



Longparish Pub Walk

Distance: 6¼ km=4 miles

easy walking

Region: Hampshire

Date written: 18-aug-2012

Author: Botafuego

Last update: 17-dec-2016

Refreshments: *The Cricketers, The Plough(?)*

Map: Explorer 131 (Andover) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

Problems, changes? *We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org*

Public rights are restricted to printing, copying or distributing this document exactly as seen here, complete and without any cutting or editing. See *Principles* on main webpage.

Village, pubs, woodland, meadows

In Brief

This pub walk starts with a question: which is the better pub? Unusually for this site, we've done the walk but have not visited either *The Cricketers* or *The Plough*. Instead we interviewed the inhabitants of Longparish. Opinion is even. Both were rated "pretty good". The new management under TV chef James Durrant took over *The Plough* creating both anticipation and uncertainty. In December 2015, he closed *The Plough* announcing that his gastro pub formula "doesn't work". In 2016, Allen Watts, landlord of the *Lunar Hare* in Andover saw its potential and decided to take over the pub. He declared "we are doing a few little refurbishments, and some painting and decorating at *The Plough*; we are turning it back into a beautiful, country, village pub." We'll see. Please, visitor, use the *feedback* facility to let us know what you find. Both inns serve food and booking may be necessary. (For *The Cricketers*, ring 01264-720-335; for *The Plough*, ring 01264-720-358.)

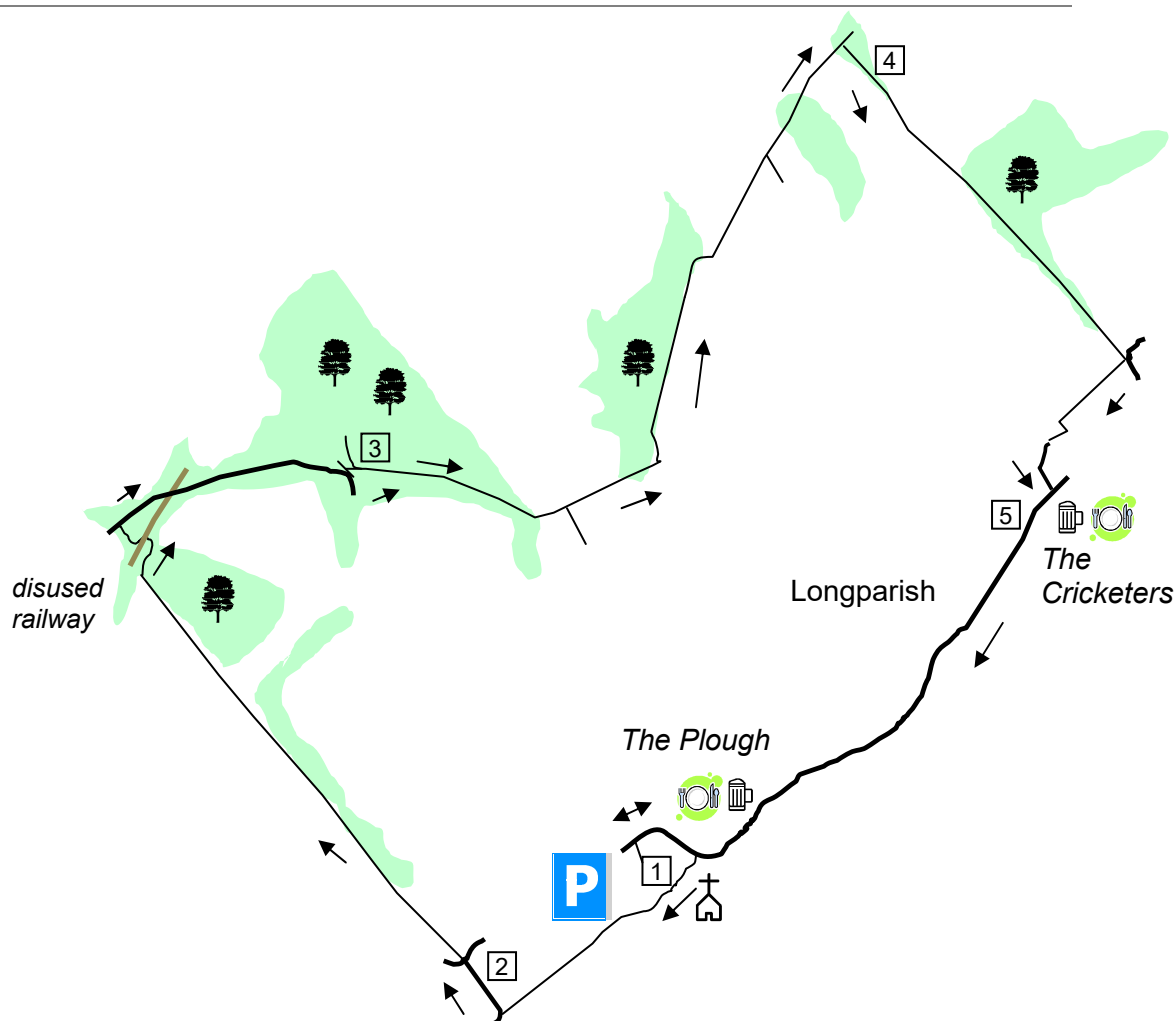


There are no nettles on this walk but there *are* some brambles, so shorts may be risky. Good shoes are adequate. Your dog can come too.

The walk begins in **Middleton**, the central village of Longparish, near Andover, Hampshire, **postcode SP11 6PA**. Park in the **village hall car park**, which is on the right when coming from the A303, just before the right bend before the church. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

Longparish is certainly well named. It wasn't called that until the middle 1500s. It also contains the hamlets of East Aston, West Aston, Middleton (the central village with the church) and Forton.

The Walk



- 1** Go out to the road, turn **right** and follow it round the right bend. At the next left bend, go **right** on a drive to the church. *Note the stocks!* The church is well worth visiting. *St Nicholas church was built in a mixture of styles, late Norman (the priest's door), late English (the chancel arch), decorated (the aisles) and perpendicular (the west tower). The most mysterious item is on the south wall of the chancel: a monument known as the Easter Sepulchre.* Turn **left** by the porch on the south side and go through another lichgate and veer **right** along the grass beside the River Test. Continue through a swing-gate into a pasture. *You are on part of the Test Way, a 79-km (49-mile) long-distance footpath from Walbury Hill in Berkshire (the highest point in the South East) to Eling, near Southampton. The grand building over on the right is Middleton House.* Leave the pasture via a swing-gate onto a lane and turn **right** on it.
- 2** The lane leads to the main road. Go straight over the road, through a swing-gate and along the right-hand side of a large field. You pass several field boundaries. After near 1 km, before you reach a line of trees, go **right** on a narrow path into woods. Your path veers left, goes down to cross the disused railway and veers left again up the bank. You reach a tarmac lane. Turn **right** on the lane, shortly going over the disused railway. You pass a farm on your left and reach a right bend. Here, at the bend, squeeze past a metal gate on your **left** into woods. Cross a rough track to meet a wide gravel track at a wide bend.

3 Turn **right** on the wide track. You pass a green arrow confirming that you are once again on the Test Way. After some more woodland, the track comes out into the open. Ignore a track on the right here, thus leaving the Test Way, and continue with a field on your right. Stay on this sandy gravelly track ignoring all turnings off as it wheels left. About 800m after you left the Test Way, you will notice a fingerpost pointing right across the field as you approach a line of trees ahead. Ignore the fingerpost and continue past the line of trees. After another small field, you quickly reach a second line of trees. Immediately before these trees, turn **right** on a woodland track which may be unsigned.

4 You pass a wood on your left with a hollow. Your path runs between hedges with occasional views, under a shady canopy of trees. Later, there is a fence on your left and finally your path comes out to a road at a bend. Don't join the road but turn immediately **right** at a fingerpost on a footpath between fields. The path weaves left and right by a fence and comes into a residential road. Keep **left** along the road and follow it as it bends left to the main street opposite *The Cricketers*. There is also a general store at the corner. *The Cricketers is open 11-3, and 6.30-11. They boast "Food To Bowl You Over" and the menu is promising. Beer is Wadworth.*

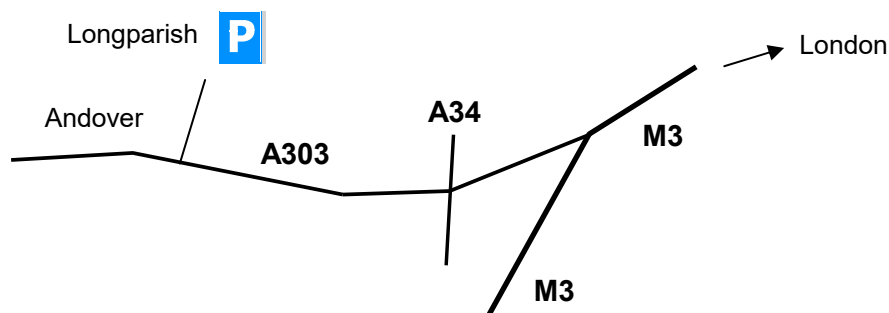


5 Turn **right** and enjoy a walk through this endearing village, amidst ever changing styles. Soon you pass *The Plough* on your right. *The Plough is under new management (as from March 2012 but see above) and has a good Sunday menu which is more sparing on other days. Beer is an excellent selection of Ringwood ales, including the sublime Boondoggle.* Continue, following the main street as it bends right and left, soon reaching the car park where the walk began.



Getting there

By car: Longparish is supremely easy to get to as it is signposted north off the A303 just east of Andover. The A303 branches off the M3 just west of Basingstoke. In fact, it is little more than a hour from London.



By bus/train: bus 26 from Winchester or Andover station, not Sundays. Check the timetables.

fancy more free walks? www.fancyfreewalks.org