

The Test & Dever Way



A 14- or 19-mile circular trail with the option of taking a bus in one direction



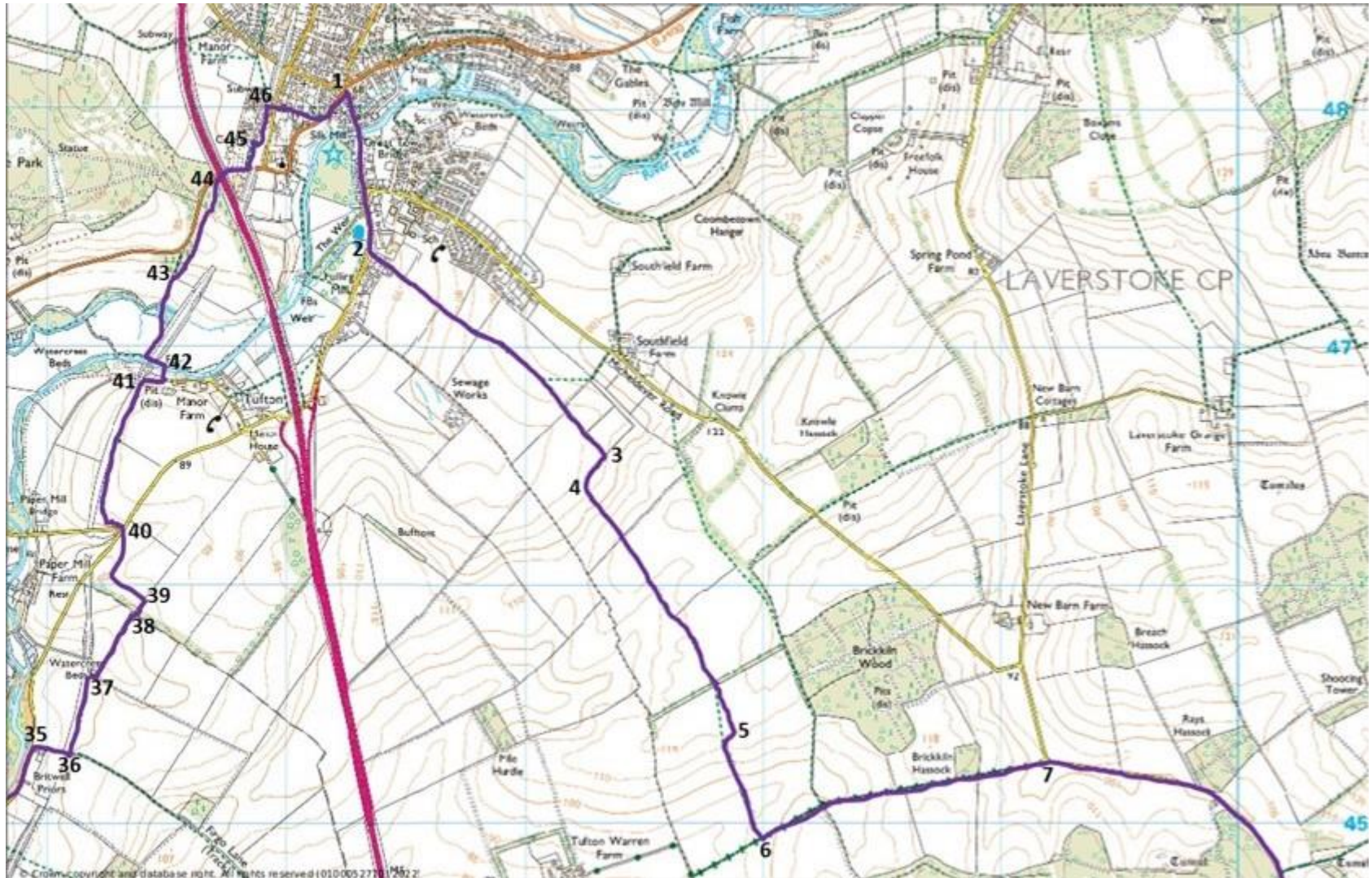
A waymarked walking trail

Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 144 (Basingstoke, Alton & Whitchurch)

Rail enquiries:
www.southwesternrailway.com

Public Toilets:
Whitchurch Bell Street car park
Sutton Scotney Gratton Park

Around & About Whitchurch
www.whitchurch.org.uk



Waypoint OS Grid Ref: SU

1 46250 48071

The trail begins at Whitchurch town square. Proceed south along Winchester Street for 700 yards crossing over the world - famous River Test chalk stream with the Silk Mill on your right.

2 46350 47392

3 47332 46547

4 47250 46430

5 47871 45372

Turn left into Webbs Farm Close and follow the public right of way uphill through farmland for 2¾ km as you head south out of Whitchurch. At the top of the ridge beyond waypoint 4 there are far reaching views towards Danebury Hill Iron Age Hillfort in the far distance. At 5 there is a dog leg to the right and then continue following the path through trees to the junction with the byway at 6.

6 47986 44942

7 49192 45252

8 50341 44175

Turn left onto the byway and at the junction with Laverstoke Lane turn right and follow the lane for 1½ km passing the long brick and flint wall of the Roundwood Estate, known locally as the 'million-pound wall', until you reach 8 at the entrance to a small copse. Continue through the edge of the copse.

9 50267 43922

10 49700 44056

11 48464 43685

At 9, turn right as you head out across rolling open downland towards the Dever Valley.

(Distance from 9 to 12 approx. 3½ km)

This is a peaceful landscape of field systems, broadleaf woodland, tumuli and ancient barrows that stretch out in close alignment with Tidbury Ring and Danebury Iron Age Hillfort to the SW.

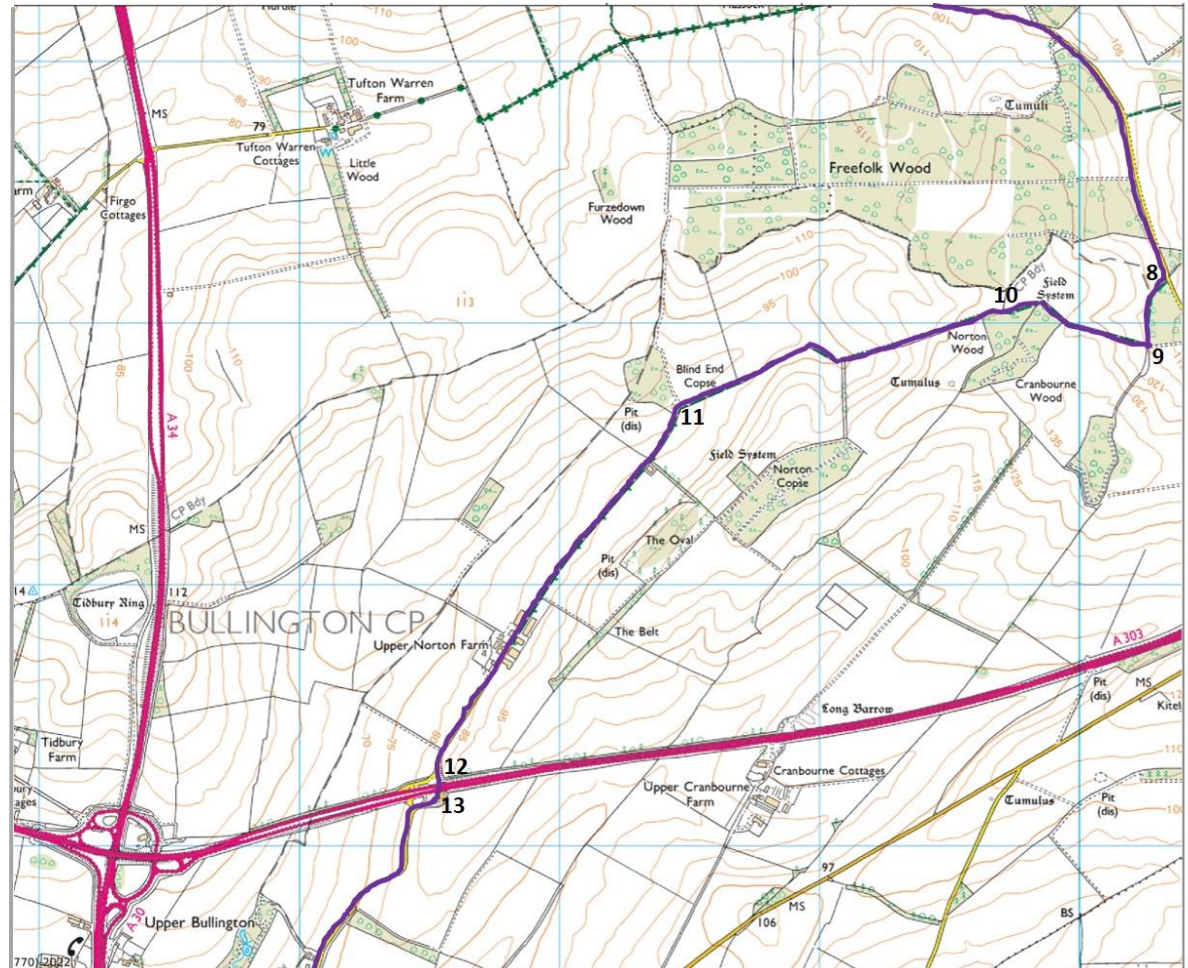
12 47537 42274

Passing through Upper Norton Farm you shortly cross under the A303 at 12 & 13.

The arable landscape abruptly changes as you approach the distinctly riverine well-treed landscape of the Dever river valley.

13 47539 42178

Continue along the lane passing the rear of the Norton Park Hotel until you reach the junction with 14.



14 46923 41101
15 46316 41187
16 46111 41256
17 46090 41524
18 45963 41524

For the shorter trail, turn right at **14** and continue to **16**. To continue on to Sutton Scotney and village services, go straight ahead and follow the instructions **A – M** at the end of this document.
At **16** turn right and then left and look for the stile in the hedgerow near cottages at **18**. Crossover the stile and walk diagonally across the field to crossover the stile in the far-right hand corner at **19**, at the base of the old DNSR railway embankment.

Evidence of the former Didcot-Newbury-Southampton railway line can be seen in the landscape along the western stretch of the trail between Bullington and Whitchurch. The line operated between 1885 and 1964 and it was the first to employ a steam navy (a steam-powered mechanical digger) in its construction. It remains a noticeable feature in the landscape south west of Whitchurch. The top of the embankment affords a clear view along the route of the old track bed at **19**.

19 45889 41407

Continue ahead through the woods turning left at the fingerpost and crossing over the River Dever at Chimple Bridge. Turn right onto the river bank, then immediately turn to the left away from the river, at the marked post.

PLEASE NOTE the riverbank is private – please stick to the designated route.

21 45741 41321

Cross a small open meadow (PN. can be overgrown) keeping close to the treeline. Just before the meadow boundary, the path veers right through trees and then left to a stile.

Cross the stile and head diagonally right across the field towards the Grade II* Norman Church of St Michael & All Angels. **DOGS on LEADS – HORSES in FIELD.**

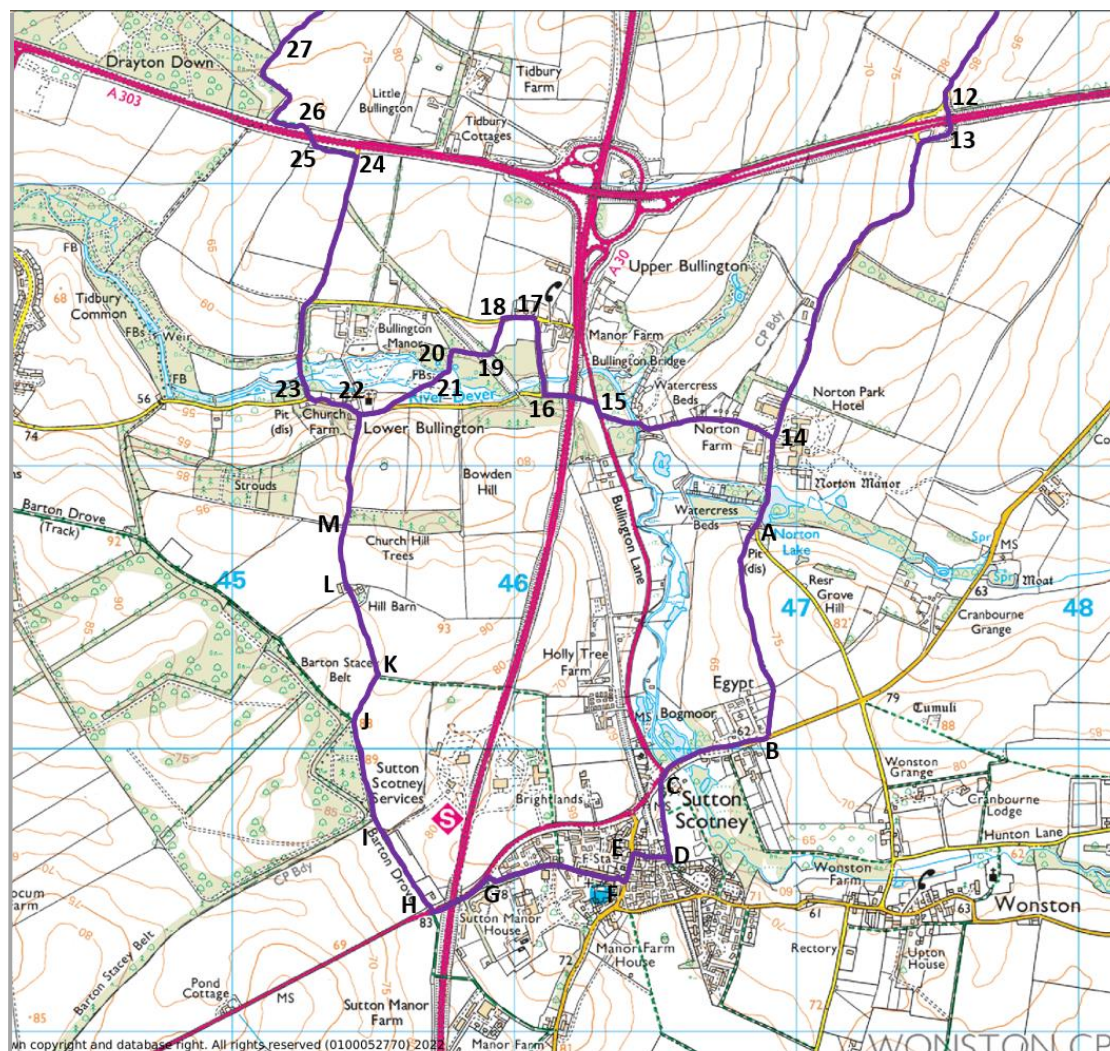
22 45464 41189

Crossover the stile and exit onto Bullington Lane. Turn right and continue ahead to **23**.

23 45270 41239

Turn right and follow the lane to **24** and then turn left onto the footpath just before the A303.

24 45442 42109



25 45301 42142
26 45268 42211
27 45175 42496

The path passes under the A303 via a double bridge, an example of architectural styles colliding and at **26**, turns left skirting the edge of the field and Drayton Copse....

These woods mark the edge of a base where American troops from the 70th Tank Battalion prepared for D-Day. The tank training roads still exist. Most of the 70th's tanks succeeded in making it onto Utah Beach.

Follow the path uphill around the edge of the field to the gap in the hedgerow at **28**.

Bronze, Iron Age and Roman remains have been discovered on these downs. Viewpoint: Stop to admire the open vistas between 27 & 28 with Danebury Ring Iron Age Hillfort on the horizon.

28 45593 42780
29 45409 43544
30 44742 44531
31 44563 44791

Pass through the gap in the hedgerow and continue ahead across the fields and on to the byway at **29**. The old DNSR railway embankment can be seen swinging in a north easterly arc towards the footpath. Pass under the impressive railway arch and at **31**, crossover to the lane leading to the River Test at The Cleaves, a local beauty spot.

32 44532 44882

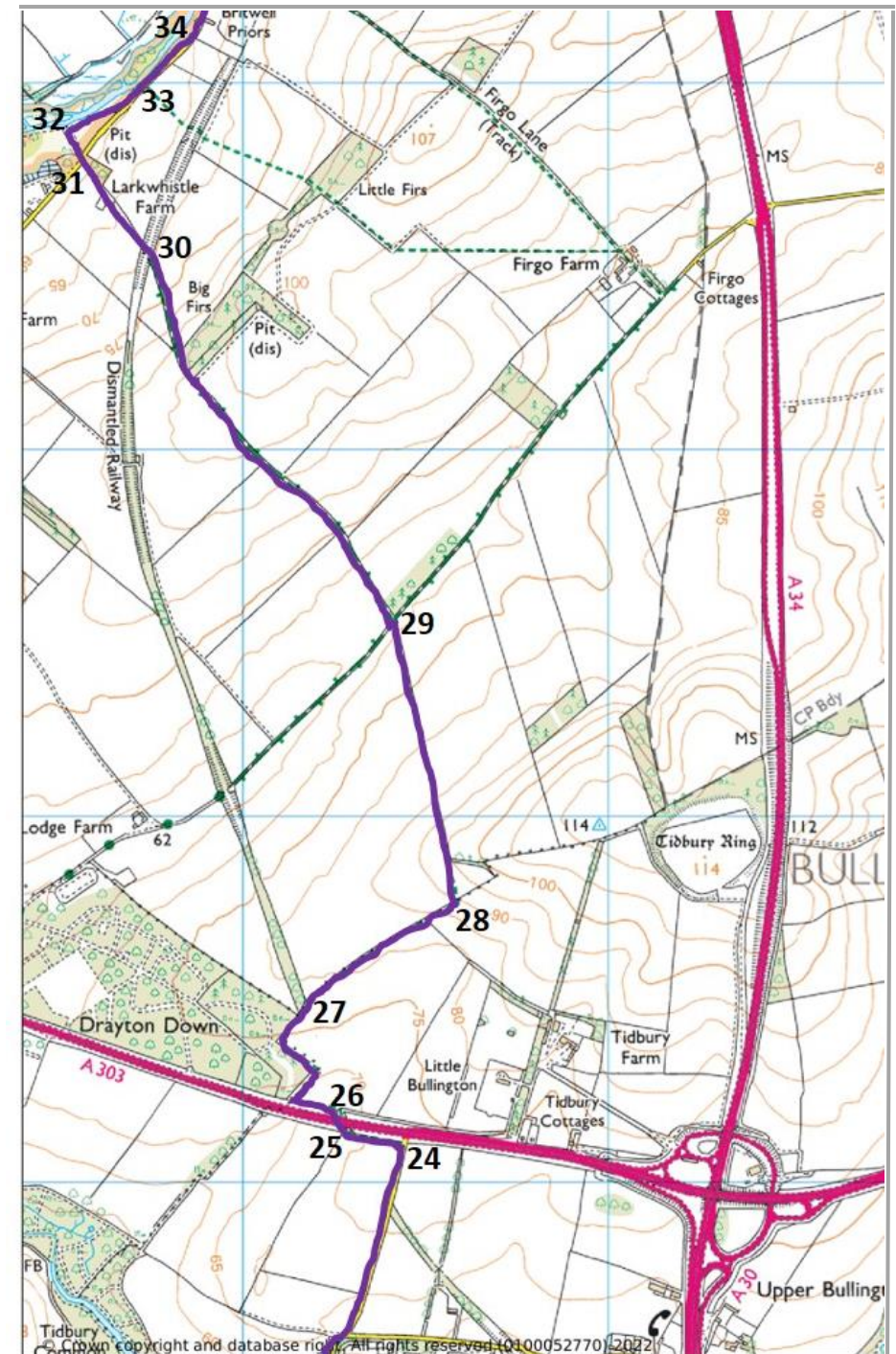
To take in the open river views at The Cleaves, before turning right, continue ahead for a few yards, then retrace your steps to join the footpath parallel to the river.

33 44683 44946

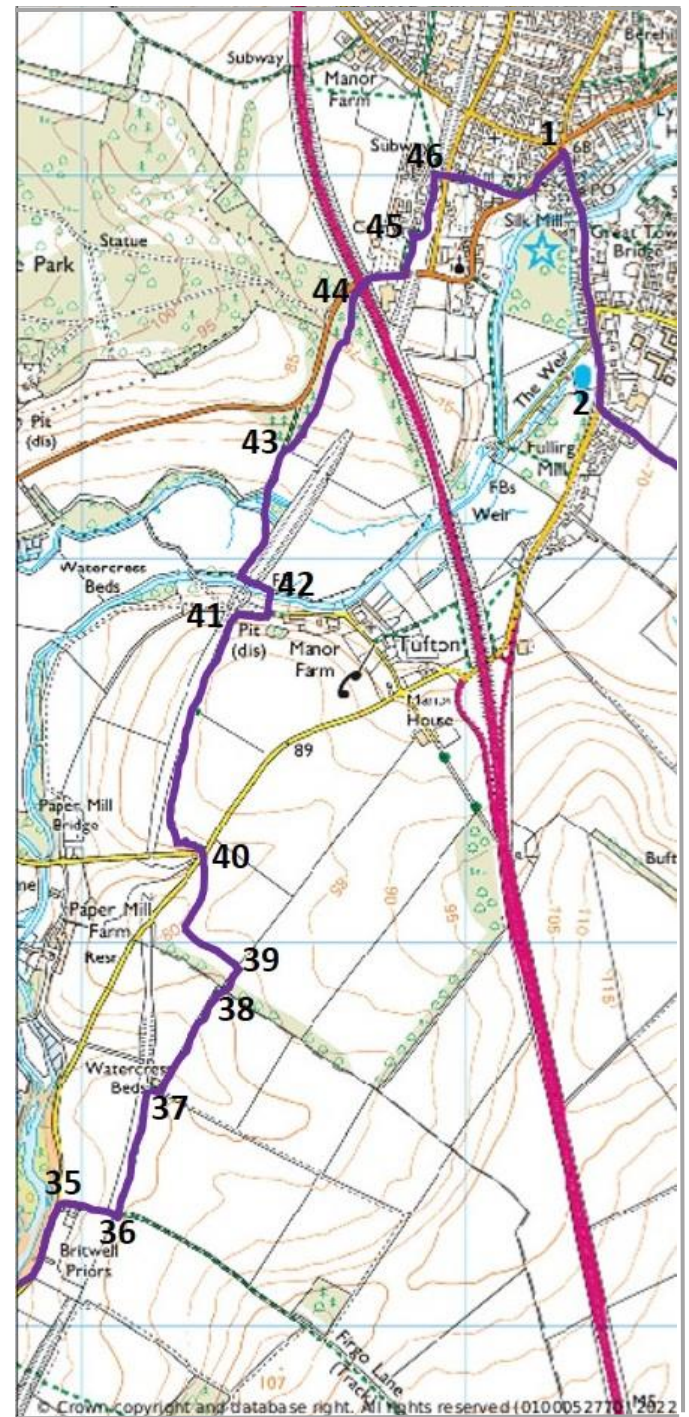
Join the lane (Nuns Walk) passing Britwell Priors on your right.

34 44866 45123

This is an interesting Elizabethan house that was moved in the 1920s from its original location at Britwell Salome, Oxfordshire to its new location near The Cleaves.



- 35 44941 45324 Turn onto the byway passing under the exposed bridge girders and take the path sloping up to the left at **36**.
- 36 45093 45295 Continue ahead on this path following the line of the old DNSR railway and skirting farm buildings to the junction at point **39**.
- 37 45189 45608
- 38 45356 45876 *Take some time to enjoy the big skies and open vistas over the Downs.*
- 39 45423 45952 Turn sharp left following the field edge and then diagonally through a small copse with fruit trees to rejoin the lane at point **40**.
- 40 45320 46227 Crossover the lane taking the path opposite through the hedgerow and then follow the field edge to your left towards Tufton.
- 41 45425 46867 The path exits onto a lane at Tufton. Turn right and then left by the fingerpost to take the footbridge across the River Test.
- Take some time on the bridge to admire this stunning world-famous chalk stream and the preserved DNSR railway viaduct spanning the river.*
- 42 45491 46922 Turn left and pass under the viaduct (the old DNSR line ran above). Follow the path along the edge of some woodland and over a very small footbridge into the next field; continue straight ahead through three kissing gates until reaching a stile and footpath into the field on the right.
- 43 45519 47290 Crossover the stile, walking gently uphill, keeping to the left-hand side of the field and then gently downhill, crossing over two further stiles.
- 44 45710 47720 At the road, turn right and under the A34 flyover. Cross the road, continue past the cemetery, then turn immediately left, (before passing under the railway bridge) and head towards the new houses. Pass between 3 bollards, and soon turn right to pass through 3 more, following a path to the right of no.6; you are now following the route of the old railway. Continue ahead crossing over a road and passing the back of two houses; the second one is the old Whitchurch Town station house, now a private home that retains many original architectural features and station fixtures.
- 45 45849 47863
- 46 45916 48002 Turn right through the foot tunnel and crossover into Fairclose. Continue ahead and at the junction with Church Street, turn left to return to the town centre.



Norton – Sutton Scotney – Bullington Loop

- | | | |
|---|-------------|--|
| A | 46859 40793 | At the junction with point 14 , continue straight ahead and at a curve in the road join the footpath on the right, crossing fields to join the main road at B . |
| B | 46904 40052 | Turn right and follow the main road passing attractive cottages on the left. |
| C | 46508 39868 | Opposite the mini roundabout turn left into the access road to the allotments and car park. Cross the recreation ground close to the public conveniences on your right. |
| D | 46531 39617 | Look for the alleyway on your right and follow this to the village high street where food and refreshments can be purchased from the village shop or pub. |
| E | 46419 39634 | Crossover to the Coach & Horses Inn. |
| F | 46386 39531 | On the side wall of the inn, you will find the plaque recording the names of the villagers who in 1830 signed the petition to the King. For the story of the Dever Valley Swing Riots, please see below. |
| G | 45908 39553 | |
| H | 45700 39436 | Follow the lane along the side of the Coach & Horses Inn to the junction with the main road, turn left, crossover the A34, then turn |
| I | 45533 39706 | right onto Barton Drove byway. Continue ahead to point J . |
| J | 45425 40102 | At the fork in the path, take the footpath diagonally right at point J and then bear left at point K . Continue ahead past farm buildings |
| K | 45519 40265 | towards Lower Bullington. |
| L | 45411 40568 | |
| M | 45404 40793 | Beyond point M you will join a lane at 22 opposite the Grade II* listed Norman Church of St Michael & All Angels. To climb up and over the old railway embankment and track bed, turn right here and walk along the lane to point 16 . Follow the instructions for 16 – 22 . Otherwise, to return to Whitchurch turn left and follow instructions for 23 – 46 . |



The Dever Valley Swing Riots

***“The nobs of old England of shameful renown,
Are striving to crush a poor man to the ground,
They’ll beat down his wages and starve him complete
And make him work hard for eight shillings a week.”***



The Swing Riots were a massive wave of protests carried out by impoverished farm labourers facing the prospect of starvation over winter. Wages had been driven down to an all time low, the price of bread had rocketed and the hated threshing machines were robbing labourers of winter work.

In the autumn of 1830 Dever Valley villagers drew up a petition to the King. Signed by 177 men of the parishes of Wonston, Barton Stacey and Bullington, the petition attributed their hunger, misery and distress to the people’s lack of representation in a Parliament filled with men ‘in whom the people have no confidence’.

Although the riots, machine breaking and arson occurred in rural locations all over the county, the Dever Valley was a particular hotbed of radicalism. In November 1830 a crowd of over 800 gathered in Sutton Scotney seeking donations of food, increased wages and the destruction of threshing machines; some farmers received advance warning signed by the infamous figurehead known as ‘Captain Swing’.

The uprisings led to severe penalties with village leaders transported and young Henry Cook of Micheldever hanged.

Please pause at the Coach and Horses public house and read the names on the commemorative plaque recording the Dever Valley villagers who signed the petition to the King, ‘they challenged injustice in defence of their rights and they should not be forgotten’.

For further reading: www.hampshire-history.com/the-swing-riots

