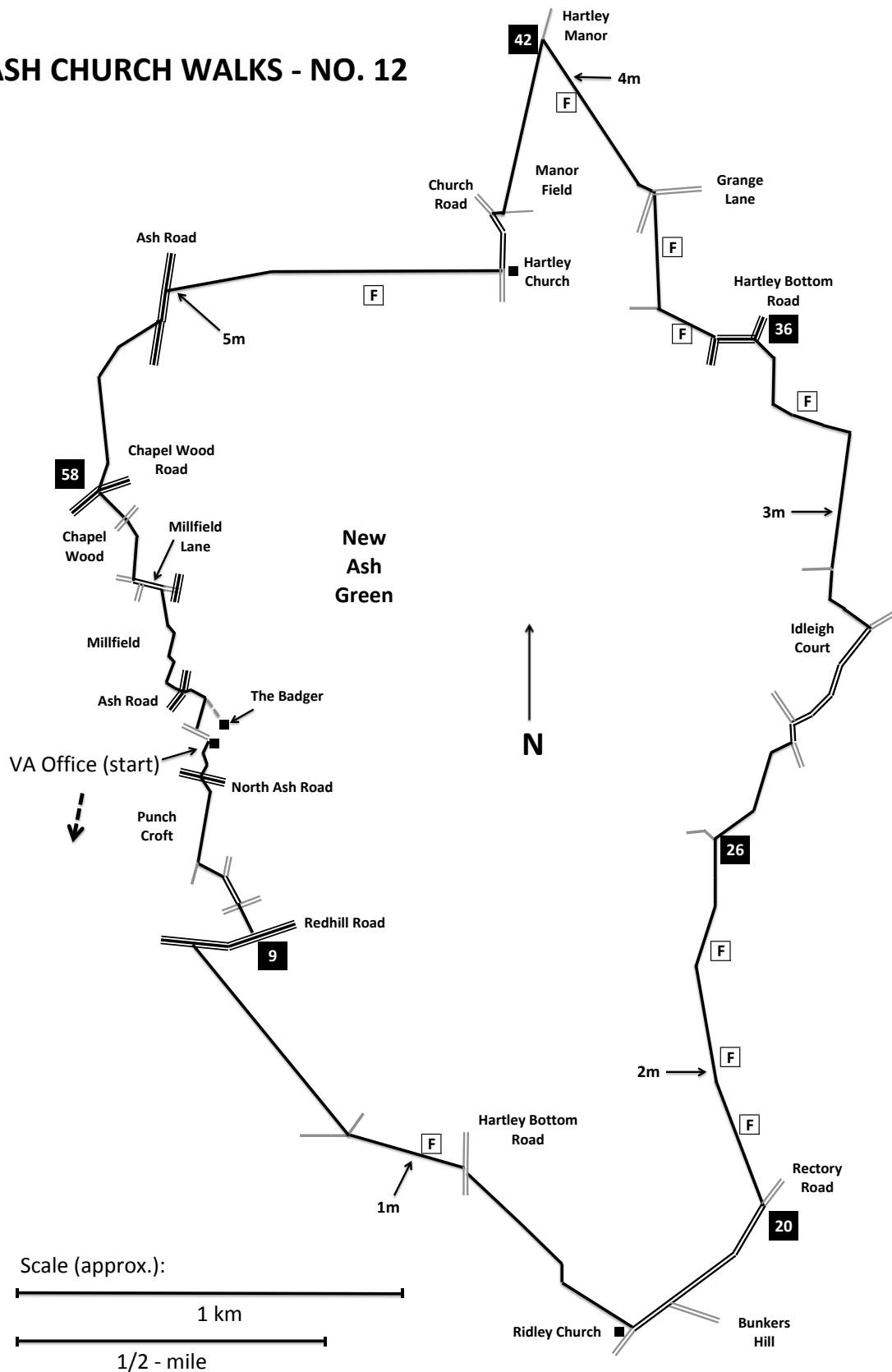


ASH CHURCH WALKS - NO. 12



Scale (approx.):
 1 km
 1/2 - mile

--> Starting direction

ROADS:
 == Significant roads
 = Others - on route
 - Others - adjoining

PATHS:
 — On route
 - Adjoining
 [F] Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')
 [88] Direction label (as in the walk notes)

ASH CHURCH WALKS - No.12 (2 January 2016)

(New Ash Green - Ridley - Idleigh - Hartley Manor - Chapel Wood - New Ash Green) - 5.94 miles

Some fine views in the higher sections. This was a pleasant and not particularly difficult new-year walk (muddy in places - but not unreasonably so, after heavy rainfall).

Roads and hindrances:

The few road crossings are not especially difficult, and the short sections along roads are relatively harmless. The briefly bending road at Direction 36 needs a little care, but no more than routine common sense.

Notes taken: January 2017

The start and finish is at the **New Ash Green Village Association Office** (DA3 8HH).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		The starting point is at the corner of New Ash Green's <u>south</u> car park next to the entrance to the Village Association office. First walk along the narrow path away from the office, alongside the car park but separated from it by a small wall and tall fence.	605 654	
2	1	Reaching a garage court go slightly leftwards towards the road.		
3	2	Cross the road and, about 30 yds. to the left, walk along the path heading in the same direction, away from the road, next to the houses of Punch Croft (numbers 7, 8 etc.).		
4	3	After number 9B, fork slightly left.		
5		Ignore the first turnings on the left (by numbers 124 and 128).		
6	4	Turn left opposite number 135, and follow the path as it curves gently further leftwards.		
7	5	Passing the corner of number 63, move across to go ahead (via a parking area at first) along the road which has joined from the left, and follow it towards the green space up ahead.		
8	6	At the T-junction by the green, walk over the grass to join the path along its left-hand side, and follow this up to the main road beyond.		
9	7	[Map point] Turn right along the road, crossing when convenient.		
10	9	Move over to the left to join a footpath, still parallel to the road.		
11	11	Find a MKG on the left and go through it and along a short path towards a stile.		
12	12	Cross the stile and beyond it go ahead along the right-hand edge of a large field, and another one beyond, heading towards trees in the distance.		
13	18	At the end, in the right-hand corner, cross a stile and continue down a fenced path through the trees.		0.86

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
14	20	Go over a broad crossing path, and through a spring gate (next to a bigger one), immediately followed by a stile; and then !!F!! carry on to a downward track across a large field. (Straight down, using the most direct line to the road.)		
15	23	You reach the road at a MKG. Go through it, turn right along the road, then left up a footpath.	612 643	
16	24	Go over a stile and carry on up the left-hand side of a field.		
17	26	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 Ridley Church comes into view.	614 642	
18	32	Pass the church on your right, and turn left along the road.		
19	33	Keep left along Rectory Road.		1.55
20	35	[Map point] About 100 yds. after passing the Old Rectory, turn left at a MKG, into trees.		
21	36	!!F!! Leave the trees through another MKG and turn a little to left to cross the grassy field, heading for its far left-hand corner.		
22	40	Go through the MKG at that corner, and go along a short enclosed path to another MKG.		
23	41	!!F!! Go through into a large sloping field, turning slightly left and aiming initially at the bottom corner of the trees which border the field on the left.		
24	45	!!F!! At the bottom go through the gap (open gate or MKG) and adjust slightly rightwards to go up across the next field. The path is usually clear, but if not head towards the tallest of the trees which form the field's top border.		
25	48	Go through the gap a few yards to the left of that tree, and start along a winding track, first left then right, through the wood. Take care to avoid potentially ankle-twisting rabbit holes.		2.29
26	50	[Map point] The track leads to a MKG at the far edge of the wood. But here do not go through the MKG: instead turn right along the path immediately before it, to walk along, still in the wood, but next to its left-hand edge. The path is barely visible in places, but exists.		
27	51	Go through another MKG out of the trees: the fence still on your left.		
28	52	Cross to the left-hand side of the fence (through a MKG, next to a big gate) and, with the fence now to your right, follow it to the top.		
29	55	There go through the MKG, and turn left on to the road. At the road junction after Court View take the right turn.		
30	57	Go ahead along the road, ignoring the stile and footpath to the right.		
31	60	Turn left along the signposted footpath. Continue as near straight on as possible. The route becomes a concrete path, and then a grassy track along the left-hand edge of a field. Ignore an enticing couple of left-turns, and carry straight on.	622 657	
32	67	Eventually follow the line of trees as it swings leftwards.	622 662	3.16

* **"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
33	68	The track then swings rightwards, following the edge of a new cluster of trees on the right.		
34	70	!!F!! Go slightly leftwards away from the trees, aiming at a stile about a third of the way down the line of trees opposite.	620 663	
35	71	Go over the stile and along a narrow path between fences.		
36	72	[Map point] You reach a road after going down some steps. Turn left along it. (A little care is needed here: traffic sometimes takes the bends at optimistic speeds.)		
37	73	As the road swings left after Little Dormers, go down the footpath which instead goes more or less straight on. This goes down to the right of a garden, and then !!F!! across a large field towards trees.		
38	75	Go through the trees at the bottom, !!F!! then turn half-right diagonally upwards across a large field.		
39	80	At the top, you would wish to cross the road and go directly up the track opposite into the trees, but this is not the right of way. Instead go right for a few yards along the road, then left into the wood and slightly right again.		
40	81	Keep right, along the main path.	617 669	
41	85	About 50 yds. before the end of the trees take a little track on the left, which then immediately turns back to the right towards a gap leading out of the trees to the field-edge. Then !!F!! continue at a slight angle across the field, heading towards the wooden fence at its far right-hand corner.		
42	87	[Map point] At the corner (having virtuously kept to the right of way and avoided cutting across!) turn sharp left to go along the far edge of the same field.		4.11
43	91	Go through the MKG at the end, and carry on, keeping near to the right-hand edge of the playing field.		
44	92	Keep on along the left-hand side of the red-brick buildings.		
45	93	Turn right along the driveway to the MKG at the exit from the sports field.		
46	94	After the MKG turn left along the road.		
47		Immediately after the pond, escape the tarmac by using the parallel path on the left. Then continue ahead along it, ignoring the gateway to the graveyard on the left.		
48	95	Edge rightwards to rejoin the road.		
49	96	Opposite the lych-gate of Hartley Church, turn right along the signposted footpath, which after a minute or two launches you straight ahead !!F!! to start the crossing of a large field.		
50	101	Go through a MKG and ahead and over a crossing path.		
51	103	Just before an information board and a bench continue ahead over another crossing path.		
52	104	Continue ahead along the right-hand edge of a field.		
53	105	Divert to the right between metal barriers to follow an enclosed path, still parallel to the field edge.	605 666	
54	106	At the end turn left alongside the road, staying on the left-hand pavement to start with.		5.03

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
55	107	After about 80 yds. cross the road to go along a footpath opposite (easily missed), fenced off after a metal swing-gate and leading along the left-hand edge of a large field.	604 665	
56	109	At the end, ignore the metal gate on the right, and follow the track as it swings gradually to the left alongside the fence. Keep alongside it as it labours in and out of existence.		
57	113	The fence gives up the struggle, but continue ahead along the main path, as it swings gently right, then left.		
58	114	[Map point] Reach and cross the main road. <i>At this point, being local residents, we dispersed (although some of us found our way to The Badger). The directions which follow are to guide those unfamiliar with New Ash Green back to the starting point. There are many alternatives, but the route described here is probably the simplest, and will not be far off the quickest.</i> Go over the bank on the other side, and then briefly to the right towards a grassy space.		5.39
59	115	Before the grass, turn left alongside houses 57-56-55 etc.		
60	116	Opposite number 49, go diagonally rightwards, across the roadway and the parking area, and beyond go a little further to the right and alongside numbers 84-85-86 etc.		
61	118	After number 92 go diagonally across the grass on the left, passing the corner beyond number 41 and following the path round to the left.. Then cross the grassy mound alongside and walk along the parallel road beyond it, crossing as soon as convenient.		
62	120	About 40 yds. before reaching the main road, turn right along the pathway which runs more or less parallel to it (though turning left and right and times - cut the corners when possible).		
63	123	When a concrete path appears on the left, opposite a lamp-post, follow it towards a zebra crossing.	604 656	
64		Go over the road at the crossing, and turn half-left, then slightly right, into the New Ash Green shopping centre.		
65	124	Turn right along the walkway beyond Pets Pantry, cross the roadway beyond the shops, and continue ahead between parking areas.		
66	125	Reaching the next road, turn left towards the Village Association office.		
67	126	At the end of the road, reach the Village Association office, the starting point of the walk.	605 654	5.94

* **“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.

FOR THOSE WHO WALK WITH THEIR DOGS

See footnote on next page.

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!

ASH CHURCH WALKS - 12	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	9, 36, 54	3
Quiet road \$\$	7, 18-19, 29-30, 39, 46, 48	12
Open field with livestock	21, 23	6
Edge of field with livestock	16, 28	4
Field (or edge) without livestock **	5-6, 8, 12, 14, 24, 31b-34, 37-38, 41-44, 49b, 52, 61a, 62a	37
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	1-4, 10-11, 13, 15, 17b, 22, 31a, 35, 45, 47, 49a, 53, 55, 58-60, 61b, 64-66	20
Woods	17a, 20, 25-27, 40, 50-51, 56-57, 62b-63	19

** 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 (5) – Details noted in January 2017, but subject to frequent change:

The stiles in Directions **13** and **14** have dog-gates, and those in **12** and **16** have easy gaps. The only tricky one is in **35**: this used to be easily passable, but is now newly wired down with rises of about 2 ft. and 1 ft.