

ASH CHURCH WALKS - NO. 14

Sheet 1 (first and last sections)

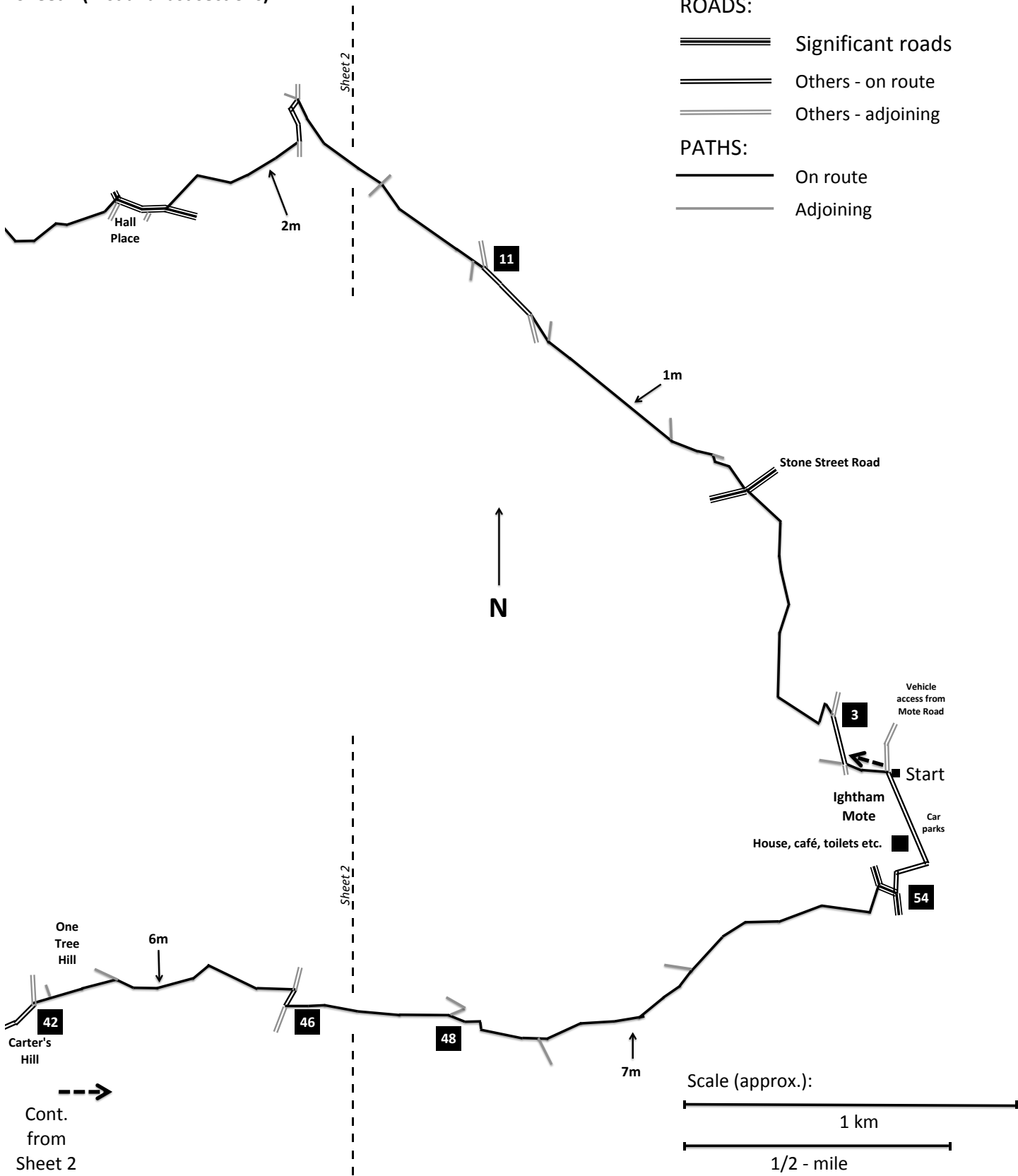
88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

ROADS:

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

PATHS:

- On route
- Adjoining



ASH CHURCH WALKS - NO. 14

Sheet 2 (middle section)

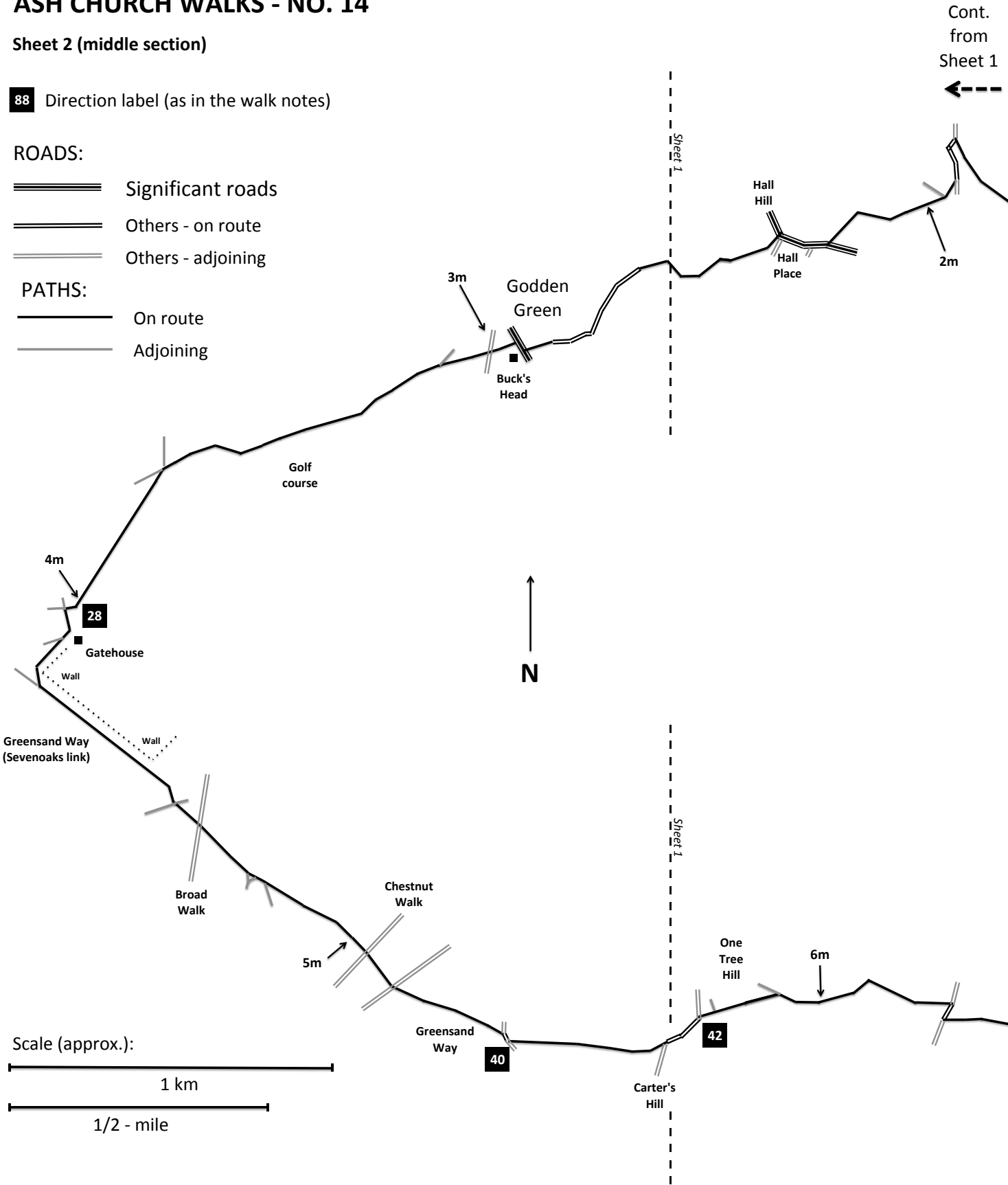
88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

ROADS:

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

PATHS:

- On route
- Adjoining



ASH CHURCH WALKS - No.14 (29 August 2016) - 7.91 miles (Ightham Mote - Godden Green - Knole Park - Ightham Mote)

A varied walk, featuring Knole Park and Ightham Mote, with pleasant woods and fine views in between. There are deer in large numbers in the park, best seen at the end of a day, when they gather with fewer people around. As it was an 'all-day' walk we were able to take our time, pausing at lunchtime at Godden Green, where the Buck's Head provided an exceptionally friendly welcome.

Roads and hindrances:

The steep climb into the forest near the start (see Direction 4) is well worth taking, rather than the alternative along the road.

Notes taken: September 2016

The start and finish is at **Ightham Mote** (TN15 0NT).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		If you enter the grounds of Ightham Mote the obvious way (along the driveway off Mote Road, south-west of Ivy Hatch), the starting point comes quite early where the drive forks - before the main car parks, though there is a small parking area exactly there, on the left. There is currently a 'welcome' sign there which details five destinations straight ahead, but also two 'estate walks'. Our walk starts briefly along the 'Green Route', which goes down to the right, opposite the sign but otherwise unmarked.	584 538	
2	2	After passing a wooden gate, leave the 'Green Route' by turning right along the road.		
3	4	[Map point] Fork left along the bridleway, and follow it, quite steeply uphill, as it bends first left, then right, and then continues along a fenced path, next to a field at first, then back into trees.		
4	19	Reaching the road, go directly across to take on a short but steep climb. The warning notice at the bottom is presumably directed at horse-riders; but this section deserves respect from walkers also. It is perfectly manageable, with the help of the retaining steps, but take your time! <i>There is a viable though inferior alternative: turn left at the road instead, walk carefully along it, keeping to the right when it forks, and turning right for the gentler ascent of Church Road, to join the main route at Direction 9. But we all took the main route, which is much more enjoyable.</i>		0.74
5	23	At the top pass the back of the warning sign (the twin of the one below - this one discouraging riders from trying the descent: a scary thought!) and follow the path leftwards. Then swing right with the path towards blue (bridleway) waymarks.	580 547	
6	24	Follow the waymark left along a broad woodland path.		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
7	25	At the next waymarked junction go straight ahead.		
8	32	Carry on ahead, ignoring the waymarked path down to the right.		
9	33	Go straight on, along the road as it joins from the left.		1.27
10	34	Pass the school and the church, and ignore the entry to Cone Hill on the left.		
11	36	[Map point] As the road swings to the right, instead go straight on along the bridleway into the woods. <i>Some detailed directions (12-15) follow, and paths are not always easily defined in woods, but the main thing will be always to follow the main track, which goes more or less in the same direction, all the way until the bridleway signposts come into view at Direction 15.</i>		
12		Go straight on, ignoring the footpath on the left.		
13	41	Continue ahead, veering if anything slightly to the right.		
14	42	Go a little to the right (avoiding the thicker undergrowth on the narrower straight-ahead track).		
15	45	Look out for green 'Public Bridleway' signposts over to the left, and cut off a small corner by leaving the main path and heading towards them.	566 558	
16	46	Turn left down the road, ignoring the new bridleway opposite.		
17	47	Turn off the road down the signposted footpath on the right.		1.95
18	48	Pass to the right of the remnants of a huge tree, and carry on, only slightly to the right (ignoring the sharper right turn at that point). The path here is rough and stony to start with, requiring a degree of care.		
19	53	Eventually, after going across a small, rough open area, pass a gate to reach a road, and turn right along it. Soon after the first (unnamed) private entry a verge of sorts appears on the left.	563 554	
20	55	As the road swings right, instead turn left along the footpath – avoiding the entrance to Hall Place by going through the kissing gate and turning left to go, at first, parallel to the fence on the left. Then follow the field-edge as it swings down to the right.		
21	60	At the bottom, ignore the gated track on the right, and continue ahead up a rough roadway. Follow the main roadway as it becomes less rough and swings to the left, ignoring side turns at a couple of points. Continue up alongside an equestrian area and on and down to the right, eventually catching sight of the grass of Godden Green ahead.	558 553	
22	68	On reaching the green, cut leftwards across it to reach the road and, crossing it, the Buck's Head beyond.		
23	69	In front of the Buck's Head – unless taking refreshment there – turn right, up along the grassy area parallel to the road.		2.94
24	70	Immediately after house number 1, turn left, away from the road and the green, cross a small parking area, and go through the swing gate and along a path alongside buildings.		
25	72	Go through a metal gateway and over a roadway and continue along the track opposite.		

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	Mins.*		OS	Miles
26	73	Maintain the same overall direction as the track bends slightly right, and then back a little to the left at a junction. Continue gently uphill along the broad path among the trees.		
27	80	Faced by a formidable-looking gate ahead, slip through the smaller gateway on its left into the grounds of Knole Park and go ahead down the rough roadway, through the golf course (carefully obeying the warning notices) all the way, down, along and then gently up, ignoring side-turnings, until you get close to the boundary wall of Knole itself.		3.40
28	93	[Map point] Turn right about 30 yds. short of the wall, towards the car park.		
29	94	At the top of a short rise, turn left along the roadway towards the gatehouse.	539 543	
30	95	Pass the gatehouse on your left; then, as the roadway goes away to the right, instead go straight on alongside the long boundary wall on your left.		4.09
31	97	At the end of the wall, at the point where it angles away to the left, join a crossing path to turn half-left; and follow it, keeping more or less parallel to the fresh section of the wall. The route is now waymarked 'Greensand Way', all the way back to Ightham Mote, although in truth you are until Direction 36 only on the spur connecting to it from Sevenoaks.		
32	102	The wall on the left turns away, but continue ahead on the same path.		
33	104	Bend a little to the right with the path, and following this new direction go on over a crossing path, into trees.		
34	106	Cross a roadway and continue along the pathway almost opposite.	543 537	
35	109	Go straight on up the main path, ignoring the right fork.		
36	115	Cross another roadway and go straight on along the rough track opposite (now joining the main Greensand Way).		5.04
37	117	Pass through the gate in the fence, leaving Knole Park land, cross the road (uncomfortably close) and follow the winding woodland track opposite.		
38	119	Emerge over a stile into an open area roped off into numerous small fields. Other things being equal, follow the right-of-way line, diagonally to the far right-hand corner, passing through a series of gaps in the ropes, marked with yellow tapes. But if horses are using the fields it makes sense instead to turn right and follow the field-edge, anti-clockwise, to reach that same corner.		
39	122	In the corner cross a tall stile and beyond it go down and turn right for a few yards along the rough, broad track.	552 530	
40	123	[Map point] Turn left along a narrow track, which has uncomfortably close barbed-wire fences on both sides for much of the way.		
41	130	Turn left along a short driveway, and then left again up the steep road.	558 530	

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	Mins.*		OS	Miles
42	132	[Map point] Turn off the road to the right at the footpath signpost, climbing quite steeply among trees and ignoring a path which soon joins from the left.		
43	136	Pass a stone bench on the left and continue straight ahead, ignoring the waymarked alternative on the left. The track then winds left and right, but always keep on the main path.		5.93
44	138	Follow the track as it drops to the right and turns immediately left across a small stile. Then follow the woodland track as it veers from side to side and falls and rises. Some of the descents are on the steep side, but supported by handrails in a couple of places, and steps at the end.		
45	145	Meeting a road, turn right down along it.	567 531	
46	146	[Map point] Turn left through a MKG. Enjoy the stunning view to the right.		
47	151	At a wooden kissing gate, pass the NT's sign declaring 'Ightham Mote'. (But there is still well over a mile to go!)		6.53
48	155	[Map point] Go ahead past an information board. Here you are rejoining Ightham Mote's 'Green Route' which has come in from the left.		
49	156	Follow the track as it turns right, soon going down steps.		
50	157	And keep following it as it turns left at the bottom.		
51	164	Ignore the track coming in from the left, and continue ahead following the waymarks, leaving the main body of trees behind and walking along a broad, rough roadway.		7.15
52	172	Swing left with the increasingly broad roadway.		
53	173	After passing buildings, turn right along the road.	584 534	
54		[Map point] Part company with the Greensand Way by turning sharp left into the grounds of Ightham Mote (still following its 'Green Route').		
55	174	Follow the roadway as it swings right, uphill.		
56	176	... And to the left at the top. From this point you can go ahead to reach the starting point by simply following the roadway straight on, ignoring everything which is on your left, eventually passing through a pair of overflow parking areas. <i>However, there are several reasons why you might wish to turn left: first come the toilets (currently open) and the café; then the 'Reception' entrance to the paying areas (everything on our route is free of charge); and then the main car parks.</i>		
57	180	If you have nevertheless carried straight on, you reach the starting point of the route at the 'Give Way' sign.	584 538	7.91

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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 - 14	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	19, 23	2
Quiet road \$\$	2, 9-10, 16, 21c, 41, 45, 53-56	12
Open field with livestock	27b, 31-33a, 34-36, 38	16
Edge of field with livestock	28-30	2
Field (or edge) without livestock **	20a, 22,	3
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	3a, 3c, 20c, 21b, 24-25a, 27a, 39-40, 46, 49-50a, 50c-52	24
Woods	1, 3b, 4-8, 11-15, 17-18, 20b, 21a, 25b-26, 33b, 37, 42-44, 47-48, 50b	41

** 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 (3) – Details noted in September 2016, but **subject to frequent change:**

The stiles in Directions **38** and **39** have easy gaps.

In the stile in **44** both climbs are about 12 ins. There are gaps to the sides, but beware nearby barbed wire!