

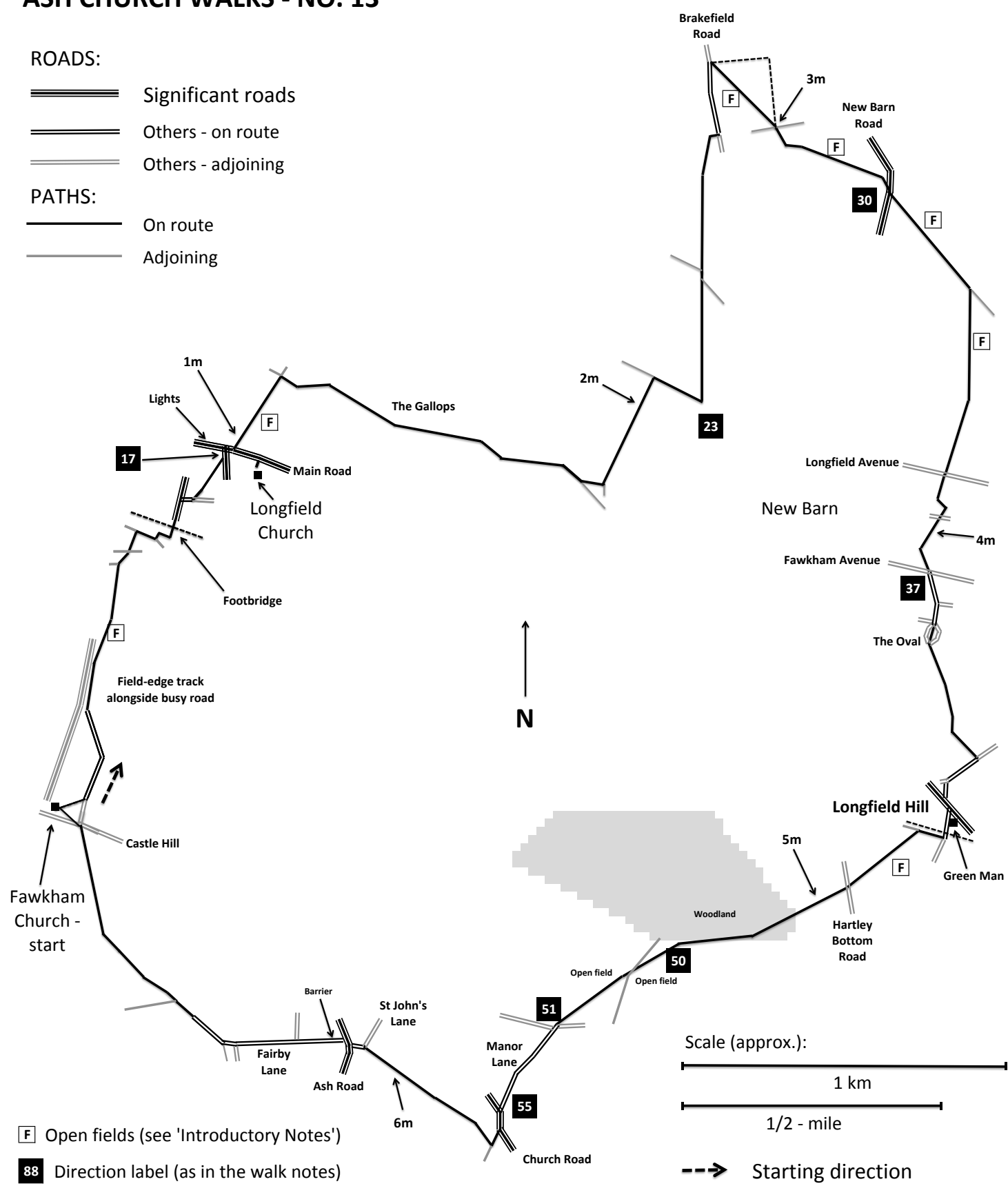
ASH CHURCH WALKS - NO. 13

ROADS:

- Significant roads
- Others - on route
- Others - adjoining

PATHS:

- On route
- Adjoining



## **ASH CHURCH WALKS - No.13 (10 July 2016) - 6.96 miles** **(Fawkham - Longfield - The Gallops - Brakefield Road - New Barn - Longfield Hill - Hartley - Fawkham)**

The 'Gallops', near the start (Direction 20), offer good and contrasting panoramas to left and right; and again later there are fine views towards first Istead Rise and then the wooded hills around Hartley.

On a hot day, we found the Green Man (43) well placed to offer refreshment (realistically the last opportunity on the route).

### **Roads and hindrances:**

Crossings of the main road in Longfield (17 - see the note) and Hartley (62) are perfectly manageable with ordinary care. The New Barn Road (30) is more troublesome and demands great care.

Going up the little bank in 28 might stretch credibility for a moment (but only a moment)!

Notes taken: September 2016

The start and finish is at **Fawkham Church** (nearest postcode - DA3 8EQ).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		From the car park of Fawkham Church, with the road behind you and the church to your right, go directly up the grassy slope, aiming about 20 yds. to the left of the furthest left of the benches at the top.	597 680	
2	1	Pass through the hedge at the top and turn left along the road.		
3	4	Reaching the main road at the bottom, turn right to go alongside it, but then immediately step up to the right to walk along the embankment, or, if necessary, the field edge, parallel to the road. <i>(Not strictly speaking a right of way, but seemingly accepted as sensible traffic-avoidance.)</i>	598 683	
4	6	<b>!!!F!!!</b> At a footpath sign, rejoin the right of way by angling away from the road, about 30 degrees rightwards, across the field. Aim (bearing 025) at a gap barely visible, in the trees beyond, near the third pole from the left (including the one at the road).		
5	8	Go through the gap and along the narrow path through the trees.		
6	10	Continue ahead across the grass, passing the nursing home down on the left.		
7	11	Cross the road, and continue ahead along the walkway opposite, alongside number 33 on your right.		
8	12	Reaching another roadway, turn right along it.		
9		Turn left along the grassy gap next to number 10, and then immediately right again, alongside a fence and towards garages ahead.		

\* **"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
10	<b>13</b>	Reaching the garage court, look across to the left to find the steps of the railway footbridge. Cross the bridge.		
11	<b>14</b>	Coming down from the footbridge, double back for a few yards, then, ignoring the entrance to the station car park, follow the main road as it turns right, down between shops.		
12	<b>15</b>	Go ahead, crossing the roadway at the corner of Waitrose.		
13		Turn right along the roadway towards the 'in' way to the Waitrose car park.		0.77
14	<b>16</b>	But after a few seconds, well before reaching the car park, turn left down a narrow, bleak passageway between fences, and then across a little open area, used as a parking space.	601 690	
15	<b>17</b>	Continue ahead, angling across another driveway and on down an equally shady passage, turning right with it after a while.		
16	<b>18</b>	Turn left alongside the road, without crossing it.		
17		<b>[Map point]</b> At the end, next to the mini-roundabout, go ahead over the crossing main road ('Main Road'!) and turn right along its far side. <i>(If crossing is troublesome, a little detour to the left, perhaps even as far as the lights, will help.)</i>		
18	<b>19</b>	About 30 yds. along from the roundabout, turn left, away from Main Road, up the driveway, signposted as a footpath.		
19	<b>20</b>	<b>[!!F!!]</b> Go straight on through the remains of a redundant MKG and up between the fields.		
20	<b>23</b>	Next to the pole at the top, turn right to go alongside the hedge. Choose either side, depending which view you prefer. You will eventually need to be on its left, but there are a number of gaps.		1.12
21	<b>36</b>	Right at the end, when faced by houses, turn left to go alongside their back boundaries.		1.81
22	<b>41</b>	At the end of the houses, follow the fence round to the right, along the top of a field.		
23	<b>43</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> As waymarked, turn left to go gently downhill, between fields, aiming at the left-hand edge of the densely packed trees in the middle distance.	617 693	
24	<b>47</b>	Reaching those trees, continue ahead, alongside them at first, with open fields still on the left.		
25	<b>52</b>	At the end of a further group of trees on the right, swing up to the right beyond them, towards a MKG.		
26		Regain the original direction by turning left along a metalled roadway.		2.67
27	<b>55</b>	<b>[!!F!!]</b> About 100 yds. after a little terrace of houses (Thomas Cottages) turn right into the field, and there turn half-right again to walk diagonally across the field towards its far corner, so that you have almost doubled back on yourself. (Bearing, to cross the field, 140) In the event we found this field impossibly overgrown, but walking round its left-hand edge worked well enough.		

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	Mins.*		OS	Miles
28	<b>59</b>	<b>!!!F!!!</b> At the junction of paths at the field corner, go over the main crossing path and up the little bank beyond it. Then head, slightly leftwards (bearing 119), over the next field towards the left-hand side of a big house in the middle distance.	619 701	
29	<b>63</b>	Pass through a gap in the fence, and go on across rough scrubland, towards the house and, currently, the construction site next to it where a new house is being built. Skirt the site, still on its left-hand side. Then turn slightly right, through a parking area, to reach the main road.		
30	<b>65</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> Aiming at a small gap in the hedge, a yard or two to the left on the other side, cross the road with great care. The sightline to the left is limited, so decisiveness (and, for a group, possibly an intrepid advance look-out on the other side) is called for. <b>!!!F!!!</b> Once over, go through the gap and turn half-right (bearing 141) across the field.		3.24
31	<b>67</b>	Continue ahead, though currently there is an inconvenient ploughed strip across the line of the path.		
32	<b>70</b>	<b>!!!F!!!</b> At a path junction by a waymark-post, turn a little to the right (bearing 179), aiming at the somewhat taller trees a little to the left of the houses of New Barn.		
33	<b>74</b>	Reaching the trees, turn slightly right to go alongside them, ignoring the stile at that point, but looking out for a gap in the trees on the left, about 20 yds. further on.		
34		Use that gap to slip across into the trees, yet continuing ahead in the same direction.		
35	<b>77</b>	Cross the road and continue ahead along the narrow passage starting about 20 yds. to the left. Follow it as it turns briefly left and right.		
36	<b>79</b>	Go straight over the driveway and continue along the narrow footpath opposite.		
37	<b>81</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> Cross another road, and continue ahead along the road opposite (The Oval).		4.09
38	<b>83</b>	Where the road forks, just beyond Pincroft Wood on the right, make your way either across or around the grass oval towards the green gate opposite.		
39	<b>84</b>	Go through the gate and straight ahead along the right-hand side of a huge field.		
40	<b>88</b>	Turn right into the road.	625 682	
41	<b>89</b>	At the fork keep to the left of the grass and go ahead to the main road.		
42	<b>90</b>	Turn left alongside the main road, crossing to its far side when practicable, before the Green Man.		
43	<b>91</b>	At the Green Man turn right along Manor Road and then go ahead to cross the railway bridge.		4.60
44	<b>92</b>	Immediately after the bridge turn right, through a gate, and go ahead along the right-hand edge of a playing field, parallel to the railway below on the right.		
45	<b>93</b>	Continue ahead along a short enclosed passageway.		

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	Mins.*		OS	Miles
46		<b>!!!F!!!</b> After about 60 yds., emerge and, faced with a large field, turn half-left to go across it. [Bearing 229.]		
47	<b>96</b>	At the end, next to several poles, go through the hedge and down steep steps to the road. Turn right for a few yards along the road.		
48		Then turn left through a MKG and down an enclosed footpath among trees. Follow the path as it goes ahead, between wooden barriers and then up at the far side of the valley.	621 678	
49	<b>102</b>	At the top of a slightly steeper rise, go through a MKG and continue ahead along the right-hand edge of a field.		
50	<b>105</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> Cross a stile and turn half-left to go diagonally across a field punctuated by large trees. The direction lies between the three nearby trees on the right and one on the left, heading towards a MKG in the middle distance. [Bearing ...229.]		
51	<b>108</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> Go through the MKG and then ahead along an enclosed passageway (waymarked as SD296).		5.37
52	<b>111</b>	A driveway merges from the right.		
53		Reaching another driveway at a T-junction, turn right along it.	613 673	
54	<b>112</b>	Follow the road as it swings to the left, ignoring the broad restricted byway which is signposted further to its right.		
55	<b>115</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> Reach a main road at a T-junction and turn left, crossing to its right-hand pavement.		
56	<b>116</b>	Turn right along a metalled driveway. (The 'private' sign is relevant to vehicles, not walkers.)		
57	<b>117</b>	Turn right along the waymarked footpath.		
58	<b>118</b>	Go straight across a smaller path, and ahead, keeping down to the left of the small embankment; then still ahead along another narrow, enclosed pathway.		
59	<b>119</b>	Go over a little footbridge, and on.		
60	<b>120</b>	And still ahead, ignoring the spring gate on the right.		
61	<b>123</b>	At the end join the minor road which has been running parallel on the left, cross to its left-hand side and go ahead towards the main road.		
62	<b>124</b>	Cross the main road and, slightly across to the right, go ahead along Fairby Lane. (Once again there is a discouraging sign, but it does not apply to walkers: carry on past the barrier.)	606 673	6.12
63	<b>128</b>	At the end, next to 'Scotgrove', swing to the right.		
64	<b>129</b>	Continue straight ahead past the metal barriers.		
65	<b>130</b>	Fork slightly right, then follow the main path as it corrects gently leftwards to the original direction.		
66	<b>135</b>	After the path has narrowed significantly, go through a pair of metal gates, and down onwards.		
67	<b>138</b>	Reaching the road at the bottom, look across it to a gateway a little to the left on the other side, and head for it.		
68		Go through the gate and diagonally down across the field towards Fawkham Church and its car park.		
69	<b>140</b>	Reach the car park - the starting point of the walk.	597 680	6.96

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## 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!

<b>ASH CHURCH WALKS - 13</b>	<b>Direction numbers</b>	<b>% of walk</b>
Busy road	11-13, 16-17, 30a, 42, 55	3
Quiet road \$\$	2, 26, 37-38, 40-41, 43, 47, 52-54, 61-63	18
Open field with livestock	50	2
Edge of field with livestock	49	2
Field (or edge) without livestock **	1, 3-4, 18-25, 27-28, 30b-33, 39, 44, 46, 68	46
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	5-10, 14-15, 29, 34-36, 45, 48a, 51a, 56-60, 66-67	26
Woods	48b, 51b, 64-65	4

\*\* 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.

**STILE (1) – Detail noted in July 2016, but subject to frequent change:**

The one stile, at Direction 50, has easy gaps.