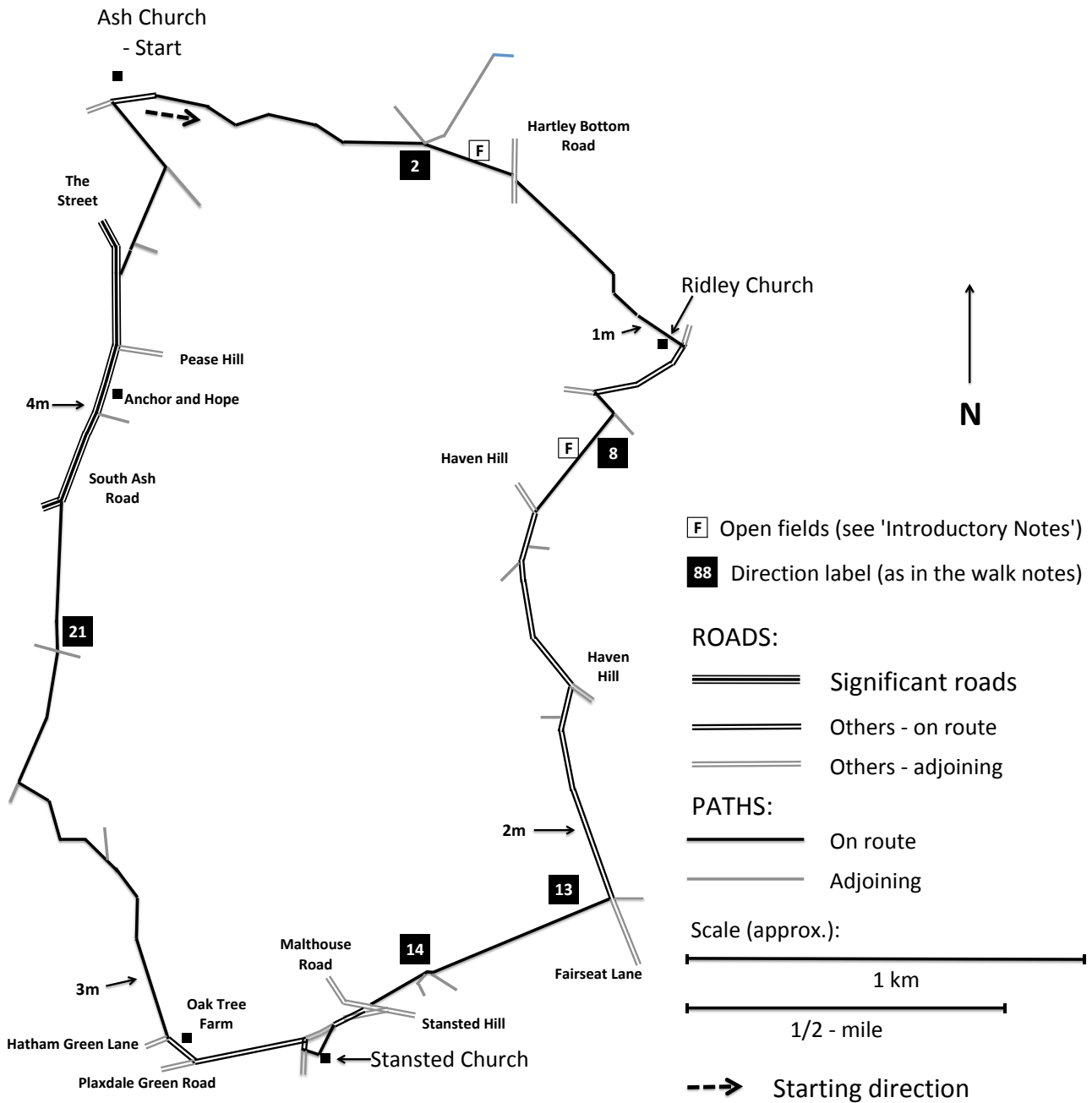


LOCAL CIRCUIT FA1: RIDLEY & STANSTED



LOCAL CIRCUIT FA1: RIDLEY AND STANSTED

Linked churches:

Ash (start and finish)

Ridley (Direction 6)

Stansted (15)

Roads and hindrances:

The 7-minute stretch of road near the end (22-23) is borderline acceptable, I think. Here there will at most times be the tedious necessity to take account of oncoming traffic, and having to think about this will not allow much energy for enjoyment. At least it is reasonably safe, in that there is plenty of scope to stop and snuggle up to the right-hand hedge. The trouble is, you may need to do this rather more often than you would like.

Notes taken: Between October 2011 and March 2012; revised October 2014.

The start and finish is at Ash Church (TN15 7HD).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		Coming out of <u>Ash Church</u> , at the end of the church path turn left along the metalled road. Go along this, and onward as it becomes a track. Keep to the main path as it goes downhill through trees after a while, swinging first right, then left.	601 645	
2	10	[Map point] As the track swings further left, instead turn right to go through a spring gate (next to a bigger one), immediately followed by a stile, !!F!! on to a downward track across a large field. (Straight down, using the most direct line to the road.)		
3	13	You reach the road at a MKG. Go through it, turn right along the road, then left up a footpath.	612 643	
4	14	Go over a stile and carry on up the left-hand side of a field.		
5	16	You reach a big, awkwardly fastened gate. Go through it into trees, and on along a path more or less parallel to the left-hand edge of the wood; then into the open as <u>Ridley Church</u> comes into view.	614 642	
6	22	Pass the church on your right, go ahead to a road and turn right along it, downhill before long.		1.05
7	26	Turn sharp left down a broad track.		
8	27	[Map point] Turn right. The start of this path is well hidden. It begins with a spring gate followed by a little stile. !!F!! It then turns into a broad track, down and up across the middle of a large field. Carry straight on, even if (as currently) the field ceases to be cultivated and turns into scrub.	614 637	
9	31	Go through the remnants of a MKG and turn left at the road.		
10	35	Ignore the footpath which goes to the right next to Haven Manor: continue along the road.		

* **"Mins." is very approximate!** See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

!!F!! : **Field crossing might be unmarked.** See 'Open Fields' in 'Introductory Notes' for some thoughts about dealing with this.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
11	39	At the junction turn right (along the road signposted Fairseat and Wrotham).		
12	40	Ignore a footpath signposted along a narrow passageway on the right.		
13	46	[Map point] Turn right over a (currently damaged but adequate) stile and go ahead along the footpath between barbed-wire fences.		2.10
14	52	[Map point] At the end of the field go slightly left into trees - but only slightly left, along the narrower, upper of the two possible tracks, keeping the fence immediately on your right. This leads very soon to a stile, and then into the open for the descent to the war memorial at Stansted, visible ahead.		
15	56	At the bottom go over a stile next to a wooden gate, and then ahead up the road opposite towards Stansted Church .		
16	57	Go up the little pathway* branching up to the left into the churchyard. Swing left with the path to approach the church: then turn right to pass it and go towards the wooden gate leading out of the churchyard. <i>* Or just carry straight on, missing the church, and carry straight on down Plaxdale Green Road (Direction 17); and deduct 1 minute from subsequent total times and 0.03 miles from cumulative distances.</i>		
17	58	Go out through the gate and turn right down the road and immediately left at the T-junction along Plaxdale Green Road. Follow this down the hill, and most of the way up the other side.	606 621	
18	62	A little before the top turn right on to Hatham Green Lane.		2.83
19	63	As the road swings to the left, after the entrance to Hatham Green Cottage, go instead along the footpath more or less straight ahead (MR200), past the front of Oak Tree Farm. It goes along through trees, then down and somewhat to the left.		
20	75	After following this winding path through the trees, downwards to the left, then upwards to the right, turn right at a T-junction of paths (just after a clearing in the trees).		
21	80	[Map point] Go ahead, ignoring signposted and waymarked alternatives to left and right.	600 632	3.67
22	84	Emerge on to the road, and turn right.		
23	91	(After passing the Anchor and Hope and crossing Pease Hill) look for a MKG on the right just after the '30' speed-limit sign. Go through the MKG, then swing left alongside the hedge: at first the road runs parallel beyond it. Later at a junction of tracks turn left through a MKG, and go along the right-hand edge of the field to another MKG.		
24	96	Continue along the right-hand edge of the cricket field.		
25	98	Go over a lift-and-drop stile and cross the road on to the church path leading back to the starting point at Ash Church .	601 645	4.54

- ***“Mins.” is very approximate!*** See ‘Introductory Notes’ for an explanation of how this column is used.

FOR THOSE WHO WALK WITH THEIR DOGS

I do not venture to give advice about walking with your dog. As well as the joys, you will be well aware of the issues involved, and particularly that relationships between dogs and other countryside animals potentially involve mutual suspicion, or worse.

But what this footnote does try to do, in response to requests, is to give some indication of the nature of the walk from a dog's point of view, to enable you to decide whether it is suitable.

The percentage distances on the right should be self-explanatory.

The information in the middle column may look a bit cluttered, but I think it should enable you (if the detail is of interest) to mark up within a few minutes a print-out of the walk notes, so that you have some idea what might be round the next corner.

The risk in all this is that **things change so quickly** in the agricultural working world; and what I describe might become misleading after subsequent changes. I have done my best, but there is no guarantee that you will find the information up to date!

LOCAL CIRCUIT FA1	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	22	8
Quiet road \$\$	6b, 9-12, 15, 17-18	25
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock	4, 23b	4
Field (or edge) without livestock **	2, 8, 23a, 24	13
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	1, 3, 5b, 6a, 7, 13, 16, 19-21	44
Woods	5a, 14	6

** This is not a promise, just a statement of fact - that, having walked these sections perhaps two or three times, I have found no animals or any sign of them.

\$\$ Again, not a promise that there will be no traffic to worry about. Just a personal judgement of conditions as I have found them.

STILES (7) - Details noted in April 2015, but subject to frequent change:

The stile in Direction 2 has a dog-gate; and the one in 4 has easy gaps. 8 is wired down to ground level, and the step is thin (but firm); but it is not high (climbs of about 1.5 ft. each). 13 and 14 are also wired to ground and are quite tall, but in each good gaps have been burrowed out to one side. 15 could be tricky: quite high (2 ft. climb, then 1 ft.), but a 6-in. gap under the gate to the side might be helpful. 25 has easy gaps.