

Mid Wilts Way directions east to west, split into 13 stages

MWW directions east to west - Ham to Wilton

Maps: Landranger 174, OS Explorer 158 & 157

Distance: 7.9 miles (12.6 km)

The MWW starts outside the Crown and Anchor pub in Ham (which is now an Indian restaurant). With the pub on your L, walk up the main street, following it first R then L, past Manor Farm House on the R. Just past two houses on the L, the first of which is thatched, turn L into a field on a bridleway. Proceed along the wide, stony track for half a mile (0.8 km) into the second field, to reach a wooden post next to an information board about the Ham Estate.

Turn R, across the field (the landowner leaves a broad path to follow through any crops) aiming for a gap in the hedge at the top of the field on your L. (This is not the official right of way as the landowner has shifted it to the west, presumably to minimise the space taken up by the path in the field to the east). Go through this gap, turn R to the corner of the field and then L along its edge. After approx 150m turn R through the line of trees and pass through a gate. Continue in the same direction diagonally up Ham Hill, and pass through a gate in an "empty" fence into another field. Maintain direction to reach another small metal gate at the top of the hill,. The landowner has thoughtfully placed "No footpath" notices on the other side of this gate to L and R, indicating that you should continue gently upwards for 25m to arrive at a track which is hidden from the gate below.

Turn R along this track (which is deeply rutted and can be overgrown) and follow it along the top of Ham Hill for exactly one mile (1.6 km). There are fine views to the R along this stretch of the MWW. Join a tarmac road which after a few metres arrives at a junction with the road back to Ham. Cross over this road and continue along the track (also deeply rutted) onto Ashley Down, where the fine views persist (trees and hedges permitting), for just over a mile (1.6 km) to reach another tarmac road close to a junction with the main road to Shalbourne. Turn R down to the junction, and then R down the main road for a few metres, before turning L into a copse onto a signposted byway. Follow the track along the top of Rivar Down, with more bucolic views to the R (and the first view of the Wilton windmill), for another 1.3 miles (2 km) to yet another tarmac road. Turn R down the road for 700m, ignoring a byway to L, then turn L into a field onto a waymarked footpath. Proceed down a slope through a gap to the bottom of the field beyond, with hedge to L. At the corner of the field, go through double metal farm gates and turn R onto a track with open field to L and hedge to R. Follow the track into the village of Marten.

On reaching the main road, turn sharp R, with letter box and notice board outside Rose Cottage on R, and follow the road past Sir William Bentley Billiards on R to arrive at the A338. Turn L along it and immediately R, signposted Wilton and Windmill. Follow this Roman road for almost one mile (1.6 km), turning L and downhill at the T junction, signposted Grafton and Wilton. After approx. 150m, arrive at the Swan Inn in Wilton.

MWW directions east to west - Wilton to Wootton Rivers

Maps: OS Landranger 174 & 173, OS Explorer 157

Distance: 5.4 miles (8.6 km)

Proceed down Wilton's main street with the Swan Inn to your L. On arriving at the duck pond to your L, enter the field opposite and immediately turn L with hedge to L. Follow the path round to the L on the edge of a verdant meadow, with a small lake (Wilton Water) on your L, to arrive at the Kennet & Avon canal, which is reached via a small footbridge. The Crofton Pumping Station and Beam Engines are on the other side of the canal, slightly to the L, and can be visited when open by crossing the nearest bridge to the L/west.

Turn L and walk along the canal towpath for approximately 4 ½ miles (7.2 km), passing four locks and a road bridge, before the canal disappears into a tunnel (Bruce Tunnel); follow the path up to cross a minor road (Savernake Road), with a houses to L and R. Continue along the path opposite, past what

used to be the Forest Hotel and an open field to L, to rejoin the towpath via steps and a low tunnel under the railway. Soon after this, pass under the A346 at Burbage Wharf. Continue ahead past four bridges over the canal, each accompanied by a lock. At the fourth bridge, number 108, leave the towpath and turn R across the bridge to join Wootton River's main street. Walk along this for 250m past the village hall on your L to arrive at the Royal Oak pub on your R.

MWW website directions east to west – Wootton Rivers to Oare

Maps: OS Landranger 173, OS Explorer 157

Distance: 4.6 miles (7.4 km)

Mud Lane (see below) is well-named and can be very unpleasant at its worst. As an alternative to slipping and sliding along it, it is possible to reach the **small car park** mentioned below by taking quiet country roads, which also provide good views of Martinsell Hill. To do so, go up the metalled road opposite the Royal Oak pub, and after 50 metres or so turn R (signposted Clench Common and East Wick). Follow this road for 0.8 miles (1.3 km), passing East Wick Farm to R on the way, to arrive at a junction to L (signposted New Mill and Milton Lilbourne). Follow the road round to R here (signposted Martinsell Hill and Marlborough) and after 0.6 miles (1 km) arrive at the **small car park** to L, with Mud Lane to your R.

If you wish to stick to the **official route**, with your back to the Royal Oak pub, turn R up the metalled road. After 150m, fork L by a house named Martinsell up a green bridleway. Follow this until it enters a field, where you turn L along its edge, then R at the field corner to reach the well-named Mud Lane at the top. Here it is worth making a small detour: if you turn R along Mud Lane for perhaps 15m you will see, carved onto the end of a tree stump at head height to your L, the lugubrious face of the Green Man. Now turn round and go west along Mud Lane, counting off three vast fields to your L, with a barn between the second and third, to reach a metalled road, on the other side of which is a **small car park**.

Go through the gate beyond the car park and walk to where the woods on your R veer R. Here turn L and go uphill on the track that emerges, with a copse to R, kinking R then sharp L at the top. Continue south with fence to R and turn R through a gate after 300m. Here there is a bench where you can pause to admire the view of the Pewsey Downs at your leisure. Amble on through a small wooded area to arrive at a gate in the fence to your L. There are now two routes to choose from:

- i) the **official route** takes you through the open access land on the other side of the gate; follow the path which veers away from the fence on your R to take you round clumps of gorse bushes and stunted trees, eventually returning to the fence beyond. Follow the fence past a gate on your R to reach a **metal kissing gate** only a few metres beyond. Turn L, away from the kissing gate. **Regrettably this route is now very overgrown, as the permissive path described below is much more popular.**
- ii) **alternatively** you can take a much more user-friendly permissive path which continues along the edge of the field beyond the wooded area to reach the **metal kissing gate** described above; go through this and continue ahead.

The gate which both routes arrive at is dedicated to the memory of Mark Rendall of the Long Distance Walkers Association. You join the White Horse Trail at this point. Proceed along the gently undulating top of the hill, passing through a second gate, with fence to your R and more stunning views of the Pewsey Downs to both L and R. This is the Giant's Grave. Just beyond the trig point, plunge steeply downhill and follow the path round to the L to a stile in the corner. Cross this and the field beyond to reach Pound Lane. Turn R along this, leaving the White Horse Trail, to arrive at the A345 in the village of Oare after 350m. Turn R again to reach the White Hart pub in 25m. Sadly this is now permanently closed.

MWW directions east to west – Oare to Knap Hill

Maps: OS Landranger 173, OS Explorer 157

Distance: 3 1/2 miles (5.6 km)

With your back to the White Hart, turn L up the A345 and take the first L turn after 30 metres, signposted Huish. Follow this until the houses on your R are replaced by a field, which you turn R into on a signposted footpath, walking up its R hand side. The incline increases as you approach the fence on the far side, but this is as nothing compared with the steepness of the slope on the other side of the fence! Climb the well-trodden path as far as a bench, then strike out diagonally L to a farm gate (which was on the ground at the time of writing) in the fence beyond. Go through this and continue in roughly the same direction, passing through gorse bushes and keeping the fence to your R in sight, for around 150m, to arrive at a sturdy wooden gate on your R. Go through this, then immediately turn L. After approx. 50m, pass through a farm gate and head for another gate at the other end of the field. (At this point you rejoin the White Horse Trail). The superb views of the Pewsey Downs enjoyed on the last section of the MWW are repeated here. Go through the gate, with a fence to the L, and walk along the edge of the large field beyond. Follow the fence round to the R, go through a gate and immediately turn L through another one. Walk gently downhill on a sunken track between earthworks until you reach a crossroad of paths beyond a gate, just to the north of Gopher Wood. (Here you leave the White Horse Trail again).

Pass through a wooden gate beyond the crossroads and continue slightly uphill to a stile. Here go L then R round two sides of the field next to Gopher Wood to cross the stile at the top. Go half L here, aiming for the signpost in front of the L hand tree in the distance, then R on reaching it to go along a ridge of hills through several more fields, with the route being clearly waymarked. More fabulous views of the Pewsey Vale open up to the R along this ridge. As you start to go downhill, arrive at a gate into the last field before the Knap Hill car park, with Knap Hill itself prominent to your L. Follow the path through the centre of the field to a gate in the far fence, and turn R after this into the car park.

MWW directions east to west – Knap Hill to A361 Shepherd's Shore

Maps: OS Landranger 173, OS Explorer 157

Distance: 5 1/2 miles (8.8 km)

Cross the Alton Barnes to Lockeridge road from the car parking area at Knap Hill. Go through a metal gate, then a metal kissing gate immediately to the L. Follow the well beaten track through two more metal kissing gates. Turn half R, with Adams Grave and Walkers Hill to your L, to join an obvious path beside, or on top of, a low earthwork. The White Horse Trail comes in from the L just beyond Walkers Hill. Continue on this path along the contour line for 700m to arrive at the top of the Alton Barnes White Horse.

Continue through the gate beyond and follow the contour of the hillside. There are tremendous views of the Pewsey Vale to the L on this section, and to the R is Milk Hill, the highest point in Wiltshire at 295m (968ft). Go R in a tight semi-circle round the stunted trees and bushes on the shoulder of Milk Hill to pass through a gate beyond. Follow the ridge in a broad semi-circle to the L, passing through a second gate, then turn R through a third one. Shortly after this, arrive at a wide track, where the Wansdyke Path comes in from the R but the Pewsey Downs Nature Reserve is left behind. Turn L down this. Do NOT take the broad stony track to the R after approx. 100m, but instead go through a gate in the fence on the R just after it to access the iron-age fortification known as the Wansdyke. This will be your companion for several miles.

After approx. a mile (1.6 km) walking along the top of the Wansdyke enjoying the superb views on both sides, and passing through two gates in the process, arrive at a third gate on the R in the corner of a field which is festooned with waymarks. Go through this. The official route continues immediately to your L beside the Wansdyke, but is often too overgrown to follow. If this is the case, go down the track beyond and through a farm gate to join a stony track parallel to the Wansdyke. Go L down this to arrive at a T junction after 100m or so. Turn L towards a gate leading to Manor Farm, then almost immediately R through another gate to return to the top of the Wansdyke. Descend and continue, to arrive at a barn after just over 1 mile (1.6 km), going through two gates and a stile in the process. At the barn, go through another gate, then turn R and L over the track leading to it to rejoin the Wansdyke after yet another gate. Continue along the top of the Wansdyke, crossing several farm tracks along the way, at all of which you drop down from the Wansdyke and negotiate a stile or metal kissing gate on each side of the track. After 1.2 miles (1.9 km) and a final stile, arrive at the A361 via the driveway of a house, Shepherd's Shore farmhouse.

MWW directions east to west – A361 Shepherd's Shore to Devizes Wharf Centre

Maps: OS Landranger 173, OS Explorer 157

Distance: 6.3 miles (10.1 km)

Cross the A361 to the L of a line of trees opposite. Go through a metal gate and walk along (or beside) the Wansdyke, an ancient fortification which stretches for 50 miles through Wiltshire (you will already know this if you have walked the previous stage!), for the length of two fields. Go through a metal gate, turn R along the byway for a few metres, then turn L onto a path through a copse. Go through a gate and continue following the Wansdyke until you arrive in the field which hosts two radio masts on Morgan's Hill. These come into view (and indeed have been visible since joining the Wansdyke, or even before) soon after leaving the gate, and are a constant landmark on this part of the MWW. Turn half R and walk diagonally across and then up the side of the field, with fence to R and the masts to L (this is not as indicated on the map, Ordnance Survey have been advised of this error), then descend to a gate in the corner. Go down the slope on the other side for some 20m, then turn L on a well defined path, with radio masts still to L. Follow the contour of the hill through another gate to rejoin the Wansdyke beyond the radio masts. Walk beside it until you arrive at a break in it to L, beyond which is a **gate** giving access to the North Wilts Golf Club. (There is an information board next to the gate, which at the time of writing was devoid of any information!)

Alternatively, on arriving in the field with the radio masts, you can take a shortcut by continuing to follow the Wansdyke, with radio masts to R, exiting the field which hosts them via a gate nestling between the ramparts of the Wansdyke. Walk along the top of it beyond to arrive at the **gate** into the North Wilts Golf Club mentioned above. This route takes walkers directly along the Wansdyke and to the L of the radio masts rather than in an extended arc to their R.

Turn sharp L onto a footpath (which is also a bridleway) once on the golf course and follow the clear cut (literally!) path downhill with fence to L and clumps of trees and the golf course to R. Fork R through a small copse. On arriving at open ground, continue slightly R, in the direction of the club house, past two waymarked wooden posts, keeping a wary eye out for flying golf balls, to arrive at a metalled road.

Cross this and go down the byway opposite. Turn R at the crossroad of tracks after approx. ½ mile (0.8 km). The surface of the track improves marginally when it becomes a badly degraded metalled road soon after reaching a large, open-sided barn to L. Continue past more farm buildings and a house (Hill Cottage) to L, taking the left-hand fork just beyond the latter. When the road bends to L at a turning/parking area, go R up a track to R of a metal farm gate. After 500m take the bridleway to L with fences on both sides. On reaching the second metal gate on R, go through this into the corner of the field. (If the bridleway is badly churned up, there is the option to go through the first metal gate to R and along the field edge on the other side). Follow the fence on the L to a metal kissing gate into the next field. Turn L parallel to the fence. This is the site of Oliver's Castle hill-fort, which is on Roundway Down.

After passing an English Nature information board about the Down, and a pointed wooden post with "R5" carved into it, follow the ramparts of the fort in a wide semi-circle to the R, with wide-ranging views to R, to arrive back at the fence you left earlier. (There used to be an information board here on the Battle of Roundway, which was fought on this spot, but it has been removed). Continue past the fence corner, with fence to L, and either take the metal kissing gate to L soon after and continue in the same direction with fences on both sides, or continue past it with fence L and (soon) a copse to R. Both paths are parallel and come out in a parking area next to the copse, but it is debatable which one is muddier in wet weather. Turn L out of the parking area (i.e. away from the copse) and immediately R down a stony track. The track becomes a metalled road after a while, somewhat degraded at first, and starts to go downhill, soon reaching a double metal farm gate to R with a gap next to it.

Go through the gap and down the R hand side of the field beyond, passing to L of a pylon. Go through the kissing gate at the bottom, and another soon after, to arrive at a metalled road. Turn L along this, and at the sharp bend to R immediately after, look to your L to get a good view of the Devizes Millennium White Horse. A few metres after the bend, go up shallow steps to R into a field, and walk along its L hand side, then between two fields. On reaching a gap between hedges, with a line of houses to L, turn R along a track. Cross a metalled road, with the entrance to Roundway House to R, to enter Quakers Walk, a pleasant tree-lined avenue popular with dog walkers. Pass through the gap beside the large iron gates at its end and cross the bridge over the Kennet and Avon canal in front of

you. Turn R on the other side and walk along the towpath, passing under the first bridge (no. 140). Just beyond it is the Wharf Centre, which has a museum and cafe, where this stage ends. There is a (paying) car park next to the Wharf Centre.

MWW directions east to west – Devizes Wharf Centre to The Barge Inn at Seend Cleeve

Maps: OS Landranger 173, OS Explorer 157 & 156

Distance: 4 ½ miles (7.2 km)

Walk to the R of, then behind, the museum and cafe in the Wharf Centre, then turn L to cross the bridge (no. 140) over the canal. Once on the other side, with cemetery to R, descend onto the towpath. Pass a lock. On reaching the A361, cross it and also the canal. Descend metal steps on the other side to continue along the towpath, passing three more locks, and go under the A361. After two further locks the famous series of 16 continuous locks stretching away down Caen Hill appears before you, a wondrous sight! These take the narrow boat user (and walker) downhill and away from Devizes. Pass under a road bridge at the bottom. After another six locks, the White Horse Trail disappears to the left, at Lower Foxhanger's Farm. The next lock brings you to the end of the Caen Hill flight of 29 locks, at which point you cross over to the other side of the canal. On the side you have just left can be seen the Caen Hill Marina for narrow boats, which incorporates a swing bridge.

Go under the A365 at Sells Green (bridge 148), then under a minor road (Spout Lane) at bridge 149, from which there is easy access to the Three Magpies pub. Finally, just under 3 miles (4.8 km) from the last lock on Caen Hill, and after passing three more locks, the Barge Inn at Seend Cleeve will appear on your L on the opposite side of the canal. Go under the bridge (no. 153) just before it and turn sharp R up and over the bridge. Follow the road for a few metres to the entrance to the pub.

Note that this is the start of option 1 for the next stage of the Mid Wilts Way. If you wish to walk option 2 instead, do not cross the canal.

MWW directions east to west – The Barge Inn at Seend Cleeve to Steeple Ashton

Maps: OS Landranger 173, OS Explorer 156

Distance: Option 1, 4.1 miles (6.6 km), option 2, 5.2 miles (8.3 km)

On reaching the Barge Inn at the end of the last stage, there are two options, the second of which avoids the village of Seend Cleeve and the extra road walking that this involves, but which is over a mile (1.6 km) longer. It also adds 1.2 miles (1.9 km) onto the lengthy stretch of walking along the Kennet and Avon Canal which you have already done on the previous stage – which may or may not be a good thing!

Warning: Option 2 is usually unfeasible in summer when the lane just before the A361 becomes impassable due to overgrown vegetation

Option 1: Having crossed the Kennet and Avon Canal via the road bridge (no. 153), pass the Barge Inn on the R, and walk for approx. 0.6 miles (1 km) along Seend Cleeve's main street. Pass the Brewery Inn on the L (or go in if thirsty!). Just before reaching the A361, turn R down Row Lane. After ¾ mile (1.35 km), after a downhill section, and as the road turns sharp L, continue ahead on a track past Seend Head Mill on R, to reach a quiet lane via a bridge over Semington Brook. At this point, the option 2 route comes in from the R. Continue up the quiet lane for approximately 80m to reach the busy A361.

Option 2: Continue along the Kennet and Avon Canal for 1.2 miles (1.9 km) until you arrive at the swing bridge opposite Seend Park Farm (no. 156). Cross over the canal via the bridge and follow the waymarks around the farm to emerge onto its drive. Cross the bridge over Semington Brook, turn L at the end of the drive and follow this metalled road almost to the A361. A few metres before reaching it, take the grassy bridleway to the L. At the end of the first field on the L, the lane gets narrower as the nettles close in. They soon predominate, partially hiding huge badger sett entrances. Just after the lane

bends L, look for a stile on the R into a field. Walk across this field, with Semington Brook on L, to arrive at another stile into a quiet lane. (When it has been raining, turning the centre of this field into a lake, follow the hedge on R round the field). You join the option 1 route at this point. Cross this stile, to find a bridge and Seend Head Mill to L, and turn R up the lane to reach the A361 after 80m. (Route is now on tarmac roads as far as Keevil church).

Cross over the A361 with great care, turn L, and after a few metres take the road R signposted Bulkington and Keevil. Take the first lane to R, which soon bends L and passes The Old Dairy (on R) and Elmleaze Farm (on L). On arriving at a junction on a bend, turn R (effectively straight on) and walk ½ mile (0.8 km) into the heart of the village of Keevil, passing a Byway, Longleaze Farm, Martins Road and Pyatts Corner/Butts Lane, all to L. Take the next L into Church Lane, and walk through the graveyard, keeping the church on the L. Go through the gate out of the graveyard and cross a field to a sturdy footbridge between two metal gates. Go half left in the next field to a metal kissing gate into a third field. Here turn R along edge of field to a kissing gate in the corner. There is then a brief section between hedges before another kissing gate into the next field. Walk through this with hedge R to a broad track. This has a double metal farm gate across its entrance, with fence L and hedge R. Go through a metal farm gate at the end into another field and follow the right hand hedge. Take a stile by the third metal farm gate on the R about 30m from the end of the field.

After 30m or so, arrive at a gate, turn L and go through the gate hidden in the corner of the field, and another one immediately after it. Continue down the field edge, ignoring the farm gate to the L, with hedge L. At the bottom, cross a stile and go through a swampy area to arrive at a footbridge. Cross this and follow the path across two fields, with Steeple Ashton's unusual castellated church directly in front of you. Go through a gate in the top R hand corner of the second field, then immediately right through another one into a field beside the church graveyard. Follow the path in a wide sweep to the L beside the graveyard. At a gate beside the entrance to the graveyard, turn sharp R along a path between hedge and fence to come out through a rusty metal gate opposite a house at the end of a narrow track. Turn L down the track to reach Steeple Ashton's main street, opposite Bartletts Mead. Turn L down this to arrive at the Longs Arms pub on R.

MWW directions east to west – Steeple Ashton to Lower Westbury Road, Bratton

Maps: OS Landranger 173 & 183, OS Explorer 143

Distance: 4 miles

Facing the Longs Arms pub, turn L along the main road, shortly arriving at Acreshort Lane/Acre Close on the R. Go down this lane, and when the metalled surface ends turn R down a bridleway, with a bench on R. At the T junction at the bottom of the slope, turn R then immediately L (where the White Horse Trail rejoins our route), along a path which goes gently uphill between hedges. Soon join a track coming in from the R. This is named as East Town Lane on the OS Explorer map. Turn L at East Town Farm, keeping the farm buildings on the L, along a wide track. After a while, the track becomes grassy, continue in the same direction with hedge on R. When the track veers off R at a right angle at the entrance to a field, proceed half L across the field (or go round the right hand edge of the field if crops are in the way, which they invariably are in the summer) to a gap in the hedge onto a metalled road. At this point, there is a choice of routes: either a lengthy road section (the official route) or an alternative which follows the White Horse Trail over fields. This alternative is slightly longer and can get boggy/very muddy when wet. It can also be quite difficult to follow if hedges are overgrown and stiles hidden in undergrowth, even though the MWW waymarks all point the right way, so detailed directions are given.

If following the **official route**, turn L along the road for exactly a mile (1.6 km). On reaching a crossroads, turn R and not long after crossing a railway pass a sewage pumping building on R in the village of Bratton.

If following the **alternative route**, turn R along the metalled road for 500m until you reach a metal kissing gate on L just before the drive to Lower Dunge Farm. There is also a sign stating "Capps Lane ¾". Go through this and follow hedge on L to a gap into the next field (there is a metal gate and footbridge hidden in the far L corner of the field, but this is now redundant). Continue along the edge of the next field, with hedge to L, to a metal kissing gate and footbridge which give access to a cultivated field. Continue in the same direction (although you may have to forge a route through crops to do so), aiming to the R of the four trees in the middle of the field. Maintain direction over the next

field, which is also often cultivated, aiming a few metres to the R of the second tree in the middle. Go through the metal kissing gate on the far side to emerge onto a narrow metalled road (Capps Lane).

(The occupant of the house opposite has unilaterally diverted the right of way at this point, and it looks as though the diversion is here to stay). Turn L along the road for 20m, then go R down a narrow fenced path beside the house. Cross the stile at the end, then veer half R in the next field to get to a stile and footbridge on the other side. In the next field, head for a double stile sandwiching a footbridge half way along the hedge on the right hand side. About two thirds of the way down the next long, thin field, in the hedge on L (do not go through the gap in the hedge some 30m before this), is yet another stile and footbridge, leading to a rusty metal gate. Once again the landowner has created an unofficial diversion of the legal route by erecting a fence along two sides of the next field, to ensure that walkers do not follow the right of way, which goes half R across it, to arrive at a metal kissing gate onto a railway crossing.

Having crossed safely, pass through another metal kissing gate and go half R for 10m to cross another stile and footbridge to the L. Cross the field diagonally to the L, aiming for a telegraph pole at the far end of an elevated, rampart-like section to L on far side of the field. (If it has been raining it would be advisable to follow hedge to L, then turn R across the field on the elevated section, to avoid swampy areas in the middle). Cross two stiles hidden behind the telegraph pole at the other end into a final field. Cross this diagonally, aiming for a small brick building (the sewage pumping building). Cross a stile over a wooden fence at the far side, then a second one a few metres further on, to arrive at the metalled road into Bratton. Turn R along this. It is at this point that the official and alternative routes unite.

If continuing to next stage, soon after passing a stately thatched dwelling called Court House (on R), turn R into Lower Westbury Road.

If terminating in Bratton, walk past Lower Westbury Road uphill to arrive at the B3098. The Duke pub is to the L on the B3098.

MWW directions east to west – Lower Westbury Road, Bratton to Upton Scudamore

Maps: OS Landranger 183, OS Explorer 143

Distance: 4.9 miles (7.8 km)

If starting in Bratton, turn down road (Court Lane) off B3098 signposted Steeple Ashton, West Ashton and Trowbridge. Take the first road on the L, which is Lower Westbury Road.

If continuing from last stage Turn R along Lower Westbury Road for 650m, then, at a dead end sign, follow the road sharp L uphill (signposted Westbury) to arrive at the B3098. Cross this and walk up the L hand edge of the field beyond. The path narrows after the field and continues uphill. At a fork, bear L, and soon arrive at the tarmac road from Bratton to the White Horse car park. Turn R on this road, still going uphill, for 200m, then bear R off the road to a stile. Follow the fence round to R after crossing this. At a kissing gate some 30m further on, turn L and walk along the northern ramparts of Bratton Hill, which is an Iron-Age hill fort. Go past the White Horse beneath and to the R, and through a gate into an open area containing two benches in front of the car park. From here there are fine views over the vale below.

Facing the view, turn left and walk along the path at the top of the escarpment. Pass several benches, the first beside an information board about the White Horse, and a stone plinth with a metal semi-circle on top giving information on the places below relative to the points of the compass. It also tells you that White Horse Hill is 754 feet above sea level. The plinth was erected by pupils of the Aldcroft School of Building in Trowbridge in 1968. Drop down to a metal kissing gate hiding in the bushes. Follow the fence to R through the field and into the next one, to arrive at a rusty square water tank 700m from the White Horse. Go 90 degrees L uphill to another metal kissing gate onto a tarmac road. (Turn R here downhill for access to Westbury). Turn left uphill. At the junction at the top, by the entrance to a now defunct quarry, turn right onto a wide degraded road. This is the Imber Range Perimeter Path (IRPP).

Follow this road for a little over 2 miles along the IRPP, initially with the quarry to L, then firing ranges/restricted areas. Towards the end, it goes quite steeply downhill from Upton Cow Down, then

emerges onto the slip road from the A350 to the village of Upton Scudamore. Follow this road as it sweeps up to and over the A350, soon arriving at the Angel Inn in the village.

MWW directions east to west – Upton Scudamore to Heaven's Gate car park

Maps: OS Landranger 183, OS Explorer 143

Distance: 6.4 miles (10.2 km)

Pass to the R of the Angel Inn and turn R at the T junction beyond. Where the road bends to the R, go through the gateless kissing gate behind the 'sharp bend' road sign on the L and go straight ahead across the field to a railway bridge. Turn L 10m after crossing it. Pass over three fields connected by two small bridges to arrive at a roundabout on the A350 via a stile. Take the first exit off the roundabout, signposted Warminster, B3414, and after 300 metres turn R onto the lane to Croft House Farm. (It may be more expedient if the grass verges have not been cut to go down the service road opposite the stile past the garage, then turn R to cut between the Burger King and Travelodge. If you do this, turn L on arriving at the B3414 to arrive at the lane to Croft House Farm).

Go over a squeeze stile at the end of this lane, and follow the path to L through trees, as indicated by the yellow arrows, with the farm to your L. Go over a stile and across two fields separated by a stile to reach a third stile towards the R hand corner of the second field. Cross the stile and continue ahead down the path through a wood. Cross the field beyond this and continue to the L of the wood on the other side to reach a stile to R by a sign which states 'Upton Scudamore 1 3/4 miles'. Emerge on the other side very near a layby on the A350.

Turn L and walk on the grass verge beside the A350 for 500 metres. Turn L over a stile, which is opposite the layby on the other side of the road, and proceed along the track beyond with hedge to R. Keep on the track when it bends R to arrive at a metalled road. This is Victoria Road which leads into Warminster to the L. Turn R along this road and after 500m take the track leading off it to the R by means of a stile between two double farm gates and pass under the A350. Immediately after this turn L, and soon arrive at a stile on the R. Go over this and proceed along the edge of two fields. Quite soon after entering the third field, look for a stile on the L. Cross this and descend onto a wooded path which, after 300 metres, comes out on the track from the National Trust car park to Cley Hill. Turn R here and pass through the kissing gate at the base of the hill. Please ascend and descend the hill by any route (and there are many!) other than the well worn one which goes straight up the hill from the entrance gate, so as to minimise any further erosion. The trig point at the top probably affords the best views. When you have had your fill of these, return to the kissing gate where you came in. Having passed through the kissing gate, proceed down the track to the car park via the R/L kink where you joined it earlier. Turn L onto the A362, and arrive at the roundabout after 400 metres or so.

Take the second exit off the roundabout, signposted Horningsham (ignoring the Main Entrance to Longleat House, which is the first exit) and walk 1.4 miles (2.2 km) along this road past Center Parcs (to L), Batsford Timber (both sides), the Main Entrance to Longleat for paying visitors (to R) and the entrance to the Aqua Sana Spa (to L). Immediately after this is Heaven's Gate car park (to L). This is shown on the Explorer map as being in Nockatt Coppice, but is only the usual blue P in the Landranger map.

MWW directions east to west – Heaven's Gate car park to Kingston Deverill

Maps: OS Landranger 183, OS Explorer 143

Distance: 4.4 miles (7 km)

Turn L out of Heaven's Gate car park onto the road to Horningsham. At the end of the wood on the R turn R on a bridleway heading downhill. When this joins a road, continue in the same direction. Follow the road round to the L past a phone box to arrive at a T junction. Turn R here to reach another T junction only a few metres up the road.

(If it is desired to visit Horningsham, turn R here. This is Horningsham's lengthy main street and will eventually lead you, past church on R, to the Bath Arms pub.)

Turn L here, signposted to Longbridge Deverill, Shearwater and Shaftesbury. After a few moments, as the road bends L, turn R onto a bridleway just past the Horningsham place name. On reaching a quiet country road, cross it and continue on another bridleway slightly to the L, which is accessed via a farm gate. Here trees briefly line the route, but after going through a gate it continues along the side of a field with a fence and occasional trees to the R, ascending gradually. Just before going through another gate to enter woods, there is a large memorial stone to Bernard and Joan Russell about 40 metres to the L.

Follow the path steadily, and then quite steeply, uphill through Bidcombe Wood, passing through two farm gates en route. It levels out at the top and then descends a little to reach a gate. Keep going in the same direction across a field towards a fence along the ridge top in front of you. On reaching this, turn L and follow the fence south-east for approx. 1½ miles (2.4 km). There are fine views on this section in all directions, with Whitecliff Down to the L and Bidcombe Down to the R. As you follow the fence, descend then ascend to a beacon on the hill top. Shortly after this, ignore a track veering off to the L towards a trig point on top of Cold Kitchen Hill.

Eventually arrive at a gate in the fence on your right, just past a lonely tree (OS Explorer map reference 849 380). Strike out across the field on the other side at 90 degrees to the path you have been on, going gently downhill at first. As you pass approx. 40m to the R of a metal water trough, veer slowly to the R and follow a discernible, chalky track more steeply downhill. On arriving at a fence corner, go L down the field edge with fence to R to reach a gate in the corner. Go through this onto a narrow metalled road. Turn R and, on reaching a junction, turn L to enter Kingston Deverill.

If finishing in Kingston Deverill, walk to the B3095 at the T junction ahead.

If continuing on next stage, turn R just before reaching the B3095, immediately after Bell Cottage.

MWW directions east to west – Kingston Deverill to Mere

Maps: OS Landranger 183, OS Explorer 143

Distance: 5 miles (8 km)

If starting in Kingston Deverill, take the turning off the B3095 past the front of the church signposted to the local gliding club, with a 15 m.p.h. speeding limit specified. In 175 metres, when the lane bends sharp R, maintain direction down the no through road.

If continuing from last stage, turn R after Bell Cottage. At the next junction, turn L (effectively straight on) with a small stream (River Wylve) on your R. When the road bends sharp L, turn R down a no through road.

Soon after, take the metalled bridleway to the L, which has a sign aimed at the gliding club members entitled "Important notice" fixed onto the fence where it leaves the road, and at once turn R through a metal gate into a small field. (If there is a bull in this field, you can continue along the road to the end of the field, then turn L up a track to rejoin the correct route beyond the field). Aim for the gate on the far side, cross over a track and go through another gate on the other side. Continue on a gentle uphill gradient with fence to L. Keep going in the same direction for approx. 1¼ miles (2 km) after crossing the track, following the contour of the hill, even when the fence veers L in the first field, and passing below two copses before going through open country. There are some fine views to the right (north) on this section on a good day, including that of Little Knoll which has a wood running up its middle, giving it the appearance of a Mohican haircut!

On reaching a cross fence, turn L through a gate going slightly uphill. The grass runway for the gliding club the notices for which you passed earlier soon appears to your L. On reaching a sign warning you of the presence of gliders, go through the gate to R opposite the sign. Go half left, in a south-westerly direction, across a field, then down a track on the edge of the next field with fence to R. Continue in the same direction across a third field with a fence still to R, but half way through it go through a gap to find the fence now on your L. This is open farming country with vast fields and lovely views to both sides. Eventually almost 1½ miles (2.4 km) after leaving the gliding club runway, arrive at a wide track going towards two low, flat hills (tumuli and the remains of White Sheet castle) topped by a mast on White Sheet Hill to your R. Cross the track, go through a gate and veer R towards the fence. Follow

the fence on a well defined farm track, but after an initial descent follow a green farm track which forks off at a narrow angle to the L. It soon becomes apparent that we are descending the western arm of a large semi-circle of hills, with the houses of Mere directly below us. Stay on this track to go through two metal gates, then along a farm track followed by a metalled road. This brings you to a T junction with another metalled road by a house. Turn L and follow the road over the A303 into the centre of Mere. The route ends at the war memorial and clock tower or, if preferred, The George Inn next to them.