

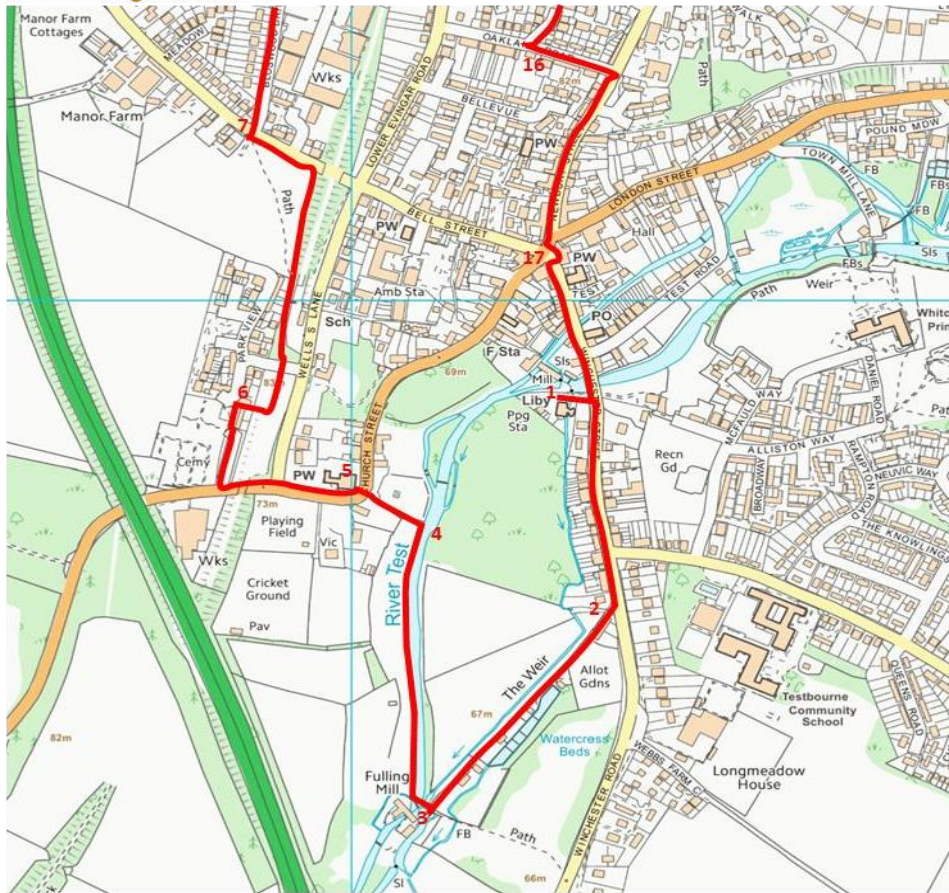


To the NORTH (about 75 minutes, 3.4 miles)



ParishOnline

Whitchurch CP 



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The walk begins at the Winchester Street car park next to the Silk Mill. (1)

Turn right at the car park entrance, heading south along Winchester Street (which becomes Winchester Road).

At the end of the redbrick houses turn right into The Weir (2) and follow the lane down towards Fulling Mill. Turn and look to your right across the water meadow to the old tithe barn. In the past farmers were required to give one-tenth of their produce to the established Church to help support their local priest and this would be stored in the tithe barn.

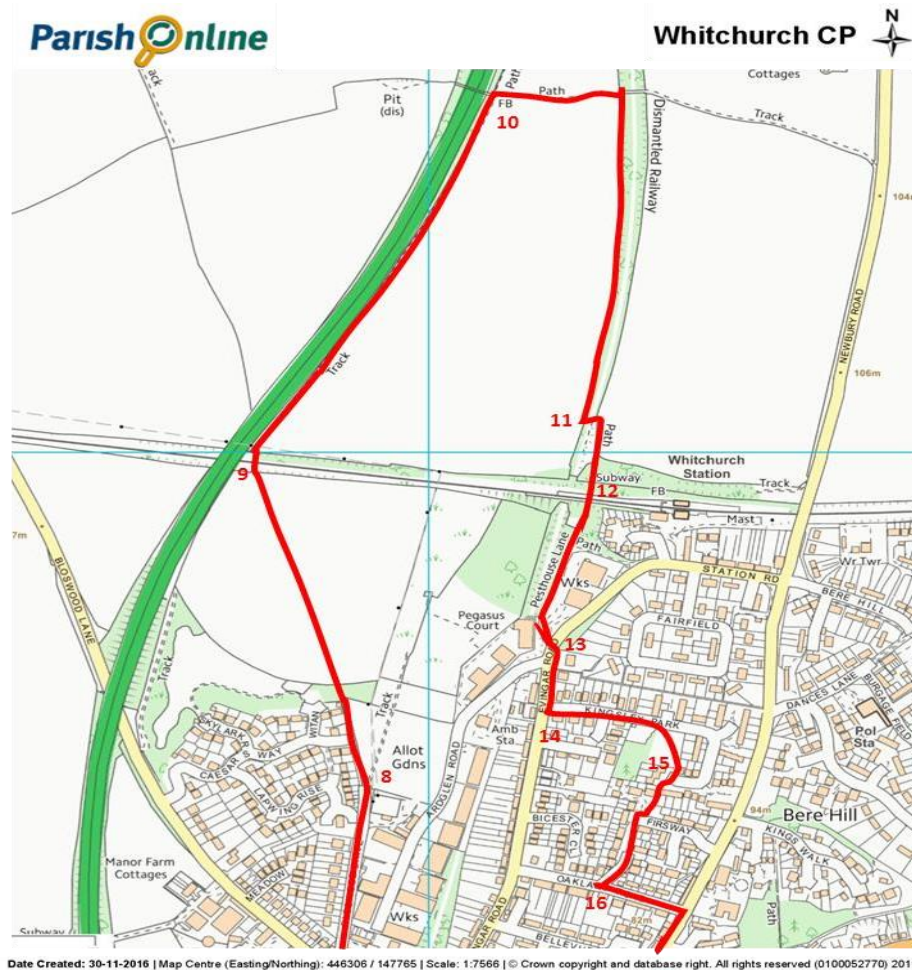
At the end of the lane (3), turn right to cross over the bridge at Fulling Mill taking a minute to admire the beautiful clear waters of the River Test and then follow the path with the river on your right hand side. PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NO CYCLING ALONG THIS PATH and DOGS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE RIVER. At the end, turn left (4) along the path, with a high wall to your right, then cross the road (watch out for traffic!) at All Hallows Church (5).

Parts of All Hallows Church date from the 12th, 13th and 15th centuries, but it was much altered in the 1860s when the Gothic Revival spire was added to the Norman tower. Inside are brasses and effigies of the Brooke family, who once lived in the house over to the left (now called Kings Lodge) and memorials to the Portal family of papermakers. The most notable monument is a 9th century grave marker for a Saxon woman called Frithburga,

It reads: "HIC CORPUS FRITHBURGAE REQUIESCIT IN PACEM SEPULTUM", translated as, "Here the body of Frithburga lies buried in peace". Whoever she was, she represents the Saxon community of centuries ago. Outside is a very large yew tree thought to be over 800 years old making it one of the oldest trees in Hampshire.

Turn left and follow the road under the brick railway arch, then turn right and walk towards some houses keeping the town cemetery to your left. As you reach the houses, the path goes right (6) between the houses, before bending left onto the embankment of the dismantled Didcot to Southampton railway line. The footpath crosses a road and continues to follow the embankment behind the old station house on your right. If you are able to see above the fence you will notice some of the architectural features and railway fixtures that have been retained.

Continue straight ahead between the old embankment on your right and new housing on your left. Just before you reach Blosswood Lane, the footpath turns to the left before exiting opposite Blosswood Drive (7).



Cross (again, take care!) and walk up Blosswood Drive, keep straight on the unmade road surface at the end until you see a footpath running diagonally up to the left (8).

Follow the path up – it cuts through trees and then runs diagonally across a field to the top left hand corner, next to the A34 (9), and then crosses a footbridge over the railway line (you will see Whitchurch Station down to your right).

Continue on this path along the left hand side of fields, with the A34 on your left, until you reach a waymarked junction of paths (there is a path to the left over a footbridge, crossing the A34). At this junction (10), **turn right** and walking away from the A34 you follow the path across the field, passing a lone tree and, at the other side of the field, turn right and walk along keeping the hedgerow to your left.

When you reach a gateway on the left (11), turn left and a few metres further on take the **second** of two paths on the right hand side – the one immediately before the next gateway. Walk right down here, with the hedgerow on your right and a fence and field to your left, continue through a narrow brick tunnel under the railway line (12), and then straight ahead along a surfaced path (Pesthouse Lane) until you come up to a road junction, where Ardglan meets Evingar Road (13).

Turn right down Evingar Road and then left into Kingsley Park (14). At the recreation ground on the right, walk across the field to the bottom left-hand corner (15), where there is a path through into Firs Way. Go across slightly to the right then down another path, and further down until you reach the junction with Oaklands Road then turn left along Oaklands Road (16).

At the junction with Newbury Street, turn right and follow the road downhill passing a number of attractive period buildings. As you approach the town square you will pass H's Café on your right where Lord Denning, former Master of the Rolls was born and the imposing grade II* listed Town Hall dating from the reign of Queen Anne. On the opposite side of the road is The White Hart Inn, once a busy coaching stop on the old London to Exeter turnpike road and a favourite of Charles Kingsley, keen fisherman and author of the Water Babies, who made regular visits to Whitchurch.

At the mini roundabout in the centre of Whitchurch (17), continue along Winchester Street, passing Whitchurch Silk Mill on your right. Whitchurch Silk Mill dates from 1815 and is the oldest surviving silk mill in the country still weaving in its original Regency building.

Continue over Town Bridge and turn right to return to your starting point at the Winchester Street car park.