

April 15th, 2012

A mostly flat walk, with plenty of wildlife; three hares, a deer and the first swallow were seen in 2012. There are 4 ploughed fields, usually well re-instated, but muddy when wet.

- From the TK, turn to walk down the tarmaced path (21), past Whittle Hole and through the gate. Follow the emerging stream a short distance, then turn left, down the steep bank, to cross it via a FB, and up to the stile.
- Cross, and proceed across a further stile (16) though the horse grazing until the hedge ahead is reached; turn left between this and the earth mound to the stile in the corner.
- Across this, and through a short patch of scrub, emerge into pasture to walk uphill beside the wall, left, to the gate/stile ahead.
- This leads to Keinches Lane; cross, and, ignoring the FP, right, pass through the KG and ahead (58). A further 2 KGs lead to a view point over the Vale, and a post indicating a divergence of paths.
- Take the right fork between scrubby trees and the roots of one massive fallen giant to walk downhill alongside a newly-planted hedge, right, to the stile at the bottom (1).
- Cross the horse pasture and intervening stile, gradually converging on the left hand hedge, cross the double stile at the corner, and the raised FB over Dunn Mill stream.
- Head half left towards the fence and stile just in front of the explosive stores belonging to the Firs—Winston Churchill's Toy Shop.
- Cross into the lane, and turn right (2), and where the lane bears sharp left, go straight ahead to cross the stile next to the gate.
- Turn left to walk along the left hand hedge (3), and through the gap in the left hand corner into a ploughed field. Cross this diagonally right to the stile at the bottom, and continue along the left hand hedge to the gate ahead, leading to Folly Farm lane.
- Turn right and continue to the gate to Folly Farm. (sometimes a very friendly sheepdog greets you). Through this cross the drive and go through the gate ahead onto a broad bridleway between horse pastures. At the end, pass through 3 gates and into a large field.
- Turn right, gradually diverging from the right hand fence towards the fence ahead, and through a double gate to a KG, and thence over a FB.
- Continue in the same direction across the corner of the next field to a farm track. Cross this and where the hedge ends, scramble across the ditch into the ploughed field. (There is a more dignified crossing by walking left to the field corner and back, but this is NOT a FP!)
- Walk ahead between the crops, right and a piece of set-aside, left, until the hedge ahead is reached. Turn right to cross this field, gradually converging on the right hand hedge, to the right corner. Turn right through the gap onto a broad track, through a further gap and again, ahead across the next ploughed field (25).
- Go through the gap and in the same direction (half left) to the top right corner of this field and through the deeply rutted and waterlogged gateway and pass along the left margin of this field to the stile next to the gate at the left corner.
- Bear left, first diverging and then converging again with the left hand hedge/fence, over the earth mound, to the double stile in this fence. Across this, head half right, crossing the track to Scothill farm, to the stile in the right hand corner, where the FB leads you to Weir Lane.
- Turn left, and shortly right over the double stile, then uphill,(18) half left towards Castle Mound and the double stile in the right hand corner.
- Across this bear half right to the Stile/FB/stile, (21) and ahead along the left hand hedge until the gate which leads to the tarmaced FP and back up the steep slope to the TK.

Key: Numbers refer to Whitchurch Parish Paths

KG=kissing gate

FB=footbridge

TK=Telephone Kiosk