

Walk the Test Way 2010

Route Details and Points of Interest

Signage:

The walk is well signposted with the logo of **TW** on a green arrow. To assist you on the route we have erected additional signs all along the route. You will also find signs throughout indicating the mileage to the finish point at Romsey Memorial Park.

Countryside Code:

We would ask you all to spend a minute reading this short piece of advice before you commence the walk.

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow signs. In particular walk in single file when by necessity you have to walk on, or cross metalled roads.
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Leaving the Walk:

If for any reason you decide to leave the walk before completing the Walk at the Memorial Park in Romsey, **you must advise Keith Cameron, the Walk Coordinator on his Mobile. 07768040268.**

Marshalling:

The walk is well marshalled all along the route and should you have any difficulties then please make contact with a **Yellow Tabard Marshal**, who have the use of mobile phones.

First Aid:

We have 3 Ambulances available all day. Our Marshals can call St John Ambulance Brigade at a moments notice. The Marshals should also be able to deal with minor First Aid issues. **In the unlikely event that a walker needs Medical assistance and you are unable to locate a Marshal, the Walk Coordinator can be contacted in an Emergency on 07768040268. It is imperative that should you feel ill in any way, that you contact a Marshal with immediate effect. We also strongly suggest that if you are walking independently you team up with "a buddy" for obvious reasons.**

Toilets:

Toilets are available at Bourne Inn, St Mary Bourne, The Plough at Longparish, The White Lion at Wherwell. Lions Den Car Park which is a few hundred yards south of Stockbridge, adjacent to the left hand side of the path. Lower Brook, where the Test Way crosses the river. All sets of toilets are clearly marked by a free standing sign.

Refreshments:

For walkers on the 3 longer walks you may care to take time out at **The John of Gaunt pub at Horsebridge**, which will be open for coffee and soft drinks from 10am.

Annies at Kimbridge is also open and on your route, for morning coffee and light lunches, or the purchase of soft drinks and ice creams from their shop, from 11am. This is just a short detour of 100yds across the Kimbridge level crossing.

Memorial Park Romsey. We have made arrangements for the Cafe here to be open.

Additional Bottles of water will be available, at Longparish, Wherwell, Stockbridge, nearby the river crossings at Horsebridge, Lower Brook, and at Parsonage Farm, Awbridge. In addition many of our Marshals will have small supplies of water.

Points of Interest:

St Mary Bourne and south to **Wherwell** takes you some of the most remote parts of Hampshire. After leaving **St Mary Bourne** the track passes through some delightful farmland, before walking along the edge of **Harewood Forest**, and on the left side you observe lovely folded downland.

Through the villages of **Longparish** and **Forton** you will see wonderful thatched properties before crossing the A303 and entering **Harewood Forest**. After leaving the Forest and just before you drop down into **Wherwell**, you will have the most superb view, of the Test valley.

Wherwell, has to be one of the most attractive villages in the Test valley, with a large number of thatched properties. The village was once renowned for its Abbey which lay alongside the present Victorian church. It was founded in 986AD by Queen Elfrida and relics of the Abbey remain. No time to stop today, but the whole village is worth a further visit!

As you leave Wherwell, and go across **Chilbolton Common**, you traverse an area of great natural beauty, a wild patch of grassland that has an international reputation with botanists, who have found over a hundred species of grasses and other plants growing there.

After leaving **West Down** and walking along the old railway track, you eventually skirt the village of **Leckford**. The entire village was bought by **John Lewis** in 1928, and the properties are all decorated in the familiar green so well known to us all, as we visit the various John Lewis and Waitrose stores within the partnership.

Stockbridge an attractive village at the start of the mid distance walk was first referred to in 1141. The main street is particularly wide, reflecting its earlier role as part of a drover's road. It developed as a thriving market town in the 13th C, and is still bustling today.

The **Clarendon Way** a walk from Salisbury to Winchester crosses the Test Way just to the North of **Horsebridge**. Just before entering **Horsebridge** you will observe a **disused Canal Lock**, once part of the Southampton to Andover canal. Well that was the intent but the ambitious plan was never completed! To the south of **Horsebridge** you can observe the **old railway station**, which served the old **Sprat and Winkle line**, which was closed in the 1960s.

After crossing the **Test** and shortly after the **Oakley stream**, you will be able to observe **Mottisfont Abbey** whose roots date back to the 11th century. The House was given to the National Trust in 1957 and is now famous for its superb walled rose garden. After walking through the village of **Mottisfont**, you will pass by **St Andrew's Church** which is well worth a visit in the future. **Squabb Wood** which is entered after crossing Old Salisbury Lane in Awbridge is a very attractive piece of woodland, very similar to the New Forest and is the home to oak, beech, birch and silver birch. Immediately after leaving this woodland you will cross marshes which to your left will present fine views of Romsey Abbey. You will cross the Test just once more at **Saddlers Mill** (built in 1748), before finishing the walk in the **Romsey Memorial Park**.

Birdlife, Flowers and Fauna:

Apart from observing the wonderful River Test and its many tributaries, the opportunity to spot salmon and trout on the chalk bed there is much more beside.

As the route criss-crosses not only the Test but also the Oakley stream and the River Dun, you may spot some of the many rare birds and plants that can be found here, such as kingfishers, marsh harriers, little grebe, snipe, redshank, green winged orchids and butterbur.

Above all else enjoy yourselves!!