

MWW website directions – stage 5, Bratton to Steeple Ashton

Maps: OS Landranger 183 & 173, OS Explorer 143

Distance: 4 miles

West to east

If starting from Bratton, take the road off the B3098 signposted Steeple Ashton, West Ashton and Trowbridge. Pass Lower Westbury Road, the first turning to your L.

If continuing from last stage, turn L at T junction.

Pass stately thatched dwelling called Court House, on L. Shortly after this, 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**, continue past Court House and over a railway bridge to a crossroads. Turn L here, and after exactly a mile (1.6 km), at a left hand bend in the road with a black and white arrowed “sharp bend” sign and a footpath sign to Easton, go through a gap in the hedge on the R into a field.

If taking the **alternative route** mentioned above, 250m after the T junction, cross a stile into a field on the L after a sewage pumping building, immediately crossing a second stile over a wooden fence. Go half right across the field to another stile and footbridge in the far corner. After another stile, continue in the same direction diagonally across this field. (If it has been raining it would be advisable to go past the telegraph pole on the slightly elevated, rampart-like section across the middle of the field, turning L at the hedge at the bottom, to avoid swampy areas in the middle). Cross a small footbridge and stile and go half R for 10m to arrive at a metal kissing gate leading to a railway crossing.

Having crossed safely, pass through another metal kissing gate and go half L to the corner of the field. Go through a rusty metal gate onto a footbridge and over a stile. Turn R into the long, thin field beyond, and aim for the left-hand end of the hedge at the end, where there is a double stile sandwiching a footbridge. Aim for the tree in the middle of the hedge to L in the next field, where there is a footbridge and stile. In the next field, aim for a stile to the L of a house. Cross this and walk down the narrow fenced path to R to a minor metalled road (Capps Lane).

Go L along this for 20m, then turn R through the metal kissing gate. Proceed across the cultivated field beyond, going a few metres to the L of the first tree in the middle. Maintain direction over the next field, which is also cultivated. The route takes you about 50 metres to the L of the furthest of four trees in the middle of the field, in a line with a distant building. Continue along the edge of the next field, with hedge R and the building getting nearer, to a footbridge and metal gate hidden in the far right corner. Follow the hedge on R to arrive at a metal kissing gate onto a metalled road, just to the R of the drive to Lower Dunge Farm.

Go R along this road for 500m to arrive at the bend in the road mentioned in the official route above, but from the other direction. Go through a gap in the hedge on the L, signposted East Town. Here the official and alternative routes unite.

Cross this field in the direction the footpath sign is pointing in (or go round the left hand edge of the field if the route is blocked by crops, which it invariably is in the summer) to arrive at a second field with hedge to L. Follow this path, which soon becomes a track, to East Town Farm, then turn R keeping farm buildings on R. Continue on this track, which is named as East Town Lane on the OS Explorer map. It has hedges on both sides after the farm buildings are left behind, with occasional gaps. On arriving at a T junction at the bottom of a slope, turn R then immediately L, heading uphill on a bridleway. This soon arrives at the end of a metalled road known as Acreshort Lane/Acre Close. There is a bench on the L at this junction and a Byway sign. Turn L down this road for approx. ½ mile (0.8 km) to reach the road through Steeple Ashton. Turn L on this to arrive at the Longs Arms pub.

East to west

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, along a path which goes gently uphill across between hedges. 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 track. When the track becomes a path, continue in the same direction with hedge on R. When this veers off R at a right angle, continue 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Go through this and follow hedge on L to a metal gate and footbridge hidden in the far left corner of the field. Continue along the edge of the next field, with hedge to L, to a metal kissing gate giving access to a cultivated field. Continue in the same direction, aiming to the R of the four trees in the middle of the field. Maintain direction over the next field, also 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.

Turn L along the road for 20m, then go R down a narrow fenced path beside a 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, is yet another stile and footbridge, leading to a rusty metal gate. Go half R across the next field 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. Aim for a telegraph pole at the 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 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 along the B3098.