



Longparish Pub Walk

Distance: 6¼ km=4 miles

easy walking

Region: Hampshire

Date written: 18-aug-2012

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Refreshments: *The Cricketers*

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

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

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Village, pubs, woodland, meadows

In Brief

This attractive long country village was blest with two pubs till recently. Now only the *Cricketers* survives. It was also threatened in 2015 at the same time as the *Plough*, but the victory, by a toss-up of fortune, has given it a new mission, after an overhaul by new landlords Kevin and Julie May. They have kept the cosy village pub character with Wadsworth ales and a menu which has been consistently positively received. The garden is a charmer but if you have to stay inside the bars are cosy. *The Cricketers is under new management (pre-2020) open from 12 am till late evening, now open Mondays too!* Walkers say they do a "great lunch". For enquiries, ring 01264-720-335.

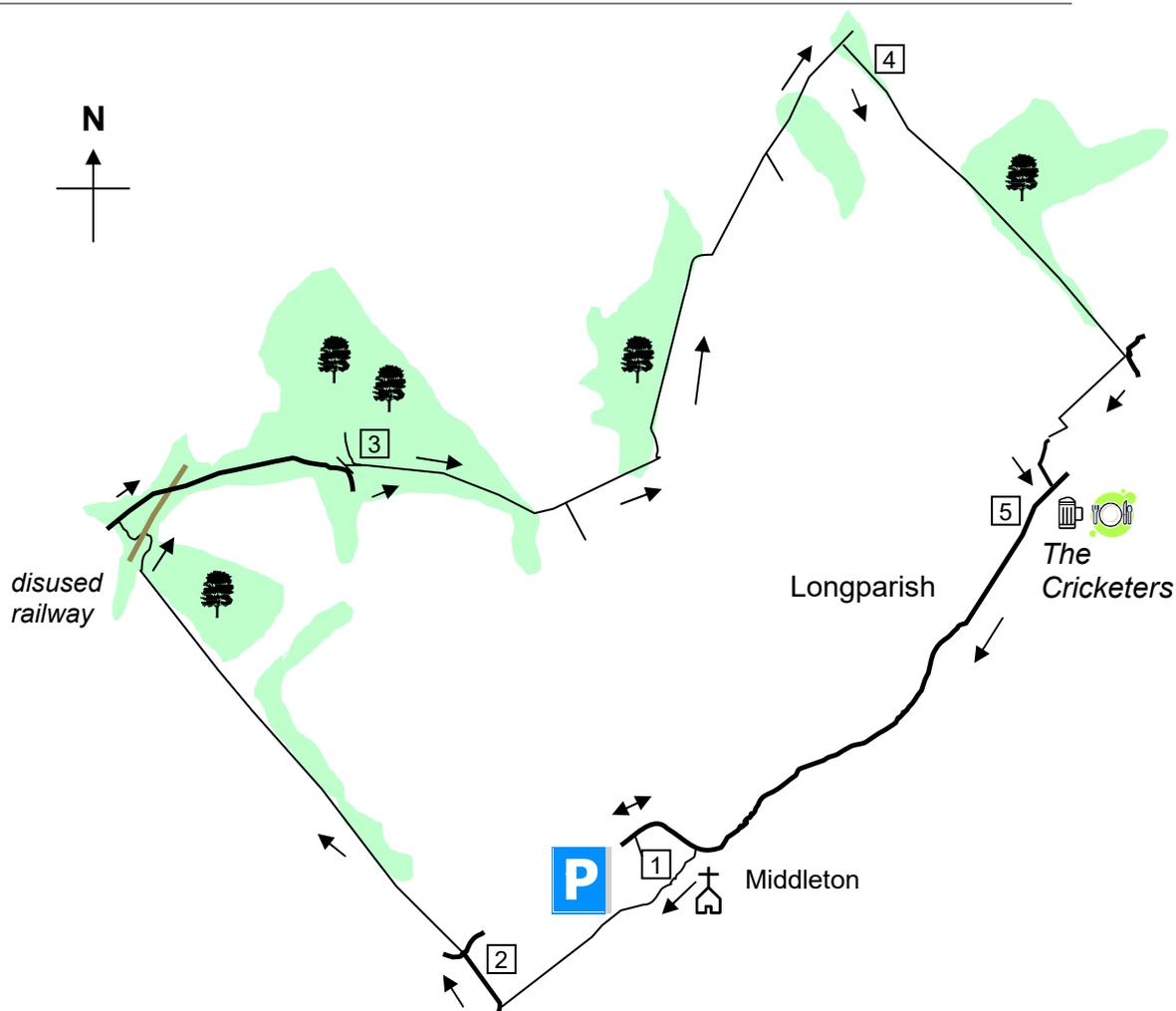


There are no nettles on this walk but there *are* some brambles, so shorts may be risky. Good shoes are adequate. Your dog can come too.

The walk begins in **Middleton**, the central village of Longparish, near Andover, Hampshire, **postcode SP11 6PA**. Park in the large public car park near the village hall, 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 From the car park in Middleton, 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, visited on the walk "Inkpen Beacon and Hampshire Villages" in this series) 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. Continue straight ahead passing a black post with a yellow arrow and, after about 1 km, just before you reach the far corner of the last field, turn **right** onto a narrow path into woods. Your path quickly veers left (as indicated by another black post with a yellow arrow), 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

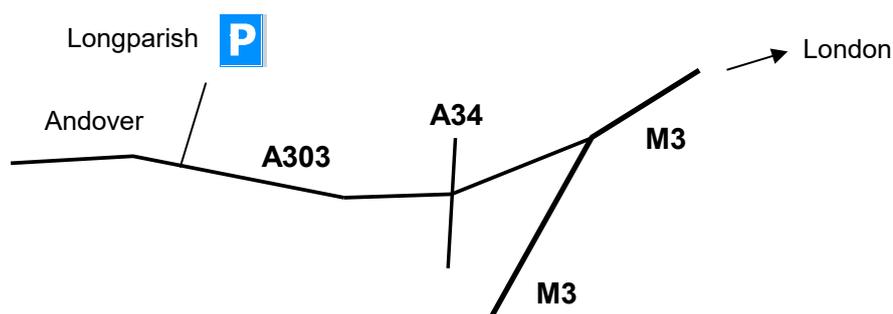
bend. Here, at the bend, squeeze past a metal gate on your **left** into woods. Cross a rough track to meet a wide gravel track at a wide bend.

- 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 is highlighted by a post with a black arrow.
- 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* (see intro). There is also a general store at the corner.
- 5 After possible refreshment, turn **right** and enjoy a walk through this endearing village, amidst ever changing styles. Walk straight ahead, passing the cricket ground and children's playground on your left, and the now closed-down (and in 2019 with no sign of re-opening) *Plough* pub on your right. 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.

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