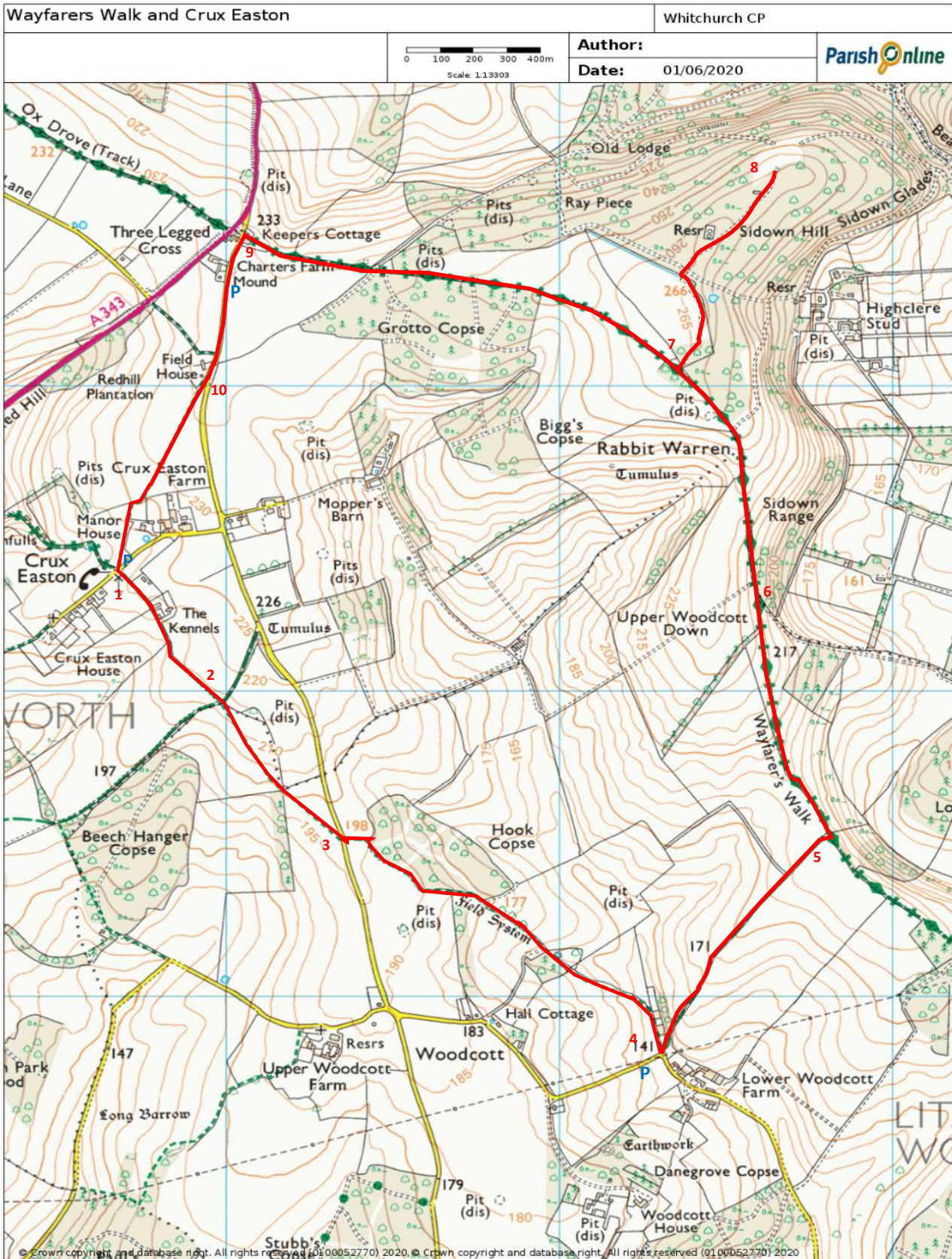




Wayfarer's Walk and Crux Easton (4.7 miles – allow 2 hrs).



NB: If visiting Heaven's Gate, 5.7 miles – allow 2 hrs 30 minutes



This is a lovely walk through some of North Hampshire's most beautiful countryside, visiting the historic Grade II listed Titt wind engine in the small village of Crux Easton, and a stretch along the long distance Wayfarer's Walk, with extensive views of the Highclere Stud, Beacon Hill and Ladle Hill. When the Highclere Estate path is open (between Easter and the August Bank Holiday), you can also visit Heaven's Gate.

The circular route is described as if starting out at Crux Easton (1) – you can park there next to the telephone box. It is also possible to start the circuit just south of Three Legged Cross (9) – there is a layby just south of the junction with the A343. Another option is to start at Lower Woodcott Farm (4). If you are not starting at Crux Easton, just follow the directions from your chosen starting point, and continue from the start when you reach Crux Easton.

Across the road from the telephone box at Crux Easton, a bridleway heads south-east. Just at the start you can visit the historic wind engine – enter the field through a gate on the right hand side.

Continue along the bridleway until you reach a junction of paths (2). Ignoring the signed paths to the left and to the right, carry straight on ahead (there is a marker on a post a few yards further on), along the left hand edge of a field, heading gently downhill. You pass through into another field and cross it, still heading south-east, to meet and cross the road which runs north from Egbury to Three Legged Cross (3).



Continue along the path until you reach Hook Copse, continuing with the copse on your left. The path eventually enters a hedgerow and runs along through it – you will have to duck under a tree or two along the way! Eventually you come to where the road from Dunley bends left on its way up to Woodcott, at Lower Woodcott Farm (4).

Turn back up to the left, along a bridleway which climbs before meeting the Wayfarer's Walk at a T-junction at the top (5). Turn left along the Wayfarer's Walk, passing through a gate and continuing along and up, with fields to the left. Be sure to listen out for the skylarks hovering above you.



There are magnificent views across to the right of Beacon Hill (on top of which is the grave of the 5th Earl of Carnarvon, who financed the Tutankhamun expedition in the 1920s), Ladle Hill (further across to the east) and, below and in front of you, the Highclere Stud.

Continuing on, the path then joins a track coming in from the right (6). Continue up the track, eventually reaching the point where the path to Heaven's Gate is signposted on the right (7).



If the path is open, you can follow it along the edge of a field and then through woods to reach Heaven's Gate (8), a brick-built architectural folly set in a gap through the trees, so that it is visible from Highclere Castle below. Then retrace your steps to rejoin the Wayfarer's Walk.

Continue along the Wayfarer's Walk until you get to Three Legged Cross (9), turning left down the road towards Egbury (be careful to watch and listen out for vehicles). Just before Field House (10), there is a path on the right, but instead continue along the road past Field House and then immediately look for another path on the right, past a gate. Go along this path to reach the edge of a large field.

Across the middle of the field ahead of you, look for a wooden post (to the right of some farm buildings) and head straight across the field in this direction. At the edge of the field you will reach a stile – cross over this and follow the path across a paddock to another stile, which then brings you back to your start point (1).