

Pewsey Vale Circular Walk in 13 stages - clockwise directions

- C1 Ham to Linkenholt**
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C1 Ham to Linkenholt

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (north sheet) and 158, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7½ miles, 12.1 km

With the Crown and Anchor pub on your left, walk up Ham's main street, following it first right then left, past Manor Farm House on the right. Just past two houses on the left, the first of which is thatched, turn left 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 right across the field, aiming for a gap in the hedge near the top of the field on your left. (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 right to the corner of the field and then left along its edge. After approx. 150 m, turn right 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. Continue diagonally left and more gently upwards to arrive at a track which is hidden from the gate below.

Turn left onto the track which takes you along the top of a long ridge for almost 2¼ miles (3.6 km), with extensive views on both sides. Your first landmark is the Combe Gibbet on your left, which the track skirts round. Not far afterwards, cross a

road and join the Wayfarer's Way by a car park. Pass to the left of Walbury Camp, an Iron Age hill fort. Ignore a pedestrian gate on your right but take the next exit from the ridge top via a kissing gate, some 50 m further on, into a field. Having joined the Test Way not long before passing the Combe Gibbet, you leave it at this point.

The path descends fairly steeply, bears round to the left past double metal field gates, then joins a bridleway and turns right, going ever downhill through woods and past several green metal signposts. At the bottom, join a byway coming in from the left and soon after go round a barrier onto a metalled road. Pass two houses to your left, the first of which is Lower Farm, and at the T junction go left (Church Road).

Walk through the tiny village of Combe to arrive at a wide circular tarmac area. Here the road you are on goes very sharply left, but you continue ahead, with Combe Manor on the right. Take the middle of three paths in front of you. This is a stony byway (the path on its right goes to the Church of St Swithun – note the curious spelling) which climbs relentlessly to Wadsmere Down. At the top, go through a gate (which is left open), across a strip of grass and along a path enclosed by bushes and vegetation for some 40 m.

Here fork half right, onto a bridleway, leaving the byway in the process. Soon join a grassy vehicular track across the field. Enter Combe Wood through a large gap. Ignore the track which goes straight ahead downhill, and instead turn right onto a bridleway; either path can be taken as they soon join up.

Keep a lookout for a short path to the right, which brings you out on the top of Sheepless Hill. You join the Test Way here. Descend to the bottom and turn left onto a signposted byway through Combe Wood. It does not take long before you arrive at a crossroads of tracks in a glade, where there is a signpost festooned with waymarks.

Keep ahead, soon emerging into an open valley. Pass a red brick barn on the left to arrive at a solitary wooden dwelling. Take the track to the right of this, but after a short distance take the footpath which zigzags upwards through scattered bushes and trees. Cross a stile and go up the left-hand side of a field. At the top, keep ahead on the track to the right of Linkenholt Manor. This stage ends on reaching the road.

C2 Linkenholt to Oxenwood

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 4.9 miles, 7.9 km

With Linkenholt Manor on your right, walk along the road away from Linkenholt. This goes downhill past a sizeable house on the left, then continues uphill to reach a T junction with another road. Turn left for 20 m, then go right on a narrow road into the charming hamlet of Little Down. A wider road soon joins from the left.

Go uphill to Winterside Farm, where the tarmac runs out. Continue slightly left then right on a stony track past the farm to arrive at a crossroads of tracks.

Turn right onto an “other road with public access” (ORPA) and climb gently to the corner of a metalled road. Turn left onto another, very straight, ORPA which can often get muddy/waterlogged. After $\frac{3}{4}$ mile arrive at a road. Cross it, go a few steps to the left and keep ahead on another road. This descends to Henley Farm. Just past the farm, turn left and proceed uphill on a stony bridleway. At the top, go through a bridle gate to the right of double field gates, and turn left down the field edge. In its corner go through a (broken) metal bridle gate and directly under a pylon. Continue ahead on a field divider which brings you out at a road.

Take a few steps to the right and continue on the bridleway, which almost at once turns left along the field edge (the right of way has been moved from the other side of the fence/hedge). At the bottom, turn left for a few metres on a rough farm track, then bear right off the track through a gap in the hedge into the next field. After 15 m or so, arrive at the bottom of a wide, enclosed footpath. Turn right onto it, going gently uphill.

At the top, go over a stile then maintain direction to the left of the hedge past several grand old trees. Cross another stile, with Oxenwood’s large church over to the left. Continue in the same direction, keeping the village’s fenced war memorial well to your left, to arrive at a stile onto the road into Oxenwood. Turn right along it, passing the imposing Fosbury House on your left, then some cottages to your right, to arrive at a staggered crossroads. The stage ends here.

C3 Oxenwood to Hippenscombe Farm

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 4.85 miles, 7.8 km

At the staggered crossroads in Oxenwood, take the road signposted to Tidcombe and The Chutes, but almost immediately fork left off it onto the road signposted to Beacon Farm Buildings. Swerve left round the farm and continue on a stony track. This initially dips down but then begins a long, steady climb to the top of the downs, from where there are fine views in good weather. At a crossroads of tracks turn right, still ascending. On arriving at Fosbury Farm, which has two chunky stone pillars at its entrance, bear slightly right, ignoring Turnbull Lane on your left.

The track initially has two fields on its left but thereafter is accompanied by Oakhill Wood. After half a mile (0.8 km), when the track goes sharp left downhill, turn right for a few metres, then climb over a stile into a field. Turn left, keeping Oakhill Wood on the left. The path ahead through an outcrop of Oakhill Wood is indistinct.

According to the OS map, it passes to the right of a misshapen dead tree. It then passes a drained pond to right and a depression to left as it goes through the wood. Walkers then have to clamber down a stony bank to join a grassy path at the entrance to the next, smaller field. In practice it is easier to pass to the left of the dead tree and the depression aiming for the well-used path next to the fence, which then joins the grassy path into the next field.

Go gently downhill, with the wood still on your left. Cross another stile, pass through more woods, still descending, then turn left along the top of a field, with Oakhill Wood still on your left, and fine views of Hippenscombe Bottom on your right. Once at the field corner, turn right downhill. Walk along the side of a house at the bottom. This is Goudyses Gate; if you are using your own transport to get to and from the start/finish points of the PVCW, it is advisable to park in the small layby opposite, but to continue to the end of the stage, it is another 1.6 miles (2.6 km) approx. (See next stage.)

C4 Hippenscombe Farm to Collingbourne Ducis

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 6.25 miles, 10.1 km

From the small layby at Goudyses Gate, cross the road and turn half right along a dead-end road. This takes you into Hippenscomb Bottom, a long, sinuous valley overlooked by verdant hills. Pass Hippenscombe Farm after 1.6 miles (2.6 km). Soon after this, the tarmac is replaced by a stony track. The route lurches to the right at a fork, then bends back to the left, ignoring a track going uphill to the right.

Go through a metal bridle gate next to a field gate, then follow the track, now much grassier, round to the right, with a small copse on your left. On arriving at another field gate, which is left open, take the bridle gate to the right, then immediately turn left, so that the fence is now on your left. At the end of the field, go through another small gate onto an enclosed path. After 70 m, turn left and start a gradual ascent out of Hippenscombe Bottom. Pass to the right of a house called Scot's Poor, to arrive at a road.

Bear half left towards the triangle of grass and take the byway signposted to Gammon's Farm. Some way past the farm the route forks – continue ahead. Not long after this, arrive at a metal barrier across the bridleway; this is where the equestrian route goes straight on, but walkers need to fork right and descend through woodland. Some 40 m past where the OS map shows a bridleway forking left into a field, turn left onto another track – the northern end of the bridleway has been diverted onto this track. The bridleway soon opens out and marches along the bottom of a wide valley. Eventually emerge onto a minor road which leads to the Shears Inn.

Cross the road which runs past the pub and keep ahead on the road which leads to Collingbourne Ducis and the A346, where this stage ends.

C5 Collingbourne Ducis to Milton Hill

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 5.4 miles, 8.7 km

Leave Collingbourne Ducis by taking the metalled lane on the other side of the A346 from the post office (Chick's Lane). After a while, a single lane road comes in from the left at a narrow angle (Everleigh Road). Soon after this, turn right off the road and walk between the extensive buildings of the Oldlands Piggery / West Hill Farm, exiting through a field gate. Keep ahead on a deeply rutted byway, passing through two more field gates, to arrive at a line of trees.

Pass through the trees, then at once turn right. On meeting an earthy track, turn left and pass by Summer Down Farm (to your left). Arrive at the metalled road from Pewsey to Everleigh and turn right along it for 75 m. When the road turns 90 degrees to the left, keep ahead on another byway. This is initially well surfaced, and goes gradually downhill, but soon becomes deeply rutted. The byway has an MoD danger area on its left for the first 1.3 miles (2.1 km) (although curiously the danger area is not shown on the latest version of the online OS map). After a further 1.4 miles (2.25 km), just after passing a couple of barns on your right, and several bee hives on your left, arrive at the end of this stage (marked as Pump House on the OS map).

Milton Hill is most easily accessed by road by taking the minor metalled road from Milton Lilbourne. To continue to Milton Lilbourne, keep ahead on said road. To continue on the next stage, turn sharp left onto another much smoother byway

C6 Milton Hill to Upavon

Maps: OS Explorer 130 (north sheet) and 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 5.9 miles, 9.5 km

Milton Hill is most easily accessed by road by taking the minor metalled road from Milton Lilbourne. Once there, if arriving from Milton Lilbourne, turn right onto a byway. If continuing from the previous stage, turn sharp left onto the byway.

It is 1¾ miles (2.8 km) from the three-way junction at Milton Hill back to the Pewsey to Everleigh Road, which you walked along briefly in the previous stage. Soon after starting, the byway becomes gravelly and climbs. It is not long after it levels out before Milton Hill Farm is signposted to the left, at which point the byway becomes metalled. Continue ahead to the Everleigh to Pewsey road.

Cross it and keep ahead past Down Farm and a field full of pig pens (and pigs) on your left. At a junction of paths, both byways, turn left and walk between two fields covered in pig pens. At another path junction, turn right onto a deeply rutted but grassy track. Follow this in a steady arc round to the left towards, then past, woods. The route eventually goes through the woods (which are called Grant's Firs). Once on the other side, fork right, away from the trees, rather than straight ahead towards the A342

Soon arrive at a T junction of tracks and turn right onto a grassy bridleway. This gradually veers away from a gravel track immediately to the left, and the A342 beyond it. You are now in open countryside, with glorious views on both sides. This is Bohune Down. Keep ahead past the Trenchard Lines barracks (to the left), followed by the Upavon golf course. On reaching the corner of the golf course after a short ascent, turn left, now with the golf course on your left. Pass several tumuli on the golf course, and a miniature bench on your right, just as the path starts to descend. On reaching a large gap in the hedge to your right, turn right for 10 yards, then left onto an enclosed path (not easy to see). This takes you down to the village of Upavon, where you emerge between houses onto a junction with the A342 (to the left) and a minor road (to the right). Continue ahead, crossing a bridge over the Avon, and bear right up an alley to arrive at the Ship Inn, where this stage ends.

C7 Upavon to Marden

Maps: OS Explorer 130 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 5.9 miles, 9½ km

From the Ship Inn in Upavon, cross the road and take the road up the left-hand side of the Antelope pub. Turn right into the first road you come to, Chapel Lane. When this slopes down to a junction with Jarvis Street, turn left up a narrow lane between houses to the edge of a large field. Keep ahead on an obvious path through the field. On reaching the line of trees, turn left along the field edge, keeping the trees to your right, to arrive at the A342 (again!). Cross it and turn left into a metalled byway, which has a large sign to the Chalk wedding venue in the field to the left.

Keep ahead past Rushall Manor (on the right) and start climbing soon after. When the track levels out and forks left to the Chalk wedding venue (Rushall Hill Barn), continue ahead on a rutted track. Pass a group of barns over to the right and arrive at a T junction with another, deeply rutted, byway, with a military road some 30 m ahead. Turn right onto the byway, which runs roughly parallel to the military road initially. Follow this undulating terrain past a bridleway, then a byway, both of which disappear off to the right. On arriving at the military road, turn sharp right onto another bridleway, opposite a flag post.

Pass to the left of a square enclosure and walk along the edge of an open area, with woods to the left. Bear left, between Marden Cowbag and Broadberry Banks, and follow the path downhill all the way to the A342. Cross it with care and take the bridleway on the other side. At a crosstracks at the end of the first large field, where the route for riders forks left, continue ahead. At a second crosstracks soon after, turn left across the middle of a field. Cross a footbridge and stile, then walk through two fields and three kissing gates. After the third one, the route becomes enclosed but soon arrives at Marden's main street, where this stage ends. The next stage starts just across the road.

Marden's village hall is some 45 m to the right (north), and the Millstream pub is further 150 m to the right / north.

C8 Marden to Bishops Cannings

Maps: OS Explorer 157 & 130 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7½ miles, 12.1 km

The start is approx. 200 m south of the Millstream pub, and 45 m to the south of the village hall. Take the road running down the side of the Grange Farm. This narrows and passes stables. Cross a stile in the corner which may be partially obscured by vehicles, and walk up a field, with a hedge on the right. Go through a gate with stone supports, across a track (used by the Pewsey Vale Circular Ride) and keep ahead on a bridleway with a concrete surface.

This brings you out on a bend in Chirton's main road, with The Corner House on your left. Continue ahead to the church and pass through the churchyard, keeping the church on your right. The right of way passes through a field gate on an enclosed path to the right of and just beyond the graveyard at the back of the church, but there is a kissing gate in the left-hand corner of the churchyard which, if you go through it (rather than turning right on the enclosed path), provides easier access to the field. With both approaches, turn right along the field edge on an obvious path along the rear of some houses to arrive at a stile in the corner. Cross it and turn left along the same road you left earlier.

When the road bends sharp left, riders will stay on the road, but walkers will go through a kissing gate on the right into another field. Walk half left towards a wide, concrete bridge over a stream, then go half right after crossing it to a kissing gate in the corner. Turn left. The path is parallel to a hedge with a substantial house on the other side. Go through a kissing gate onto a road and turn left for a short distance. Turn right into a bridleway which comes out on Patney's main road opposite house no. 31. Turn right and follow the road up to and across a railway bridge.

At the bottom of the slope on the other side, turn right onto a track, which is parallel to the road, to an unusual stone stile on the left.

Cross it and continue ahead on a slightly raised field divider. Go through a large gap into the next field, soon joining a track. Turn left on this, and after 25 m or so, strike out across the field on your right. Unfortunately, the right of way has been obstructed by a row of substantial mounds, so aim for the barns of South Farm ahead. It is possible to cross overgrowth next to the barns to gain access to a track beyond.

Turn left on this track and follow it to the road between Patney and All Cannings.

Turn right. Ignore the drive to Manor Farm on the left and take the turning to the left just past the cemetery (Chandlers Lane), signposted All Cannings. Pass the primary school on the left, and later a children's playground on the green, also on the left.

When the road turns right, continue ahead along Drewitts Lane. This doglegs right and left and goes through a small paddock.

Take the rusty metal footbridge over a stream in the right-hand corner which leads to a narrow, enclosed path. This soon gives way to a large field, with a well-used, possibly very muddy, footpath across its middle. Turn left along the towpath of the Kennet & Avon Canal for over a mile (1.6 km), passing under the Allington bridge, then the remains of a swing bridge. On arriving at the Horton Chain (road) bridge, bear left off the towpath up to the road through Horton.

Turn left along the road, passing both entrances to stately Townsend House on the left, then Townsend Farm on the right. When the road turns sharp left, take the drive on your right to Hopton Mill Farm, signposted Kennet & Avon Canal and Bishops Cannings, although this is hard to read. Just before reaching the house, turn left onto a fenced off path through a paddock. Go through a gate in its far-left corner into a field. Aim for two bridle gates to the right which enclose a concrete track. On the other side of the track, continue ahead on a tree-lined path to arrive once again at the Kennet & Avon canal.

Cross it via the swing bridge in front of you and bear left along a partially concreted track, a bridleway. Go through a gate onto a road in Bishops Cannings called The Street. After a short distance, turn left along Church Walk, which (not surprisingly!) leads to the churchyard, on the other side of which is the Crown Inn, where this stage ends.

C9 Bishops Cannings to Knap Hill car park

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7 miles, 11.3 km

Starting from the Crown Inn, with the village car park some 80 m to the north, walk through the churchyard and down the lane beyond to arrive at The Street – this is the official start of this stage. Continue ahead for a short distance and go through the gate on the right. Follow the left-hand side of the field across a footbridge and the field beyond it. Turn right along the field edge, ignore a pedestrian gate on the left, then cross two footbridges on the left in quick succession. Follow the obvious path along the field edge, then across meadows likely to contain horses to come out on a minor road.

Turn right along the road for 25 m, then take the wide restricted byway on your left past a barn on the left. Gradually ascend Roughridge Hill. Just before a T junction with a byway, go through a bridle gate on your right onto the Iron Age fortification known as the Wansdyke. This will be your companion for the next few miles. **Try not to walk along the top of the Wansdyke where possible to help prevent erosion.** The next right-hand turn is where the equestrian route of the PVCW joins the Wansdyke. Walk along the Wansdyke, passing through a series of bridle or pedestrian gates, and/or over some rickety stiles. Bear left away from the Wansdyke through a field gate, then bear right again to rejoin it beside two barns.

Continue for just under a mile (1.6 km), climbing fairly steeply at the end, to arrive at a stony track to Manor Farm. The official route continues ahead alongside the Wansdyke, but this can get badly overgrown in the summer. If this is the case, turn left for 20 m, then right up another stony track, parallel to the Wansdyke. Turn right through a field gate on the right just before the track levels out to pass through the Wansdyke via another field gate. Turn left and continue along the Wansdyke for 1¼ miles (2 km), enjoying the superb views on both sides, and passing through two gates in the process.

Turn left along a track after the third (wooden) gate and almost at once fork right. The official route returns to the Wansdyke, now on your left, via a stile; if this is too overgrown to use, simply walk up the track beside it instead. At the top, turn right through a gate into the Pewsey Downs Nature Reserve. Cross the field, keeping the fence on your left, and go through another gate. Turn left and follow the contour of the hillside, with tremendous views of the Pewsey Vale on your right. On your left is Milk Hill, the highest point in Wiltshire at 295 m (968 feet). After the second gate go left in a tight semi-circle past the stunted trees and bushes on the shoulder of Milk Hill. Keep with the contour of the hill (this is a favourite haunt of paragliders in the summer) and go through a bridle gate.

Just round the next fold in the hill the Alton Barnes White Horse will suddenly appear in front of you. Follow the path which passes just above it and on turning the next bend, Walker's Hill, with the tumulus of Adam's Grave on its summit, will appear before you. Aim for it, then bear left in front of it towards a kissing gate in the fence on the left. Go through another kissing gate, across the small field beyond and through two more gates to come out on the Alton Barnes to Lockeridge road. On the other side is the Knap Hill car park, your destination.

C10 Knap Hill car park to Wootton Rivers

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7.3 miles, 11.3 km

Much of this section follows the Mid Wilts Way (MWW).

Walk through the car park, and past the two large boulders at the end. After 80 m, turn left through a clearly waymarked gate. Ignore the path that follows the fence on your left and follow the path uphill to the first of several squeeze stiles / field gates in the middle of the fence on the far side of the field, with Knap Hill rearing up to your right. The path climbs more steeply on the other side of the squeeze stile, but you are soon on top of a ridge of hills with arguably the best views of the whole PVCW spread out beneath you on both sides.

The path goes through several fields. In the last of these, with Gopher Wood in front of you, turn half left in the direction indicated by the signpost and go over another squeeze stile / through a field gate. Walk half-left across the next field, with Gopher Wood over to the right, to arrive at a field gate. Go through this and descend to a crossroads of tracks. You join the White Horse Trail (WHT) here.

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-hand corner of the field, then immediately right through another gate into a large field. Walk round the edge of the field with a fence to the right. Go through a bridle gate at the end of the field, and across another field in the same direction. The right of way is an enclosed path accessed by a bridle gate, to the right of a track accessed by a field gate.

The path can get so overgrown as to be impassible, in which case taking the track is an option, although this is not a right of way. Regrettably the track can get very muddy in wet weather. Both routes bring you out on the driveway of a house, Huish Hill House. If on the enclosed path, turn left; if on the track, keep ahead.

The MWW veers sharp right between a fence and a hedge soon after, but the PVCW continues down the drive to the A345 Marlborough to Pewsey road. Cross it with great care. Follow the track on the other side past a barn and then left uphill.

Just before reaching a field gate, turn left into woodland. At the first crossroad of paths the WHT turns right, away from the PVCW. The second crossroads of paths is signposted; go straight on and soon emerge into open countryside. Quite soon after this, bear half-left downhill, rejoining the MWW, with woods on your right. Continue ahead at the bottom, with a wood now on your left to arrive at a small car park by a road. On the other side of this road is the start of the well-named Mud Lane.

As an alternative to slipping and sliding along Mud Lane, it is possible to reach Wootton Rivers by taking quiet country roads, which also provide good views of Martinsell Hill. To do so, turn right on reaching the road above, and after approx. 0.6 miles (1 km) arrive at a junction to right (signposted New Mill and Milton Lilbourne). Do not go right but follow the road round to the left to pass East Wick Farm on your left. Approximately 0.7 miles (1.2 km) after the junction, arrive at a T junction. Turn left here and after 50 metres or so arrive at the Royal Oak pub opposite.

If you wish to stick to the **official route**, make your way along Mud Lane, past three large fields to your right, with a barn between the first and second. On reaching the end of the third field, turn right down the edge of the fourth field, with hedge on the right. However, before doing so, it is worth making a small detour; if you continue along Mud Lane for perhaps 15 m you will see, carved onto the end of a tree stump just above head height to your left, the lugubrious face of the Green Man. Once back in the fourth field, follow the edge round to the left at the bottom and after 150 m turn right down a green bridleway. This leads directly to Wootton Rivers. On reaching the metalled road, turn right and you will soon arrive at the Royal Oak pub on your left.

C11 Wootton Rivers to Great Bedwyn

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 174 & 173

Distance: 7 miles, 11.3 km

Turn left on coming out of the Royal Oak pub. Pass the village hall on your right en route to the Kennet & Avon Canal. Cross the bridge over the canal and turn left onto the towpath. Walk along the canal, passing under three bridges, each accompanied by a lock, before reaching a fourth under the A346 at Burbage Wharf. Not long after this, the canal disappears into a tunnel (Bruce Tunnel). Here bear right up steps and through a low tunnel under the railway, and then past a field and what used to be the Forest Hotel to the right, to cross a minor road (Savernake Road).

Turn left up the road and cross a bridge over a dismantled railway. Climb the slope beyond and go through the small village of Durley. Just beyond its derestriction sign, bear right through a sturdy kissing gate into the Tottenham House estate. (If you look to the left here, you can see the top of the Ailesbury Column a considerable way down Savernake Forest's Grand Avenue). Follow the well-used path across grass, which is swampy at first, then go over an access road to the house (which is here visible in the distance to the right). Continue through a copse and across more open ground. Cross another access road to the house and leave the estate through another sturdy kissing gate.

Follow the wide track through woodland, past the imposing St Katherine's church on the left. Continue on the track, signposted to Chisbury and Stokke, through more woodland. At the top of a slope, turn right. On reaching a London bus stop (!) on the right, bear left, with Stock Common soon on your left. At a junction in front of a couple of houses, turn right downhill. The path veers to the left past another house and becomes Hatchet Lane (a path, not a road). Follow this to a road which crosses a bridge over the canal in front of you. Turn left down this past the church to Great Bedwyn's village square, where this stage ends.

C12 Great Bedwyn to Froxfield

Maps: OS Explorer 158 & 157, OS Landranger 174

Distance: 7¼ miles, 11.7 km

Walk up Great Bedwyn's High Street towards the Three Tuns pub. At the pub, turn right along the road. After a short distance take the footpath on the left behind a house to a field. Go diagonally half right across the field, up some steps onto and across a slightly elevated path to the telecoms mast to the left and continue across the next field in the same direction to reach the wood on the other side. (If either of the fields has an impenetrable crop in it, you will have to find your own way to the same place by going round field edges.)

Turn right and through a gap into the next field, then bear left onto a path which winds its way through the wood. Cross a stile into a field, where curious horses can often be encountered, and turn left up its edge. Go over a stile at the top and across the next field. Go through a field gate and continue more or less in the same direction to a sturdy stile. This leads down to the road through Chisbury. Turn left past a small grass triangle and take the footpath ahead past a telephone box and a garage with a white door. Walk between fences past the back gardens of houses, keeping left at an open area and across two stiles into a field.

Walk down the left-hand edge of the field and go through a gap in the corner into another field. Keep the hedge to your left and dip down, then up, past a pond to the

left. At the field end, turn right, now with a fence to the left and trees/hedge to the right. At the field corner, turn left for a few metres, then right, following the line of telegraph poles, to arrive at Noke Wood. The route ahead is just inside the wood, however this can get very overgrown and walkers have made their own path (which is not a right of way) along the edge of the adjoining field on the right. When the wood comes to an end, kink right and left onto a very wide, grassy track, which takes you down to the A4.

Cross it carefully, turn right along the pavement provided, then turn left down the road to Ramsbury. Take the first path to the right (a bridleway) in front of a house and walk along it as far as the field boundary. Here turn left uphill on an enclosed bridleway. On reaching a road, turn left past Rudge Farm House. Take the footpath to the right immediately after the house and climb gently up the right-hand side of the field. At the top, turn left onto a wide, grassy track through Rudge Coppice. Follow this round to the right to arrive at a junction of tracks, Kink left and right, and follow the track downhill, now with Bottom Coppice on your right, to a Ramsbury Estate information board.

Turn right and follow the track to another Ramsbury Estate information board. Turn right again and walk uphill on a dirt track, soon with a wood on your left. When the track turns left, continue ahead beside the wood on a gravel path and walk down the side of two large fields to arrive at a road. Kink left and right and walk uphill to join another wood (Cake Wood). There are some lovely views along this section. After approx. 350 m, turn right up a gentle rise over open ground to meet a hedge corner. Continue down the side of the left-hand field, with the hedge on your right, until you meet a stile. Cross it and follow the path through a small copse to another stile at the top of a stone flight of stairs.

The stile can be bypassed by going through a demolished fence to its left. Go down the steps and turn right along the pavement. Cross the A4 with great care using the traffic calming islands. Turn right again to arrive at the Pelican pub in Froxfield, where this stage ends.

C13 Froxfield to Ham

Maps: OS Explorer 158, OS Landranger 174

Distance: 5¼ miles, 8 km

From the Pelican pub, take the A4 towards Hungerford, but after passing the speed limit signs take the road on the right, signposted Little Bedwyn. Cross bridges over the railway, the Kennet and Avon Canal, and a river. At a fork in the road, continue ahead, and when the road veers to the left, maintain direction on a byway. At a crossroads of tracks, turn left on a bridleway. Turn left on arriving at another byway,

then quickly right onto the Long Walk (which is well named!). This starts with a climb but is thereafter flat and green as it passes through woodland. Go through a kissing gate and continue ahead on a gravel track. Fork left on a wide green path to avoid entering private land, with railings on your right. Go through another kissing gate onto a road.

Turn left and follow the road through the hamlet of Bagshot. On reaching a triangular village green, turn left into a field. The path soon bears left and slightly downhill, then narrows to go round the garden of a large, square, brick house called Upper Westcott. It emerges onto a continuation of the road you have just left. Turn right and go gradually downhill. A few metres beyond double wooden gates on the left, cross a stile on the left (the right of way has effectively been moved here from the double gates). Walk across the field and go through a squeeze stile, then bear right onto a clear gravel path to the A338, which is accessed via a stile and a footbridge.

Cross the road with care and turn right along its pavement for 50 m. Turn left onto a footpath through a wooded area which eventually goes through a field gate and bears right onto the tarmac drive of Mount Prosperous (the house is visible to your left). Turn right and stay on the drive as it passes through an open area, then turns left and right up a tree-lined avenue to meet a road, which is accessed via a kissing gate to the left of closed double gates. Cross the road and follow the path diagonally right across two fields to where there is a large gap in a line of trees in the field corner. Go up the right-hand edge of a large field, half of which may contain crops, through a gap next to a field gate, past Field House to left and down to the road on a short track. Turn right to find yourself in Ham, your destination on this stage.