Pewsey Avon Trail directions north to south in six stages

Pewsey to Upavon

These directions are an update of the original directions given by Chris Cole in his excellent guidebook for the Pewsey Avon Trail (PAT) in 2010 when it was first established. This guide book is still available from the White Horse bookshop in Marlborough, or online at www.whitehorsebooks.co.uk/pewsey-avon-trail.

Maps: OS Explorer 130, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 5.9 miles (9.5 km)

A free car park is available at Bouverie Hall in Goddard Road, Pewsey, which is off North Street and adjacent to the Post Office. Part of the car park is used as a market on Tuesdays, so if all the spaces are occupied there is another car park a short distance away in Broomcroft Road.

Turn right out of the car park to reach the official start of the Pewsey Avon Trail, at King Alfred's statue. The River Avon can be briefly glimpsed beyond the statue. Continue along River Street. At the end, turn right along Church Street and past St John the Baptist Church to the next bend. When you reach the entrance to The Crescent, continue ahead on a footpath between houses. This takes you past the end of several private gardens, with views on the left towards Pewsey Hill and its White Horse. Continue along the edge of the sports field, with views to the right of Knap Hill, Golden Ball Hill and Martinsell Hill, which are all components of the Pewsey Downs. The path emerges on a minor road beside a brick-built thatched cottage.

Turn left along the minor road and go past Sharcott House. At the junction, turn right, signed as a 'Quiet Lane' to Manningford. Ignore the unsigned turning on the left as you follow the road round to the right, followed by a road junction beside a white thatched cottage, which is appropriately named Corner Cottage. Turn left past the cottage and shortly the road crosses the infant Avon in a dark wooded area. About 50m after going under the electricity cables, go through a kissing gate in the hedgerow on your right. Cross the field towards the tiny isolated church of Manningford Abbots.

Enter the churchyard by way of a rusty kissing gate. Go past the church porch to exit via another rusty kissing gate. The Wiltshire Council waymark points half right across the field; ignore this and do not follow the mowed path dead ahead either. Instead aim about 10 o'clock across the field towards a large oriental beech tree with dark purple leaves. Beside it, but hidden until you get much closer, is a kissing gate. Go through it to join the White Horse Trail (WHT) through a small wood (this section can get **extremely** boggy) via two sleeper

bridges. Exit by another kissing gate into a field and bear diagonally right across it, with a black and white thatched cottage in view on your left. Enter another small but boggy wood through a kissing gate.

Emerge onto a minor road, cross it and go down a wall-lined track beside The White House. Go through another kissing gate and bear half left across the field to yet another kissing gate which leads through the narrow band of trees via a sleeper bridge. Exit through a kissing gate and turn left, away from the White Horse Trail, in a brief diversion to see the Manningford Bruce church. Aim for another kissing gate at the end of a wall round a large house, and follow the wall to the churchyard. Leave this by the main gate, cross the road and follow the signed footpath opposite between metal fences. Enter the next field via a stile and follow the left-hand field edge to a stile and signpost by a thatched cottage, which is only visible at the last minute. You rejoin the WHT at this point. Cross the minor road (Wick Lane) and take the footpath a few paces to the left.

Emerge by the large brick barns of the Manningford Business Units and continue ahead, firstly on grass, then down the tarmac drive. At the junction, turn right towards a pair of imposing pillars between metal railings, but before reaching them go left along a wide strip of grass. The path kinks right and left to emerge beside the river at the Manningford Trout Fishery. Cross the concrete bridge, continue briefly on the gravel path, then bear right up the wide path alongside the river. Cross this at North Newnton church, go past its porch and along the tarmac drive to exit onto the road opposite Falkner's Farm. Leave the WHT here by turning left to follow the road to the roundabout at the Woodbridge Inn.

Turn left in front of the inn, cross the road by the roundabout and follow the path on the verge on the other side towards Pewsey. After crossing the river, turn right onto a wide, well-maintained path signed to Everleigh. After about 550m you will arrive at a Y-shaped intersection. Fork right here (the gate has been removed) onto an often overgrown path. When the grass ends, continue along the gravel track, then tarmac road, past farm buildings, and finally beside houses in Vicarage Lane, prior to reaching the A342. Turn right over the river to Upavon village centre.

Upavon to Enford

Maps: OS Explorer 130, OS Landranger 184

Distance: 4.8 miles (7.7 km)

Leave the centre of Upavon by following the No Entry road alongside the Antelope Inn, against the flow of traffic. Stay on the pavement until it ends, shortly before the T-junction with the A342 to Devizes. Cross over at the island onto the grass verge, where there is a seat and wooden carving that commemorates the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Directly opposite it is the turning to Widdington (a farm) and the shooting club. Cross the road with care onto the no through road, and follow it all the way to the vedette at Casterley Camp, climbing steadily, then easing off after passing a pair of tall masts above a reservoir, for approx. 1.3 miles (2.1 km). The higher you get, the better the views!

On reaching the vedette, turn left through the open parking area and follow the wide gravel track alongside the edge of the impact area. This is a military road, so be aware of the occasional light vehicle (tanks use the parallel dirt track to the right). Ignore the bridleway sign some 30m ahead, as well as the first left-hand turning you come to, which is a permissive byway. Take the next turning to the left, by a flagpole. The route follows the byway, signed as the Ridgeway Route, for ¾ mile (1.2 km) to the large barns of West Chisenbury Farm. Turn right here onto a narrow tarmac track, which is a byway.

After 250m, the narrow tarmac track turns sharp left. Continue ahead downhill between fences (this section can get very overgrown in summer) to emerge beside houses at Compton Farm. Follow the road round to the right through the farmyard, which contains several unusual items! As you exit this, go through a kissing gate in the fence ahead, and cross the field beyond, passing to the left of a pond, to reach another kissing gate in the corner. This is a permissive route which cuts out the dogleg required to follow the right of way, which leads to a stile some 80m or so further along the road.

Now follow the fence to the left on a wide grass track, and bear right behind a white thatched cottage. The grass track climbs between low banks, parallel to the A345. Pass through a kissing gate in the corner at the top, and go through another kissing gate in front of barns. Turn left past the barns to a junction. Go straight on past the electricity sub-station on a track signed as a bridleway. At the top of the slope, arrive at a bend in a lane, and turn immediately left through the kissing gate into a field. Pass to the right of the wooden pylon and continue in the same direction gently downhill, aiming towards a distant mast. Go through the kissing gate to the left of the thatched cottage into a small wood, and follow the path down steps to the main road.

Cross this to enter the village of Enford. Proceed as far as the church, which is on the left, where this stage ends.

Enford to Figheldean

Maps: OS Explorer 130, OS Landranger 184

Distance: 4.3 miles (6.9 km)

Turn left out of the church car park, then right again at the T-junction, signed Netheravon and Coombe Lane. Pass under the gantry outside the Swan Inn. Follow the lane through Longstreet to the junction in Coombe on your left, just beyond Glebe House, signed as Coombe Lane. Turn right here down an enclosed track, which has a concrete surface for most of its length. Don't miss the blue plaque on the wall here placed there in memory of two policemen who lost their lives on this spot in 1913. Ignore the signposted turning to Fittleton. After passing the sewage pumping station (on the left), cross the river on an old metal bridge, then keep ahead to Fifield. Follow the lane as it bends left, and at the right-hand bend fork left (straight on) up a track.

Cross over the military road and bear half left across the field to a kissing gate. Walk beside the left-hand edge of the next field, then go half right in the following field aiming for a corner of trees. Continue along the valley on a track towards Netheravon, with the river and Fittleton's church on the left. Bear left (straight on) along the minor road (Mill Road), passing the Stonehenge Ales brewery, to a T-junction. There is a shop 50m to the right here, should you be in need of sustenance. Turn left to cross the river again on Haxton bridge (which dates only from 2011).

Entering Haxton, keep following the road round to the right, signed to Everleigh, and go past the turning into Lower Street. Then after the first bungalow on the right, and opposite Old Post House Cottage, go down a fence-lined path. At the end of the path turn right, then left at the next junction. Go past a small lake on your right, then through woods, soon accompanied by the river, to come out on a minor road. Turn left here for 50m to arrive at Choulston Farm.

Turn right just past its entrance through a kissing gate. Head across the field, to the right of the sewage works and past a small copse on the right, going past two redundant kissing gates in the process, to arrive at a lane. Turn right (effectively straight on) along the lane, then at a Y-shaped junction fork right towards Figheldean (pronounced Filedeen!). Follow the lane for some 450m, then turn left, opposite the church, up through trees. Bear right along the fence at the top. Follow the path round to the left at a crossing of tracks soon after, passing

allotments to your left and houses to the right. Cross the minor road (Pollen Lane) to end this stage at Figheldean's magnificent village hall.

Figheldean to Amesbury

Maps: OS Explorer 130, OS Landranger 184

Distance: 4 ½ miles (7.2 km)

Take the wide grass path down the side of the village hall. Go through a gap at the end into a field and walk along its right-hand side towards houses. Continue ahead past a post box and notice board, then with a wall to your left and a school to the right, to emerge onto another road, opposite Ablington Farm. [There is an alternative permissive route here devised by the landowner for those who would like to avoid the livestock in the fields ahead: turn right down the road for 20m, then take the track to the left as far as the stile* below.] To continue on the standard route, go through the small gate just to the right of the farm entrance, into a paddock. Cross it, following the wall, then cross a stile that has been extensively chewed by horses! Proceed towards another stile* in the trees ahead. Still going straight on, pass over a farm track and onto a wide rutted track through a wood. This may be muddy and partly overgrown.

Cross over the access road to Syrencot House, onto a path through a continuation of the wood. At a junction of tracks, turn left, then almost at once right, to reach a military road. Cross it and bear half right across a field of long grass, aiming for the detached house beside trees. Take a narrow fence-lined path between houses that exits onto the road beside a post box and notice board at The Croft. Turn right along the road and follow it round to the left and all the way to Milston church. Note the old sundial above the porch roof.

Follow the road as it bends left for a further 200m, then turn right at the metal railings onto a narrow tarmac path over the river. Turn left and cross the river for a second time. Follow the path around to the left to emerge onto a narrow lane. Turn right along this and go uphill past some cottages. Immediately after the second one, where the lane bends left, take the footpath that forks right into the trees. The elevated path meanders back and forth, then finally bears away from the river to exit through a kissing gate. Continue ahead across fields and through two more kissing gates. This brings you into a field, with houses over to the left. Bear right along the edge of the field to join a narrow tarmac lane (Church Lane). This takes you all the way to Bulford church.

Carefully cross the A3028. Go through the gate opposite and over the footbridge. Turn right and walk along the edge of the field until you arrive at a stile by the entrance to the Dovecot (a property). Cross this, turn left, then within

50m go right onto a concrete road. At the entrance to the Watergate Farm coarse fishing lake, bear left on a path between trees. This climbs up to join a gravel track. Proceed ahead, still climbing. Soon after the track levels off, pass a pylon to your right. Over to the left you can see wireless masts and the various Ministry of Defence buildings around Bulford and Boscombe Down. The track ends at an electricity sub-station, with wires radiating in various directions. At the bridleway sign (on your left), turn left along the tarmac road. The noise of traffic on the A303 intensifies.

Just before reaching the A303, our road bends left. On the bend is a three-way bridleway sign. Turn right through a tunnel of trees on a tarmac path that runs parallel to the A303, then crosses over the dual carriageway. On the other side the path emerges onto a residential road (Ratfyn Road). Turn right along it to the next junction. Go through the gate on your right to enter Lord's Walk.

You now have two choices: the easiest, quietest, and most straightforward route is to proceed ahead on the wide grass strip between trees, exiting onto the A345 at the far end. Seats are provided but the trees obstruct distant views. A more interesting alternative drops down the hillside to follow the river but is noisier due to its closer proximity to the A303. To take this route, a few paces after entering through the gate, turn right beside the electricity sub-station. Follow the purpose-built path through the trees, initially going back in the opposite direction. At first the path descends gradually, then steps are provided where it drops more steeply, to emerge near the A303 river bridge. Now follow the riverside path all the way to the A345. Both routes emerge onto Countess Road within a short distance of each other. Turn left to arrive at a crossroads with traffic lights. Turn right here for the High Street.

Parking is available, at a price, in the Central Car Park a bit further on along the A345 (Salisbury Road). Alternatively, you can park for free in Bonnymead Park, which is on the PAT route to Old Sarum, although the parking area is much smaller.

Amesbury to Old Sarum

Maps: OS Explorer 130, OS Landranger 184

Distance: 7 miles (11.2 km)

Turn left out of the Central Car Park (towards the A303), and at the crossroads turn left into the High Street. This becomes Church Street after crossing Salisbury Street, which comes in from the left. Pass the church, which is set well back from the road, on the right, and cross the Avon on Queensberry Bridge. When the road bends right, continue ahead on Recreation Road, which leads to Bonnymead Park. Take the footpath which forks off to the right of the children's play area at the entrance to the park. Cross three bridges over the Avon at Ham Hatches and proceed to a crossroads of tracks near a house. Continue straight on along a grassy track that climbs gradually to another crossroads of tracks.

The track widens considerably here and becomes gravel. Continue ahead, climbing a bit more, then descending to a double field gate (one side of which is usually left open) next to a bridle gate into a field. Maintain direction, now climbing again, as the gravel track peters out into grass. Follow the hilltop above the valley, keeping to the right of a fenced tree plantation, then go half right towards a double field gate next to a bridle gate. Shortly before reaching this, a footpath comes up from the valley on the right to join ours. Pass through the gate and continue along the bridleway between hedge and fence. Cross an intermediate track, then gradually bear left towards Ham Wood on a wide, clear track. Follow this along the left-hand edge of the wood down to a minor road in front of Beech Wood, with Fairwood House on the right.

Turn right along the road, past the imposing entrance to Great Durnford Manor's drive, into Great Durnford. Entering the village at a bend, St Andrew's Church is clearly visible in front of you. Continue through the village past a turning to the left. Opposite a house called The Field House, turn right down a gravel track beside a private car park. This is the driveway to Durnford Mill. Turn right onto the footbridge over the weir in front of the mill, then follow the path across a second bridge over another river channel. Fork right, then immediately go left round a tree to climb the bank to another unsigned junction. Proceed along the left-hand edge of an open field, with the river to your left. The path becomes enclosed between hedges, and crosses a track at Woodford Green. Go straight on, then at a Y intersection bear right (effectively straight on) between hedges, then paddocks. After bending right, exit by a gravel driveway onto the road.

Turn left, now following part of National Cycle Route 45. Arriving at the Bridge Inn, turn left over the river. Although unclassified, this road can be busy at times as it is the main access road from the Woodford villages to the A345. Follow the road to, then through, Netton, ignoring three turnings to the left.

After passing Heale Cottage on a right-hand bend and just before the speed derestriction sign, look for a gap in the trees on your left; there is a signpost opposite but it can get completely covered by vegetation. Enter the woods, and follow the narrow path that climbs diagonally up the hillside, gradually at first, then becoming progressively steeper. The path emerges at the top of the wood into a large open field. Follow the obvious track in front of you beside a fence. After 100m you will emerge onto a wide, stony farm track, beside a seat dedicated to Eddie, a pleasant spot for a rest.

Turn left up the farm track for about 120m to a bridleway junction. Turn right onto a wide grass track with a fence to the right. In the far corner of the field, go through a gap into a strip of woodland, where you cross the Monarch's Way. On the other side, continue ahead across the centre of a large field. The top of the spire of Salisbury Cathedral comes into sight at this point. The path dips down to cross a footpath, known as The Avenue, by Keeper's Cottage. Climb up the other side of the dip and at the top the massive hillfort of Old Sarum is seemingly just a stone's throw away. In reality, there is still almost a mile to go to get to it.

Ignore the track going off to the right at the top of the slope and continue on the wide track past a cottage and across the minor road (which goes left to the Beehive Park & Ride). Follow the fence-lined path round the base of the hillfort. Exit through two gates beside a farm onto the entrance drive to the interior of Old Sarum. Bear right if you wish to visit the English Heritage site, where you will find a car park and toilets.

Old Sarum to Salisbury

Maps: OS Explorer 130, OS Landranger 184

Distance: 3 miles (4.8 km)

(updated in November 2026)

From the Old Sarum car park, walk back down the entrance drive to the yellow box markings at the bend. Go through the gate on your right. Do not climb the bank, but bear left to a second gate, and follow the gravel track towards the main road. Just before reaching it, turn right. If starting from the layby in the A345 or by public transport, join the trail here, opposite the Harvester pub. Follow the hedgerow on your right, with views of Salisbury across Hudson's Field.

At the end of the field, exit through a gate, signed Phillips Lane. Continue beside the hedgerow and exit this field through a gate in the corner, at a Y-shaped junction. Fork left onto a narrow path enclosed by fences and hedges. Emerge onto the road beside a thatched wall. Turn right along the pavement. Cross over the road (where there is another thatched wall), and turn left into Mill Lane, which is clearly signed. At the end, bear left past the entrance to Avonside House.

Walk between staggered railings next to a No Cycling sign onto a tarmac path. Cross the River Avon on a footbridge. You now have two options, with some possibilities of switching between them:

1) For the official route, continue ahead on a tarmac path for 100m to an unsigned crossing of tracks. Turn left here onto an enclosed path. This turns right and left after some 150m, then gets narrower, with a field to the right and a good view of the cathedral ahead. Kink left then right with a high fence enclosing some allotments on the right (to join the riverside walk here, do not turn right, but keep ahead along a boardwalk; at a T-junction with another boardwalk turn right – this is the riverside walk).

2) Soon after leaving the allotments behind the path surface changes from earth to self-binding gravel (SBG), with a tarmac cycle track joining it from the right. Turn left onto a wide bridge over the River Avon (the first of many on this stretch). Pass the River Park Play Area on your right, (still enclosed by Harris fencing). Quite soon after, the riverside walk joins from the left.

   For the riverside option, turn left immediately after crossing the bridge onto a small, stony beach. Take the well-used and possibly muddy path off it (which is permissive). This path veers away from the river at first but gradually returns to its side not long before a lengthy section of boardwalk. Keep the river close to your left. The path surface eventually becomes SBG, where there are exits to join to the official route on the right. Ignoring these, continue ahead to arrive at it anyway after 100m or so.

Turn left. Pass the next bridge, to the left, which leads to the Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre and takes National Cycle Route 45 and the Golden Way circular cycle route across the river. Cross a road (Ashley Road) and continue along the riverside, now on tarmac and which is shared with cyclists, signposted to Superstore, City Centre and Cathedral Close. Pass under the ring road. Cross another road (note the plaque on the bridge, known as Scammell's Bridge, on the left relating its history).

Pass under the railway and follow the path past another bridge to the left, this time a pedestrian one, where the SBG surface returns. The next bridge on the left is a vehicular bridge signposted Castle Street. It is quickly followed by another pedestrian bridge to the left, with the large Central car park on the right. On arriving at a quiet road, with a large painting of a duck and a kingfisher on the buildings on the other side, turn left along it across the river. Where the road veers to the left, turn right along a path with the river still on your left (the River Avon has split in two) past a Tesco supermarket. Pass a park on the right, soon replaced by shops – this is The Maltings.

Go straight on through the archway and over the pedestrian river bridge to the left of the Bishop's Mill pub. Cross the road (Bridge Street) and turn left down the side of the King's Head Inn, with the river now on your right, to arrive at Crane Street. Turn right here to join the Cranborne Droves Way.

To reach the end of the Pewsey Avon Trail and visit the cathedral, turn left along Crane Street and right at the traffic lights/crossroads down the High Street. Go under the archway to enter the Cathedral Close. Continue ahead to the west door of the cathedral, where the trail ends.

Outside the cathedral entrance is a signpost which displays a waymark for the start of the Avon Valley Path, which is effectively a continuation of the Pewsey Avon Trail to the coast at Christchurch.