

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

From rolling hills to bustling market towns, the South Downs National Park's landscapes cover 1,600km² of breathtaking views, hidden gems and quintessentially English scenery. A rich tapestry of wildlife, landscapes, tranquillity and visitor attractions, weave together a story of people and place in harmony.

For your guide to everything there is to see and do in the National Park visit southdowns.gov.uk/discovery-map

Keep up to date with the latest news and events from the South Downs National Park. southdowns.gov.uk/newsletter



YOUR COUNTRYSIDE CODE: RESPECT. PROTECT. ENJOY.

Respect other people

- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Keep to the paths unless on Open Access Land



Protect the natural environment

- Take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs



Overlooking the River Itchen
© SDNPA/Mischa Haller

RIVER ITCHEN

One of the three main sources of the River Itchen lies just to the south of Cheriton. The Itchen is considered to be one of the best chalk rivers in Britain with its crystal clear waters filtered over thousands of years through the porous chalk of the South Downs.

Renowned for the quality of its fly fishing, access is restricted to the river and few footpaths run along its banks. Fortunately, within a three-mile stretch of the upper Itchen, five footbridges cross the river – this leaflet shows you how to make use of them to create a lovely circular walk. Don't forget your binoculars to spot lots of wildlife on the river.



The River Itchen
© 2020 Vision

SOUTH DOWNS WALKS CHERITON AND RIVER ITCHEN



SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

POINTS OF INTEREST

The walking routes in this leaflet take you through picturesque villages, along the beautiful South Downs Way and over the stunning River Itchen. Here are a few of the highlights you might come across.

CHERITON

This pretty Hampshire village has a church which sits upon an ancient barrow and the crystal clear River Itchen, which rises nearby, running alongside picturesque thatched cottages.

A decisive event in the English Civil War, the Battle of Cheriton took place on 29 March 1644 in the fields to the east of Cheriton. The Battle was between the Royalists led by the Earl of Forth and the Parliamentarians under Sir William Waller.

The Parliamentarians won, halting the Royalists advance to Winchester and forcing King Charles I's troops on the defensive, leading to their eventual defeat in 1645.

HINTON AMPNER

While exploring the area, walkers can see Hinton Ampner House & Garden. A fine example of 20th century design, the gardens were largely designed and planted by the last owner of the estate, Ralph Dutton. The whole estate was gifted to the National Trust on Ralph Dutton's death in 1985. For more information visit nationaltrust.org.uk.

In Hinton Ampner village there is a small church, which dates from the 12th century. It contains lovely stained glass and two poignant memorials to children.

CHURCH IN THE WOOD

Bramdean church dates from the 12th century, with Victorian additions. Known locally as the 'Church in the Wood', this charming tin church stands on Bramdean Common and was originally built for the charcoal burners who made their living on the common in the late 19th century.

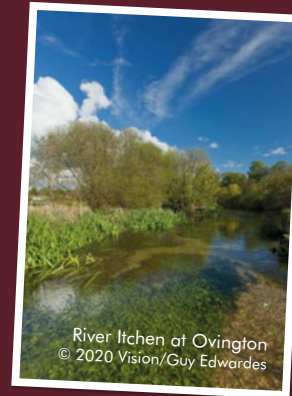
ITCHEN ABBAS

This village's charming setting on the River Itchen is said to have been the inspiration of "The Water Babies" by Charles Kingsley, who visited the village regularly in the Victorian era. Its attractive small Victorian church replaces a Norman

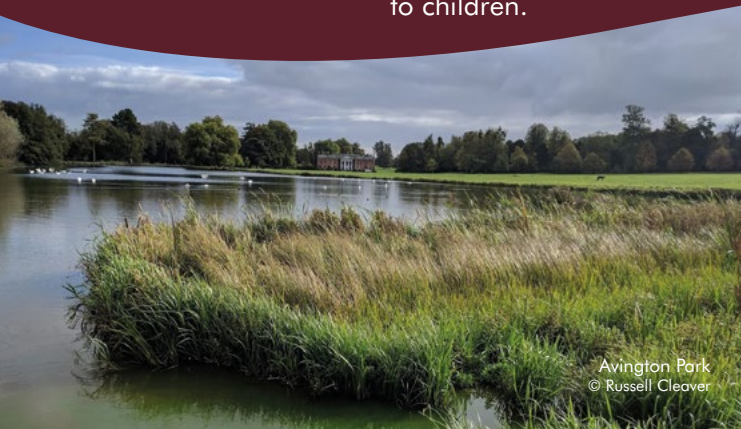
original but the ancient yew alongside is probably the oldest feature on site.

ITCHEN STOKE

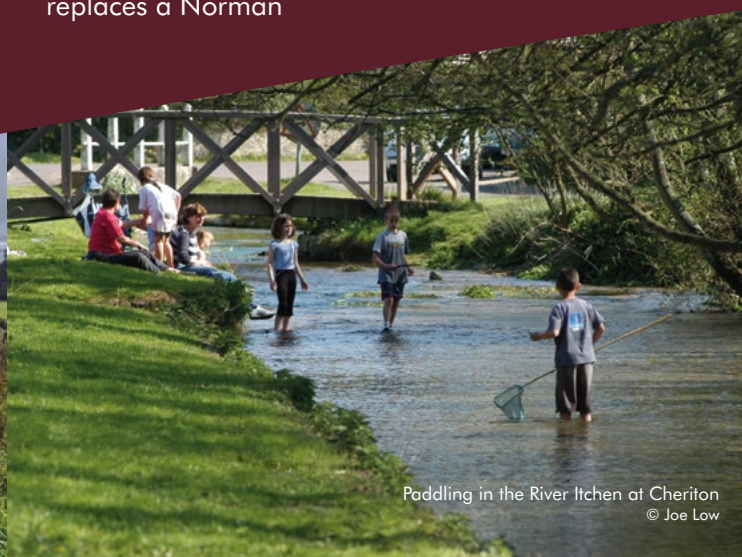
A hamlet with a lot of charm, the tall, elegant church is designed with a French influence, unlike the more prosaic cottage opposite, built out of huge flints. How did the builder ever construct its straight lines and corners?



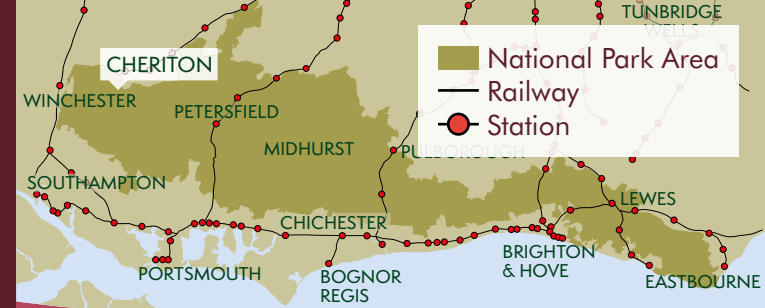
River Itchen at Ovington
© 2020 Vision/Guy Edwardes



Ovington Park
© Russell Cleaver













Paddling in the River Itchen at Cheriton
© Joe Low



FIND YOUR WAY

Follow the arrows on waymarkers.

- Footpath  
- Bridleway  
- Restricted byway  
- Byway  
- Open access land  National Trail Acorn 

TAKE THE LEAD

For a safe and fun visit with your dog please remember to keep them on a lead around livestock, horses and wildlife. Always bag and bin your dog poo – any public bin will do!

GETTING HERE

There is very limited parking in these villages so please use public transport where possible. Visit traveline.info to plan your journey.

CONTACT

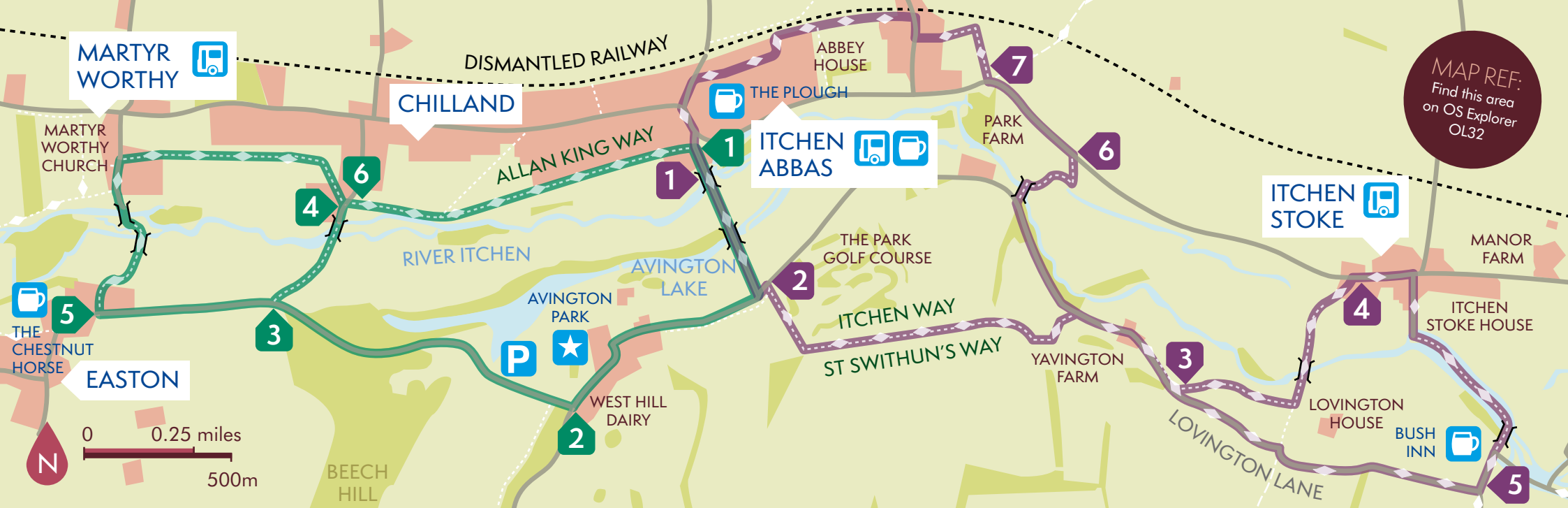
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RIVER ITCHEN CIRCULAR WALKS

TRAIL:

DISTANCE:
4 miles (6.4 km)

ALLOW: 2 hours

GRADIENT:

Mainly level

PATH:

Loose surface, can be muddy.
River footbridges may be slippery.

TRAIL:

DISTANCE:
5 miles (8 km)

ALLOW: 2.5 hours

GRADIENT:

Some minor inclines, mainly level

PATH:

Loose surface, can be muddy.
River footbridges may be slippery.

1 From Itchen Abbas, pass the little church and cross the rivers by the road bridges. Then turn right to Avington.

2 Follow the road through the village, then turn right into Avington Park enjoying views of the mansion at the lakeside.

3 Leave by the road and take the next footpath right at the edge of the wood to cross the river to Chillland.

4 A few steps up the road, turn left and head west along a footpath towards Martyr Worthy church. Here drop down to cross the river by footbridges to reach Easton.

5 Turn left at the road and head east to cross the river, back again to Chillland.

6 Now turn right along a footpath running beside a tall brick wall. This path eventually opens out at a lovely spot on the river where the path forks in two. Follow the right fork back to Itchen Abbas.

1 Start at Itchen Abbas following signs to the church and Avington Park – cross the river by the road bridges and turn left at the road junction.

2 Take the next right, up a road and footpath towards a golf club. Continue down to a lane and past Yavington Farm.

3 Just beyond the farm, take the footpath left to the river and cross by footbridge to Itchen Stoke.

4 At the road turn right, then right at the crossroads down to the river. Follow the path beside the river then cross the footbridge to the 'Bush Inn' at Ovington.

5 Walk uphill, turning right at a lane continuing back beyond Yavington Farm – take the next footpath right. Using the footbridge cross the river then continue through a wetlands reserve to the road.

6 Cross to a fingerpost, then follow the hedge towards Itchen Abbas. At the layby take the footpath right which zig-zags up to Baring Close.

7 Continue to Rectory Lane, then turn right. Take the next footpath left to follow the path beside the old railway line then out through houses, past the school and down to your start point.



CHERITON

TRAIL:

DISTANCE:
10 miles (16 km)

ALLOW: Over 4 hours

GRADIENT:

Some steady climbs

PATH:

A mix of gravel and grassy paths

MAP REF:
Find this area
on OS Explorer
OL32

1 From the village hall in Cheriton, take the signposted path to the church. After the church gate turn right and follow the grass path to the end of the churchyard. Proceed through the kissing gate to Hill Houses Lane. Turn left (Ithen Way) and after 100 yards turn right through the chicane.

2 Continue on the footpath through fields with the river on your right, through the gates towards a tall, lone pine tree.

3 Take the track down to Cheriton Mill to the road. Turn right (Wayfarer's Walk), walk to the road junction and then up Prite Lane opposite. Where this track ends, turn right onto Hinton Lane and head south-east, keeping left at the fork in the track.

4 Broad Lane is one of several green lanes which featured in the 1644 Battle of Cheriton. Continue across Badshear Lane and Cheriton Track.

5 Where the track ends, cross the A272 and, where the road turns left, keep right to the rear gates of Hinton Ampner. Your path (part of the Wayfarers Walk) is on the left. It skirts the edge of the estate before rising across parkland towards Kilmeston village.

5A *Shortcut: As you skirt Hinton Ampner estate, turn right at the path crossroads waymarked 'Ithen Way'. Pass in front of Hinton Ampner House and at a minor road turn right. Head north on the road, which leads back to the A272. Cross over and continue through Cheriton village to the church.*

6 Go straight ahead towards Kilmeston until you emerge at a lane. Cross to a Wayfarer's Walk footpath and continue to another lane. Turn right on the

road and head for the road junction. Opposite, enter a kissing gate and proceed through three more kissing gates, then continue across two large fields before slowly rising to join the South Downs Way (SDW). Turn right at the roadside and head west using the road.

7 Turn right at the Milbury's Inn. After 100 yards turn left into a quiet lane following the SDW. Leave the lane at a sharp right bend, continuing ahead along the SDW (Holden Lane track). Follow it to the A272, then cross and walk up to a short stretch of downland. Go through the gate and turn right along the SDW.

8 Follow the hedge on the right to a gate where you pass through, leaving the SDW to join a restricted byway. Go through a copse and keep left at the fork staying on the restricted byway onto Honey Lane.

9 Turn right at the junction with a road and continue to Hill Houses and back down to Cheriton.

KEY:

- Point of interest
- Pub
- Bus stop
- Parking
- Trail point
- Road
- Bridges

- National Trail
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Restricted Byway
- Woodland
- Buildings