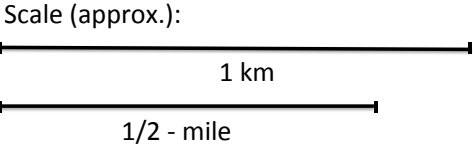


ASH CHURCH WALKS - NO. 18

F Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')

88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

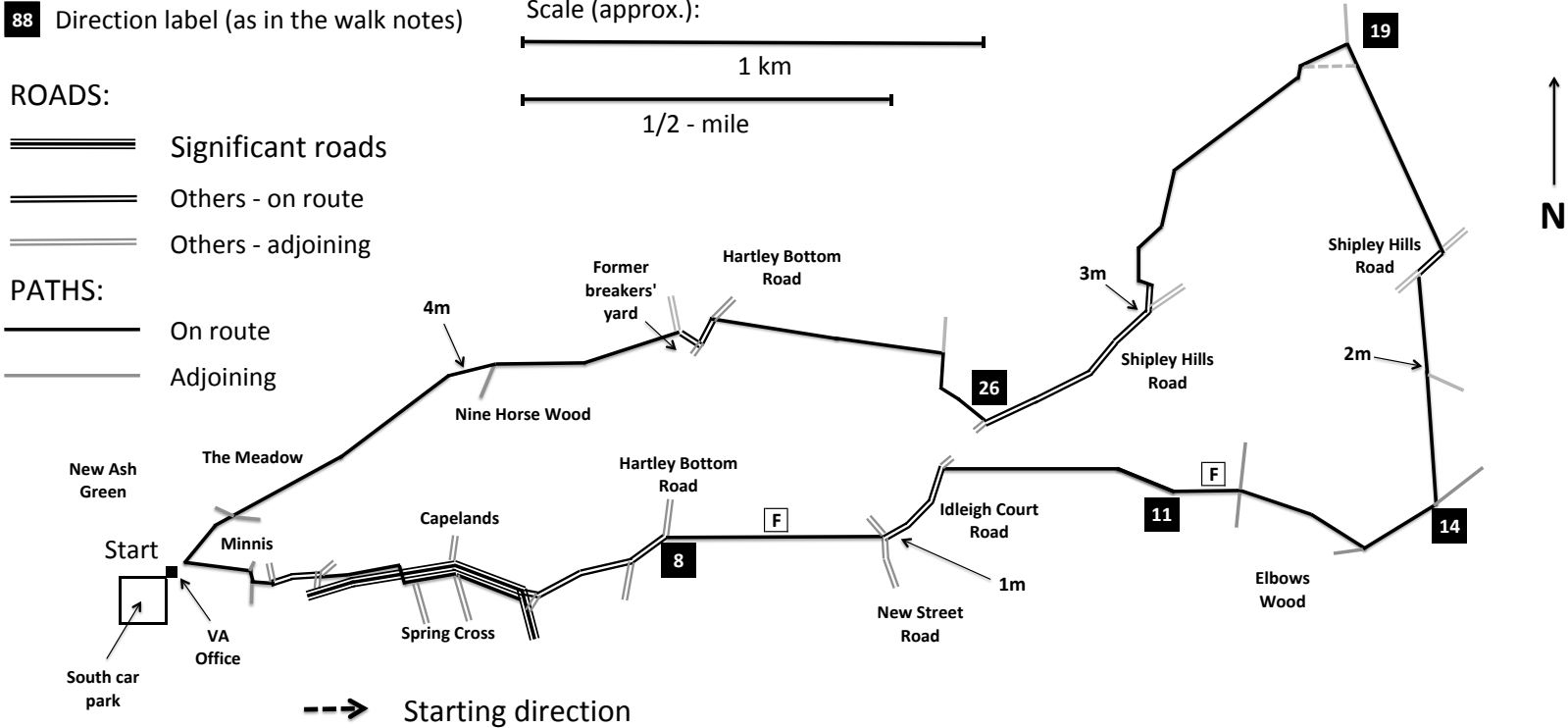


ROADS:

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

PATHS:

- On route
- Adjoining



ASH CHURCH WALKS - No.18 (30 December 2017) - 4.46 miles
(New Ash Green - Shipley Hills - Hartley Bottom Farm - New Ash Green)

In a particularly wet Christmas season, we were spared further rain on the day, but had plenty of mud to contend with (and felt the need to modify the route around Direction 14).

A short but pleasant winter walk, complete with views, on some of the less well-known paths around New Ash Green.

Roads and hindrances:

All the roads walked on are reasonably quiet.

The only significant hindrance was slippery mud!

The alley alongside the old breakers' yard (Direction 35) has become rather narrow - unpleasant rather than hazardous, though.

Notes taken: May 2018

The start and finish is in New Ash Green, in the south car park (off Centre Road, DA3 8HH).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		The starting point is the north-east corner of New Ash Green's south car park, alongside the entrance to the Village Association office. Walk away from the car park, downhill across the grass, with the VA office building on your left to start with. Then join the path which goes directly downhill, between the Minnis open space on your left and the houses of Over Minnis set back on your right.	605 654	
2	2	Go ahead, and at the T-junction at the end, confronted by house number 12 (Lambardes), turn right.		
3		Turn left, up steps, after number 11, with the children's playground on your right.		
4	3	Reaching the road at the top, turn right along it.		
5	4	At an open area with parking spaces on the left, move over a little to the right and continue ahead, not along the road, but on a winding footpath, roughly parallel to (and starting about 30 yds. from) the main road on the right.		
6	6	After passing house number 3 on the left, turn right through a gap in the hedge, cross the road, and turn left along the path on its far side, crossing the Spring Cross entrance road, and then moving across to the left to join the road.		
7	9	Follow the road downhill, keeping left at the grass triangle and then again at the road junction near the bottom.		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
8	14	[Map point] !!F!! Where the road reaches the field and bends to the left, instead go straight ahead into the rising field by way of a MKG. Aim a little to the left of the buildings you can see at the highest point of the hill ahead, gradually angling across to meet the road hidden behind the hedge on your left. (The meeting point is not yet visible).		
9	22	Go through a MKG in that left-hand edge, and carefully on down steep steps to meet the road at a junction. Start out along the road which goes straight ahead (Idleigh Court Road).		0.99
10	24	Turn right on to a path, over a stile. Go along the left-hand edge of the field, ignoring a stile on the left after a couple of minutes. Carry on – in due course going slightly right to keep to the right of trees.	622 656	
11	29	[Map point] Just before the corner of the field turn left down a little track through a few trees. This swings round to a stile. Cross the stile and go on down to the bottom where the trees end. !!F!! Then up across the width of a large field to a gate visible between trees, just beyond a cross-path.		
12	32	Go up across the broad cross-path next to a collection of waymarks. The route is straight ahead (NS283), initially with trees to the right.	628 656	1.52
13	35	The trees on the right end: go virtually straight ahead (actually slightly right) down to more trees, and on to the bottom.		
14	39	[Map point] Turn left along the valley floor. <i>(Not designated as a right of way, but clearly walked, harmlessly, on a regular basis. We chose to use this as an alternative to the 'correct' detour – ahead, then sharp left to the far end of the valley – which the pre-walk had shown to be, at the time, impossibly muddy for the group walk.)</i>		
15	42	At the end continue ahead. (The 'correct' route rejoins from the right, over a well-concealed stile.) Pass a fenced-off hay store and go on along the right-hand bottom edge of a sloping field.		
16	46	Approaching the road, use the metal gate on the right (to the right of the big one) and then turn right, briefly, along the road.		2.15
17	47	Turn left along the bridleway, going not along the roadway leading to a private house, but, by way of a metal gate, parallel to it, along the bottom, left-hand, edge of a sloping field.	632 661	
18	52	At the end of the field, where the long hedge comes down from the right, continue ahead for a little more than 100 yds., with a row of small trees on your left.		
19	53	[Map point] At a waymark, turn left through a gap, beyond which is an information board. Then go ahead up the gently sloping field, gradually merging with the path on the left (which you could have used, but for the short detour to take in the information board).		
20	55	Merge with that track and continue across it, for the first few yards in the same direction.		

* **“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
21		Then, at the highest point of the rise, turn further left into the trees, in which a MKG is concealed. Keep over to the right to approach it and go through. If you find yourself heading towards a big gate, the MKG is about 15 yds. further to the right. Follow the enclosed track ahead, down and up.	630 665	
22	61	Near the top of the rise, follow the track left, still between fences.		
23	62	Cross a stile and carry on, moving to the right to begin an anti-clockwise arc around a house and garden.		2.86
24	64	Turn right along the house's driveway.		
25	65	At the end turn right up the road.		
26	72	[Map point] Turn right along a broad, rough track.		
27	74	Turn left just before the corner of Northdown Cottage.		
28	75	Go ahead, neither into the driveway on the right, nor into the forecourt on the left, but straight ahead over a stile.		
29	76	Carry on, through a pair of kissing gates.		
30	77	And still continue through another kissing gate.		
31	78	Go through a MKG and straight on down the right-hand side of the huge field.		
32	82	Go through a MKG tucked away in the bottom right-hand corner.		
33		Go through the gap, and, a very few steps ahead, turn left along the road.		
34	83	At the road junction turn right.		
35	84	Turn left along the footpath which goes immediately to right of the former car breakers' yard. (There is a signpost but its angle is imprecise. Make sure you are on the unlovely and initially unpromising but correct path right next to the corrugated metal boundary of the yard - not the field edge above it to the right.)	616 659	
36	86	At the end of the corrugated metal you emerge at the bottom corner of an open sloping field. Carry on in roughly the same direction, along the bottom, right-hand, edge of the field towards the wood.		3.76
37	88	Go straight on into the wood, and on along the broad woodland path.		
38	92	After a slight bend to the right, emerge from the trees, and bend back to the left to go along the bottom left-hand edge of the sloping meadow.		
39	96	At the end go ahead along the woodchip path among trees.		
40	98	Emerging at a crosspaths, go straight ahead alongside the grass, on the upward path alongside the houses on the right.		
41	99	At the top go to the left of the Village Association building to reach the car park - the starting point of the walk. (Unless you prefer to bend to the right of it to reach The Badger, as we did.)		
42	100	Arrive back at the car park.	605 654	4.46

* **"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!

ASH CHURCH WALKS - 18	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	6a, 7	8
Quiet road \$\$	4, 9, 16, 24-25, 33-34	17
Open field with livestock	8, 11b	8
Edge of field with livestock	30	1
Field (or edge) without livestock **	1, 6b, 10, 12-13a, 13c-15, 17-20, 29, 31, 36, 38, 40	44
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	2-3, 5, 21b-23, 26-28, 32, 35, 41	16
Woods	11a, 13b, 21a, 37, 39	7

** 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 (4) - Details noted in December 2017, but **subject to frequent change**:

The stiles in Directions **10**, **11** and **28** have easy gaps.

The one in **23** is wired down, with rises of 18 ins. and 2 ft., but there are several large holes at the sides.