

Hike Description

STAGE 1

The hike begins from the car park at the bottom of the ski centre road. Head leftwards up the path that leads past an information board. Keep to your left as you go up hill. When you come to a branch in the path with a sign post you can either go left following the direction marked Capital View or head straight on up what is a steeper route marked Caerketton. The two paths come back together higher up the hill a little way past a knoll which is the remains of an iron-age fort. Continue up the path until you reach another point in a slight dip with a sign post by a gate. You go through the gate, and steeply up the hill in the direction marked Caerketton, keeping a fence on your left. Continue until you reach the top of Caerketton, marked by a large cairn at the top. On a clear day the views are spectacular.



STAGE 2

Continue along the obvious path westwards over substantial rises and dips, with the fence continuing on your left, until you come to the top of Allermuir. It has an elaborate viewfinder plaque at its summit.



You can also get an excellent view of the Pentland Ridge; Turnhouse Hill, Carnethy, Scaldlaw, East Kip and West Kip... A much longer day's walk.



STAGE 3

Continue westwards dropping down from the summit. Go past the concrete WD marker, following the substantial track that leads off to your right. It soon joins a military road that runs down the east side of the Howden Burn. Follow the road until you come to a small stone building. This is the Green Craig Cistern. You'll hear water running inside it. It was constructed in 1790 and the engraving above its door is 'Edinburgh Thomas Elder Praefect MDCCIXC'. Thomas Elder was the Lord Provost at the time.



Cross the small stream just past the building and to your right. Obvious tracks lead to the right, below Allermuir. High on its slope above you can see rocky outcrops with two long gashes in them. One of these is known as the Reindeer Cave. In 1886 a number of animal bones were found. Follow the tracks, passing through a number of gates. Avoid dropping downhill off to your left. You will come to an un-metalled road which some way along it has a

gas installation on your left and the Swanston golf course on your right. Behind a stone wall on your left you will start to see Swanston Cottage.



Swanston Cottage was built in the 18th century as a general meeting place for the city fathers. The second storey was added in 1835, the thatched roof was replaced and the bow windows added. Robert Louis Stevenson's father took summer tenancy of the house in 1867, which continued for a number of years.

STAGE 4

You will come to a livery yard, with a sign for walkers and drivers pointing them to your left. You need to follow the smaller sign that leads to your right past a number of farm buildings and parking areas. This soon leads to a car park marked Penland Hills Regional Park Swanston. This is just past the Swanston Brasserie. Go through this car park, the main one for the golf course, past another information board and bear right up a path that leads you to a road with thatched cottages on its right side. Follow the road until you can clearly see the whitewashed houses. The one shown below was the house of John Todd, the 'Roaring Shepherd'.



Retrace your steps until the track turns to your right. There is a signpost at the opposite corner above a beech hedge. You simply follow the direction shown for Lothianburn. Follow

the track all the way to the main road A702 just below the building that was the Lothianburn golf clubhouse. When you reach the main road turn right and find your start point along the road on your right.