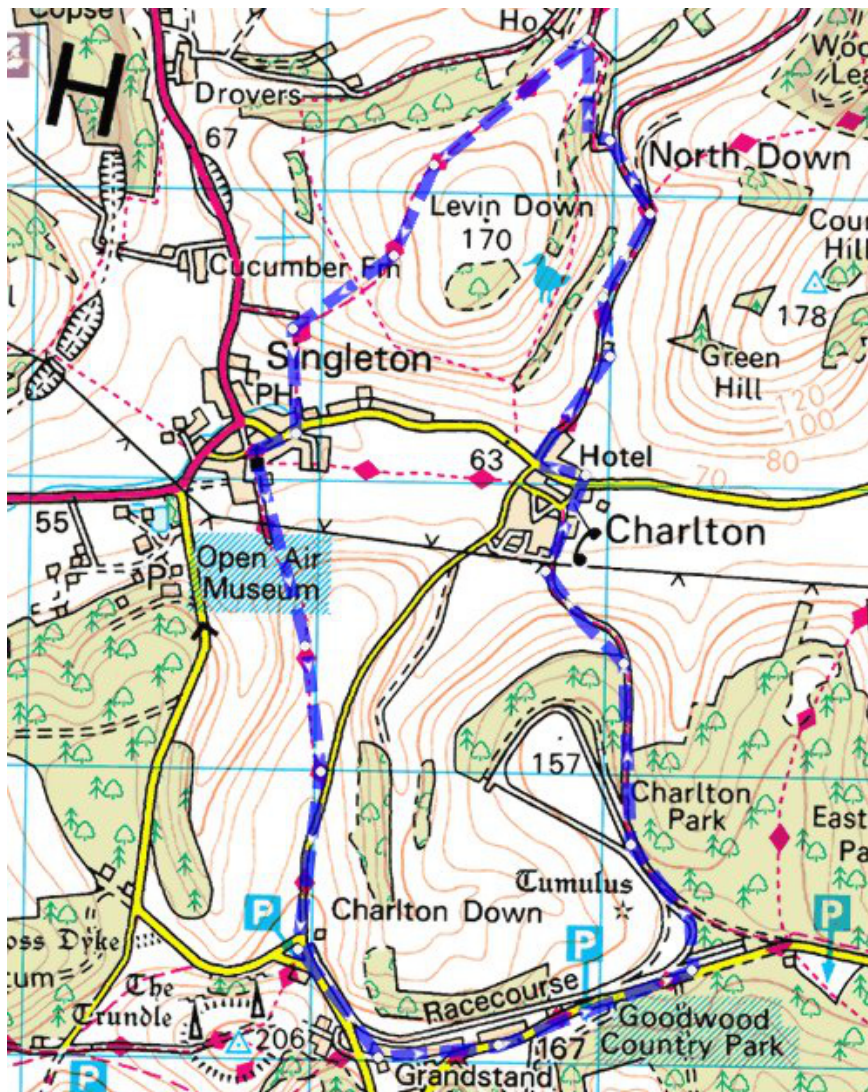

Favourite Nature Rambles Around Chichester

by David & Lynda Thornley

The Downs Around Goodwood



This walk starts off at Goodwood Race Course then heads up to Levin Down taking in Charleton and Singleton before returning to the Trundle.

It's just over 5 and a half miles which is mainly easy going bridleways so is good if it's wet; although the climbs are moderate there are some amazing views. Unfortunately it's not one of the best walks for dogs as there's lots of game and livestock about so they need to be kept under control for much of the time.

The start is at the car park just north of the Trundle which overlooks the race course. The first part of the walk is around the entrance and main stands of the course which is usually deserted apart from the occasional race days when they become a hive of activity. This is soon left behind as you take Charleton Lane through the woods where there are lots of pheasants both wild and reared. It's a reminder that the Estate is a major shoot and you can usually



see them scuttling along the path in front of you; on each side of the path cover has been provided for the birds to hide in.

It's a pleasant woodland path that soon descends into Charlton with it's popular pub, the Fox Goes Free, which is not to be missed if it's open. The Downs Bridleway continues north as the mass of Levin Down rises on the left hand side; there is a footpath up the hill if you prefer it. There are many wild flowers on the Downs but this is a particularly good spot and on a sunny day there will be plenty of butterflies.



After a while there is a junction with a bridleway going left before climbing the hill, take this

path and leave the other for another day. It's a pleasant climb through the trees until you reach the top where there's another junction but this time it's well signposted; keep left following the direction to Singleton.

The route then takes you over open downland before dropping down to the village. If you're lucky you'll see some of the deer that are common on the Downs here, at the time these pictures were taken there was a group of six in the distance, a couple with magnificent antlers.

This is the west side of Levin Down and the views back over the Downs are as spectacular



as those looking forward to the Isle of Wight providing the visibility is good. Take care here as live-

stock often graze here which is great for the flowers and keeps the Downs as we like to see them.

The little village of Singleton soon comes into sight as the path drops down the hillside. If it's a Sunday in the summer months then you can stop off at the Village Hall for a ploughmans lunch or if it's a bit later for tea. Follow the road to the right for a few hundred yards before taking the lane south past some particularly pretty cottages to the Church.



Here you have to walk around the outside of the graveyard to find the path that's clearly marked to the Trundle. It may be a relatively steep climb but it's short until the path levels out and drops down the car park where you started. There is an abundance of flowers both on the descent and the rise out of the village, it's the pleasing result of a less intensive way of farming for which we've much to be grateful for.

If you've still got some energy left there's the Trundle to climb with it's splendid views over the race course as well as across the Harbour and to the north over the Downs.