



**GUIDE TO FOOTPATHS
IN AND AROUND
REDLYNCH CIVIL PARISH**

by
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Revised Edition – 2013

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INTRODUCTION

Jenny Thompson's guide has been the definitive work for anyone wishing to explore the countryside in and around Redlynch for many years. This version is a working document, and it is intended that the description for each footpath will be updated to reflect the changes that have occurred since Jenny walked them, whilst retaining the original narrative as far as possible. By dating these revisions, hopefully walkers will be prompted to continue to revise and maintain the descriptions into the future, and incorporate small items of interest relating to each path.

MORGANS VALE, REDLYNCH AND WOODFALLS

FOOTPATH 14

This short footpath is not signed at all but is a very useful way of getting to the walks on the Downs from Redlynch. It commences at the top of Sandy Lane where a stile is located on the left hand corner adjacent to the cottage. The path leads the walker up the field close to the fence on the right, to a field gate and so out onto the road by Templeman's Old Farmhouse. Turn right to commence the walks to the Downs, but first pause and note the small tumulus, in the field left of the road which is covered in pine trees: it is known by some as 'The Butts', and besides being an old burial ground it was used as butts for archery practice in medieval days; however on other maps it is identified as 'Templeman's Tump'.

FOOTPATH 23

Another very short but good little path which connects Slab Lane with Primrose Lane. Start below 'Four Winds', the last of a group of houses on the right in Slab Lane where the road has begun to descend. A finger sign is in place, and the footpath is bounded on both sides by wire fences as it dips down and then ascends across the field. In the dip a stream flows under the path from the right but doesn't surface on the other side, although a change in vegetation gives some indication of the presence of water. There is no footpath sign at the Primrose Lane end where the path finishes above Days Farm.

FOOTPATHS 35 AND 52

Two numbers for a bifurcated path situated in Kiln Road; one finishes in Princes Close and the other in Quavey. There is a wooden footpath sign at the top of Kiln Road, whilst at the end of the broad section a footpath disc leading the walker down a narrow path at the bottom of which there is an old finger sign just discernible in the hedge. There are no signs on 52 at either end. This leaves 35 about 3/4 of the way down the narrow section on the left. The walker must not be put off from using it in that it appears to only lead to the house on the right; the right of way is by the left side of this into Princes Close.

BRIDLEWAY 36

This must be one of the shortest bridleways in the area and revels in the name of Petticote Lane. There are "horse and rider" signs at either end of this path which cuts off the corner between Princes Hill and Grove Lane. It starts in the latter opposite Sandy Lane passing by 'The Old Reading Rooms' which was formally the Baptists' Chapel, and finishes in Princes Hill about 100m from its junction with Bowers Hill. Cars are prevented from using this short-cut by posts which have been installed at the Grove Lane end. The reviewer can recall having to stand aside as Mr Hopkins Snr drove past in his Austin Seven. Under the leaf mould, is a metalled roadway; but his was probably the last vehicle that could fit. *JM & DS B-B 30 Jan 2013*

FOOTPATH 22A

This small path leads the walker through the houses in Orchard Road to halfway down Morgan's Vale Road. The start is a tarmacked path opposite the flats and to the left of a terrace of three cottages. Where the path turns

sharp left note the slab of concrete on the ground by the cottage; this is the capping to an old well. There are no signs at either end of the path.

FOOTPATH 22

This is the extension of the road called Downton Hill and indeed, the central portion is paved, but this has been partly obliterated over the years by a layer of decayed leaves etc. It crosses between fields and comes out on Lode Hill above Paccombe Farm. In Autumn there are some lovely blackberries to be picked here, although their growth has narrowed the path somewhat. There are no signs at either end of the path.

FOOTPATH 22B

This footpath leads from Orchard Road by the side of the School playing field between the houses and associated gardens into The Close; again no signs are in place.

FOOTPATH 12

This path is the only public footpath through Grove Copse, and was very well marked, however, at the time of this review, most of the signs had gone. The start is opposite the Burial Ground in Grove Lane and is obviously signposted. The approach to the new self-closing metal gate might be a squeeze for wheelchairs, after which a broad track takes us past paddocks with an assortment of livestock and their shelters. On entering the wood, the path forks, and the Right of Way is to the right. You should also bear right at subsequent opportunities.

The Copse is particularly pretty at bluebell time when there are drifts of this beautiful flower accompanied by the wonderful perfume. Although some of the deciduous trees have been removed there has been optimistic replanting of replacements, many still to emerge from their protective plastic tubes.

The footpath leaves the copse at a new metal kissing gate, after which the course follows the same line ahead along the field edge. In front are views of Lower Pensworth Farm and beyond Titchborne Farm. To the right, the hedgerow has some cherries which may bombard you when ripe.

Keeping to the top edge of the field to avoid the boggy bits, we finally reach another new kissing gate and then three steps down into the lane which leads to the farm, and the start of Bridleway 42. There is new modern sign in place. *JM & DS B-B 30 Jan 2013*

FOOTPATH 55

This is not marked at the start in the lane leading to Lower Pensworth Farm. The walker must look for the new metal gate just over the brow of the hill on the right of the road leading to the farm, adjacent to a tiny copse. Enter the field via the gate and keep to the right edge of this. In Winter 'Newhouse' can be glimpsed ahead through the trees. Pause and admire the pond in the dip of the field. On reaching the corner a stile is found, and this is followed by a rickety bridge, fortunately with a hand rail, which takes the walker over a ditch. The path turns sharp left at this point, then right to follow the ancient hedge on the right in which are some lovely large trees. The walker is advised to keep as high as possible at this point as the land to the left is very marshy; with lush vegetation in summer it is hard to find the way. A worn wooden finger post almost opposite an entrance to 'Newhouse' on the road to Whiteparish indicates where the path ends.

FOOTPATH 10

This connects Goggs Lane with Grove Lane. A modern finger post adjacent to the high fenced farm buildings on the left up Goggs Lane indicates the start of the path. It is an excellent track with, at first, a small copse on the

right, with bluebells in the spring and butchers' broom for colour in the winter. To the left across the paddocks is Quavey, whilst above on the skyline can be seen houses on The Ridge in Woodfalls.

Just before a farm gate is reached the path turns sharp left, with a choice of a stile, or just walk around the end of the fence. This part of the path has narrowed, as the hedge gets thicker, providing a haven for birds. So to another stile, this time with an alternative of a wooden pedestrian gate, after which the path turns sharp right up a broad grassy track by the side of the Burial Ground.

Finally we arrive at Grove Lane, via a new self-closing metal gate. There is a new finger post sign in place here too.
JM & DS B-B 30 Jan 2013

FOOTPATH 15

Footpath 15 commences at the top of Sandy Lane and passes in front of 'Bampton's Field' and Bampton's Hill Farmhouse'. A green notice board at the start explains the route to be taken following the main track way rather than taking what appears to be the dedicated footpath - which has not been adopted.

After the gate into the field, the path continues gently rising along the edge of the field and then the side of the copse - Grove Copse. At the crest, take time to notice the sandy nature of the soil in the area, and the glorious views to the north and east. The line of the path has to be noted with care across 'Buckets' - this being the name of the field. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, (and subsequent review years later!) the footpath has been ploughed and not reinstated. The walker should look ahead and choose an appropriate route to cross the field diagonally, towards the north-east corner of the field, to the left of the copse. The hedge on the north boundary of the field has been brutally cut back, with mature trees reduced to the same height. The easiest exit point is the field gate, as the stile in the hedge, is now difficult to locate, and overgrown with bramble.

On crossing the stile, or passing through the gateway, note the small quarry ahead; the route is to the right of this, down towards a large gap in the hedge where a stile delivers the walker on to Bridleway 42, opposite the overgrown area which was once Upper Pensworth Farm.

This is a walk that, added to others, makes a very pleasant round and is particularly attractive on clear days when the views can be appreciated, or when the bluebells are out in Grove Copse. *JM & DS B-B 30 Jan 2013*

FOOTPATH 22C

A short but useful tarmacked path which cuts a corner off and connects The Ridge with Vicarage Park - there are no signs at either end. On The Ridge it lies between 'Domus Aprica' and 'Ridge House', with a high fence on the left. This extends nearly to the bottom of the footpath, the last piece of which is a pavement which leads the walker down to Vicarage Park Road: turning right will take the walker past four houses to Morgan's Vale Road.

FOOTPATH 27

Another short path from The Ridge to Morgan's Vale Road enabling the walker to cut off a larger corner than the preceding one; again there is no sign at either end. Commencing on The Ridge adjacent to 'Emviz' and opposite a private metalled track leading to Hart Hill Farm, the first part is short and tarmacked. Halfway along this portion on the left is a path through to Greensmead. Footpath 27 comes out into Herbert Road, a short cul de sac, and from which there are extensive views over Morgan's Vale to Salisbury, The Cathedral and the Downs above Downton.

St Birinus Road has to be crossed to the next section of the path, which is also tarmacked and has a high fence on the left behind which are now new houses, but not so long ago there was a disused clay pit which was a haven for wildlife. The path turn left into a lane, which in turn leads the walker out into Morgan's Vale Road adjacent to 'Langstone House'.

FOOTPATH 11

Footpath 11 commences at the top left hand corner of the short gravel lane called The Drove which is adjacent to Woodfalls Post Office, and takes the walker across the fields to Harthill Drove.

Old wooden finger signs are in place at the start of each Drove but there are no signs elsewhere. After climbing over the stile the walker should pause a while to admire the view which must be one of the most extensive and best in the Parish, about a third of which can be seen from this point. The way ahead is diagonally down across the field to the stile which is easily seen, thereafter down by the side of a fence. The overgrown dampish area on the left is a haven for plants and birds; was this another clay pit for the brick works? On reaching the track to the house the walker must turn left then immediately right to a stile. So down between fields to a stile into the unmade Harthill Drove. After rain, and in Winter, the path can be quite muddy.

BRIDLEWAY 21

This bridleway connects Harthill Drove with Whiteshoot, and commences in the former where it turns sharp right. It is a natural extension of the route passing through Redlynch via Quavey Well and is suggested as being part of the ancient trading route for salt from Pennington and Lymington. It is also known locally as "the muddy track". There is no sign at the Harthill end, from where the lane slopes down to lower edge of Tinney's Firs, which is owned by The Woodland Trust, and open to walkers. Mr Tinney "acquired" the woods, formerly common land, following the Enclosures in 1821, and planted some Douglas Firs, hence the name. The entrance at this point is always muddy, but it is generally drier underfoot in the woods than along the next stretch of the bridleway, which is rather muddy in places particularly in winter and after heavy rain. It was refurbished some years ago and clay was used in some parts; however a way can be picked through. On the way the walker has fine views across Lover, the Hamptworth estate and Langley Wood. Alternatively, a parallel route can be followed through the woods, before re-joining the bridleway once the slope has levelled off. The exit onto Whiteshoot is through an unusual bi-fold metal farm gate at the bottom corner of Tinney's Firs, and there is a finger post at this end. *DSB-B 19Feb13.*

BRIDLEWAY 46

This gravel track connects Bohemia with Forest Road and Loosehanger, which is the usual point of access. A single finger post serves to sign this bridleway and Footpath 17 from 200m up Loosehanger from the Lover crossroads. The track is a good one throughout its length, and until the steep top part, it is hedged on both sides, with a good variety of species. Where the track bifurcates, 46 continues onwards and upwards and Footpath 18 is to the right. From here the path climbs steadily uphill, finally through woodland which contains some lovely Scots Pine and so onto Forest Road opposite Tethering Drove. There is a finger post at this end. *DSB-B 19Feb13.*

FOOTPATH 18

Starting at the bifurcation of the footpath 46 in Bohemia (see above), the walker takes the right-hand track and around the right hand bend at Slate Cottage, towards a cluster of bungalows. At the end of the gravel, a good stile is in place leading into a tightly fenced path leading to another stile where we cross Footpath 17. Go straight on across this small field to another stile, followed by a diagonal descent, leaving the lone oak on your right, to a final stile by a five barred gate on to Loosehanger. This final field is marshy, and it may be difficult to cross. When reviewed, a route was taken along the right hand field boundary, and then following a drainage channel to gate. However the final 20m were impassable! There is a Footpath sign in place at this end, high in the hedge, 75m up Loosehanger from the crossroads. *DSB-B 19Feb13.*

FOOTPATH 17

This path connects Whiteshoot with Loosehanger and effectively cuts off a corner; it is signed with a finger sign shared with Bridleway 46 at the Loosehanger end, just the village side of the gravel track. However its other end is not marked. It can be found by the signs to 'Hideaway', 'Woodbanks' and 'Rose Cottage' and is in fact the fenced drive to these properties. The signed path diverges from the driveway at the sharp right bend, turning left beside a tall fence which leads us around a garden which was formerly crossed by the old route. This diversion is easy to follow, and the walker can enjoy snowdrops and daffodils in season, before a stile is found on the left which takes the walker into one of a series of very tiny grassy fields. The way lies directly ahead, (footpath 18 is crossed on the way), and via three small fields to a finale stile leading onto a broad grassy track between houses taking us up to Loosehanger. *DSB-B 19Feb13.*

FOOTPATH 25

The footpath commences in Highfield Lane which is on the left down Slab lane. Turn into the lane and take the right fork soon after entering. At the end of this a stile will be found. There are no signs at either end of this short path which is useful for adding variety to 'round walks. After crossing the stile the path follows the hedge on the right. At the end of the hedge footpath 26 leaves on the right, again no sign, whilst 25 drops down into a dip which can be a bit boggy in winter, eventually to a further stile which leads the walker into Lodge Drove below the thatched property called 'Cerdic Heights'.

FOOTPATH 26

There are no signs at either end of this short path. It commences on footpath 25 at the point where the hedge and fence meet; here the walker will find the rails of a stile but no step. Over this the path follows a diagonal route across the field which can be damp at times, to another stile in the corner which is in better order than the first one. Another stile 15 yards uphill followed by another diagonal traverse, this time uphill, to a final stile in the far corner of the field which takes the walker onto bridleway 38 (Lodge Drove extension).

THREE ROUTES TO DOWNTON

BRIDLEWAY 38

This path is one of three which connect the parish with Downton Civil Parish; these are numbers 38, 34 and 39, and any two can be made to form a circular walk. In the opposite direction number 38 can be put with walks in the Hale Civil Parish and other excellent circuits can be done. Another asset of the path is that other small paths meet it from time to time so even more variety can be added.

The path starts at the top of Lodge Drove opposite the Social Club. This Drove used to be a public road until around 1811 when the owner closed the middle section to the public. Very quickly the tarmac gives way to a gravel track and the housing becomes more sparse. The gravel track bifurcates at the end and the footpath follows the right fork through a five barred gate on which there is a plastic footpath disc. The way now is down the sunken broad track flanked by trees on either side - indeed one of the features of the walk is the wonderful oaks passed. The ground can be somewhat damp in places in the Winter but these places can be circumnavigated.

After passing one field on the right a stile is found which denotes the end of footpath 26. A fairly newly planted copse of deciduous saplings is then found. The land on which this planting has been done was poor and ill drained and one must thank the person who paid for the planting to have the foresight to use it in this way, for it is future generations which will get the true benefit. The walker eventually reaches a stile on which there is an Avon Valley Footpath marker (footpath 28 and H 19): the copse encountered here is aptly named Dark Copse. The path continues downwards on its still sunken way to slowly flatten out. The avenue of trees has given way to a hedge on the right. There are large disused overgrown sandpits on the left, some covered in brambles, where rabbits abound.

Passing through a gate (no sign) the walker comes upon the secluded and beautiful Lodge Farm House with its very pretty gardens and lovely old roses. The track here is a good gravel one, down to the Moot Lane-Woodgreen road, the C336.

Towards the end of the track if it is walked during the week, the walker may be aware of a constant low roar and the chimneys of the Brick Works are seen. On getting nearer it is found that the roar is indeed that of the fires which can be seen at the end of the building, whilst outside in front, stand stacks of gorgeous orangey red bricks. There is no footpath sign where the path ends, but this is opposite a green BT box on which is painted No. 15 in white.

As with so many of the walks this one has interest whatever the time of year. In the Spring catkins can be found longer than the writer's finger and snowdrops are followed by a range of wild flowers: a large variety of bird life inhabits the hedgerows and copses passed, the latter rejoicing in, for example the names Church Close Copse (where is the Church?), Little Copse and Dark Copse.

FOOTPATH 24 and D 26

This route to Downton commences in Slab Lane, and sadly there is no indication where it starts, which is by the side of the hidden electricity sub-station. Half way down Slab Lane on the left where the road is dropping down the hill lies a large farmhouse; this was once a nunnery and later harboured Cromwell's soldiers who were storming Longford Castle. Between this and close to the next cottages which lie lower down the road, a wide gravel track is the start of the path.

This quickly leads the walker past the electricity sub-station and onto a narrower track flanked in the main by elders and hazels. The stile at the end is somewhat broken. After crossing this and a more substantial one ahead which is marked with the Avon Valley green footpath markers, the way ahead is well trodden by people walking this long distance path, which now incorporates footpath 24 and is very well signed. The path gently descends to the right to another stile, and thereafter by the side of the fence which now lies on the walker's left. A small copse which hides an overgrown quarry is passed, otherwise most of the interest is in the more distant views of Downton and the downs beyond. Soon the land flattens out and a deep ditch is crossed via a substantial bridge. Surprisingly, even after much rain no water lies in it, however by casting the eye around the walker can often see the white of chalk, so perhaps the lack of water in the ditch is not so surprising after all.

Finally a very substantial stile made from what look like old railway sleepers takes the walker into a lane. The way ahead leads out into Moot Lane where besides the Avon Valley Finger sign there is a substantial wooden one informing the walker that it is 1 1/4 miles to Woodfalls.

BRIDLEWAY 39 and FOOTPATH D 25

The third path to Downton starts along Muddyford Lane and is the track opposite The Row, but again no sign indicates its presence. It was once wide enough for vehicular traffic but this is not so now in the first section. Being a very old lane it has a wide variety of trees growing in the hedges which lie on either side. Eventually the grassy track gives way to one of metal, down by the side of the Travellers' Caravan Site. Where the road bends round into this the path turns left to a field, and just past the hedge which comes up from below it turns right, through the hedge.

Here the path becomes D 25 about 100 yards from its start in Lode Hill (see later). After entering the set-aside field the footpath lies down in a sunken gully. Although this path has been cleared out in the past it is now becoming overgrown with brambles and walkers now take a line parallel and adjacent to it. Amusingly, a plastic footpath disc is attached to the large pine tree at the top of the field, but it is way above the walker's eye line! The path eventually comes out into Hamilton Park, but on the way a notice is passed which states that the owner is taking part in 'The Countryside Access Scheme'. This allows members of the public to use, for peaceful purposes, the set-aside land, but in doing so no permanent right of way will be established. Many obviously enjoy this

facility, as can be seen from the numerous tracks and paths which have been created, but they will not become public footpaths and are not described in this booklet.

In Hamilton Park there is a splendid WCC metal footpath sign, showing three paths. Footpath D25 continues on the same line as previously down a narrower path behind the houses, thence into a wide track which takes the walker past the BT buildings and out into Barford Lane between 'Hamilton House' and 'Wellesley Cottage' (shades of Trafalgar and Waterloo!). There is a substantial wooden footpath sign set into the hedge of the latter, indicating it is 1 1/2 miles to Redlynch.

One unfortunate aspect of this walk is the tipping of waste that has taken place in the hedge bottoms. Fortunately, most will decompose but it does detract from an otherwise pleasant, and essentially dry, walk to Downton.

FOOTPATHS ASSOCIATED WITH THOSE TO DOWNTON

FOOTPATHS 28 and H 19

In order to get to the start of footpath 28 the walker follows the first part of footpath 24 from its commencement in Slab Lane to where it crosses the first stile; this is the start of 28. The walker turns left along the grassy track, from where good views are to be had over to Breamore Woods whilst the hedge on the left gives protection from the wind. The footpaths are well signed as they are incorporated into the Avon Valley Footpath and are well walked. The stiles are in good condition and where footpath 38 is crossed there is even a choice! The meadow land dips and rises offering a good surface on which to walk. However one field does have a wealth of thistles, so covered toes or a watchful eye are needed. Birdlife abounds in the hedgerows and copses passed, whilst to see rabbits is not uncommon.

Having crossed footpath 38 the way is ahead up the side of the hedge ahead through a small copse at the bottom of which is an overgrown small pond. This is alive with mating frogs in the spring. The hedge is followed to the top of the field, but the walker should look back frequently to admire the unfolding wonderful views of Wiltshire and Hampshire chalk downs and valleys, whilst a little further on over the brow of the hill the views are down into Dorset.

The path turns left at the top of the field until a splendid large strong Avon Valley finger sign is reached. The stile is crossed and the path now becomes H 19. The way ahead is towards the telegraph pole in the middle of the field with the large footpath disc on it. From the pole the path continues diagonally downwards towards the corner of the deer fence and so to a stile. The walker should pause before crossing this and read the notice by it. 'What's Happening Here', 'The Past, The Future' explaining about the copse the walker is passing.

Yet another stile into a meadow which towards the bottom is rather boggy. A bridge takes the walker over the worst bit, and so to a substantial stile (footpath H 20 leaves at this point). Although wet, gravel has been put down in the recent past so it is not a poor surface to walk on. Yet another stile and another field to cross, and this is done uphill towards the corner of a wire fence, which, when reached, is followed to the right. So over the last stile on this walk and then through the farm buildings of pretty Hatchet Gate Farm. What wonderful views the cottage must have down the valley towards Home Farm and the river valley and downs beyond.

So through gates and along a good track to finish at the end of the green at Hatchet Green; here an Avon Valley Footpath sign is in place.

FOOTPATH H 20

Down the gravel section of Lodge Drove lie hidden houses. On the left about two thirds of the way down beside a more obvious sign to Heathy Farm, a wooden finger sign can be found. The footpath is a short one, extremely well signed and it takes the walker through a rather damp, but pretty, hidden valley to join H 19, the Avon Valley Path, before it enters the last copse. The gates, stiles, and bridges that have to be negotiated on this path are substantial.

It is a lovely way of adding to the variety of rounds that can be done centred on Lodge Drove.

FOOTPATH D 25

It begins as a very short path across one tiny field. It commences by the bus stop sign on the right down Lode Hill opposite Ashley Grange Nursing Home where there is a stile. From this point it crosses the grassy field diagonally following a slightly raised hump in the ground to just before the corner of the metalled road leading to the Travellers' Caravan site; it then passes through the hedge and continues down to Downton. This section of the path is described in the routes from the parish down to Downton.

FOOTPATH 53

This is the short straight metalled road from the B3080 opposite Paccombe Farm towards the Travellers' Camp. It forms a junction on the first corner with Bridleway 39.

HALE CIVIL PARISH

FOOTPATHS H 2 and H 4

These together make an excellent easy circular walk which is particularly suited to a bright day in Winter or Spring as it is a dry walk regardless of the prevailing weather conditions. Because of the difficulties encountered with parking it is better to start at St. Mary's Church, Hale, on the C336 where it is possible to pull off the road.

Before commencing the walk, the walker should cross through the gate opposite the way up to the Church, in order to stand on the footbridge over the River Avon. This is the start of footpath H 1 over the water meadows to South Charford. It is a lovely peaceful scene; often swans occupy the water, and after good rains, water lies in the dips of the meadows giving a good idea of how the water was distributed in the time-honoured management of such water meadows.

Crossing the road the path to be taken is very well signed with the green and white discs of the Avon Valley Path. It begins very steeply up by the side of the tiny Parish Church which was built in the 17th Century on the site of a ruined one. Pause here and look inside if it is open, and also inspect the graveyard; although many of the stones cannot be read, snippets of Bale's history can be gleaned.

Even very early in the year snowdrops appear over in the grounds of Hale Park; the house of the park is easily seen here and throughout the walk. On the left of the path there is a deep dip in the ground which led to the old river crossing at Charford.

The path continues upwards but not so steeply now, beside the avenue of lime trees of varying ages, many festooned with mistletoe. Indeed twenty bunches were counted on one tree and even so some must have been missed - mistletoe is a feature of the whole walk.

To the left in a field the walker passes a huge ancient cedar, but sadly it has lost some of its branches. There is also a short avenue of younger lime trees to the left near the end of the footpath. On reaching the road where the walker turns left to reach footpath 4, the main avenue of limes continues on (private), up towards Hatchet Green. These are the trees which can be seen on the skyline when driving south passed Charlton All Saints on the A338.

Footpath H 4 starts a little way along the road on the bend at Home Farm. There are wooden finger posts at both ends, but no signs in between.

The way passes through the farm gate in front of the farm house and follows the excellent track which lies ahead between some lovely wooden farm buildings. Of particular note is the restored barn on the left on its staddle stones.

So through another gate. At this point on a bright day, the walker should pause and identify things in the scene around, Downton, Trafalgar House, Breamore Woods etc.; both the long and the short views are very pleasing.

The gravel track wends its way ever downwards, through a small copse full of bluebells in the Spring, whilst in Winter the ferns which grow by the side of the track are an attraction. So out onto the C336, where in order to reach the car the walker must turn left.

Even though one is walking along the road there are things of interest to see - the cottage passed on the left with its wonderful windows, the old water meadows on the right, and the lovely embankment on the left covered in deciduous trees. Three West Hants Water buildings lie on this short stretch of road, What is their function?

FOOTPATH H 3

This is a short footpath signed at each end which in effect cuts the corner off the road which skirts Hale Park. It can be incorporated with a number of footpaths to form a variety of rounds. Commencing to the left of the drive to Hale Park it is fenced for most of the way across fields, allowing the walker to enjoy the views. Having negotiated a kissing gate at the end of this fenced section, the line to be taken is downwards towards the corner of a fence. At this point a huge magnificent cedar lies to the right. A stile has to be crossed followed very quickly by a gate which takes the walker out onto the C 211, Hale to Woodgreen road.

BRIDLEWAY H 8 and FOOTPATH H 9

The bridleway which is well signed throughout, runs parallel to Hale Purlieu starting below the house called "The Knoll". The first section has recently been improved, with the invasive rhododendrons having been cut back, and gravel put down on some of the wet sections, although there are still one or two small areas of damp muddy ground even after dry weather. It is a lovely walk with deep leaf mould softening the surface as the walker passes through rhododendron and deciduous woodland. There are some huge beech trees along the way, some having weirdly shaped branches whilst others have initials carved on them from long ago judging from the height at which they are found. It is delightfully cool in Summer, and interest is maintained by glimpses of hidden houses, valleys and even a newly created pond. Where the path crosses beneath the pylons, Breamore House and the woods can still be seen over the fast growing and invasive silver birch.

The path now enters a rhododendron tunnel, no views here, but soon a short downhill section is reached and with it the end of Strickland Plantation where the path turns left.

A delightful cottage called 'Hornet' lies on the right in its hidden valley, and the path follows the track upwards from this to a T-junction. Right and virtually immediately left the path crosses a stile into a field (now footpath H 9), with the way across this parallel to the hedge on the right. However the blackberries growing here may detain the walker at the right time of the year. A stile on the other side of the field takes the walker onto a narrow path which lies between some well hidden houses and their delightful wild gardens.

So to finish on the road down to Woodgreen opposite the keeper's cottage called 'Godshill Wood Cottage'.

BYWAY H 13

This path does not have a sign post at either end, namely Hale (Queen Street) and Hale Purlieu. On the latter it starts at a five barred gate very close to where the pylons cross the road. It takes the form of a very good broad track which descends through the woodland, crossing bridleway 8 on the way. The surface of the path has recently been improved in parts so it is not as wet as the writer has found previously. After crossing the tiny stream in the

valley floor just after leaving the wood the way is obviously upwards between a field and garden to the metalled Queen Street, the true Hale, and its lovely hidden houses.

As with so many paths described in this booklet, it can be added to others to make both long and short circular walks.

BRIDLEWAY H 14

This, combined with H 13, and part of H 8 form a lovely round particularly when the rhododendrons are in flower, or on a warm Summer's day when the coolness is appreciated. It has wooden finger signs at both ends.

Commencing in Queen Street at the end of the tarmac a sign is found leading into a field which has to be crossed diagonally towards a gate by a wooden barn. The way lies ahead between the lovely small barns, and so through yet another gate. The path then follows the edge of the field in which lies the top part of the lime tree avenue which goes down to Hale Park. There are not so many bunches of mistletoe on these as on those lower down the avenue. These particular trees are those seen from the A338 on its way south to Downton along the River Avon valley.

A small tongue of woodland is entered where there is a good sign for this bridleway path and footpath H 17. Following the sign a track is reached where the way lies to the left, so down and up between small fields and past well hidden cottages finally through a five barred gate onto Hatchet Green by the side of 'The Old Post Office'.

FOOTPATHS H 17 and H 21

These are very tiny footpaths which are little used, but do allow the walker to vary the ending of the preceding H 14. On entering the tongue of woodland as described above the walker takes the indicated footpath to join a track near the garage of a house. The way ahead is clear, down by the side of the garage over a stile and into a tiny field. This is quite wet and wellies are needed for the next 40 yards down close to the fence on the right, in all but the driest weather. A stile is crossed into a broad overgrown track-like area. A further 40 yards has to be walked to where, on the left, are the horizontal bars of what was once a stile; there is no sign here unlike elsewhere on this path. The path then climbs upwards by a garden on the left onto the track where a finger sign will be found, with the track leading round into the far corner of Hatchet Green passing a few peacefully situated cottages on the way.

BRIDLEWAY H 10 and FOOTPATHS H 6 and H 7

H 10 is a bridleway, and with the two footpaths, H 6 and H 7 make a lovely circular walk, commencing at the end of Hale Purlieu just after the Woodgreen sign.

The way lies down the gravel road on the right. This bridleway has an excellent surface which half way along its length gives way to tarmac. Perhaps the pits in the sparse woodland on the left soon after the start were created by extracting gravel to make the path.

After approximately 200 yards the walker turns right down a short section of bridleway 8 to 'Hornet' and so into Stricklands Plantation.

Footpath 7 lies ahead on the left beyond bridleway 8 and a good sign is in place leading the walker to the left down through a delightful piece of woodland. Yellow paint blobs at frequent intervals shows the line of the path, whilst around are lovely rhododendrons, oaks, marshes and earth banks. Two bridges are crossed on the way to a gate and so into a field. Keeping to the right hand edge of this on its way upwards out of the valley bottom to a gate, the way out is into a farm lane. Turning left here the walker passes behind the thatched farmhouse and so onto the road on a bend just below Picket Well. There is a wooden finger sign in place.

Ten yards ahead on the road another finger sign indicates the start of footpath 6 and a stile is in place. The way is down by the left hand hedge and so to the first of two bridges which have to be crossed. The walk up through the copse beyond is beautiful in the Spring. Three stiles in quick succession have to be crossed. The middle one has a wooden finger sign which is comforting for the exit into Higher End Lane is through the garage drive of 'Ferney Hornet'.

Left up the lane now back on bridleway 10, takes the walker back to the start. Care must be taken when the tarmac ends to follow the gravel track on the left by a small pond, as the signs for footpath H 11 on the right are more obvious.

As the path climbs upwards short views of hidden valleys add interest to the scene.

The whole round is a delight, with bluebells, rhododendrons, snowdrops, daffodils and pretty trees, shrubs, cottages and gardens to please the walker.

FOOTPATHS H 5 and H 11

Another delightful short round walk is achieved by combining these two with a walk along quiet roads. It starts and finishes by the post box on Woodgreen Common. Here there is a large wooden sign for the Avon Valley Path in place, and the green signs of this are followed for H 5.

This takes the walker down a gravel track to the left between hidden houses and their pretty gardens. At the end of the track the footpath follows the left hand edge of grassy fields crossing four stiles, before finishing at the junction of C 336 and C 211 by Hale Rectory.

The views of the River Avon and Breamore House with the woods beyond are delightful, whilst the brambles are a jam-maker's delight in the Autumn.

On reaching the road the way is to the right up this quiet road towards Hale. The first turning on the right is then followed until it becomes gravelled. In Winter the walker should pause on the bridge on the way to admire the drifts of snowdrops, whilst later the colour is the blue of the bluebells in this wood.

Where the tarmac ends to the right is the marked footpath 11, which leads the walker across the field by the side of the wooden tree enclosures to a stile, after which the fence on the right is followed and so into a lovely 'clean' copse. Now the fence to follow is on the walker's left down into a dip, across a wooden plank bridge and up to find a finger sign by the side of 'Logan Bank'. Right then left down the track will take the walker back to the starting point.

In Spring, snowdrops, daffodils, bluebells, celandines, and anemones enhance the gardens, woods and verges, making it a delightful walk.

HAMPTWORTH and THE HAMPTWORTH ESTATE

BRIDLEWAYS 48 and 16, BYWAY 19 and FOOTPATH 49

These have been put together as they form a natural circuit. Some of the tracks had been seriously eroded by being used by off-roaders, but these have not been well received of late, and the track ways have been restored for normal use and are no longer challenging, other than the last 50m of Bridleway 16. The walk, as described, will take about 2 hours, but allow extra to take in any unexpected discoveries.

The start is on the right, a quarter of the way down Loosehanger Hill, and is a broad track signed by a new Bridleway finger post. The track is well defined almost throughout, which is a good thing as there are few discs or finger posts to help the walker. It winds its way through woodland varying from ancient oaks to young plantations.

The variety of trees encountered is enormous and supports a great range of bird life. There are some lovely specimens including what might be the largest larch in the parish, and it is good to see that a few hardwoods have been included in recent plantings of soft woods *DSB-B 05Feb13*.

BRIDLEWAY 16 (from Loosehanger)

A few metres from the start, we meet a red metal gate which is usually padlocked, to keep out the fly-tippers. However there is plenty of room for walkers to go around it. At the first junction, after about 200m, keep right. The track to the left is for access into a private wood. After 300m, we reach a large decaying ivy-covered oak on the left, and this is where bridleway 16 turns left through the single bar metal gate which can be seen behind the oak. Hopefully, you will return along that path at the end of the walk. There are no signs in this area. *DSB-B 05Feb13*.

FOOTPATH 49

We will continue, straight on after the ivy oak, on footpath 49. Pass through another gate, hopefully unlocked, and we then find fields on our left, where there may be deer grazing. The first field has a small compound with walls made from Pierced Steel Plank (PSP), or Marston Matting, which is a legacy from World War 2. This material was used to build airstrips, but post-war, it became a ubiquitous construction material, with a multitude of uses. After a sharp rise and dip, a pond is passed on the right where in summer dragon flies can be found. It is now more open here after recent felling and replanting, and this encourages a wider variety of species to visit the water.

Continuing on, the walker spies rhododendrons growing in some profusion in the wood on the right. Just beyond are signs that a cottage was once to be found here, but now it is a forest workers' liar, with rusty tractor, dilapidated caravan, decaying container and other detritus around a shed.

In Spring snowdrops abound by the path, whilst on a bright winter or spring day, we see drifts of cream coloured dead purple moor grass; a wonderful contrast to the dark canopy of the evergreens overhead.

So on to a track junction under the pylons. To the right is the Pound Bottom landfill site. During the working week, this is the source of the heavy truck noises and sometimes, an unpleasant odour. To the left, under the pylons is an area used by the Estate for commercial shooting. "Carcasses remain the property of the Estate", according to their website. Fortunately, our way is straight ahead between the commerces necessary to run a modern estate. The track then passes between dense rhododendrons, followed by the new and rather dense plantations of Burnt Ground Wood. At the top of the slope, we reach another unsigned crossroads and follow the maxim of "If in doubt, go straight ahead".

By the side of the track there is a pile of rotting timber, the diameter of some of the logs being greater than the length of the writer's arm. They are the remains of a majestic stand of trees that used to be found here. On down into a dip to cross a small stream by way of a plank, thence to climb up through beech and yew to the restored 'Franchise Lodge' where the path turns right up the track. When JT walked here, she casually glanced at the 'cattle' in the field only to discover that it was a large herd of fallow deer. Now, it has a herd of rabbits. The shuttering around the field boundary indicates this is a commercial arrangement.

Just before climbing over the stile at the top of the track (no signs,) the walker should note the old gravel workings by the side, possibly used when the road across the forest was built, for the same can be found on Tuckers Hat' - what a lovely name - at the start of Byway 19. *DSB-B 05Feb13*.

BYWAY 19

Having crossed the stile the way is left passing isolated 'Hope Cottage' and 'Little Orchard'. After the latter is the gravel track which is Byway 19. There is a new metal gate, and no signs, although 40m further on, a red "Byway" arrow can be seen on a telegraph pole. Numerous "Private" signs will be seen, which only pertain to the

woodland, and you may spot a few more Red Arrows by the track. Only a few years ago, the walker would have paused to admire the extensive views over Hamptworth and beyond, but now the relatively newly planted saplings have grown so tall as to exclude this.

The path is signed downhill to the left at the junction which is soon reached and it is a question of 'following your nose' ever downwards. This track has been regraded in recent years. Pieces of broken drain cover and random cats eyes show this to be sensible example of recycling. However, the gradient reminds you that anti-clockwise was a good choice for your walk. Do stop on the way frequently to admire the lovely stands of trees and who knows what else?

Eventually the gravel track beneath the pylons is reached again. There is no sign here to show the walker that the way is straight ahead across the track into a lovely old lane. The hedgerow trees are tall and meet together way above the walker's head, giving the feeling of a cool green tunnel when they are in leaf. Continue to the end of the lane to the junction with Lyburn Road. Below the bridge flows a tiny stream; it is worth the walker taking time to walk a short way along the road to the right in order to get a better view of the decaying undershot water wheel of the old sawmill and ponder what it was like when in use. The recent reviewer spoke to a passing retired worker from the estate who suggested it had been abandoned before his colleague started work on the estate in 1928. *DSB-B 05Feb13.*

BRIDLEWAY 48

Steps have to be retraced to a track junction where the right fork is taken, clearly indicated by a new Byway finger post. After 100m, we reach a "Y" junction. There is still a white disc on the gatepost to the left, indicating that the way ahead is to follow the left hand path. This was another estate track which was unable to withstand heavy use, and cyclists and walkers could only realistically enjoy using it after a prolonged period of dry weather. Now, apart from one or two chasms to be bypassed, it has a good surface.

On the left, you will see one of the latest business ventures on the estate, the Big Field Solar Farm. This is operated by a Spanish company and generates 5MW, which is half the total output of solar electricity from the New Forest National Park. It is tucked away, occupies some poor quality grazing land, and saves us from the threat of wind turbines.

The woodland traversed to this point has been that of trees that thrive in damp conditions, but this soon changes to majestic pines on the left. In sunny warm weather the smell from these is quite intoxicating, and after balsam poplar quite the best smell in the world. So, up through rhododendrons again, at the top of which by an open gate a junction is formed with Byway 37. We can enjoy this re-laid gravel track until we reach Bridleway 16 on the left. Again not signed but fairly obvious from usage. *DSB-B 05Feb13.*

BRIDLEWAY 16 (from Black Lane)

This unsigned track takes the walker passed 'Pimlico Cottage', a beautiful old Forest cottage, with its three kennel dormer windows, which has been serially extended - perhaps once too many. Regretfully the well by the front door, has gone, and although it was once possible to convince small children that this is was Goldilocks encountered the Three Bears, they have obviously sold up. After the cottage, there is a gate and then a long straight lane with mature hedgerows. When JT walked this way a fox trotted up the track and got quite close before crossing the bank into the wood. Such encounters will not be uncommon here. At an unsigned "T" junction, turn right. The track zigzags left then right, and a tumble down "hovel" in the wood near the second turn is seen. All that is left are the bricks of the chimney breast, capped by the remains of the last roof of corrugated iron. A wooden privy still lurks by the stream, and in the spring snowdrops can be seen before daffodils. Was this the site where there were some houses which were burnt down in the not too distant past?

After a while, the old track way between the earthbanks becomes completely impassable. Follow the example of previous walkers, and cross the earthbank on your left to join the detour path. At times this becomes an intimate tunnel through the rhododendrons and holly. Finally the path rejoins the track too soon, leaving the walker to

tread precariously through clay and mire for the last 50m. Perhaps stay in the woods a little longer? You can now see the metal gate and the ivy-covered oak which mark the completion of our circular walk. *DSB-B 05Feb13.*

BYWAY 37

This broad track connects Home Farm Hamptworth with Black Lane; there are no signs at either end to denote its classification.

Starting at Home Farm the track is the continuation of the unclassified tarmaced road. At this point it has a fine gravel surface but this does deteriorate further along necessitating the wearing of wellies after wet weather, even though the width is maintained throughout its length. No distant views at all to distract the walker from admiring the trees to right and left, firstly a stand of conifers in plantation followed by deciduous ones.

Throughout the length are rhododendrons which are a delight when in flower. In Winter, on the right near a small broken gate, the walker can see the tops of some of the tall trees around Hamptworth Lodge. These are the same trees which dominate the vista in this direction, when viewed from The Ridge and Whiteshoot. On the north side of the track lies Bath Hole Plantation, what a lovely evocative name, for indeed in the depths of this private woodland according to the maps of the area, there is a large pond.

At the top of a gentle incline the track is joined by bridleway 48; the woodland on the right has the lovely name of 'Pimlico Firs'.

So right and the gradual descent to the metalled section of Black Lane. Embankments lie on either side, the one on the right being quite high and topped with magnificent trees, some of which provided the anchorage points for rope swings used by the children in the not so distant past.

BRIDLEWAY 51

This is the bridleway which starts on Hamptworth Road on the right just after Coles Lane which is the lane up to 'Witterns Hill'. A metal finger sign to Home Farm is very obvious whilst at the other end a wooden 'Bridleway Only' sign is set in the grass verge.

The trees are quite magnificent; huge oaks, beeches and horse and sweet chestnut form a modified avenue through which the track passes; in early Summer the rhododendrons in the adjoining woodland enhance the scene with their purple flowers.

The track ends opposite the Home Farm buildings where the tarmac of the unclassified road which leads down to the 'Old Chapel' on the Lyburn Road begins; to the walker's right lies Byway 37.

FOOTPATHS 7 and 8

These two footpaths have been put together as they form a natural round. From the lay-by adjacent to the entrance to Hamptworth Golf Club the walker follows the road a short distance past Elmtree Farmhouse towards Landford.

After about 40 yards a metal finger sign in the hedge on the right is seen, signed Hamptworth. By this is a narrow gap in the hedge by the remains of an old gate, and through the gap the footpath's correct line is across the field and through the hedge half way along its length: however there is no gap in the hedge now; there is however, one higher up the field and the walker would be advised to use this. From here the line of the path is to the near corner of the small wood which lies diagonally to the left, and thence along the top edge of this. The walker should look into the wood and note the remains of old coppicing, and at the right time of the year, the woodland plants and flowers. Footpath 7, the return route, is passed on the way to this path's exit by the side of 'Wisteria Cottage', on

the unclassified road which leads up to Home Farm. In place is a metal finger sign to Elmtree Farm, but sadly the path is somewhat overgrown at this end, and in Summer the walker may have to leave the field 10 yards higher than intended through a gap in the hedge.

The walker turns left down the road, and should note the marshy area below 'Wisteria Cottage' with its different vegetation which includes sedges many feet tall, quite a contrast to the very sandy land traversed on footpath 8. Note also, the delightful stone artifacts outside 'Park Copse Cottage', whilst on the wall of 'Rose Cottage' bricks set into it inform the walker that it was built in 1881.

Just past 'Rose Cottage' another metal finger sign is found, this time it is to Hamptworth Farm. The way is up a short track which leads into Park Copse, thence onto an excellent path through this, which exits opposite a hedge. The path lies to the left of this and ends on Hamptworth Road just below Hamptworth Farmhouse: there is a metal sign in place, which, because of the effect of the wind on it, frequently points in the opposite direction!

Right up the road will bring the walker back to the layby and the car. For safety the left hand verge should be used.

FOOTPATH 33

A very useful pretty path which can be combined with others to form long or short circular walks, and, by its use, road walking is often minimised.

It starts through the white kissing gate adjacent to the white lodge cottage and its attendant white metal gates on the right along Hamptworth Road. There is an old finger sign in existence. Through the kissing gate the path winds its way forwards and within a few yards it joins an excellent track through the rhododendrons. Therefore a good time to walk this is when these shrubs are in flower.

For most of the way the path follows an earthbank on the left, often with one parallel to it on the right - was this an old trackway? Another white kissing gate is spied near the end which takes the walker out onto Byway 37 about 100 yards from where this joins the metalled part of Black Lane. Again a feature of this walk are the lovely trees. If the walker glances up to the left soon after starting, some of the tall trees which are so obvious when looking over the Hamptworth Estate from The Ridge or Whiteshoot can be picked out.

FOOTPATH 9

The writer has, for descriptive purposes, split this path into two by the natural division of Hamptworth Road; the second part follows in the Langley Wood section. By the bridge below 'Langley Wood Restaurant' lies a lay-by, and in position on either side of the road are metal footpath finger signs which indicate the two parts of Footpath 9. The path across the road from the lay-by is started through the gate and follows the hedge on the left until it bends away sharply. The footpath follows the line already taken across to a piece of damp fallow ground, often more than damp after rain! The path leads the walker over an excellent bridge, where the River Blackwater and a stream that runs through the lower part of Lover join, thence into a small marshy copse where, in Summer, the lush vegetation can be a problem; the walker should therefore aim towards the telegraph pole ahead. Here a broken stile will be encountered which leads into a field, the way across which lies to the left of a white house ('Merrow') where a further stile will be found and also a metal finger sign rather obscured by the hedge. Over this, the path takes the form of a grassy track between the houses, and so out into Black Lane.

LANGLEY WOOD

FOOTPATH 9 AND WP 34

There are only three footpaths traversing Langley Wood which is a National Nature Reserve, and they do not make a circular walk; however they can be incorporated with others described in this booklet to make round walks over a very varied range of landscapes, often with only short sections on roads.

This part of Footpath 9 lies to the North East of Hamptworth Road, and becomes Whiteparish 34 after the Civil Parish Boundary short of the Whiteparish Road at 'Gills Hole'. It starts from the small lay-by next to the bridge over the River Blackwater just below 'Langley Wood Restaurant' and crosses the stile onto an excellent path which is marked throughout, although some signs are not very obvious. Footpath 9 actually starts in Black Lane and that portion to the Hamptworth Road is described above.

It traverses lovely deciduous woodland in which there is an abundance of wild life. It is common to see deer: there are reputed to be five types inhabiting the woods, foxes are not uncommon too, and the bird life is very varied. In the Spring the wild flowers are quite magnificent. In Winter colour and form is given by yews, holly, ivy and on the ground, wood spurge, whilst a variety of rushes and ferns relieve the covering of fallen leaves.

About a quarter of a mile after the stile, there is a junction with Footpath 47 on the right, with 9 continuing directly ahead, but sadly, at the time of writing, the sign indicating this has been vandalised. Other junctions which might in the past have given the walker trouble, are very well signed to the parish boundary.

Earthbanks abound, and can be seen from many parts of the walk giving rise to speculation on the past history of the area. Although the whole is named Langley Wood this is composed of several named copses, for example Appsy copse, East Copse and Wall Copse.

After a small pond on the left the footpath bears left before continuing on the line as before. So to the parish boundary, and now the path is Whiteparish 34.

The path lies between two earthbanks and is quite broad; it was once an old coaching road. It is often very wet in its lowest parts, and at times somewhat overgrown, so the way forward has to be chosen with care. There are old signs to show the way, some more obvious than others. In Winter, wellies are advised, whilst in Summer towards 'Gills Hole' the vegetation, particularly nettles, hinders progress.

Eventually a stile in a barbed wire fence is reached, and over this the path continues through a fence-enclosed area often much cut up by the horses kept there. A further stile leads into a very small but overgrown enclosure, to get out of which the walker must go to the left hand corner by the earthbank, where there was once a gate. So onto a paved track which lies ahead, and thence onto the Whiteparish Road near 'Titchborne Farm'.

There is a good footpath sign at this end.

FOOTPATHS 47 and L13

As described this footpath commences from its junctions with Footpath 9, a quarter of a mile from this path's start off the Hamptworth Road below 'Langley Wood Restaurant', and finishes on the right hand bend on Coles Lane on the way to Witterns Hill Farm. It is very well signposted throughout. This is a delightful walk over undulating wooded terrain, crossing a stream at the lowest point, but even in very wet conditions this can be strided.

This stream forms the civil parish boundary and thereafter the footpath is known as Landford 13. The rhododendrons which grew profusely along part of the way are now no longer, but the springtime highlight must be the drifts of bluebells shrouding the undergrowth in a mist of blue, whilst the perfume....!

The other feature of the walk is the magnificent stands of Corsican Pines situated at the highest point of Bishops Wood; the canopies of these are very easily discerned from the vantage points of The Ridge and Whiteshoot.

FOOTPATH L 13 (continued)

This is the third path that goes through Langley Wood National Nature Reserve but only for a short distance, and is a natural extension to Footpath 47; it combines readily with a number of other paths, both in Whiteparish Civil Parish and Landford Civil Parish, to give the walker a good choice of circular routes.

This section is described from just after the right hand bend in Coles Lane, about 80 yards beyond the end of the first part described above, and like this has an English Nature Board up at this point. There is also a footpath sign, indeed, for the first part of the path it is extremely well signed. The path is a good one, soon dropping down between two earthbanks which was the old roadway, however it does get a little sticky after wet weather; in fact it was known as 'The Glue Pot' by the youths of the village in years gone by. Again, trees are a feature of this walk with a huge variety encountered, and here are majestic oaks and beeches. Look around also, for signs of old habitation, bay trees, earthbanks, sunken areas, snowdrops and daffodils.

The footpath is close to the golf course, indeed at one point on the very edge of it. The walker should be alert to people playing as they cannot see those who may be in the wood, and on approaching the footbridge, extreme care should be taken to make one's presence known. After the bridge new signs have been put up and the way is easily found. The route is left up the track between the trees, so to a cross track, namely L 10 and L 20. Ahead, the track continues between the now more indistinct earthbanks and rhododendrons. A farm gate is encountered through which the walker passes and so through the farm buildings which lie on either side. It is a 'real farm' with a wide range of animals including guinea fowl, ducks, and Shetland ponies, some to be negotiated on the walk! The walker is now in pretty North Common Lane and here the trees to admire are poplars and copper beech, whilst there are the attractive gardens of the wide variety of properties encountered.

At the top of the lane the line of the path is diagonally across to a railed tarmaced path which leads the walker down onto the grass verge of the A36.

LANDFORD AREA and THE LANDFORD CIVIL PARISH

FOOTPATH L 23

This footpath lies between Landford and Whiteparish off the A36. The start of this path is indicated by a new black wooden finger sign on the left travelling towards Salisbury in the cutting through which the A36 runs.

It rises diagonally upwards on a gravel-bedded broad track, thence over a stile onto a grassy track. The path lies ahead, through a plantation of young horse chestnuts to a farm track where it turns right. Before following the track down by the side of the wood, the walker should pause and admire the peaceful scene over to Bramshaw Woods and Nomansland.

At the corner of the wood a yellow painted arrow indicates the way ahead into the wood. On a warm Spring day four varieties of butterfly were identified spiralling up in the open ride, a lovely sight.

A little further along, a yellow paint blob indicates that the path follows the left track where the track divides; within a few yards this bifurcates and the right grassy fork is the one to be taken to a stile into a field. This is bisected by a wonderfully clear little stream over which there is a small low railed wooden bridge. What a range of plants grow here.

So to the hedge, and the path now runs along by the side of this to the left. In the corner is reached a five barred gate into the drive of 'Barnack House', and this is the route. To comfort the walker that he is in the correct place there is a dot of yellow paint on the adjacent rail, which may be part of an old stile. The path follows the drive and so out into North Common Lane. Two more slightly less obvious yellow spots are passed on the way, so encouraging the walker that he is in the correct place.

FOOTPATH 4 AND L11

Footpath 4 is in Redlynch Civil Parish and L 11 is the extension of this in Landford Civil Parish. Starting just beyond 'The Cuckoo Inn' a metal finger sign to Landford is in place. The path takes the walker up by the side of a fence

with a small wooded pond on the left, and over two stiles in quick succession into a small field. The correct line of the path is diagonally up across the field to the top left hand corner, but sadly on reaching this the way is barred by a barbed wire fence and an overgrown hedge. Both can be passed with difficulty.

The path follows the track then encountered, to the left, round beside the field in which ornamental trees are being grown. So down to the River Blackwater and the Parish boundary; what a wonderful range of bog-loving plants thrive in this damp place.

'Landford Lodge' once the home of the Pleydell-Bouveries, is clearly seen to the right - what a lovely setting the house is in.

The track takes the walker along the edge of a wooded area where in Spring glimpses can be caught of magnolias, specimen rhododendrons and other choice shrubs, but this woodland is strictly private.

At the edge of the wood the footpath lies straight ahead by the side of the hedge, so to the left hand of three adjacent five barred gates where a kissing gate is found for the benefit of walkers. Thence diagonally across the grassy field to the corner passing a five barred gate in the hedge on the right. Here the rails of a stile can be found, and shortly after crossing this a second more complete stile has to be crossed. The hedge is now on the walker's left and by following this for a short distance, the last stile, on which there is a disc, finishes the path in North Common Lane. Turning left here, the walker has a wonderful choice of footpaths to get back to 'The Cuckoo'.

FOOTPATHS 3 and L 5

Commence as the one before at the finger sign just past 'The Cuckoo Inn'. The three stiles in quick succession are crossed, so into a small field, where this path diverges from footpath 4. The line is diagonally up to the right towards a large oak tree which grows in the hedge. There a five barred gate is found along with footpath discs. The large field which is entered presents the walker with a problem as it has been cultivated, and a tree nursery planted over part of it. The correct line of the footpath is diagonally left across the field in a straight line to the junction of the hedge ahead and the line of trees. This point can be best located as half way between two clumps of very tall conifers. Here a blob of paint will be found on a post by a narrow path leading down to the River Blackwater and the Parish boundary, where the footpath is now L 5.

A good bridge is in place and once over this the path turns to the right and runs parallel to the river through sparse woodland and then a holly thicket. Along the river, in Spring, the banks are covered in wild daffodils and anemones, a most beautiful sight.

The stile the walker passes on the left into a field is private, and the footpath leads to a very tumbledown bridge, where it might be more prudent to scramble down and wade the stream, before crossing the stile into a field. Disc signs are in place as well as blobs of paint for the rest of this path.

The fence to the left is followed up to the woodland, thence to the right along the track until a stile is reached which leads the walker into Broom Park Copse. A good variety of plants and trees are encountered here, including an enormous patch of foxgloves. The veil-walked path brings the walker out of the wood back onto the track he was previously on, this having gone round the outside of the copse. This is now followed ahead towards the A36 which can be heard! However the walker should still pause to admire the ornamental trees in the nursery to the left, and the lovely white painted 'Northlands', once the home of Sir Adrian Boulton.

A bend is reached where a disc shows that the footpath passes through a gate and down by the side of a house to the bus stop opposite 'The Landford Poacher'. A metal finger sign is in place here.

FOOTPATH 2

This is a short path which can be used to add a variation to Footpaths 3 and L 6. It commences immediately on the left of the white painted wooden bungalow a quarter of a mile beyond 'The Cuckoo Inn', and not where the metal finger sign indicates.

It rises diagonally across the field towards the skyline on the left, and from thence it crosses to the other side of the hedge which is reached at this point. Thereafter it turns right to follow the hedge down to the corner of the field and a junction with Footpath 3 before descending to the River Blackwater. Sadly, at the time of publication, the first part of this path has been overplanted with ornamental trees. The right of way however is as described, it is hoped that the path will be restored in the not too distant future.

BYWAY 45, and FOOTPATHS L10, L 20, and WP 5

The four footpaths together form one continuous one, which commences on the "Road Used as a Public Path" (RUPP), namely the gravel track down in front of Hamptworth Golf Clubhouse, where a footpath disc attached to the telegraph pole shows the line of Byway 45.

The track lies deep between two banks topped with hedges, which are home to a variety of birds and plants. On reaching the bottom a substantial footbridge lies ahead straddling the River Blackwater; the yellow blobs of paint found here can also be found at infrequent intervals along the way. Also at this point a junction on the left is formed with footpath L 21.

The way (L 10) lies over the stile ahead and up by the side of a rather wet gully which is edged by splendid oaks; this was an old trackway in years gone by. Another stile is crossed, and the walker now passes newly planted deciduous trees in their faded pink plastic protection. A jiggle left then right at the top of the plantation now has the walker on an excellent track, even if it is usually somewhat muddy after rain. This passes through holly, beech and oaks to a track crossing. L 20 lies ahead and is marked by a yellow disc on a fence post, and L 13 is the track crossed. Named Scotland Lane the lane has, at the right time of the year, cultivated flower species on it, the only signs left of long gone 'Beechams Cottage'. The golf course and fields are passed and woodland is entered. This is a magical place when the bluebells are in flower, the scent from which is all pervading, but nevertheless, it is beautiful whatever time of year the walk is done with a splendid variety of trees to admire.

Yellow paint marks on some trees show the way left from Scotland Lane into the wood, where the path lies between parallel earthbanks until a stream is reached without a bridge, thereafter the path is numbered WP 5.

Beyond the stream on the right in a field is a lovely pond, where in the Summer wild iris are seen, whilst bulrushes stand tall at other times of the year. The path which is obvious, then enters somewhat scrubby woodland containing some enormous yews. Finally it emerges onto the verge of the A36 opposite 'Glendale Farm', which is a bungalow. The only sign here is a small green disc on a fence post.

Three footpaths start at the end of the metalled Coles Lane beyond 'Witterns Hill Farm' and can easily be added to others to make a variety of rounds.

On all, great care has to be taken as they cross Hamptworth Golf Course: the walker should not linger in the open, and be ever alert for players and the shout of 'Fore' indicating a ball is heading the walker's way.

FOOTPATH L 9

This starts at the end of Coles Lane where there can be found a white golf club notice warning walkers to take care, and goes straight ahead down the track beside a copse at first, then a hedge. In the copse in the Spring, snowdrops and wild daffodils grow in profusion. To guide the way some yellow paint marks on trees can be seen.

On the left close to the 16th green a bridge over a ditch takes the walker onto another fairway. Before crossing, look up to the right to ensure no one is about to hit off. The line of the path is directly ahead, thence through the scrub ahead onto footpath L 13. There is no sign at this end.

FOOTPATH L 21

At the end of Coles Lane beyond 'Witterns Hill Farm' on the right there is a five barred gate which leads onto the golf course. A golf course notice is in place and a yellow paint dot decorates the telegraph pole. Ahead, across the 16th fairway lies an obvious path marked by yellow paint which leads the walker down a wooded gully between earthbanks; was this also an old roadway? Lovely trees and flowers add interest as the walker descends to the river valley. Towards the bottom, after rain, it can be quite wet, and so to a stout corrugated iron bridge. The way ahead over the golf course is clearly marked with yellow paint. Great care must be taken when emerging from the trees mindful that golfers will only be aware of the presence of walkers when they are seen. The 18th fairway is crossed followed immediately by walking behind the 10th green, thus to the substantial bridge across the river again, where Footpath L 21 joins Footpath L 10.

Turning right at this point will take the walker up the gravel lane to the Golf Club and thus the Hamptworth Road.

FOOTPATHS L 12 and 5

This is the final footpath from the end of Coles Lane. It starts by following L 21 across the 16th fairway to where the former path enters the trees to go down the gully. Footpath L 12 keeps to the outside of the trees on the right, with the way marked intermittently with yellow paint. The track is obvious and becomes more so when the walker passes through the hedge (i t is signed here); continue down the track, which is followed round to the right and over a bridge. The walker is now in Redlynch Civil Parish and the footpath is numbered 5.

The track is followed upwards until a silver birch tree is seen up towards the right. At this point the walker leaves the track and heads towards this and from there to the metal finger sign at the end of the hedge ahead, thus out into a layby on the Hamptworth Road close to the Golf Club. As stated before, great care must be taken at all times by the walker when on the Golf Course.

BYWAY 44

This is an excellent wide and good-surfaced track connecting Hamptworth with Landford; there are no signs on it.

The start is in Lyburn Road about a quarter of a mile from 'The Cuckoo Inn' by the side of the Southern Water Wastewater Pumping Station building. Ahead lies a ford over a tributary of the River Blackwater, but a footpath adjacent to the hedge on the left takes the walker to a very substantial bridge, and from thence back onto the broad track. Excellent hedges bound the track with a great variety of shrubs and trees in them, including the more unusual broom. The grassy verges support a host of flowers, and in Summer there are large clumps of foxgloves, whilst in Autumn blackberries tempt the walker.

Three water courses are crossed on the way, one of which on the left, is denoted by its long bank of hazel bushes, which in late Winter are bright yellow with catkins.

Just before a copse is reached on the right where unsigned Footpath 1 starts, the walker enters a beautiful avenue of oaks which line the track to its exit on Lyndhurst Road, Landford between 'New Cottage' and 'Bisley'.

FOOTPATH 1

Commencing on the above Bridleway, this path ends in School Road, Nomansland. The line of the path has been officially changed from that which is shown on the OS maps. It now starts on Bridleway 44 adjacent to the copse on the right where a good stile is in place; there are, however, no signs on the path. It follows the edge of the

copse which contains quite a variety of trees including Scots Pine, but it is rather overgrown. Honeysuckle, gorse and bramble grow on the edge. To the right views to Pound Bottom and up onto the Forest can be seen.

On reaching the corner of the wood a stile is crossed into the wood; the correct path lies straight ahead and crosses a small stream by way of a good footbridge. The wood is one of conifers and relief from the dark green is obtained from the gorse along the path and the creamy colour of the purple moor grass below. Although the path is within the wood it runs parallel to grassy fields, the second one reached being Nomansland sports field. A bridge is crossed into this. The footpath then follows the boundary of the field to the left to exit through the kissing gate by the children's swings and slides; thence through a second gate into the lane at the bottom of School Road, Nomansland, which is reached by turning right.

FOOTPATHS ON THE DOWNS

BYWAYS D 37, D 32, D 40 and 41

These paths have been put together as they form a splendid natural circuit which is quite long. However, later in this section, other paths are described which allow the walker to create combinations of paths to suit the length of walk required; for this, reference to the map is required. They constitute two of the routes to Pepperbox Hill described in the booklet; the third is WP 16 to be found later in this section.

The path commences in Muddyford Lane where the tarmac ends and the fields begin. At this point bridleway D 35 goes left along the hedge, whilst the one to be described goes straight ahead up onto the top of Barford Down. The field through which the path runs is now set-aside. Wonderful views are afforded throughout the walk, starting with those over to Breamore Woods, Martin Down, Great Yews and Clearbury Ring, and these are followed by Longford Castle, Salisbury and the Cathedral, whilst beyond is Salisbury Plain. Looking the other way from the highest point, Southampton with its cranes by the docks and high-rise flats are easily viewed. The closer views are delightful too, lovely rolling fields, copses and magnificent trees. These tracks are a naturalist's paradise; dog roses of every hue, spindleberries in the late Autumn, whilst the wild flowers and birds give immense pleasure.

At the triangulation point which lies to the right near the crest of the down, footpath D 39 goes off right, across the field. To the left, both above and below the copse, and also to the right at the bottom of the field crossed by footpath D 39, there was a golf course in the 1910-1930's, which was started by the first Dr Whitehead and his friends.

The path descends steeply and can be slippery when it is wet as this is chalk land; the steep bank on the right has a lovely range of plants of this habitat on it. The path is now a very obvious track which, at the bottom by Barford Down Farm, joins the minor road. Here footpath D 38 joins on the right, yet another way of shortening the route.

The walker now follows the road ahead to the next bend where three more paths meet. The left one, D 31, traverses below the main slope to the A36 opposite a minor road to West Grimstead and is not described. The excellent track to the right, D 33 is described later and offers another way of shortening the walk.

Byway D 32, the middle route has the blue bridleway sign and goes gently uphill between the other two, on a good chalk-based track. The climb is steady and views unfold to the right of Salisbury and beyond, and as the walker gets higher, to the left, and to Southampton. The track finishes on the A 36 opposite the road to Pepperbox Hill; there is no sign in place at this end. However, just before dropping down onto the A36 the walker passes through a gateway on which this path, and the next one in the circuit, are marked by discs. Thus, the walker turns right to follow the direction pointed by the arrow on the disc to now follow byway D 40.

With the fence now on the left the track which climbs gently upwards, is walked to the communication tower which is situated by the rounded grassy hump topped by gravel, which is a reservoir. The path at this point follows Long Plantation on the left, at the end of which from the right, it is joined by footpath D 33.

Following the track round to the left the walker sees Privet Farm ahead which is situated by the side of the extension to D 33 (see later); however D 40 turns right 20 yards after first sighting the farm, passing by the side of a copse named Cole's Bury, why this name? The path from the reservoir has had a good surface but now it deteriorates again, and in Winter is quite muddy and rutted. After passing Cheyney's Wood, which abuts Cole's Bury, the track passes between hedged fields, although the hedgerows are not so dense as to completely exclude the extensive views, and they have some wonderful spindleberries in the Autumn.

After a while a cross track junction is met at the corner of Langford Lane Wood; this is created by footpath D 38, and byways 40 and 41, all means of varying the walks on the Downs.

The walker takes the byway ahead which quickly becomes a very well-surfaced track which passes between old strong hedges in which hazel dominates, on its way to end at Templeman's Farm. On the way another good track forms a junction on the left; this is byway 42 to Lower Pensworth Farm, whilst just beyond the walled garden of 'Templeman's Old Farmhouse' also on the left, footpath 14 goes over the field to Sandy Lane.

Where the gravel gives way to concrete, in the field on the right there is a small tumulus covered in pine trees which was purported to having been used for archery practice in years gone by some refer to it as 'The Butts', whilst on some old maps it is named 'Templeman's Tump'. In order to get back to the starting point of this circular walk, the walker follows the road, turning right at the junctions reached, so back down Muddyford Lane by the side of the extremely deep chalk pit, fortunately well fenced, where chalk was extracted for many years for the building of roads, and so to the start.

The three footpaths which follow can be substituted for parts of the above in order to shorten the circular walk, and also to add variety.

FOOTPATH D 39

The footpath starts at the Triangulation Point on byway D 37 about a quarter of a mile from the latter's start in Muddyford Lane. There is no sign to indicate the way but there is a stile in place into a grassy field. In years gone by the lower part of this was once a golf course. The footpath follows the hedge on the right, eventually dropping down to another stile which is not in good order, at the bottom of Langford Lane Wood. There is no sign at all at this point.

FOOTPATHS D 38 and 50

Footpath D 38 commences at the end of byway 37 where this joins the metalled road close to Barford Down Farm. Here it goes right up a good track by the side of the farm buildings and is clearly signposted with a metal footpath sign.

The prominent earth banks in the field on the right which was a golf course in years gone by are intriguing; one can only speculate as to why they were created but perhaps this happened when the golf course was laid out. The civil parish boundary is higher up the field, just above an old bank and the line of a grassy track.

The path ascends gently between fields to the corner of Langford Lane Wood where it joins footpath 50 which continues the path upwards by the side of the wood.

FOOTPATH D 33

This makes an intermediate length walk towards Pepperbox Hill. On the more distant bend in the minor road round from Barford Down Farm, three paths are clearly marked: footpath D 33 is the right hand one of these and climbs up the excellent track on the right towards Privet Farm. The hump of the reservoir and the communication tower are seen up on the skyline towards the left. The walker should pause from time to time and look back over

the scene unfolding behind. Soon after the track levels out it joins byway D 40, and the walker can turn right on this in order to return to the village; left is to Pepperbox.

Footpath D 33 continues ahead passing isolated Privet Farm. The track which goes along just inside the wood, has been improved recently with much cutting back. Typical chalk-loving trees and plants dominate - huge beeches and yews, old man's beard, elder etc., along with a good range of flowers too. To the right in Cole's Bury Copse are concreted rectangular holes in the ground, why and for what?

From the copse edge the way should be through the narrow belt of trees and bushes ahead, but this is so overgrown in parts that it is impossible to traverse it; the walker therefore has to resort to walking along the southern edge. At the end of the field the remnants of a wooden gate are found, leading into the narrow tongue of wood and so to a junction with WP 16, whilst ahead over a stile, lies WP 17.

BYWAY 42

An invaluable connecting track, which gives a lot of flexibility to the walker when planning a circular route incorporating walking on the Downs. The upper part of it from its junction with byway 41 is dry even in the wettest of weathers, being made of flints on chalk in the main. The track itself is wide and connects 41 with the Whiteparish Road passing Lower Pensworth Farm on the right, and footpaths 15, 12 and 55 on the way.

Commencing at the Templeman's Farm end the walker follows the track gently downwards, between hedgerows. At the end of the first field on the right, the walker can see an overgrown sunken track lying between the tall hedges. This used to be the old road to Upper Pensworth Farm which ran in front of what is now Templeman's Old Farmhouse before the front portion of this house was added. When this was done another road was constructed, now byways 41 and 42.

A densely overgrown area is quickly reached after this on the left, all that remains of Upper Pensworth Farm. In the Winter when the vegetation has died down the walker on looking through the gaps can see snowdrops and moss covered bricks, whilst a clump of daffodils grows on the trackside opposite, by the stile to footpath 15 which ends here. Old fruit trees can be seen amidst the tangle of brambles and other invasive vegetation, whilst on the other side of the private farm track which lies adjacent and was once an old drove way, the ivy covered remains of a flint and brick wall still stand; this was the old farmyard. The land either side of the private track has recently been fenced off, and the route ahead is sometimes blocked by a traditional "Hampshire Gate" (loose barbed wire supported by stakes which can be rolled back).

The track continues ahead, and is muddy "in season", eventually to pass the once pretty Lower Pensworth Farm, which has been enlarged into a Country Residence, on the right and so via the metalled road, passing the steps to Footpath 12, out onto Whiteparish Lane. There is no sign in place, only one to 'Lower Pensworth Farm Only'. *JM & DS B-B 30 Jan 2013*

FOOTPATH 40J

Yet another connecting path, like the one above. It lies to the west of Byway 41 and enables a good choice of routes to be taken over the Downs.

This path starts at Langford Lane Wood, and is the western track at this junction, i.e. in the Whiteparish direction. It is a broad flinty track which descends gently between hedges and copses to form a junction with Whiteparish 16 at Long Copse. It is described as passing 'Studlands Cottage'; this is now no longer but lay within Long Copse by the side of the track, and in Spring snowdrops identify the site.

The path is well signed at the Long Copse end, but as stated before, there are no signs in place at Langford Lane Wood junction.

FOOTPATH WP 16

This is the third footpath that can easily be walked from the parish although it does not lie within it; it ends at Pepperbox Hill.

It starts at Titchborne Farm which lies on Whiteparish Lane, otherwise known to some old residents as Matchams Lane. There is no sign at the start which is the gravel track leading up between the houses which lie off the right hand bend on this road. Note the old wooden barn conversion on the left with its staddle stones.

About a quarter of a mile up the track on the right can be found what must be one of the largest oak trees in this area; it is truly vast. At this point the footpath continues ahead and not down the track into the copse which is called 'Hanghill!' The copse on the more prominent hill a little further on the left rejoices in the name of Popplehill Copse. The track is a good one to its junction with footpath 40, although it is subject to mud in wet conditions.

Along the way it offers lovely pastoral views, with, at its highest point, vistas down towards Southampton.

On the left after about a mile an old overgrown quarry is circumvented, beyond which the hedge is a double one. In fact what has happened here, is that the track which is Whiteparish 16 is an old drove way and went to the left of the quarry, continuing on between what is now seen as a double hedge; it is the farm track the walker is now on that is new.

Care must be taken at Long Copse. The route to the left which is footpath 40, is obviously signposted, whilst this footpath goes straight on up the side of the copse along the edge of the field. There is a small disc on the right side of the fence post at this point, but the walker has to search for it.

Long Copse is partly an old hazel coppiced woodland, and partly fairly young beech plantation. Near the corner of the field is an open gate with a footpath disc on it, so the walker enters Battscroft Copse and continues straight ahead. The track is in good condition and wide. At a track junction the way is left, then quickly right down a narrow footpath - the way is signed. The path runs parallel to the field which is reached within the woodland, on the way passing huge yews and magnificent old beeches.

After leaving the copse the track dips and rises through a narrow belt of trees. It has recently been improved and the walking is easy. Near the top of a rise an old gate is found on the left, this is footpath D 33 , whilst on the right a stile can be seen, footpath WP 17.

Soon the walker is aware of the huge white quarry on the right. It really is an awesome sight and quite justifies the warning signs which are in place.

At the end of the quarry fence the path is not obvious, but the way is directly ahead by the side of the old fence, and then an earthbank on which are growing huge beech trees in the small copse which is next encountered.

So into a field; the walker will have been aware of the A36 for some time, but now the traffic noise is quite intrusive.

The fence which lies on the left is followed up to the corner of the field and so into the final copse. Again the path is good and lies under lovely old yews, although on either side is a thorn jungle. Steps which have been cut lead down into an old quarry, and so the path exits onto a track five yards from its junction with the A 36 opposite the turning to Pepperbox Hill, but sadly there is no sign at this point either.

Throughout the walk there is much to interest the walker, wonderful views, ancient trees, coppiced woodland, whilst the hedgerows abound with interesting plants and bird life, and animal tracks passed give rise to speculation - What?

WHITEPARISH CIVIL PARISH

FOOTPATH WP 17

This is the extension to D 33 which passes Privet Farm from its junction with WP 16, the path from Titchborne Farm to Pepperbox Hill, and takes the walker out onto the A 36.

Its start is a stile which is nearly as decayed as the gate which marks the end of D 33 and is found at the top of a rise three quarters of the way to Pepperbox Hill on WP 16.

The 'white mountains' of the quarry dominate to the left, whilst ahead can be seen and heard, the A36.

The path follows the line of the pylons down across the field to the buildings of Lower Bush Farm where another stile takes the walker onto the track which serves the farm. So upwards, past the pond and bullrushes up onto the road, where there is a metal finger sign to Downton in place although a few of the letters on this are missing.

FOOTPATHS WP 2 and WP12

These two footpaths have been put together because they form a natural round, albeit with part of it on roads.

Starting at the corner by Titchborne Farm on the road to Whiteparish, there is a metal finger sign in place by a stile. The way ahead is by the hedge on the left which is full of brambles. This is now followed to a gateway just before a very tall hedge which lies directly ahead of the walker. The path crosses the track diagonally to a stile. From this the line is across the field towards the area between two barns where another stile is in place. So on between the barns and a further stile leads the walker into a grassy field. The path runs parallel to the fence which lies on the right, crossing a usually dry ditch to a stile which can easily be seen. From this point the walker has to be careful; the path goes diagonally across the lush grass field to exit through a gateway which lies roughly midway between Ashdod Farm, which lies to the right, and the top corner of the field.

So left on a good gravel track in Lowdens Copse. The way lies between tall pines under which, in Spring, lies a carpet of bluebells. Just after fields are glimpsed on the right, a track leaves the main one to the right, and this is the footpath. So through a fallen gatepost on which there are footpath discs, but these point in the wrong direction! The correct line is by the right hand hedge which leads onto the A36, where the walker turns left; there is a metal finger sign in place. The verge is wide and has been cut, so although noisy, the way is relatively easy to Brickworth Corner, where a finger sign to Downton is found directing the walker up a broad old track. This lies in places deep between banks and is called Sandland Drove, another old cattle drove. In the Spring patches of scented white violets can be found, whilst in Summer perhaps fruit can be picked from the patch of gooseberry bushes passed on the way.

On reaching the wood the path follows its sunken route between the field and the wood. Sadly this is getting extremely overgrown and can only be negotiated with great difficulty. Brambles and bracken are the culprits, whilst later nettles can add to a painful progression. At the end of the wood the way is sharp right, where, after about a hundred yards the going improves at a junction with a track leaving the wood. Thereafter the way is much easier, turning into a very wide grassy sward which takes the walker down ahead through the wood to a stile and so to the fields beyond. Bluebells in Goose Eye Copse are a sight not to be missed, whilst less common birds and deer can frequently be seen.

So over the stile into the field, where, just ahead is a small fenced enclosure which contains a small pond and trees, with the path to the right of this. From this point the walker must aim for the house ahead on the left which is the line of the path, over the dry ditch again to a broken stile (no sign) and so across a further grassy field to a metal finger sign to Brickworth, but this can easily be pointing in the wrong direction, not the way from which the walker has just come! Into the quiet road where, by turning right, the walker will return to Titchborne Farm.

FOOTPATH WP 13

This starts on the A 36 at 'Chadwell' and cuts the corner off the road to Whiteparish. It combines well with public footpaths around the periphery of, and through, Langley Wood, although short sections of road will have to be used.

The abandoned metal sign for the path can be found lying in the undergrowth, fortunately pointing in the right direction, and so over the good new stile. Having crossed this the way is by the hedge to the left of a small field in front of a pretty cottage; in Summer, nettles might be a problem here. Round the left hand end of the barn a stile is found and a bridge over a ditch is crossed. The way across the old uncultivated field follows the hedge on the right through thorn thickets and blackberry bushes. Another stile and another bridge, the latter over a boggy area, take the walker to the right of relatively newly dug flight ponds, obviously liked by the mallards which can be seen in residence. Even early in the year there is the scent of wild mint in the air.

Where the hedge which has been followed bends sharply to the right, the way crosses the tussocky grass towards the obvious silver birch ahead, thus to the hedge again which is followed to the final bridge and its accompanying stile. Thence the path follows the edge of the wood with its tall straight well-spaced poplar trees, to finally come out on Whiteparish Lane near Ashdod Farm, where there is no sign on, or by the stile.

This is not a particularly damp walk despite the footbridges which would seem to indicate that it is so.

FOOTPATH WP 4

This is the tiny section of footpath WP 4 which lies on the west of the A 36; the rest of the path is on the other side of the road and is signed there. It joins footpath 13 cutting off a short road walk. Sadly it is not signed at either end and is blocked at the top by a barbed wire fence, whilst at its junction with WP 13 there is no gap in the hedge at the correct point.

Described from the A 36 it commences nearly opposite Hill Crest Camp Site where a five barred gate will be found into a field containing a large metal barn. The path follows the left hand hedge down the field to where it should pass through the hedge which lies ahead but which is very overgrown at this point. The walker must turn right and find the gap about 15 yards further along which will allow passage onto WP 13 by small Esso pipeline signs.

DOWNTON CIVIL PARISH

BRIDLEWAY D 35

This, and the following two, form a way of varying the walks over the Downs towards Pepperbox Hill, as well as combining well with routes from the Parish to Downton.

Commencing where the tarmac ends in Muddyford Lane at the same place as byway 37, it follows the right side of the hedge on the left. The hedge is a typical one of chalkland, with elder and yew as well as blackthorn and brambles, whilst old man's beard forms huge curtains in places. Rabbits abound in this set-aside environment, and the walker has to take care not to step into a burrow whilst taking in the pastoral scene around. Sadly, there has been some vegetative fly tipping but this can be circumvented.

At the end of the field the path continues ahead downwards, enclosed at first by the hedge on the left, and a small copse on the right. Signs of ancient coppicing can be seen on both sides. The track is a pleasant grassy one, finishing on the minor road which leads to Barford Down Farm through a short avenue of horse chestnuts and close to the old Salisbury to Downton railway bridge. There is a metal sign in place at this end, but there is no sign at the start.

FOOTPATH D 36

No signs are in place at either end of this path which will be described from the point opposite the sign to Barford Park Farm on the C 336

This is a real downland walk across set-aside fields. The walker frequently has skylarks and butterflies for company even early in the year.

The track starts as a very good one climbing gently uphill. On the crest of the track where the footpath crosses footpath D 27 (unmarked), the walker should look to the right and note the dip in the ground which was the line of the old Salisbury to Downton railway. Just after this point, the track bears left towards a gap in the hedge which lies ahead. From there on the path is non-existent on the ground. In fact, after passing through the hedge, it lies ahead following the faint track upwards over Barford Down. It eventually meets byway 37 in the proximity of the five barred gate which lies ahead a short distance from the triangulation point.

FOOTPATH D 27

The line of this footpath commencing in Hamilton Park, lies on the River Avon side of the old railway line between Salisbury and Downton. A good metal sign is in place at the start and directs the walker along a tarmaced then gravelled path, behind the houses in Hamilton Park, and thence into, firstly, cultivated fields, then into set-aside. It crosses two stiles on the way to the latter. One can but marvel at how the vegetation has grown on this once busy railway track.

The embankment finishes abruptly, and the way is ahead up onto the downs. The path is obvious but narrow, in this set-aside field. Near the crest footpath D 36 is crossed.

The path now descends to the left hand fence corner ahead, where within this enclosure was the entrance to the 180 yard long railway tunnel. The railway embankment is obvious ahead, and the route continues by the side of this ending on the minor road to Barford Down Farm on the other side of the railway bridge from bridleway D 35; a metal finger sign is in place.