



Upton Grey and Weston Patrick

Distance: 8½ km=5½ miles

easy walking

Region: Hampshire

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Refreshments: Upton Grey

Map: Explorer 144 (Basingstoke) *but the map in this guide should suffice*

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Historic villages, wide views, easy field paths, woodland, spring flowers

In Brief

This easy walk visits these two delightful villages, full of thatched and timbered houses, some mere cottages, some more opulent. Life in the village thrives, with the clatter-bang of young families. The surrounding country consists of wide open fields with a good section of woodland which you pass through. The field paths are all wide and excellent, with tarmac drives and well-surfaced tracks. Wild flowers and butterflies abound.

There is a legendary pub in the village. (To enquire at the *Hoddington Arms*, ring 01256-862371 or book via *open table*.)



In one section, the one through Privett Copse, you may find brambles and nettles in summer, making long clothing necessary in the summer season.

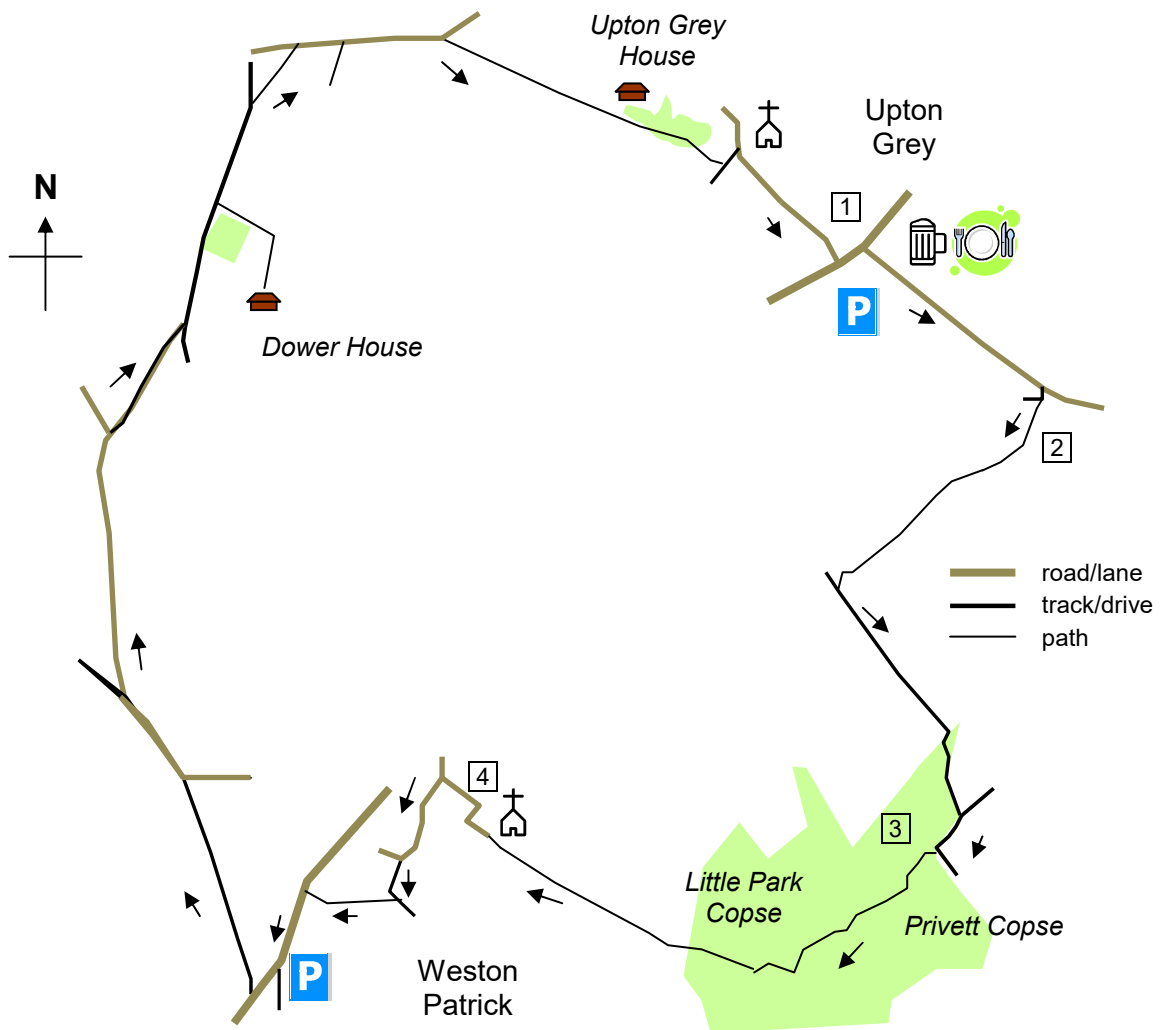
There is a longish section of woodland where you may encounter squishy conditions in the wetter months, but apart from this, strong shoes or trainers should be fine. There are two stiles, one on the high side but not wired up, so your dog should, on the whole, find this walk quite manageable.

The walk begins in the village of **Upton Grey**, about 7 miles from Basingstoke, Hampshire, www.w3w.co/foggy.lamps.corrode, postcode **RG25 2RL**. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk

The Grey family came from Normandy – or even from the Norse lands, because the family's founder was Anchetil de Greye and, spelt as "Ásketill", it means "God-Cauldron"; his father was Hugh Fitz Turgis, from "Thorgist", or "hostage to (the god) Thor". Their descendents took over Upton in the 1200s. The village is a merger of the manor of "Aoltone" ("higher farmstead"?) and the manor of "Odingetone" or "Hoddington" – a name you will see in several places, including the pub. After the Black Death of the 1300s (which halved the population) and the Civil War of the 1600s, the village was run by the Opie family for a century. A tomb bearing their coat-of-arms can be seen in the church. Incidentally, the Norman church is a treasure house of memorials and on no account to be missed. Upton Grey House, which you pass on the route, dates from the 1700s and was acquired by Lambeth vinegar distiller John Hanbury Beaufoy in 1800, using the fortune he made from pickling (an inestimable resource in the days before fridges).

For more practical matters, the village has a little shop which is open every day but closes at lunch time on Sundays. The pub will appear later.



1 Beginning in the centre of Upton Grey, with the duck pond on your left, walk along the main road towards the *Hoddington Arms* (a pleasing prospect for your return). Just before the pub, turn **right** on a side road, signposted *South Warnborough*. Follow the road uphill, gaining ever more extensive views. You come over the brow of the hill and the road begins to descend. You reach the entrance to *Hoddington Farm Cottages* where there is a signpost indicating a footpath. Turn **right** here and immediately cross to a large name board for the *Farm Cottages*. Don't worry about the big words *No Public Access* because there is a more courteous notice adjoining it indicating a half-hidden stile.



2 Go over the stile onto a path which runs between lines of recently-planted trees. (These trees will form a spectacular avenue for ramblers in the future.) Your wide grass path soon passes a crop field on your left and ends at a T-junction with a wide gravel drive. Turn **left** on the drive. The drive drops and rises and turns right. Ignore a private track on the right here and turn **left** to regain your direction. You reach a T-junction with a wide track lined with trees. Turn **right** on this track which shortly bends left. **Leave** the track here by keeping straight on along a woodland path.

3 Follow the trail through Privett Copse and Little Park Copse [Jul 2021: [clambering over fallen branches and a whole tree](#)], always keeping to the main winding path with bluebells and ramsons in springtime. [At the time of writing the mud had dried but in wetter conditions it should be possible to hop around any mushy sections](#). After mixed woodland, suddenly you are under tall beeches. You cross a narrow clearing. Finally you emerge from the wood into a broad crop field. Take a path straight ahead across the field, crossing under wires. You meet a farm track just as Weston Patrick comes into view, previously hidden in the dip. Keep straight on, passing through a farmyard, picking up a tarmac lane. The lane zigzags past the church of St Lawrence.



St Lawrence's church has a Norman doorway, but the rest was rebuilt by the Gothic-revivalist Victorian architect T H Wyatt, who is buried in the churchyard and whose family still live in the village. (See also St Katharines's church on the Savernake walk in Wiltshire.) The village's name comes from its Norman owner, back in the 1200s. The best-known son of the village is TV gardening supremo Monty Don who grew up here.

4 Continue round the lane, passing *Manor Farm House* (dating from the 1500s) and *St Lawrence House*. At the next junction, turn **left**, passing *Flint Cottage* and other dwellings, including the delectable *Wyatt House*. Stay in the lane until before it bends sharp right. **Leave** the lane here by turning **left** on a track, through the smaller of two wooden gates. Opposite a large metal gate and a horse pasture, turn **right** at a post with a yellow arrow onto a narrow footpath. The path runs beside a crop field on your left and comes down, via a heavy metal barrier, to a road. Turn **left** on the road. On your left in 200m is a rough "layby", capable of accommodating a car or two, and useful as an alternative starting point. Ignore a bridleway on your left here and continue uphill for another 50m to a junction.



5 Turn sharp **right** at the junction onto a track marked as a byway. After 600m between fields, you meet a tarmac lane. Keep straight on uphill. In 200m, ignore a bridleway on your left and stay on the tarmac. In late spring, cowslips are abundant. As you approach the top of a rise, ignore a footpath sign on your right and, as you pass some large metal gates, ignore a permissive path on your right. As the lane begins to descend you come

to a fork. **Leave** the tarmac here by taking the **right** fork, a level bridleway, passing some black metal gates. The path runs past crop fields, tree plantations, horse paddocks and woodland. You join a spick-and-span tarmac drive and pass a farm on your left. Soon on your right is a private drive leading to the *Dower House*. *Historically the aristocrat's equivalent of a granny annex, but this one is a palatial executive home with landscaped grounds.* Continue another 300m or so to where the drive abruptly bends left towards some steel gates. **Leave** the drive here by keeping straight on, on a bridleway. It leads out to a road,



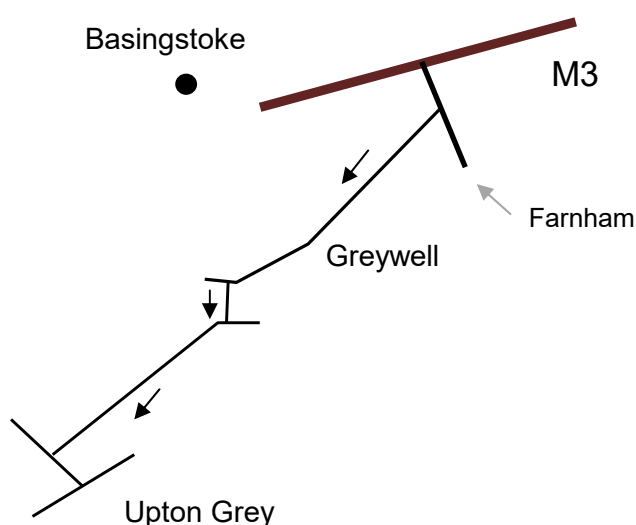
Avoid a byway opposite and turn **right** on this fairly quiet minor road. You have good views left as you pass the main entrance to the *Dower House*. As you descend a gentle gradient, the road elbows left. **Leave** the road here by going **right** over a stile, onto a wide green path with a tree plantation on your right. At the end of the plantation, keep straight ahead on a narrow path beside the garden fence of *Upton Grey House*. You now have the sight of Upton Grey ahead, as well as extensive views right. At the end, turn **left** on a drive by a cottage and turn **right** on the road. *Immediately on your left is St Mary's Church.* Continue down the road into the village, passing the *Old Vicarage*, the *Old Bakery*, and the village shop, arriving at the duck pond, with the village inn beckoning on your left, back in the village of Upton Grey where the walk began.



The Hoddington Arms (known locally as "The Hodd") is both a community pub and a restaurant. Chris, Tom, Anita and Fallon have worked out a quite original menu. Try the Crab & Gruyere Soufflé starter, the Mushroom and Caramelised Onion Wellington and the Hodd Chicken Curry. For visitors who require outdoor dining, there is patio and garden space. Ales come from the Ringwood and Upham Breweries.

Getting there

By car: the easiest route to Upton Grey is from the M3 motorway. If coming from the London / M25 direction, come off at exit 5 (Hook). Turn **left** as for *Farnham* and quickly filter and turn **right** as for *Greywell*. Go through this excellent village, past the *Fox and Goose*, and follow signs for Upton Grey – involving a **left** turn (*don't miss!*) and shortly a **right** at a T-junction.



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