

The Leather Bottle and Whitewater Valley, Hook, Hampshire



Moderate Terrain

3 miles
Circular
1.5 to 2
hours

071213



Access Notes

1. The walk has just a few gentle climbs and descents throughout and some of the field paths can be quite muddy after rain and in winter.
2. There are several stiles along the way and these could be a challenge for less able people as some are quite tall and others are a little rickety and unstable. All the stiles do, however, have open fence surrounds which should be easy for most dogs to pass through.
3. There are a couple of sections of road walking so take care of any traffic. A couple of the fields are large open pastures and, whilst there wasn't any livestock present when we walked, there's a chance you may come across cattle here.



The Leather Bottle is a classic old village inn, providing relaxed comfortable surroundings for refreshments before or after your walk.

A 3 mile circular pub walk from the Leather Bottle in Mattingley, Hampshire. The walking route is really delightful with chance to enjoy a pretty avenue lined with lime trees, open fields, the banks of the beautiful River Whitewater and a spectacular timber-framed church.

Getting there

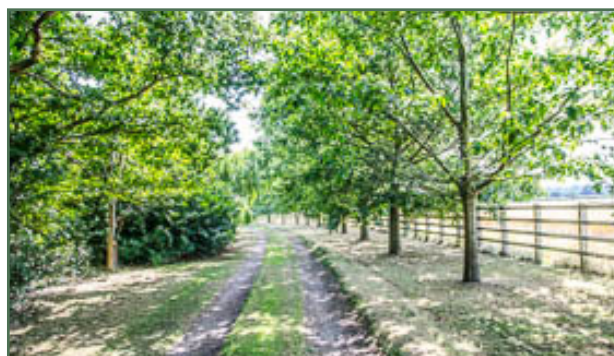
Mattingley is situated on the B3349 north of Hook. The walk starts and finishes at the Leather Bottle which is on the main B3349 road, on the right hand side if you are travelling north. There is a large car park alongside the pub.

Approximate post code **RG27 8JU**.

Walk Sections



Start to River Whitewater



Leave the pub car park back to the road and turn left along the grass verge with the road on your right. After just a few yards turn left into the gravel entrance to Bartlett's Farm, and take the right-hand of the two driveways, marked as a footpath. Cross the (very tall) stile and keep ahead on the gravel and grass driveway.

Pass through the metal gate ahead and turn immediately left and then right through a wooden gate (with stile alongside) to join the next long grass avenue. This pretty avenue is lined with a long row of beautiful lime trees. At the end of the avenue pass through the gate ahead and turn immediately right along the right-hand edge of the large open pasture.

At the far end you'll see two paths ahead. Take the left-hand of the two which goes over an old wooden footbridge across the River Whitewater. The River Whitewater rises as springs near Greywell and flows north-east through



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Hampshire where it finally merges with the River Blackwater near Swallowfield before flowing on to the River Loddon. It flows over chalk and has very little pollution making it a haven for wildlife and home to a very healthy fish population including brown trout.

Whitewater House, includes beautiful topiary trees and barn outbuildings topped with a pretty white dovecote. You'll emerge to the T-junction in the centre of Diple, with the gates to the impressive Diple House opposite.

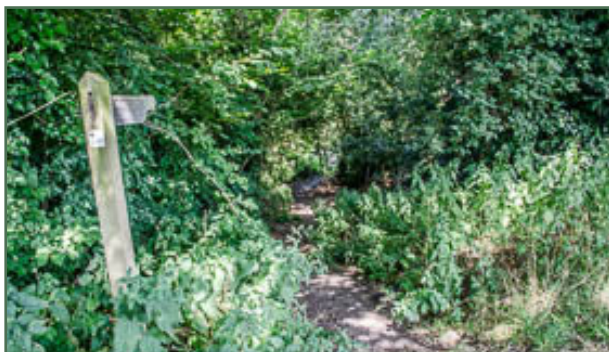
1 ➔ 2 River Whitewater to Woodland Path



At the far side of the bridge, cross the (rickety) stile into the next pasture. Cross this at 1 o'clock to reach the gate in the far right-hand corner. Pass through the gate (or stile alongside) to reach a crop field. Cross this at 11 o'clock to reach the top left-hand corner. At the top, turn left along the grass track and follow this ahead and then swinging right through a clearing containing an old shed. Keep straight ahead on the gravel track passing alongside a number of old oak trees.

Pass through the gap alongside a gate and keep ahead on the now stone surfaced track to reach a T-junction with a quiet tarmac road. Turn left along the road edge taking care of any occasional traffic. Follow the quiet lane gently downhill until it bends sharp right. At this point fork left to keep straight ahead onto the footpath into woodland.

2 ➔ 3 Woodland Path to Diple T-junction



Pass through the small section of trees and you'll emerge to the corner of a crop field. Keep straight ahead to follow the left-hand edge of a large crop field. Continue past the first section of trees on your left and keep ahead past the grass clearing now on your left. Immediately after this clearing you'll notice a footpath crossing your path. Turn left here down the edge of the grass clearing with the trees and hedge directly on your right. Towards the bottom of the slope dog-leg right and left to join the path which runs in between the small hedge and the trees.

Soon the path continues with garden fences each side. Keep ahead on the gravel driveway passing Woodside Cottage, a large white cottage, on the right. Follow the driveway as it swings right, passing another row of properties on the right. At the end of the gravel drive, bear right to follow the tarmac lane passing a number of pretty cottages on the left. The final property,

3 ➔ 4 Diple T-junction to Church Farm



Turn left for just a few paces and then turn immediately right after Diple House, through a partially hidden gate with a footpath sign. Follow the right-hand edge of this grass common. About two thirds of the way along, where the first fenced section of garden on the left ends, turn left across the common passing by a collection of young trees on the left.

You are in the grounds of Diple Mill which was built in the 16th century and straddles the River Whitewater. Corn was ground here until 1921 when it was converted into a private residence. The full grounds, which include a grotto, hothouse and wild meadows, are open to the public a few Sundays each year as part of the National Garden Scheme.

You'll pass to the left of a beautiful stone arch gateway – the entrance to the courtyard garden. Keep straight on crossing a gravel path and then a wooden sleeper bridge. Fork left here, over a narrow concrete footbridge with a white cast iron railing, which crosses the River Whitewater. Immediately afterwards turn right and follow the edge of the meadow with the river on the right.

In the field corner keep straight ahead to cross a wooden footbridge and pass through the kissing gate into a grass pasture. Keep ahead along the right-hand field edge with the river still down to the right. Half way along the field the path veers left across the centre of the pasture to reach the wide metal gate on the far side.

Pass through the gate, go over the concrete bridge and keep straight ahead on the grass track with beautiful hedgerows each side. As you pass through an open gateway, follow the track as it swings hard right to reach Church Farm on the right-hand side.

4 ➔ 5 Church Farm to End

A few paces beyond the farm, turn left through the wooden kissing gate. Pass through a number of yew trees and you'll reach the spectacular Mattingley Church.

The current church was built towards the end of the 15th century and has a distinctive construction of timber frame filled with herringbone brickwork. The bricks, which were made as parallelograms not oblongs, seem to have been designed specifically for the herringbone work and it is thought they were fired on nearby Hazeley Heath. The intricate stained glass window which sits behind the altar was erected in memory of Viscount Eversley who was Lord of the Manor here.

Keep ahead, passing the church building on the left, to reach the church porch. Fork right here down the tarmac path and pass through the gate out of the church yard. You'll emerge to a small gravel parking area. Cross this diagonally left and join a gravel driveway, passing to the right of the timber-framed white cottage.



Keep right at the fork, go ahead through a gravel front yard and then pass to the right of the brick building in front of you (a play centre) and its shed. Keep ahead on the woodland footpath. The long path emerges to a T-junction with a tarmac drive. Cross straight over and continue on the woodland footpath opposite.

As you emerge from this section of woodland, keep straight ahead along the gravel driveway to reach a T-junction with a quiet road, with the main road visible over to your right. Go ahead, crossing diagonally over the grass area opposite, heading for the brown

sign for the Leather Bottle on the main road. Merge onto the grass verge alongside the road, taking extreme care of any traffic. Continue for just 150 yards to reach the Leather Bottle on the left for some well deserved hospitality.

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

