

White Horse Trail Route directions (clockwise) split into 10 sections with an alternative for the Alton Barnes to Cherhill section, and including the “short cut” between the Pewsey and Alton Barnes White Horses

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S1 White Horse Trail directions – Westbury to Bulkington

[Updated in November 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 143, OS Landranger 184, 173

Distance: 8.4 miles (13.4 km)

About the Westbury White Horse

This is the oldest White Horse in Wiltshire, dating back to 1778. The present figure was preceded by a much older version at the same site, the date and origin of which are unknown. Legend has it that it was cut as a memorial to one of King Alfred's victories over the Danes at the battle of Ethandun in 878 AD.

The car park above the Westbury White Horse can be reached either via a street named Newtown in Westbury, which also carries a brown sign pointing the way to Bratton Camp and the White Horse (turn left at the crossroads at the top of the hill), or via Castle Road in Bratton, both off the B3098.

Start at the top of the escarpment in the open area in front of the car park containing two benches, with the White Horse clearly visible to your right. There are fine views here over the vale below. Join the Mid Wilts Way (MWW) by going down steps and through the gate to the right, then walk all the way along the northern ramparts of Bratton Camp, which is an Iron Age hill fort, with the top of the White Horse initially to your left. After approx. 500m go through a kissing gate into a grassy field (this is a permissive path) and continue ahead, staying close to the fence on the left.

Cross the stile at the end and follow the path downhill along the right-hand side of a field. On arriving at the B3098, cross it and continue down the tarmac road on the other side.

Soon turn right at a sharp bend, along Lower Westbury Road. After 650m, arrive at a T junction with another tarmac road (Court Lane). Turn left down this, passing a stately thatched dwelling called Court House to the left. Just before the speed derestriction sign, cross a stile into a field on the left next to a sewage pumping building, immediately crossing a second stile over a wooden fence.

Go half right across the field to a double stile and footbridge in the far corner. Aim in the direction of the far left-hand corner of the next field. (If it has been raining heavily or consistently, it would be advisable to go past the telegraph pole on the slightly elevated, rampart-like section across the middle of the field, turning left at the hedge at the bottom, to avoid swampy areas in the middle). Cross a small footbridge and stile and go half right for 10m to arrive at a metal kissing gate leading to a railway crossing.

Having crossed safely, pass through another metal kissing gate and follow the unofficial diversion of the legal route along two sides of the field. This has been created by the landowner to ensure that walkers do not follow the right of way, which goes half left across the field. Go through a rusty metal gate onto a footbridge and over a stile. Turn right into the long, thin field beyond, and aim for the left-hand end of the hedge at the end, where there is a stile and a footbridge. Aim for the tree in the middle of the hedge to left in the next field (follow the fencing which is now there), where there is a footbridge and a very primitive stile. In the next field, follow the fenced green corridor ahead, then turn right to the field corner where there is a stile. Cross this and walk down the narrow, fenced path to right to a minor metalled road (Capps Lane). (The occupant of the house has unilaterally diverted the right of way at this point, and it looks as though the diversion is here to stay).

Go left along this for 30m, then turn right through a metal kissing gate. Proceed across the field beyond, going a few metres to the left of the first tree in the middle. You may have to forge a route through crops in both this field and the next, although someone has usually done so before you. The route through the next field takes you about 50 metres to the left of the furthest of four trees in the middle of the field to a footbridge and metal kissing gate at a dogleg hedge. Continue along the edge of the next field, with hedge to right, to a gap in the hedge (the footbridge and metal gate hidden in the far-right corner are no longer in use). Follow the hedge on right to arrive at a metal kissing gate onto a metalled road, just to the right of the drive to Lower Dunge Farm.

Go right along this road for 500m, and when the road bends right, go through a gap in the hedge on the left, signposted East Town.

Cross the 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 left. Follow this path, which soon becomes a wide, dirt track, to East Town Farm, then turn right keeping the farm buildings on the right. Continue on this track, which is East Town Lane. It has hedges on both sides after the farm buildings are left behind, with occasional gaps. At a Y-shaped junction, fork right. On arriving at a T junction at the bottom of a slope, the MWW veers to the right, but we take the footbridge to the left into the bottom of a field. Proceed along the edge of three fields (although the path departs from the field edge in the first one for 100m), all connected by plank bridges, alongside the stream, before crossing a more substantial footbridge over the stream to the left. Turn right on the other side of this, cross a plank bridge, and cross the field beyond aiming for a stile in the hedge just to the right of a telegraph pole.

On arriving at the stile it will quickly be apparent that it is not fit for purpose (at the time of writing), so turn left along the hedge and go through the gap in the field corner onto a broad track (Butts Lane). Turn right along this, and when it starts to bend right, turn left and pass through a rusty kissing gate on the right into a narrow path between gardens. This emerges on the main street of Steeple Ashton. You rejoin the MWW at this point.

Turn left along the main road for 50m, then right opposite Bartlett's Mead down a narrow track signposted 2 Church View. At the end turn right past a rusty kissing gate onto a path between fence and hedge, then go sharply back on yourself to left through a kissing gate just outside the graveyard. Walk alongside the graveyard wall, then bear right onto a rough track. Go through a gate at the end, and immediately left past another one (the fence has been removed). Head half right down the field and go through a field gate at the bottom. Follow the tractor track to right and left to get to a gate/footbridge/kissing gate in the corner of the next field. Take the path through what can be a swampy area. Cross a stile, then head slightly uphill along the edge of a field with fence, then hedge, to right.

At the corner, ignore the gate on your right and go through the field gate in front of you and a small metal gate just beyond. After 30m, go through a kissing gate on the right, and through a small wooded, enclosed area, to arrive at a stile next to a metal field gate. Here go left along the top of the field, passing a second metal field gate to left, and through a third one. Proceed down the broad track on the other side between fence and hedge and through double metal field gates (**Warning:** these are hard to manoeuvre due to the heavy metal bar which joins them at the top, it may be easier to climb over them). Continue cross the top of another field, with hedge left.

Go through a wooden kissing gate into a brief, often very muddy, section between hedges to a metal kissing gate. Approx. 50m after this, go through the metal kissing gate in the hedge on the left. Cross the field diagonally towards the church to arrive at a sturdy footbridge between two metal gates.

Maintain direction across the next field to the gate into Keevil church's graveyard. Go through this, keeping the church on your right, and down the short street at the end (Church Lane) to emerge onto the main road through the village.

Turn right here through the village, passing Pyatts Corner/Butts Lane, Martins Road, Longleaze Farm and a byway, and after approx. ½ mile (0.8 km), where the metalled road bends left at the end of a short section of metal fencing to the right, taking the MWW with it, continue straight ahead on a compacted stone track.

When a tarmac road is reached, continue ahead for 25m, then leave the road and go through a heavy metal gate. Maintain the same direction over the field beyond; this can be filled with rapeseed, through which the farmer does leave a path, but it is not wide enough. Cross a double stile on the other side, then another field and stile. Go half left across the next field, aiming at its corner. There is a stile behind this, and immediately afterwards a bridge to the left across Semington Brook. Turn right beside the brook along the edge of two more fields, with a metal kissing gate between them, to arrive at a wooden kissing gate leading to a path between two houses. This brings you out in The Close, a small cul-de-sac of modern houses. Turn left along this, then right along Bulkington's main street. After approx. 200m, the village's only pub, The Well, is reached on the left.

S2 White Horse Trail directions – Bulkington to Devizes White Horse

[Updated in May 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 156 & 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 8 miles (12.8 km)

Warning: this section as far as the A361 is very agricultural, with many, often hard to climb and/or broken stiles, and paths not left through crops in the summer

With your back to Bulkington's only pub, The Well, turn left up the main road. Pass Mill Lane, with its signpost to the village hall, to the right, and immediately after passing the sign for the village, take a stile to your right. Go half left over the field, then cross the next one, aiming for the top left corner of the field. Cross the corner of a third field, then another, bearing half left to a stile to the left of what appears to be a gap in the hedge ahead (but isn't). Unfortunately this used to be a double stile and footbridge, but at the time of writing has been reduced to a single stile with a damaged footstep, and a large puddle of water. An easier way to get into the next field is to continue along the hedge line to the field corner, where there is a large gap into the next field, but this of course is not a right of way. Go half left across, or alongside the hedge of, the next field to arrive at the Seend to Worton road.

Turn right along this for 100m (there are grass verges but they are not very wide), then take a stile to the left. Cross three fields, climbing stiles into each, to arrive at the road into Poulshot. Turn left along this, and when it bends sharp right, just after the sign for Poulshot, take the track to the left. After 20m, pass through a metal field gate (usually left open) then bear right into the start of Broadway Lane. This is at first rough and uneven underfoot, and after heavy rain is not for the faint hearted, but it improves after a while. It is later joined by a farm track for approx. 50m, which comes in from the left past a large, open-sided barn, then disappears to the right. The track gets steadily wider until it reaches a tarmac road.

Turn left along this, then right after 20m down a gravel track. Soon go through large, ornamental gates between two off-white pillars into the drive of a plant nursery, and continue down the earth embankment at the side of the house there to a stile behind it. Cross the field beyond, with hedge to right, then cross a double stile into the next field. Go half left across the field to a stile half way along the hedge. On crossing this, you will find yourself in a lane, which can get very muddy/ waterlogged/overgrown. Turn right down this and kink left and right after a while.

Just BEFORE arriving at a field entrance, turn left onto a path which can get so overgrown that it is almost invisible. (If it really is impassable, it is possible to progress as follows, but this is not a right of way: turn left then right round the perimeter of the field ahead, then turn back on yourself at the gap in the hedge towards the pylon to follow the field edge round to a gap in the hedge on the left back onto the path you should have been on). The increasing noise of traffic on the A361 ahead will confirm that you are heading in the right direction. Another such indication is the massed ranks of solar panels in the field on your left.

When you reach the A361, go half left across it, with great care, to find a sturdy stile across the fence on the other side. Turn left along the tarmac road on the other side, soon arriving at Lower Foxhangers Farm. Turn right before the right hand of two pillars directly ahead, then turn left a few metres further on through a gap (the gate has been removed) to go through a small mobile home site. Pass to the left of "Maple" then through a small paddock. At the other end of this is a gate which gives access to the Kennet & Avon Canal.

Turn right to walk along its towpath for 2.4 miles (3.8 km). You join it at lock 23 of 29 which take the canal from Seend Cleeve up into Devizes, and reach the famous series of 16 locks going up Caen Hill on emerging from a tunnel under a road. At the top, pass two more locks, continue under the A361 (bridge 142) and pass three more. Go under the A361 again, take the ramp on the right up to the A361. Turn right over the canal bridge then turn right again to continue along the towpath on the other side. When the Canal Museum and Shop of the Wharf Centre come into view on the other side of the canal, cross bridge 140, then immediately turn left onto the towpath again.

Take the next bridge left over the canal (bridge 139) and go through the gap next to the large iron gates in front of you into Quakers Walk, a pleasant tree-lined avenue. When this reaches a tarmac road, with the entrance to Roundway House to your left, cross it and continue on a stony path between hedges. When the path bends right before a house, go left through a gap between hedges, with the house on the right, and along a path between two fields. Continue with hedge to right. Go down shallow steps with a handrail onto a tarmac road and turn left, then sharp left, to reach a kissing gate on the right very soon after the bend. Go through this, a copse and another kissing gate, then walk uphill along the left-hand side of a large field, passing to the right of a pylon.

On reaching the V stile to the left of the galvanised gate at the top, cross over the road and ascend the left-hand of two deeply rutted, chalky farm tracks beyond. When this meets a well-used path as it levels out after 20m, turn right, heading for the wood (Leipzig Plantation). Pass through a V stile into the wood and walk through it on a broad, well-used path. Soon after emerging from the other end of the wood, negotiate another V stile into a car parking area. Walk to the end of this and turn right to arrive at the kissing gate giving access to Wiltshire's most recent White Horse, the Devizes Millenium White Horse.

About the Devizes White Horse

This was a new white horse for the millennium. The Devizes White Horse faces east towards the Vale of Pewsey, as if going from Devizes to meet the Alton Barnes White Horse. It was designed by Peter Greed, a former pupil of Devizes Grammar School and cut in 1999 by some 200 local people with the assistance of heavy machinery supplied by Pearce Civil Engineering.

S3 White Horse Trail directions – Devizes White Horse to Alton Barnes White Horse

[Updated in June 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 12 miles (19 km)

On emerging from the wooden kissing gate which gives access to the Devizes White Horse, turn left and proceed downhill on the tarmac road. (There is a Natural England permissive route accessed through a gap on the left just after the first field gate you come to, which avoids walking on the road. Turn right on this and walk along the field edge, separated from the road by the hedge. Exit the field back onto the road through a gate just before the first house in Roundway village). On arriving at a T junction with the main road through the village of Roundway, turn left.

After 50m, take the track to the right immediately after Southdown House. Pass Folly House (no. 48) on the right, thus rejoining the route you took to reach the White Horse in the previous stage, but in the opposite direction. The route becomes a broad gravel path, then a narrower stony path between hedges. Cross over the metal road which gives access to Roundway House to the right. Continue along Quakers Walk. Pass through the gap to the left of the large iron gates at its end and cross the bridge over the Kennet and Avon Canal in front of you.

Turn left on the other side and walk along the canal towpath for 7 miles (11.2 km). Landmarks along the way include the Devizes Marina by the Hourglass pub, the Bridge Inn at Horton and the village of All Cannings to the right. The Alton Barnes White Horse suddenly comes into full view after passing under All Cannings bridge. On coming to the next bridge, (number 126), leave the towpath and cross the bridge. After 80m, take the stile on the right into a field and walk between fences, and later a tall hedge on the right, to another stile which leads to a tarmac road through the village of Stanton St. Bernard. Turn right for 40m, then left along another tarmac road. Where this bends sharp right, continue ahead, then immediately fork left along a grassy, often overgrown path between hedges. After some 150m, there is a footpath sign partly hidden by a tree which points you to the right, into a sizeable field, dissected by a grassy track. Bear half-left over this; a path is usually left through crops, which varies between tolerable and excellent. After 0.6m (1 km), arrive at the road through the village of Alton Barnes.

[If, however, a path has not been left, there is an alternative route: cut across the right-hand corner of the field, if there are no crops there, or walk to the right and round the edge, to arrive at a broad, grassy track on the other side. Go left along this track, and at the end of the field pass through a gap in the hedge/undergrowth on the right. Continue south down the left-hand edge of the adjoining field to come out on the canal, directly opposite the Barge Inn at Honey Street. This is the footpath to the south of the correct route shown on the OS Explorer map. Turn left and walk along the tarmac road beside the canal. At the main road through Alton Barnes/Honey Street, turn left, to rejoin the correct route just before the sign to St Mary Saxon Church.]

Clamber down onto the road and turn left, then right soon after down the road signposted "St Mary Saxon Church". On arriving at an old-fashioned wooden turnstile on the left, go through this and along the cobbled path through the field beyond. At a crossroads of cobbled paths, continue ahead. Cross two small footbridges with wooden turnstiles at both ends. When the cobbled path turns right to the entrance to All Saints church, Alton Priors, go straight on to another wooden turnstile. Go up the tarmac road beyond, past Priory Cottages on the right, and an old thatched barn on the left, to a T junction. Go up the tarmac road opposite but slightly to the left, signposted "No Public Right of Way for Vehicles, Bridleway Only".

This does indeed become a footpath between hedges after a few metres, and can get very overgrown. Proceed steadily uphill to reach another tarmac road (from Alton Barnes to Lockeridge).

Go right up the road for some 75m, then cross over and go through a field gate. Follow the wooden fencing on your left to arrive at a large, square, metal gate. Go through this (unfortunately it is quite heavy). You are now in an open access area so can make your own way diagonally up the hillside on your right to join the obvious wide, grassy path up Walkers Hill (see below). Alternatively take any of the paths in front of you which are roughly parallel to the road, and just before arriving at a kissing gate, turn right onto the obvious wide, grassy path which leads relentlessly upwards towards Walkers Hill. This has the Neolithic long barrow known as Adam's Grave at its summit. You can either walk up to Adams Grave, from which there are great views, then turn left to descend, or drift left onto the path which skirts Walkers Hill. Both routes will lead you to a multiple junction of paths. Go left here, or straight on if coming from the top of Walkers Hill, to join the main broad path to the Alton Barnes White Horse which comes in from the right after about 50m. Continue for a further 700m along the contour path to arrive at the top of the White Horse.

To access the Knap Hill car park on the Alton Barnes to Lockeridge road from the Alton Barnes White Horse, retrace your steps along the contour path, going east. Ignore the fork to the right where you joined the path on coming up from the kissing gate below, and instead continue on the main path beside a low earthwork, with the whale-like shape of Knap Hill directly in front of you. After around 150m, veer left towards a metal kissing gate, with the car parking area at Knap Hill in your line of sight. Follow the well-beaten path through two more metal kissing gates to arrive at a final metal gate. The car parking area is on the other side of the road.

About the Devizes White Horse

This was a new white horse for the millennium. The Devizes White Horse faces east towards the Vale of Pewsey, as if going from Devizes to meet the Alton Barnes White Horse. It was designed by Peter Greed, a former pupil of Devizes Grammar School and cut in 1999 by some 200 local people with the assistance of heavy machinery supplied by Pearce Civil Engineering.

About the Alton Barnes White Horse

It was cut in 1812 at the expense of the landowner, Mr Robert Pile of Manor Farm. His first contractor fled with an advance payment of £20 after drawing a sketch of the horse. This contractor was eventually found and hung for a list of crimes! In 2010 the horse underwent a major renovation, overseen by landowner Tim Carson and the Alton Barnes Parish Council, when 150 tons of fresh chalk were delivered to the site by helicopter, which volunteers then used to replenish the surface of the figure.

S4(A) White Horse Trail directions – Alton Barnes White Horse to Cherhill via Avebury

See below for alternative route via the Wansdyke

[Updated in May 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 12.1 miles (19.4 km)

There is easy access to the Alton Barnes White Horse from the car parking area at Knap Hill on the Alton Barnes to Lockeridge road. Cross the road and follow the waymarks for the Mid Wilts Way: go through a metal gate, then a metal kissing gate immediately to the left. Follow the well beaten track through two more metal kissing gates. Turn half right, with Adams Grave and Walkers Hill to your left, to join an obvious path beside a low earthwork. The White Horse Trail comes in from the left just beyond Walkers Hill. Continue on this path along the contour line for 700m to arrive at the top of the White Horse.

Go through the wooden gate beyond and follow the contour of the hillside. There are tremendous views of the Pewsey Vale to the left on this section, and to the right is Milk Hill, the highest point in Wiltshire at 295m (968ft). Go right 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 right through a third one. At the end of the next field, go through another gate to arrive at a wide track, where the Wansdyke Path comes in from the right, leaving the Pewsey Downs Nature Reserve behind. Turn left; you can either walk on the track or on the embankment on the other side of the track, which is the Iron Age fortification known as the Wansdyke. This tends to get badly overgrown in the summer.

Go through a small wooden gate on the right onto the Wansdyke some 10m after a broad, stony track cuts across the Wansdyke from the right. Proceed along it for another 80m or so, then descend carefully into the ditch on your right (there is a path on the ground) and up the other side to pass through a small gate in the fence. Continue along a grassy track with old fencing first on left then on right, ignoring all cross tracks. Follow this for almost 1½ miles (2.4 km) down to a T junction with a stony farm track and a No Entry sign, now almost illegible, to left.

Turn right uphill for 30m, then turn left along a continuation of the wide, grassy track you have been on. Follow this as it sweeps left then right for almost ¾ mile (1.2 km) and reaches a T junction opposite some overgrown barns. Go right then immediately left down a grassy path with bushes and trees on both sides. When this arrives at another T junction, go left past a metal field gate, then immediately right down another path enclosed by hedges and vegetation.

Go through the kissing gate at the end into a long field and walk along its left-hand edge to another kissing gate onto a tarmac road. Cross this and go down the short lane opposite to a stile by a field gate. Walk along the right-hand edge of the field beyond to arrive at a metal kissing gate at the end of a short stretch of gravel track. (To visit the West Kennett Long Barrow, turn left just before reaching this track). Turn right through the gate and walk over the infant River Kennet and up the gravel track to the busy A4.

Turn left along it for 20m then cross it with care to go through a gate into a field, with the magnificent iron-age structure of Silbury Hill rearing up on the left. Follow the well-beaten path through three small gates, with a small stream (the River Kennet) sometimes visible to the left, to arrive at the A4361. (This path is a permissive route; during the muddy winter months, it is much easier to walk through the field to the right of the path, which is the official right of way). Go right for a few metres and cross over the road to go through the National Trust car park for Avebury. Take the tarmac path on the other side which passes to the left of the sarsen stones to arrive in Avebury's High Street. Go left for 50 metres, then right through the churchyard and past the remains of a kissing gate by a white cottage. Go down the side of the cottage to join a tarmac road beyond. This passes a small pumping station on the left, goes over a stone bridge and soon after forks. (If you do not want to take the fairly lengthy deviation to Windmill Hill but would prefer a more direct route to Cherhill, fork left here and follow the Wessex Ridgeway waymarks). Take the right-hand fork and cross the stile a few metres beyond on the right. This takes you onto a path which is roughly parallel with the A4361 far off to the right.

Cross a footbridge part of the way down the right-hand side of the first field, then walk through three more fields beyond. Cross three stiles within 15m at the end of the fourth field, then another field beyond. This brings you to a T junction with a track to Windmill Hill. Turn left along this and walk along the right-hand edge of two fields to reach the entrance gate to Windmill Hill. Cross the site in roughly the same direction, going round tumuli en route (going over them is discouraged to help prevent erosion), and descend on the other side, going to the right of the trees to a bridle gate onto a track. Turn left along this, initially to the right of a shady wood, then, at a fork, straight on along a track which is sometimes hedged on both sides, sometimes only on one. Continue ahead where another track comes in from the right, passing a sign warning of clay pigeon shooting. Pass the site of the shooting club soon after on the right, and eventually arrive at the A4.

Go up the track opposite towards a line of trees and bushes on the brow of the hill to a T junction with a path. This is the old Bath road, and is the point where you rejoin the Wessex Ridgeway. Turn right here and walk along the bridleway parallel to the A4, passing through a bridle gate in the process, for one mile (1.6 km). There are fine views here on a good day of Yatesbury and its environs to the right, and, occasionally, of Cherhill Down stretching down to the A361 to the left. After passing a tumulus in the field to the left, turn left up a chalky track.

Fork right by the Yatesbury reservoir, which is next to a decrepit barn, to a field gate and stile, followed by another by a National Trust sign. Follow the chalky track, which twists uphill and turns sharp right on levelling out and cuts through a gap in the earthwork. These are the ramparts of the Iron Age Oldbury Castle hill fort; the Lansdowne Monument is beyond.

To see the White Horse close up, do not go through the gap in the ramparts but instead turn right off the path which goes through the gap onto another broad grassy path which runs parallel to, but outside, the ramparts. The White Horse is just below the end of the earthwork. Turn left and follow the path along the top of the escarpment. Pass to the right of the monument to rejoin the official route.

To stick to the official route without seeing the White Horse, go through the gap in the earthwork and walk along the chalky track which passes to the left of the monument.

To get down to the A4 and the village of Cherhill, take the right-hand fork onto grass about 100 metres beyond the monument and follow this downhill, soon with a fence on the left, to a kissing gate by a National Trust information board about Calstone and the Cherhill Downs. Go through the gate and down the chalky path on the other side. (An alternative is to continue past the gate by the National Trust information board and walk down the left-hand side of the field, which is National Trust land, parallel to the path on the other side of the fence, to a stile on the left about half way down). The path is well-maintained at first, with a series of shallow steps, but soon degenerates into a narrow, badly grooved path. There is a White Horse information board where the track comes out at the A4.

About the Alton Barnes White Horse

It was cut in 1812 at the expense of the landowner, Mr Robert Pile of Manor Farm. His first contractor fled with an advance payment of £20 after drawing a sketch of the horse. This contractor was eventually found and hung for a list of crimes! In 2010 the horse underwent a major renovation, overseen by landowner Tim Carson and the Alton Barnes Parish Council, when 150 tons of fresh chalk were delivered to the site by helicopter, which volunteers then used to replenish the surface of the figure.

About the Cherhill White Horse

This horse was cut under the direction of Dr Alsop of Calne, also known as the “mad doctor”, who shouted instructions over a megaphone from the main road in 1780! Situated under an ancient earthwork called Oldbury Castle, it is not linked to any previous hill figures. Its eye (four feet across) was once filled with upturned bottles which sparkled in the sunlight.

S4(B) Alternative White Horse Trail directions – Alton Barnes White Horse to Cherhill via the Wansdyke

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 9.6 miles (15.4 km)

[Updated in May 2023]

There is easy access to the Alton Barnes White Horse from the car parking area at Knap Hill on the Alton Barnes to Lockeridge road. Cross the road and follow the waymarks for the Mid Wilts Way (MWW): go through a metal gate, then a metal kissing gate immediately to the left. Follow the well beaten track through two more metal kissing gates. Turn half right, with Adams Grave and Walkers Hill to your left, to join an obvious path beside a low earthwork. The White Horse Trail (WHT) comes in from the left just beyond Walkers Hill. Continue on this path Pass through the earthworks towards the Lansdowne Monument, but immediately after going through them, veer half right towards the end of the earthworks. The White along the contour line for 700m to arrive at the top of the White Horse.

Go through the wooden gate beyond and follow the contour of the hillside. There are tremendous views of the Pewsey Vale to the left on this section, and to the right is Milk Hill, the highest point in Wiltshire at 295m (968ft). Go right 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 left, passing through a second gate, then turn right through a third one. At the end of the next field, go through another gate to arrive at a wide track, where the Wansdyke Path comes in from the right, leaving the Pewsey Downs Nature Reserve behind. Turn left down this.

Go through a small wooden gate on the right some 10m after a broad, stony track comes in from the right to access the Iron Age fortification known as the Wansdyke. This will be your companion for several miles.

After a mile (1.6 km) walking along the Wansdyke enjoying the superb views on both sides, and passing through two gates in the process, arrive at a gate on the right in the corner of a field. Go through this. The official route continues immediately to your left beside the Wansdyke, but is often too overgrown to follow. If this is the case, go down the track beyond for 20m and through a field gate to join a stony track parallel to the Wansdyke. Go left down this to arrive at a T junction after 100m or so. Turn left towards a gate leading to Manor Farm, then almost immediately right through another gate to return to the Wansdyke.

Descend and continue, to arrive at two barns after just over 1 mile (1.6 km), going through two gates and a stile in the process. As you pass the first barn, go over a stile, then turn right over the track leading to it, then left past the second barn to rejoin the Wansdyke after yet another gate. Continue along the Wansdyke, crossing several farm tracks along the way, at all of which you have to negotiate a stile or metal kissing gate on each side of the track. After a further 1.2 miles (1.9 km) and a final metal gate, arrive at the A361 via the driveway of a house, Shepherd's Shore.

Cross the A361 to the left of a line of trees opposite. Go through a bridle gate and walk beside the Wansdyke for the length of two fields. Go through another bridle gate onto a byway. Turn right for a few paces, then go left on a path through a small copse across tree roots. Go through another bridle gate and follow the path beyond as it winds right, then left and right again, in harmony with the Wansdyke. Soon two communications masts on Morgan's Hill come into view (and indeed have been visible since joining the Wansdyke, or even before), and are a constant landmark on this part of the WHT.

Pass through yet another bridle gate and go up a rise to arrive at a fence corner in the field which hosts these masts. Turn half right and walk diagonally across and then up the side of the field, with fence to right and the masts to left, then descend to a bridle gate in the corner. The MWW turns left after this gate, but the WHT continues down the hill to pass through another bridle gate onto a track, which is an ancient Roman road. Turn right onto it and walk for 1.2 miles (1.9 km).

At a junction of bridleways by a line of trees to the right, turn left through a gap next to a redundant bridle gate onto a track beside a wide field towards the hill on which the Lansdowne Monument stands. At a fork at the end of the field, bear right uphill and go through a gate by a National Trust sign. Continue uphill on a wide, grassy track and go through another gate at the top. Go straight ahead on an obvious path until you reach a stony track which cuts through the earthwork to the left. These are the ramparts of the Iron Age Oldbury Castle hill fort; the monument is beyond them.

To see the White Horse close up, do not go through the gap in the ramparts but instead turn right off the path which goes through the gap onto another broad grassy path which runs parallel to, but outside, the ramparts. The White Horse is just below the end of the earthwork. Turn left and follow the path along the top of the escarpment. Pass to the right of the monument to rejoin the official route.

To stick to the official route without seeing the White Horse, go through the gap in the earthwork and walk along the chalky track which passes to the left of the monument.

To get down to the A4 and the village of Cherhill, take the right hand fork onto grass about 100 metres beyond the monument, soon with a fence on the left, to a kissing gate by a National Trust information board about Calstone and the Cherhill Downs.

Go through the gate and down the chalky path on the other side. (An alternative is to continue past the gate by the National Trust information board and walk down the left-hand side of the field, which is National Trust land, parallel to the path on the other side of the fence, to a stile on the left about half way down). The path is well-maintained at first, with a series of shallow steps, but soon degenerates into a narrow, badly grooved path. There is a White Horse information board where the track comes out at the A4.

About the Alton Barnes White Horse

It was cut in 1812 at the expense of the landowner, Mr Robert Pile of Manor Farm. His first contractor fled with an advance payment of £20 after drawing a sketch of the horse. This contractor was eventually found and hung for a list of crimes! In 2010 the horse underwent a major renovation, overseen by landowner Tim Carson and the Alton Barnes Parish Council, when 150 tons of fresh chalk were delivered to the site by helicopter, which volunteers then used to replenish the surface of the figure.

S5 White Horse Trail directions – Cherhill to Broad Town

[Updated in April 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7.8 miles (12.5 km)

Go down Park Lane, at the eastern end of Cherhill opposite the track up to the Cherhill White Horse. Pass a turning to the left (The Street) and take the byway which forks right soon afterwards. This goes gently uphill before forking left, to continue its steady uphill ascent. Turn left opposite the derelict wartime buildings of RAF Yatesbury down a grassy track between hedges. Go straight ahead at a crossroads of tracks. The route bends right then left again, and eventually enters an open field. The section leading to the field can be very muddy in winter and overgrown in summer. Cross this, often through crops, and continue on the other side along the edge of a long field, with hedge to left. When this ends, go through the gap in the hedge by the bridleway signpost and turn left onto a grassy/muddy track along the line of trees/field edge.

Follow the track when it turns right across an open field after 80m. This comes out onto a bend in a concrete/muddy track; go right (straight ahead) on this, with rusty barn to left. At the T junction of tracks some 120m later, turn left onto a less used grassy track, with sections of concrete. This becomes continuous concrete on passing a rusty water tank to left, and meanders downhill to a T junction with a minor road, with a large metal barn to left and Highway House opposite. You are now in the hamlet of Highway.

Turn right here and walk along the tarmac road. When this bends left, go straight on round a field gate into a field. Walk along approximately two thirds of its right-hand edge until you see gap and a rusty farm gate to right (the gate is often left open). (WARNING: this can get almost completely hidden by vegetation in the summer). Go through this and head diagonally left across the next field. Go through two gates with a metal footbridge between them. Walk towards a point some 25m to the left of the telegraph pole in the next field, and as you get closer to the houses ahead, aim for one with a steep roof, which is Clevancy House. Go through the kissing gate to the right of this house, cross the tarmac road and pass through the kissing gate on the other side, slightly to the right by a post box.

Walk parallel to Clevancy House's fence, then, when it ends, continue across the field in the same direction to two gates separated by a metal footbridge in the opposite hedge. Turn half right in the next field, aiming for double metal cattle troughs, and go through the gap by the fence beyond them. Continue ahead to arrive at double gates with a metal footbridge between them. Corton Manor Farm is now visible to left. Go diagonally right and uphill through this field, passing to the right of three cherry trees, to a wooden post on the horizon. Here veer left to join a grassy track which passes a log jump by a chalk embankment, to right, to arrive at a metal field gate by a wooden fence. Go through this and continue in the same direction, steadily downhill, past a fenced pond to left, then go half left towards a muddy gap in a dip between trees into the next field.

Keep going slightly left to reach and pass through a field gate, which is often left tied open. Head slightly uphill (right) to a gap in the trees on the other side of the field, where there is another double gate and footbridge. Go straight ahead through the next field, well to the right of a brick pyramid by a metal water trough, and the two trees beside it. Go slightly right here until reaching a low embankment in the middle of the field, then veer slightly left to arrive at yet another double gate and footbridge. This gives entry to a large field in which a circuit for motor bike scrambling has been created, which is apparently no longer in use. Make your way across this in roughly the same direction, passing to the right of a hillock in the middle. Pass a stile on the other side of the circuit; do not be tempted to take the farm track uphill on the right, but instead go slightly uphill towards a telegraph pole onto a level area, with a steep slope up to right and a gentler one down to left. This leads to a metal pedestrian gate next to a metal field gate.

Walk along a section of tarmac road, with grass growing up its centre, to a final pedestrian gate by a field gate. Turn left down the minor road ahead. On arriving at a T junction with the main road through Clyffe Pypard, turn right along it. After approx 60m, turn left off it (effectively straight on). Pass the Goddard Arms, which is sadly now closed. About 30m beyond the pub, fork right onto a road with a sign on the wall reading "Private road, for residents and church visitors only, Public Footpath".

Go through the churchyard on a cobbled path, which ends abruptly beneath two yew trees. The architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner and his wife are buried here, and the wrought iron gates at the entrance to the graveyard are in their memory.

Continue in the same direction, then turn left, with wooden fence to left. Emerge into a field and cross it to a kissing gate. It is here that you will get your first glimpse of the Broad Town White Horse on the hillside ahead. Go half right across the next field to another kissing gate with a footbridge. Walk along the right-hand edge of the long field beyond, and continue along the edge of the fourth field. Go through a kissing gate by a field gate and proceed along a grassy hedged track to arrive at a bend in a tarmac road. Continue along this road in the same direction. This is Pye Lane. You soon come to the houses of Broad Town, and then Broadtown Lane, Broad Town's main road.

To see the Broad Town White Horse, go straight across into Chapel Lane. When the tarmac runs out after 60m or so, continue straight ahead on the concrete track to Littletown Farmhouse. As you approach the Farmhouse, the White Horse can be clearly seen on the hillside to the right above it. **It is not recommended that you attempt to approach any closer to the White Horse than Littletown Farmhouse, as the section of the original official route which passes directly below the White Horse was the subject of a temporary path closure order in 2014 due to a landslip. The order has expired but it has not been possible to carry out the work needed to stabilise the slope. Accordingly there is the possibility of further landslips, especially in wet weather.** The original route of the White Horse Trail past the Broad Town White Horse has been amended as a result - see directions for the next stage.

About the Broad Town White Horse

This is a small white horse which was cut in 1863 but was lost until the 1990s. The horse is regularly scoured by the Broad Town White Horse Restoration Society, which was formed in 1991.

S6 White Horse Trail directions – Broad Town to Hackpen Hill

Please note that there is a temporary path closure on this section of the route with effect from 3 November 2023 due to another landslip near the location of the previous one in 2014, see amended directions below

[Updated in November 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 6.3 miles (10.1 km)

The route begins at the southern end of Broad Town, where the main road intersects with Pye Lane and Chapel Lane. Go down Chapel Lane; when the tarmac runs out after 60m or so, **the temporary path diversion begins: continue ahead on a farm track, which is the drive to Littleton Farmhouse. When the track bends left, go through a field gate on your right and cross the field diagonally to reach a stile in the middle of the hedge at the top. Cross it to rejoin the official route.**

This section can get extremely muddy. Pass a whitewashed cottage on the right. Soon after, cross a stile by a wooden field gate. Follow the fence round the rear of Little Town Farmhouse. Pass a stile by a metal field gate on the left and, when the fence on your left disappears, continue across the top of the field to arrive at a small metal gate; ignore an identical gate to the right of this. Go through this gate and traverse a scrubby, muddy field in the same direction. This can get very overgrown.

Go over a stile into a large field, with Bincknoll Wood to the right. Maintain roughly the same direction (the path on the ground diverges from the one shown on the OS map) to go through the gap to the left of the wood into a thin field.

Cross a track at the end and continue in the same direction until you reach a gate and stile, which you cross. [\[NB Should access to the gate and stile be blocked by tall maize, if you are feeling energetic it is quite possible to walk through it. Otherwise you can bypass it by turning left down the track, then taking a rough grassy track off it to the right towards an enclosure used to rear pheasants. Turn right along its high fence, then turn right again when this meets the field fence. Cross a low stile on your left back into the field, and return to the stile and gate you had originally hoped to arrive at.\]](#) Follow the path, which is not always obvious, roughly across the middle of the field, aiming for a solitary tree in the distance. Pass to the right of the tree and follow a faint vehicular track to arrive at a stile with no step - you will have to go through the metal field gate next to it.

Turn sharp right after going through this gate and proceed fairly steeply uphill on the rutted earthen track through the wood to emerge into a field containing the remnants of the Iron Age Hill Fort of Bincknoll Castle.

Pass through a gap in the ramparts to a metal field gate, then go straight ahead on a grassy track which soon becomes stony, then enclosed on both sides, until it bends sharp right.

[NB If the way ahead across two large fields is blocked by maize, turn right along the farm track and follow it round to the left for approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, with woodland on your right. (You may see views of the Hackpen White Horse and Ridgeway ahead of you). At the T junction, turn left along a concrete track. Look for a white stone trough partially obscured by bushes on your left, and soon afterwards you will see a large metal gate also on your left. This is where you would have exited the field if you had been able to follow the official route. Turn right here and cross the grassy field onto the tarmac road by Weir Farm, as mentioned below.]

The official route, if available, takes you straight on over a stile and across the middle of a large field, aiming to the right of a small wood. Go through a bridle gate. Cross the next field, veering slightly left and aiming for a white gabled house in the distance, to go through another large metal gate. Continue on a green path across the field to arrive at a tarmac road by a house (Weir Farm).

Cross the footbridge and stile a few metres to the left on the other side of the road. Go half right, aiming for two stiles on either side of a fenced track beyond the electricity pole in the middle of the field. Go over these stiles, pass through the line of trees beyond, and head diagonally left across the field to a stile by a field gate in the far corner. Follow the fence on the right for 25m to another stile, on the right, to a tarmac footpath. Go left down this to emerge onto a gravel drive, with the house called Cotsmoor to the right. Go left down the drive then, at Sarsen Cottage, left again down Post Office Lane, arriving at the A4361 after approx. 400m, opposite what used to be the Barbury Inn, and is now the Strada restaurant.

Cross over, with care, and go down the track to the right of the restaurant (**not** the tarmac road with bollards). Go through two wooden field gates into a large field. Walk along the right-hand edge of this field and another, even bigger, one. Continue along an unfenced farm track between two fields, then go through a bridle gate at the bottom of Winterbourne Down. Ascend the Down, aiming for a solitary sarsen stone on the horizon, and pass through another bridle gate at the top to the left of this stone. Cross a small field and go through a third gate to emerge on the Ridgeway National Trail. Go right along this, past a clump of trees, to arrive at the Hackpen Hill car park, a very popular spot for dog walkers.

To see the Hackpen Hill White Horse, cross the tarmac road beyond the car park and go right through the metal kissing gate to the right of the White Horse Trail information board on the other side. The White Horse is about 30m beyond the clump of trees.

About the Broad Town White Horse

This is a small white horse which was cut in 1863 but was lost until the 1990s. The horse is regularly scoured by the Broad Town White Horse Restoration Society, which was formed in 1991.

S7 White Horse Trail directions – Hackpen Hill to Marlborough (Manton)

[Updated in April 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 6.5 miles (10.4 km)

Start at the car park at the top of Hackpen Hill just to the north of the White Horse. Cross the road and proceed southwards on the Ridgeway. After 1¼ miles (2 km) fork left off the Ridgeway on a bridleway opposite the fenced in Berwick Bassett Dew Pond.

The grassy path (muddy in winter!) is initially quite narrow and has hedges on both sides. Soon after leaving the Ridgeway, another path joins you from the left. At a fork further on, bear right, cross a track and bear slightly left to continue. Almost exactly a mile (1.6km) after leaving the Ridgeway, arrive at Totterdown Wood. Go straight through it, and through a metal gate on the other side, to emerge into an open, grassy area, which is part of the Fyfield Down Nature Reserve. Continue ahead through a metal field gate, then to the right of a conifer plantation (it can get very muddy here in wet weather). Go through a metal gate onto Herepath/Green Street.

Turn left, and after 100m turn right beside an underground reservoir (signposted Fyfield car park) onto a wide, potholed byway. At first this byway goes through open countryside, with a railed gallops track to the left; this is then replaced by a high hedge on both sides before passing the entrance to Manton House (to the left). It then bends right and left before a lengthy straight which brings you to a car park almost 1½ miles (2.4 km) after leaving the reservoir. Bear left through this to join the road. Turn right (there is a path in the field on the right for the first 150m, and thereafter a well-trodden path on the right-hand verge) and walk along it for approx ½ mile (0.8 km) until you arrive at a passing place in the road approx. 80m beyond the entrance to Manton House Farm and Barton Yard on the left.

Strike out at 90 degrees across the field on your left, aiming slightly to the right of a telegraph pole. When you get near it, aim directly for it, then turn right along the farm track in front of it for approx. 30m to a meeting of three tracks. Take the one on the right, which is enclosed on both sides. When this reaches the corner of the field, bear right then immediately left to go gently downhill.

Soon after the path becomes tarmac, arrive at the A4. Walk a few metres to the left to cross at the pedestrian lights.

Go down a metalled footpath which passes beside a green in front of some houses and very soon deposits you onto the Manton road. Turn left along this, crossing the River Kennet. Turn left down the road just past the car park for the Oddfellows pub, signposted St George's church, and after ½ mile (0.8 km) arrive at Preshute House, Marlborough College, close to the car park for St George's church, Preshute.

To see the Marlborough White Horse, take the wide, stony track between the car park of St George's church, Preshute, and the tennis courts, in the direction of Marlborough. On arriving at the second set of tennis courts, the white horse can be seen on the hill behind them.

About the Hackpen Hill White Horse

The horse was cut in 1837 by the Parish Clerk of Broad Hinton to commemorate the coronation of Queen Victoria.

About the Marlborough White Horse

This is Wiltshire's smallest white horse and was designed in 1804 by William Canning, a boy at Mr Greasley's Academy in Marlborough, and cut into Granham hill above the River Kennet by the boys of the school.

S8 White Horse Trail directions – Marlborough (Manton) to Pewsey

[Updated in April/May 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 157 & 130, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 11.3 miles (18.1 km)

(This stage can be broken at Oare)

To see the Marlborough White Horse, take the wide, stony track between the car park of St George's church, Preshute, and the tennis courts, in the direction of Marlborough. On arriving at the second set of tennis courts, the white horse can be seen on the hill behind them.

Facing the car park of St George's church, Preshute, take the path to the right of the tennis court, which then goes between fences. Go through a kissing gate at the end and continue up the side of the field to pass through a gap at the top. Bear slightly right to walk on the embankment of a sunken track which sweeps uphill. At the top, turn right to join the Wansdyke Path (the post here showing the way is continuously removed, regrettably), then enter a small beech wood.

Continue to the double stile at the end of the field beyond. Go half left up the next field to reach a log stile in its corner. Step over this and continue in the same direction with a hedge on your left. Where this juts out slightly in front of you, turn right onto an unploughed strip. This brings you to Manton Drove, a tarmac road.

Turn left along the road for approx. 100m, then go right along a path between hedges, signposted Public Footpath, which comes out into a field. Turn sharp left here around the end of the hedge/copse, then after 40m go half right across a field, which might be partially ploughed, planted or grassed over, keeping a copse of trees and bushes to your right. At the field edge, turn left, and after 30m look for a stile on the right hidden in the hedge down a slope. This takes you into a pasture field which slopes down to the Clatford to Pewsey road below. Turn left and follow the hedge along the crest of the valley, going over a stile, and then go left through a wooden pedestrian gate, then immediately right into a belt of trees. Continue in the same direction through Short Oak Copse until you meet the Wansdyke (the earthwork rather than the path!). Turn right and follow the Wansdyke down to the Clatford to Pewsey road.

Take the path on the opposite side indicated by a W.C.C footpath signpost diagonally right up into West Woods. This soon joins a track coming up from the road by a low, waymarked post; turn left along it, arriving soon after at a wide woodland track, where there is a second low, waymarked post. Turn left here, leaving the Wansdyke Path, and at a three-pronged fork soon after take the left-hand track, going slightly downhill. Keep on this track for 2/3 mile (1.1km), ignoring all paths and tracks to either side, until you arrive at a track along the far edge of West Woods.

Turn right along this track, rejoining the Wansdyke Path, which comes in from the right after approx. 400m, as the track bends left, and continue downhill to a crossroad of paths, which can get very muddy. Turn left, with the Wansdyke Path, which however leaves to the right after 10m, and proceed along an enclosed path for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile (1.2 km). On arriving at the crossroads with the Mid Wilts Way (MWW), before Gopher Wood, turn left through a bridle gate and follow the clear green track up the side of the field. (We share the route with the MWW for a while). This track is soon bordered by earthworks. Go through the bridle gate in the top left corner of the field, then immediately right through another one into a large field. Walk round the edge of the field with fence to right. There are glorious views of the Pewsey Vale below on this section on a nice day.

Go through a bridle gate at the end of the field, and cross another field in the same direction. The right of way is a green bridleway accessed by a bridle gate, to the right of a track accessed by a field gate. The bridle way can get so overgrown as to be impassable, in which case taking the track instead is an option, although this is not a right of way. Regrettably the track can get extremely muddy in wet weather. Both routes bring you out on the driveway of a house, Huish Hill House; if on the bridleway, turn left, and if on the track, continue ahead.

(The MWW goes off to the right a few metres further on). Follow the stony track past the drive to Huish Down Farm (to the left), all the way to the A345 Pewsey to Marlborough road.

Cross the road and follow the stony track as it bends right then left and gently ascends to a field entrance. Turn left just before the field gate down an enclosed path. After 200m, turn right through a gap in the hedge and go half right across the large field to a fence corner, then continue, keeping the fence to the right, to a stile and field gate where a line of trees comes down from the left. (The landowner usually leaves a clear path through any crops, which deviates slightly from the right of way, but if he hasn't, you might need to turn right along the field edge to the field entrance, then turn left to follow the fence round the top of the combe to the stile and field gate). This is Martinsell Hill. Here turn right and follow the field edge down to a kissing gate, dedicated to the memory of Mark Rendall of the Long Distance Walkers Association, where you rejoin the MWW. Proceed along the gently undulating top of the hill beyond the gate, with a fence to your right and stunning views of the Pewsey Downs to your left. This is the Giant's Grave. Cross over a stile by a field gate. Just beyond the trig point, plunge steeply downhill and follow the path round to the left to a small metal gate in the corner. Go through this and the field beyond to reach Pound Lane. Here you leave the MWW once again.

Cross into the long field beyond and follow the right-hand side down to a road (Sunnyhill Lane). Cross this, go through the gap by the stile and proceed through another field, going through a gap at the end into an even longer field. Veer slightly left to pass between a telegraph pole on the left and another in the centre of the field to arrive at another stile. Follow the well beaten path across the corner of the next field to a lane, accessed by another stile. Turn right down this lane and follow it past the entrance to Inlands Farm (to right), over Pains Bridge above the Kennet & Avon Canal, and across another bridge over a stream. Arrive at a metalled road which goes through the community of Knowle. Continue ahead onto this and soon after go under a railway bridge, then a footbridge. At a junction with another metalled road, Hollybush Lane, turn left into Pewsey.

On arriving at a crossroads with a mini-roundabout in the middle, turn right and almost at once cross over to turn left down Ball Road (signposted Southcott). Go past the Coopers Arms on the left, and fork left along Southcott Road past a house with a sign "Kings Corner" high up on its gable end. Pass another footpath to the left, and approximately 100m past the derestricted sign, take a narrow tarmac path to the right across a stream between two houses, emerging on Hurley Lane. Continue in the same direction past Tinkers Mead, then Woodlands Road, both on the right. Approximately 40m after Woodlands Road turn left onto a footpath along the edge of a field to a farmyard (Green Drove Farm). Turn right here, through the farmyard, along a metalled road. When this bears right, turn left down a broad, straight bridleway signposted Pewsey Hill, which is Green Drove.

Follow this for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile (1.2 km) to the base of the steep slope at the top of which the Pewsey White Horse is clearly visible (even when very dirty!). Take the well-trodden path up to the White Horse.

About the Marlborough White Horse

This is Wiltshire's smallest white horse and was designed in 1804 by William Canning, a boy at Mr Greasley's Academy in Marlborough, and cut into Granham hill above the River Kennet by the boys of the school.

About the Pewsey White Horse

The original horse was cut in 1785, and reputedly featured a rider. It was re-designed in 1937 by Mr George Marples and cut by the Pewsey Fire Brigade to celebrate the coronation of King George VI.

S9 White Horse Trail directions – Pewsey to Redhorn Hill

[Updated in May 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 130, OS Landranger 173, 184

Distance: 9.8 miles (15.7 km)

The Pewsey White Horse is just below the Pewsey to Everleigh road. There is a layby at the top of the hill on the right (if going towards Everleigh) where a car can be parked.

Standing above and with your back to the White Horse, turn right. The path closes with the road, then continues beside it to the corner of the field. Here cross the stile and the road beyond and ascend the enclosed bridleway a few paces to the right. Go through a wooden field gate at the top and proceed along a metalled road to Pewsey Hill Farm. At the end of the farmyard, go through a metal bridle gate next to a field gate, and along the top of the field, with wooden fence to left. Follow the broad stony track when the fence ends, and at the end of woodland on the left go through another gate. A few metres further on turn half right, as indicated by the signpost, keeping the hedge to left.

Enter a field. At the next signpost, turn sharp right. Descend on a field divider and pass through the metal field gate and the field beyond. At the end, turn sharp left for 50m, then right again through a bridle gate. Ascend gradually to the brow of a slope and go down the other side, passing a strip of trees on the right on the way. After passing under power lines by a collection of barns, continue along the metalled bridleway to the A345.

Cross it and go up the metalled road opposite (signposted Manningford Abbots). Just before the road turns sharp right by some large, white gates, go over the sleeper bridge and stile on the left. At the end of the farm buildings on the right, follow the fence round to the right. Go past the large walled house on the right and continue ahead with fence to left, passing to the left of a solitary conifer, until you come across a kissing gate on your left. Go through it to join the Pewsey Avon Trail through what used to be a small wood, but which has all now been cut down (this section can get extremely boggy). Cross two sleeper bridges to 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. Leave the Pewsey Avon Trail to its own devices here and go straight ahead across the field, with water trough to right and oak tree to left. The path goes through a kissing gate in a wooden fence. Continue in the same direction to arrive at a stile onto a road. You rejoin the Pewsey Avon Trail at this point. Cross the minor road (Wick Lane) and take the narrow, enclosed footpath a few paces to the left.

Emerge by the large brick barns of the Manningford Business Unit and continue ahead on its tarmac forecourt, or the grass beside it. When the tarmac drive turns left, keep ahead on a broad strip of grass. When this meets a metalled drive, turn right for a short distance towards a pair of imposing pillars between metal railings. Just 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 Newton church, go past its porch and along the tarmac drive to exit onto the road opposite Falkner's Farm. The Pewsey Avon Trail leaves us here by turning left.

Cross the road and pass through the farmyard of Falkner's Farm. Continue ahead along the bridleway, past barns on the right, for approx 7/8 mile (1.4 km). On clear days, there are good views of the Alton Barnes White Horse to the right along this stretch. When the track goes sharp right, take the bridleway to the left, which is enclosed by hawthorn hedges. This can be extremely muddy and churned up in wet weather. When the bridleway forks soon after, take the left-hand fork. After approx 450m, pass a large house (Charlton Manor) to your right at the entrance to Charlton St Peter, and follow the now metalled road over a stream. When the road bends left, continue ahead along a farm track. Cross the stile to the left of a barn into a field, and another soon after (a step without the infrastructure). Continue in the same direction to a stile in the corner of the field, which brings you out beside The Charlton tea room (which used to be a pub).

Cross the A342 and proceed fairly steeply uphill on an enclosed but wide stony track. Ignore a field gate to the left after the path levels off somewhat. After a while the path joins a concrete/tarmac road coming in from the left. Continue past a barn on the right and, soon after a grass triangle on the left where the metalled road disappears, pass another barn on the right. Not long after passing a trig point on the left, arrive at the broad stony track which follows the edge of the military firing range on Salisbury Plain for many miles. **Please ensure that you obey all signs to keep off this!**

Turn right here; the right of way is immediately to the right on tussocked grass, some 40m to the north of the stony military road, but the road is undoubtedly easier to walk on. Walk for almost 3 miles (4.8 km) to vedette post 12 at Redhorn Hill. There are extensive views of the Vale of Pewsey on this section, with the White Horses at Alton Barnes and Devizes both visible on clear days. On the way you will pass four flagpoles, three of which coincide with bridleways coming in from the side, and which may or may not be flying a red flag indicating that firing is progress. The last of these is at MOD vedette post 12. Here the metalled road off the B3098 to Urchfont comes up on the right, and there is a large car park.

About the Pewsey White Horse

The original horse was cut in 1785, and reputedly featured a rider. It was re-designed in 1937 by Mr George Marples and cut by the Pewsey Fire Brigade to celebrate the coronation of King George VI.

S10 White Horse Trail directions – Redhorn Hill to Westbury

[Updated in May 2023]

Maps: OS Explorer 130, 143, OS Landranger 173, 184

Distance: 13.7 miles (21.9 km)

Take the metalled road off the B3098 to Urchfont signposted Redhorn Hill. There is a large car park at the top to the right of vedette post 12.

There are six flagpoles (including the one at the start) on the section from Redhorn Hill to the A360, which may or may not be flying red flags, indicating that firing is in progress.

Walk due west, away from vedette post 12, towards the Urchfont New Plantation (known locally as the Urchfont Clump). Approx. 250m before reaching it, take the second of two stony tracks which fork to the right at the same place. We are joined soon after by the Wessex Ridgeway (WR). Follow the track on a long loop to the left, then to the right and left round (or through) the Clump, to rejoin the main track on the other side, with a flagpole to left.

After almost a mile (1.6 km), pass a memorial to a German soldier, Jager Dirk Knöffel, who “passed away by accident on 5th September 1993”(the inscription is now entirely in German), on the left. Pass several paths coming up on the right from the villages of Easterton and Market Lavington, of which there are fine views on a clear day. Arrive at vedette post (VP) 11, Lavington, which is exactly 3 miles (4.8 km) from Redhorn Hill, and transition onto smooth tarmac. Continue for almost 2 more miles (3.2 km), to the A360, taking your leave of the WR en route (it detours into West Lavington) and passing a water tower to left, a radio mast to right, and a sign to COTEC to left just before you reach the A360.

Cross with care to join the Imber Range Perimeter Path (IRPP) and after 40m or so, at a sign warning you that the road is closed one mile ahead (this is the access road to Imber village), turn right, still on tarmac. Pass a ruin on the left opposite Highland Cottages, with their bricked-up windows, and gradually ascend to a turning to New Zealand Farm Camp to the left, some 2 ¼ miles (3.6 km) from the A360. We are again joined here by the WR, although this is far from obvious! Ignore the turning to the Camp and bear half right, leaving the smooth tarmac for a stony track.

The tarmac surface is resumed at the left turn to Stokehill Farm. This turning should again be ignored. Soon after this, pass a large water tank to right, then a trig point to left. Where a metalled road from Coulston comes in from the right, continue ahead, leaving the tarmac, and 400m further on follow the main track round to the left; do not go straight on here as that is the route of the WR.

Pass Tottenham Wood to right, then a green, corrugated metal barn to left, at which point the tarmac resumes. At the T junction ahead, leave the tarmac again and turn left for 200m, then sharp right. Gradually descend to vedette post 6, where the WR once again rejoins us. Turn right here onto smooth tarmac, and at the turn off for Reeves Farm some 200m ahead, turn left uphill, still on tarmac. This is replaced by a stony track after almost a mile, where a bridleway comes in from the right. The next clump of tress on your right hides the large buildings of White Horse Farm, namely a large water tank and three barns, together with a skinny telecomms mast. Turn sharp right here, just beyond the buildings, leaving the IRPP, onto a broad track

Where this joins a tarmac road, do not go left towards the White Horse parking area, but continue straight ahead. Ignore a wooden field gate on your left. After 50m, cross a stile on the left and walk along the top of the rampart on your left. This is Bratton Camp/Castle, an iron-age hill fort. At the end of the rampart, turn left down into the hollow between ramparts, then turn right to arrive at the escarpment above the Westbury White Horse. There are fine views here over the vale below, which are only partially spoiled by the disused cement factory. If you are finishing here, turn left and go through a gate after approx.10m into the open area in front of the car park containing two benches, with the White Horse clearly visible to your right. If you are continuing, turn right.

The Westbury White Horse car park can be reached either via a street named Newtown in Westbury, which also carries a brown sign pointing the way to Bratton Camp and the White Horse (turn left at the crossroads at the top of the hill), or via Castle Road in Bratton, both off the B3098.

About the Westbury White Horse

This is the oldest White Horse in Wiltshire, dating back to 1778. The present figure was preceded by a much older version at the same site, the date and origin of which are unknown. Legend has it that it was cut as a memorial to one of King Alfred's victories over the Danes at the battle of Etahndun in 878 AD.

S11 Pewsey White Horse to Alton Barnes White Horse “short cut”

[Updated in June 2023]

This “short cut” walk has the benefit of splitting the whole White Horse Trail into two long circular walks, if desired. One can go from Westbury to Redhorn Hill to Pewsey, then to Alton Barnes rather than Marlborough and the more northerly White Horses, completing the circle by going on to Devizes before returning to Westbury. Equally one can use the short cut to go from Broad Hinton to Cherhill to Alton Barnes, then to Pewsey rather than continuing to Devizes and the more southerly white horses, completing the circuit by going on to Marlborough and Hackpen Hill before returning to Broad Hinton. Or vice versa! And of course it is a very pleasant walk just done on its own.

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

Distance: 8.1 miles (13 km)

The Pewsey White Horse is close to the Pewsey to Everleigh road. There is a layby just above it where a car can be parked.

Standing above and with your back to the White Horse, turn right. The path closes with the road, then continues beside it to the corner of the field. Here cross the stile and the road beyond and ascend the bridleway a few paces to the right. Go through a field gate at the top and proceed along a metalled road to Pewsey Hill Farm. At the end of the farmyard, go through a small metal gate and along the top of the field, with a wooden fence to left. Follow the broad cinder track when the fence ends, and go through a hard-to-shift field gate. A few metres further on turn half right, as indicated by the signpost, onto a very wide, chalky track. This ends soon after it enters a field.

At the next signpost, turn right. Go down the middle of the field on a broad track and pass through the metal field gate, which is often left open, into the field beyond. Continue in the same direction, still on a broad track through the middle of the field.

At the end, turn left for 30m, then right again through a small wooden gate. Ascend to the brow of the hill and down the other side, passing a 100m stretch of trees on the right en route. After passing under power lines, continue past a gate, with several barns on your left, and proceed along the bridleway to the A345.

Cross it and go up the metalled road opposite (signposted Manningford Abbots). After approx. 350m, go over a sleeper bridge and stile on the left. At the end of the farm buildings on the right, go sharp right. Pass through a metal field gate, then a wooden one some 15m further on, with a long wall attached to the house to the right, into a field. (It is in this field that the Pewsey to Redhorn Hill section of the WHT leaves you by means of a kissing gate in the left-hand side of the field; take care that you leave through the right gate!). Go half right across the field to a field gate at the far end. On the other side of the gate, go down a potentially muddy path and across two footbridges and a section of boardwalk in quick succession. Pass the Mill on your right, then a corrugated iron barn, to go through a wooden kissing gate into a small paddock. Go through another wooden kissing gate onto an enclosed footpath, with a thatched barn to left. Ignore a kissing gate on the right. Continue down the right-hand edge of the field beyond to arrive at the road through Manningford Bruce.

Turn left down this for some 60m, then turn right up Dragon Lane. The surface of this tarmac road gradually deteriorates. Stay on this until it bends sharp left beside a large white house, where you continue in the same direction on a footpath with woodland to left and open farmland to right. Cross the Exeter to Paddington railway line, with care, and continue in the same direction along the left-hand edge of a large field, which can get very muddy. Cross the stile at the end beside the memorial stone at Swanborough Tump (although access to the road can also be gained by forking left on a clear semi-circular path in the corner of the field kindly provided by the landowner).

The memorial commemorates the meeting between the future King Alfred the Great and his elder brother King Aethelred I in 871 on their way to fight the invading Danes, when each of them swore that if the other died in battle, the dead man's children would inherit the lands of their father, King Aethelwulf. It was erected by families who bear the Swanborough name.

Go down the long drive to Cocklebury Farm opposite the memorial, ignoring a private road forking off to the left. Go down a hedged, tarmac path at the end, then through a gate to arrive at the Kennet & Avon canal at bridge 120 (Ladies Bridge). Cross the bridge and turn left onto the towpath going west. At bridge 122 (there is no bridge 121), cross the canal and continue on the towpath on the other side. Shortly before arriving at bridge 123, you have the option of visiting a WWII memorial, indicated by a metal post by a stile on your left which used to be signed simply "To Memorial". It is to two airmen who lost their lives when their Albemarle bomber crashed nearby in 1944.

If you wish to see it, cross the stile and continue parallel to the canal for 50m or so, where you will find the memorial on your right just before bridge 123.

You can now either return to where you entered the field, turn left along the towpath and pass under bridge 123, or continue past the memorial to the rather awkward stile 50m or so further on, passing bridge 123 en route, and return to the towpath there.

At bridge 124 turn sharp left after going underneath it to arrive at the Lockeridge to Woodford road. Turn left (north) over the bridge. Approx. 130m from the bridge, you pass another memorial, to RAF Alton Barnes. A few metres to the left of the road is a sign on a blue background marked "R.A.F. Alton Barnes Memorial" indicating a kissing gate to its left which gives permissive access to the memorial some 20m beyond the gate. It is sited on the only remaining air raid shelter from the war time base, above a padlocked steel gate. Sadly it is now completely hidden by overgrown vegetation, and is inaccessible.

Return to the road and turn left along it until reaching a turning to the right signposted "St Mary Saxon Church". (Some 20m before reaching this, the Devizes to Alton Barnes WHT comes in from a field on the left). Go down this. On arriving at an old-fashioned wooden turnstile on the left, go through this and along the cobbled path through the field beyond. At a crossroads of cobbled paths, continue ahead. Cross two small footbridges with wooden turnstiles at both ends.

Leave the cobbled path where it turns right to the entrance to Alton Priors' All Saints church, and continue in the same direction to a fourth wooden turnstile. Go up the tarmac road beyond, past Priory Cottages on the right, and an old thatched barn on the left, to a T junction. (Look out for the white horse carved on the sarsen stone on the small green on your right). Go up the tarmac road opposite but slightly to the left, signposted "No Public Right of Way for Vehicles, Bridleway Only". This does indeed become a footpath, which can get very overgrown, between hedges after a few metres. Proceed steadily uphill to reach another tarmac road (from Alton Barnes to Lockeridge).

The original route required you to turn left and walk down this road for some 300m, however the route has been changed to minimise the distance walked on this road and to avoid a bend which obscures oncoming traffic. So go right up the road instead for some 75m, then cross over and go through a metal farm gate. Follow the wooden fencing on your left to arrive at a large, square, metal gate. Go through this (unfortunately it is quite heavy). You are now in an open access area so can make your own way diagonally up the hillside on your right to join the obvious wide path up Walkers Hill (see below). Alternatively take any of the paths in front of you which are roughly parallel to the road, and just before arriving at a kissing gate, turn right onto the obvious wide path which leads relentlessly upwards towards Walkers Hill. This has the Neolithic long barrow known as Adam's Grave at its summit.

You can either walk up to Adams Grave, from which there are great views, then turn left to descend, or drift left onto the path which skirts Walkers Hill. Both routes will lead you to a multiple junction of paths. Go left here, or straight on if coming from the top of Walkers Hill, to join the main broad path to the Alton Barnes White Horse which comes in from the right after about 50m. Continue for a further 700m along the contour path to arrive at the top of the White Horse.

There is easy access to the Alton Barnes White Horse from the car parking area at Knap Hill on the Alton Barnes to Lockeridge road. To reach it from the top of the White Horse, retrace your steps along the contour path, going east. Ignore the fork to the right where you joined the path on coming up from the kissing gate below, and instead continue on the main path beside a low earthwork, with the whale-like shape of Knap Hill directly in front of you. After around 150m, veer left towards a metal kissing gate, with the car parking area at Knap Hill in your line of sight. Follow the well-beaten path through two more metal kissing gates to arrive at a final metal gate onto the Lockeridge to Alton Barnes road. The car parking area is on the other side.

About the Alton Barnes White Horse

It was cut in 1812 at the expense of the landowner, Mr Robert Pile of Manor Farm. His first contractor fled with an advance payment of £20 after drawing a sketch of the horse. This contractor was eventually found and hung for a list of crimes! In 2010 the horse underwent a major renovation, overseen by landowner Tim Carson and the Alton Barnes Parish Council, when 150 tons of fresh chalk were delivered to the site by helicopter, which volunteers then used to replenish the surface of the figure.