

# HIKE BRITAIN'S SHROPSHIRE HILLS AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT

Thursday, May 28, 2020-Saturday, June 13, 2020

Leaders: Freda and Clive Wright

## Overview

Enjoy two wonderful weeks of hiking in England using the services of the HF Holiday Group, Britain's leading hiking and active holiday company. From Toronto we fly into Heathrow and travel by coach to spend the first week at the HF house in scenic Church Stretton on the English/Welsh border. For the second week we travel to the HF house at lovely Freshwater Bay on the Isle of Wight. Due to the schedules offered at the HF houses, we will spend one night at a hotel in the town of Southampton prior to boarding the ferry for the Isle of Wight. While May of 2020 is a long way away, the popularity of these houses is such that early booking is needed to ensure places. We are working with Teachers' Travel Service in Toronto and we have a preliminary booking of space for a maximum of 30 participants.

## General Information

As well as accommodation and meals, HF provides certified guides for various levels of hiking: easy, medium and difficult. Participants choose their level of hike each day and while some of the hikes will start from the "house" other hikes may require a bus ride to other interesting locations.

Accommodations can vary from "house" to "house" due to the age and nature of their houses, and bedrooms can vary in shape and size. All the bedrooms are well-equipped with an ensuite bathroom, television, hairdryer and linens, plus tea and coffee-making facilities. Both houses have an outdoor swimming pool.

HF Holiday houses are tailored to hikers and have excellent boot and drying rooms, laundry facilities and a "mini shop" for essentials such as maps and toiletries. The food is excellent and all meals are provided at each house. For breakfast there is a choice of continental and traditional cooked options. Picnic lunches and snacks are provided for the day. Evening meals include set menu options with the occasional buffet. A vegetarian and gluten free option is provided at each meal. Special dietary requirements can be accommodated but the "house" must be notified in advance of the trip.

Safety is a priority for HF. Every hike will be led by an experienced guide with first aid training. Please ensure you have footwear, clothing and equipment suitable for any conditions likely to be encountered. Britain is famous for its changeable weather so be prepared for all eventualities. Hiking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended along with specific hiking socks to avoid blisters. Layers of clothing which can be added or removed are better than a single layer. Man-made fabrics (technical wear) are better than cotton or wool for hiking. Denim jeans and waterproof capes are not suitable on any hikes.

For the daily hikes, HF suggest a backpack big enough to carry a waterproof jacket and pants, water and your picnic lunch (provided by HF). You may also want to consider personal medications, a blister kit, sunhat, sunglasses, sunscreen and insect repellent. Hiking poles are recommended. The HF trip leader will carry a group first aid kit.

The Tuesday of each week is the official day off for the resident guides in Church Stretton and the Isle of Wight. This provides the participants an opportunity to explore both areas at their leisure. The staff and leaders at both houses are always available and willing to help guests organize their free day, if required. For those who may want to explore the countryside further on their "free" day, both houses offer information on "self-guided" hikes.

## CHURCH STRETTON – Longmynd House

You will be inspired by the rich history of the area, on the border of England and Wales and the charm of the surrounding historic towns. Discover the area's fascinating geology, walk along the heather-carpeted hillsides and valleys and soak up the views of the Long Mynd, The Long Mynd, owned and operated by the National Trust is a heath and moorland plateau. Wild ponies have roamed the Long Mynd for many, many years and will likely be seen on some of the walks. Church Stretton is an historic market town, with a high street that has 30 individually owned businesses and is only a 10-minute walk from the House. **Following is an example only of the distances of the hikes.**

Option 1 – up to 12 kms with up to 400 metres of ascent

Option 2 – Up to 15 kms with up to 600 metres of ascent

Option 3 – Up to 21 kms with up to 900 metres of ascent

## ISLE OF WIGHT (Freshwater Bay)

The Isle of Wight is the largest and second most populous island in England. It is in the English Channel, off the coast of Hampshire, separated from the mainland by the Solent.

The island has resorts that have been holiday destinations since Victorian times and is known for its mild climate, coastal scenery and verdant landscape of fields, downlands and chines. The island is criss-crossed with hiking trails, including the 67-mile Coastal Path, which encircles the island. The island has been home to the poets Swinburne and Tennyson and to Queen Victoria. Because of the temperate climate on the Isle of Wight, Ventnor Botanic Gardens has magnificent floral displays and relaxing gardens to stroll through – a thought for your free day. Other options for your “free” day could include a visit to Lord Tennyson’s home, Yarmouth, a bustling harbour and market town, full of history. Shanklin Olde Village, a small part of Shanklin Town, contains some of the oldest dwellings on the island, the majority of which have thatched roofs. It is famous for its small gift shops and tea rooms. **Following is an example only of the hikes.**

Option 1 – Up to 11 kms with up to 380 metres of ascent

Option 2 – Up to 15 kms with 450 metres of ascent

Option 3 – Up to 21 kms with 550 meters of ascent

Note: As you can see, while the hike distances are similar at both houses, the ascent in Church Stretton is much higher.

To ensure everyone has a clear understanding of the hiking in Church Stretton and Freshwater Bay, we suggest you review the website for both Church Stretton and Freshwater Bay and check out the level and description of the hikes. The hikes offered change from year to year, but you will get a good idea of what typical hikes entail. The “itinerary” tab (part way down the page on these links) gives excellent hike descriptions.

Church Stretton: <https://www.hfholidays.co.uk/holidays-and-tours/guided-walking-church-stretton/>

Isle of Wight: <https://www.hfholidays.co.uk/holidays-and-tours/guided-walking-freshwater-bay/>

## **Cost**

Based on 30 participants, the cost of the trip is \$4044.00 Canadian per person. There is an additional \$25.00 non-refundable club fee due when you register on-line. **The maximum number of single occupancy rooms is four and they will be assigned on a first-come/first-serve basis. There is no extra charge for a single room.**

### **Included in this cost**

- Air Fare Toronto/London Heathrow and return
- All coach transfers between the airport and accommodation, ferry fee, gratuities included
- All accommodation costs, including a one-night stay in Southampton
- Three meals per day while at the HF houses
- Guided hiking for twelve days, including the cost of a coach if necessary for a hike

### **Not Included in this cost**

- Any costs incurred by the participants on their “free” day
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages while at each of the houses.
- Any costs incurred by the participants while travelling, i.e. lunch/snacks/personal purchases

- One Dinner/Breakfast in Southampton, as well as any personal purchases
- Possible taxi ride in Southampton from the hotel to the ferry (The distance is not far enough to have a coach, but likely too far to walk, hence a taxi). The approximate cost of the taxis, GBP 10 per taxi, will be shared by the group

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*\*** - This pricing is based on the current exchange rate that conservatively reflects our best estimate. If there is a significant increase in the exchange rate, we may have to charge a supplement to cover the difference. Similarly, if the rates drop significantly, we will refund you the difference. Please be aware that the bus companies, hotels, air fare, air tax and service charges are also subject to change at any time without notice. In the case of currency fluctuation, the airline reserves the right to adjust the rates accordingly.

## **Booking**

There are two steps to registration. Firstly, you must register on the Club website where you will pay a \$25 non-refundable registration fee. Secondly, you must pay a deposit of \$415 Cdn to Teachers Travel Service. Payment to Teacher's Travel can be made by credit card, e-transfer (for those who use on-line banking) or by cheque. There is no extra charge if you are paying by credit card. If paying by cheque it should be dated for the day you register and made payable to Teachers Travel Service. The address is Teacher's Travel Service, 21 St. Claire Eve East, Toronto Ontario M4T 1L9. If paying by credit card or arranging an e-transfer, call Cathy Kinloch, our trip agent, at 1 800 268-7229 during business hours.

**Confirmation of your booking will only be made once payment is received by both Teachers Travel and the Halton Outdoor Club.**

**Helpful Hints:** For on-line registration, registration opens at midnight on the specified registration date. Log on to the club website and follow the registration process. You will need to pay the \$25 Club fee. You will also be asked for your name, address, phone, email, name of person with whom you wish to share a room (if you do not specify a room mate this will be done for you), emergency contact and contact's phone number, as well as medical dietary needs.

**Second Deposit:** approximately \$800.00 will be required by **January 30, 2020.**

**Final Payment:** the balance is due by **April 16, 2020**

Both the second deposit and final payment are made to Teacher's Travel and can be made by credit card, e-transfer or by cheque.

For those who may be interested, the airline will allow 20% of the group (6 individuals) to deviate on the return trip. However, it must be clearly understood that those individuals can **extend for seven days only and must return to Canada via Heathrow Airport. If an individual wishes to extend beyond the seven days, one can do so but full payment of the airline ticket must be paid immediately upon registration.** For those who wish to deviate, please contact Cathy Kinloch at Teachers Travel once you are confirmed on the trip.

## **Cancellation Policy**

Your initial deposit of \$415.00 CAD per person payable to Teachers Travel, is non-refundable, should you wish to withdraw later. However, if HF or Teachers Travel were to cancel the holiday your deposit would be returned. **The deposit will also be refunded if HOC finds a replacement.**

Up to eight weeks prior to departure, anyone who cancels and is not replaced loses his/her deposit. After that the full HF payment is non-refundable unless a replacement is found. The air tickets become non-refundable at eight weeks prior.

**Everyone should have adequate cancellation insurance as well as out-of-country medical insurance.** If you do not have this coverage through other means, Teachers Travel sells Manulife travel insurance.

We plan to have a meeting with the group likely around March/April of 2020 to get to know each other and to review the forthcoming trip.

Feel free to contact either Freda or Clive Wright if you have questions. We can be reached at 905 628 0610 or [fredaandclive@cogeco.ca](mailto:fredaandclive@cogeco.ca)