

MWW website directions – stage 10, Knap Hill to Oare

Maps: OS Landranger 173, OS Explorer 157

Distance: 3 1/2 miles (5.6 km)

West to east

Walk through the car park and beyond the two large boulders at the end. After 100m, turn L through a clearly waymarked gate with a sign on it forbidding the flying of model aircraft; ignore the path that follows the fence on your L, and follow the path uphill to a gate in the middle of the fence on the far side of the field, with Knap Hill rearing up to your R. The path climbs more steeply on the other side of the gate but you are soon on top of a ridge of hills with arguably the best views of the whole MWW spread out beneath you to your R. The path goes through several fields and is clearly waymarked. In the last of these, with Gopher Wood in front of you, turn half L in the direction indicated by a signpost and go over a stile, and then ahead and L along the edge of a field beside the wood. Turn R over another stile to descend to a crossroad of tracks. (You join the White Horse Trail at this point).

Follow the clear green track straight ahead up the side of the field. This track is soon bordered by two earth banks. Go through the gate in the top left corner of the field, then immediately right through another gate into a large field. Walk round the edge of the field with fence to right. Go through another gate at the end of the field, and cross the next field aiming for the far right corner. (You leave the White Horse Trail at this point). Go through the farm gate there and after about 50m, turn right through a sturdy wooden gate, then immediately left. Keep the fence to your left in sight, and after passing through some gorse bushes arrive at a farm gate near the corner of the field. From here the village of Oare is clearly visible below, with the brooding mass of the Giant's Grave, the next stage of the MWW, beyond. Continue in roughly the same direction to arrive at a bench by the fence on the far side. From here it is a steep descent R to the field below, where the incline slowly levels out to reach the lane into Oare. Turn L along this to arrive at the A345, then R along this to arrive at the White Hart, which is sadly now permanently closed.

East to west

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 in the fence beyond. Go through this and continue in roughly the same direction, passing through gorse bushes and keeping the fence to your right in sight, for around 150m, to arrive at a sturdy wooden gate on your right. Go through this, then immediately turn left. 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. Pass through the gate and walk along the edge of the large field beyond. Follow the fence round to the right, go through a gate and immediately turn left 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 the distance, then R on reaching it to go along a ridge of hills through several more fields, with the route being clearly waymarked. 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.