

Mottisfont & Dunbridge to Romsey			Mottisfont & Dunbridge to Romsey (Short Walk)		
1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check	1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check
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Mottisfont & Dunbridge to Romsey

Start: Mottisfont & Dunbridge Station

Finish: Romsey station

Mottisfont & Dunbridge Station, map reference SU 318 261, is 112 km south west of Charing Cross and 25m above sea level; Romsey station, map reference 356 215, is 6 km south east of Dunbridge, 12 km north west of Southampton and 19m above sea level. Both are in **West Hampshire**.

Length: 22.6 km (14.1 mi), of which 5.0 km (3.1 mi) on tarmac or concrete, nearly half of that in Romsey.

Cumulative ascent/descent: 293/299m.

For a shorter walk, see *below* **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 4 out of 10

Time: 5 hours walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 10 hours.

Transport: Mottisfont & Dunbridge and Romsey stations are on the Bristol Temple Meads to Southampton Central (via Salisbury) Wessex Main Line. Journey times from Waterloo are from 111 minutes Mon-Sat (hourly service in each direction: either changing at Salisbury or at Southampton Central) and from 114 minutes Sun. Journey times from Romsey to Waterloo are from 102 minutes. Buy a Romsey return.

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train closest to 9.15 hours, but a later one for Shortcuts I and II.

OS Explorer Map: 131 (Romsey, Andover & Test Valley)

OS Landranger Map: 185 (Winchester & Basingstoke)

Walk Notes:

This walk explores woods and rolling chalk hills in the Dun and (Lower) Test Valleys of remote West Hampshire. An early highlight is the NT-owned (and ticketed) Mottisfont Abbey, a historical priory and country estate, with an arm of the River Test, Hampshire's longest and finest chalk stream, running through the stunning grounds, which also include a famous walled rose garden, trompe-l'oeil murals from Rex Whistler, and several lunch options. Walk back past the 12th century St. Andrews church, one of the few Grade I-listed churches, and follow the waymarked Mottisfont Estate Path. The route incorporates all the important features of the estate, mainly varied ancient woodlands – several of which are good bluebell woods – but also some managed for timber or coppicing, historical farmland and the Dun River Meadows. After lunch in Dunbridge the route gets a little more undulating, as the Test River is followed – mostly from a distance – all the way to Romsey, a picturesque market town. You pass all its sights: Romsey Abbey, a beautiful church the size of a cathedral, the War Memorial Park, the medieval King John's House and Tudor Cottage, some narrow historical lanes and an exhausting selection of tea and pub stops.

Three shorter options are described, one of which follows the original Book 1 version of this walk.

Walk Options:

Finish the walk after lunch at The Mill Arms in **Dunbridge** (11.1 km/6.9 mi).

Three other – mutually exclusive – **shortcuts** are possible.

Shortcut I reduces the walk by 9.7 km (6.0 mi), the ascent/descent by 176m and the rating to **1/10**;

Shortcut II reduces the walk by 8.1 km (5.1 mi), the ascent/descent by 110m and the rating to **2/10**.

Shortcut III reduces the walk by 4.1 km (2.6 mi), the ascent/descent by 48m and the rating to **3/10**.

Bus 36 (Lockerley to Romsey) stops in Dunbridge, Mottisfont and at the Bear & Ragged Staff pub early afternoon Tue and Thu.

Lunch (details last updated 22/11/2021)

At Mottisfont Abbey & Gardens (ticketed entry, free for National Trust members)

Mottisfont, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 0LP (01794 340 757, <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/mottisfont>).

...is located 1.6 km (1.0 mi) into the walk. Open 10.00-17.00 (-16.00 in winter), but not 24/25 December.

The Old Kitchen Café is located in the Victorian kitchens of the historic house. Choose from a varied lunch menu, all served on china. The Old Kitchen is licensed and offers outdoor seating in summer.

Coach House Café – located in the stables – is perfect for light lunches, snacks and treats, to eat in or take away, including cakes and drink. Everything is served on compostable or recyclable tableware.

Stables Ice Cream Open on sunny days only.

Walled Garden Kiosk Open at peak times only and an ideal spot to sit outside and enjoy light bites.

Along the Walk Route

The Mill Arms Barley Hill, Dunbridge, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 0LF (01794 340 401, <https://www.millarmsdunbridge.co.uk/>). The Mill Arms is located 11.1 km (6.9 mi) into the full walk (and 7.0 km (4.4 mi), if using Shortcut III) and an 19th c. inn with flagstone floors, oak beams, open fire, conservatory and a three-tiered garden. President Carter once stayed here. Open all day every day. Food served Mon-Fri 12.00-14.30 and 17.30-20.30, Sat 12.00-20.30 and Sun 12.00-16.00.

Kimbridge Barn Tearooms and Café Kimbridge Lane, Timsbury, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 0LE (01794 339 444, <https://www.idealcollection.co.uk/venues/kimbridge-barn/>). The Kimbridge is located 60m off-route the shortest possible route, 1.7 km (1.1 mi) into it, or 280m more if taking Shortcut II. Open 09.00-17.00 every day.

The Bear and Ragged Staff Stonemmarsh, Michelmersh, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 0LB (01794 368 602, <http://www.bear-and-ragged-staff.co.uk/>). The Bear & Ragged Staff is 800m off-route of Shortcut I, 2.5 km (1.5 mi) into the shortest walk and 280m more if taking Shortcut II. Open all day every day. Food served all day every day. A Fuller's Pub on a busy road.

Tea (details last updated 22/11/2021)

Park Café Memorial Park, The Meads, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8BB (01794 513 360). Located 2 km from the end of the walk. Open 10.30-16.30 w/days (Mar-Oct only) and 10.30-17.00 w/ends.

Café Fresh 9 Market Place, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8NB (01794 522 602).

No. 5 Bell Street 5 Bell Street, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8GY (01794 514 045, <https://www.no5bellstreet.co.uk/>).

The Tudor Rose 3 Cornmarket, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8GB (01794 512 126).

The White Horse Hotel 19 Market Place, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8ZJ (01794 512 431, <https://www.whitehorsehotelromsey.co.uk/>).

The Exchange 14 Market Place, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8QS (01794 337 700, <https://theexchangeromsey.co.uk/>).

Josie's 15 Market Place, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8NA (01794 521 222, <https://www.josieswinecoffee.com/our-shops>).

The Phoenix Bar and Eatery 30-32 The Hundred, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8BW (01794 511 530, <https://www.thephoenixbarandeatery.co.uk/>).

The Old House at Home 62 Love Lane, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8DE (01794 513 175, <http://www.theoldhouseathomeromsey.co.uk/>). Fuller's Town & Local Pub of the Year on several occasions. Dating in part from the 17th Century.

Tea Cup 8 Latimer Street, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8DG (01794 523 009).

The Olive Tree 11 Latimer Street, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8DF (01794 503 444, <http://theolivetreeromsey.co.uk/>).

Dish. Deli and Kitchen 16 Latimer Street, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8DG (01794 513 663, <http://www.dishdelikitchen.co.uk/>).

Cork & Bean 2 Latimer Walk, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8LA (01794 518 095, <https://www.corknbean.co.uk/>).

Notes:

Mottisfont

The unusual name is probably derived from the Old English motes funta, meaning 'spring near the confluence' or 'spring of the moot' or possibly 'spring of the stone'.

Mottisfont & Dunbridge Railway Station

...is the second least frequently used station in Hampshire, serving the village of Dunbridge on the Wessex Main Line. The station building is now a privately-owned residence. It is the closest railway station to Mottisfont Abbey and the village of Mottisfont, and the station was renamed Mottisfont & Dunbridge in 2006 to reflect this. It was previously known simply as 'Dunbridge'. Mottisfont used to have a station of its own on the Andover to Romsey line, known as 'The Sprat and Winkle Line', which closed in 1964. From 2007 a new service began to serve Mottisfont & Dunbridge, from Salisbury to Southampton Central, via Romsey. An excellent brochure explaining the sights along this line can be found here:

<https://threeriversrail.com/publications/>

River Dun

The River Dun flows through the counties of Wiltshire and Hampshire. It rises in Wiltshire to the south-east of Salisbury near West Grimstead, and flows east into Hampshire before joining the River Test at Kimbridge, ultimately draining to the Solent. Its valley is followed by the Southampton to Salisbury railway.

Mottisfont Abbey and Gardens

Mottisfont Abbey is a historical priory and country estate. Sheltered in the valley of the River Test, the property is now operated by the National Trust. About 200,000 people visit each year. The site includes the historic house museum, regular changing art exhibitions, gardens (including a famous walled rose garden) and a river walk. Much of the surrounding land, which is part of the Estate, and some 64 houses in the surrounding villages are also in the care of the National Trust.

Originally an Augustinian priory founded in 1201, the word "Abbey" was added to the name by an 18th century owner, but is a misnomer. It is believed that the name was considered more romantic than the historically-correct "Priory". Mottisfont was converted into a house by William Sandys, Henry VIII's Lord Chamberlain, after the Dissolution of the Monasteries. He turned the church nave into the main body of the new mansion, building additional wings on either side. The building was extensively altered in the 1740s by an unidentified architect for Sir Richard Mill. In 1934 it was sold to a great-grandson of the 6th Duke of Bedford, Gilbert Russell, who – with his wife Maud – rearranged the interior, and commissioned a series of trompe-l'oeil murals from Rex Whistler in 1938-9. Whistler's murals imitate Gothic plasterwork and can be seen in the drawing room. There is also a groin-vaulted 13th century cellarium.

Maud Russell was passionate about art; she commissioned many pieces for her homes. She gifted the house and grounds to the National Trust in 1957, although continuing to live there until 1972. When she moved out most of the art and furniture was sold; the rooms are now furnished with antique pieces similar to those she owned. Also on display is a significant part of Derek Hill's collection of early 20th century artwork.

A new Welcome Centre and Coach House Café have been opened in February 2016.

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/mottisfont>

St Andrew's Church, Mottisfont

St. Andrew's is one of the few Grade I listed churches, with a red tiled roof and squat bell tower and has been described as 'a jewel among Hampshire village halls'. It is 12th century, built of flint and rubble, containing some of the oldest and finest stained glass in the county and a rare 17th century clock with no face and no pendulum, similar to a larger one to be seen in Salisbury Cathedral and in working order.

River Test

The Test is 64 km (40 mi) long and flows through downland from its source near Ashe, 10 km west of Basingstoke, to its estuary at Southampton, where it converges with the River Itchen to form Southampton Water. It is Hampshire's longest and finest chalk stream, world famous for its superb trout fishing.

Test Way

The Test Way is a waymarked 73 km (46 mi) long-distance walking route, taking you from the chalk downs at Inkpen along the Test Valley to Eling where its tidal waters flow into Southampton Water. The route features some very picturesque villages, water meadows, tidal marshes, steep hills and peaceful woodlands.

Dunwood Camp

...is an Iron Age hillfort of a size of ca. 0.2 hectare that occupies the summit of a sandy hill, north of Dunwood Manor, to the northwest of Romsey. The site lies at a summit of 93m AOD and has a single rampart (fortification) but no definite indication of a ditch and it is possible that this earthwork was never completed. Now part of an adjacent residential property's land with no permitted public access.

Sozo Ministries International

Located in the grounds of the former Dunwood Manor Golf Club (disbanded in 2012, the land sold in 2012-13), Sozo is a Christian Healing and Deliverance Ministry and registered charity founded in 1983, offering "help to people in all forms of spiritual bondage". Sozo is a Greek word meaning "saved, healed, delivered."

Romsey

Romsey, on the River Test, is a picturesque market town and one of the principal towns in the Test Valley Borough. The lucrative woollen industry appears to have powered Romsey's growth during the Middle Ages, before being outcompeted by the North of England. Other fast-growing enterprises soon filled the gap with brewing, paper and sack making, all reliant upon water from the Test. Romsey was a reasonably large town for the early 19th century: its population was 4,274 in the first census of 1801, compared with just 8,000 for Southampton.

Romsey was the home of the 17th century philosopher and economist William Petty, the 19th century British prime minister Lord Palmerston (who lived at Broadlands, a large country estate on the southerly outskirts of the town), and the 20th century soldier and statesman Earl Mountbatten of Burma. Mountbatten was buried in Romsey Abbey after being killed by an IRA bomb in Ireland on 27 August 1979. Prince Philip was his nephew and upon his marriage to Elizabeth in 1947 they departed London for their honeymoon at Broadlands (as did Prince Charles and Diana in 1981).

Romsey is twinned with Battenberg (Hesse) in Germany, which gave its name to the Battenberg family, a branch of the ruling House of Hesse-Darmstadt, and – through it – the name Mountbatten used by members of the British royal family (Mountbatten being an anglicised, literal translation of Battenberg). Embley Park, a country estate located a little west of Romsey, was the home of Florence Nightingale. There are lots of plaques with poems dotted around the town centre as part of a Literary Trail, brochures are available in the Tourist Information near the Abbey. A useful source of information about Romsey is the Romsey Local History Society's website: <http://www.ltvias.org.uk/>

Romsey Abbey (The Abbey Church of St. Mary and Ethelflaeda)

What was to become Romsey Abbey was founded in 907. Nuns led by Elflaeda, daughter of Edward the Elder, son of Alfred the Great, founded a community – at his direction – in what was then a small village. Later, King Edgar re-founded the nunnery, about 960, as a Benedictine house under the rule of St. Ethelflaeda whose devotional acts supposedly included chanting psalms while standing naked in the freezing water of the River Test. The Vikings sacked Romsey in 993, burning down the church, but the village recovered, and the abbey was rebuilt in stone in about 1000. The Normans built the large current abbey that dominates the town and its surroundings (ca. 1120-40) on the site of the original Saxon church with stone from the Isle of Wight. It is one of the finest examples in Europe of late Norman architecture. Two treasures preserved from the earlier Saxon church are the carved stone roods or crucifixes, one within the church and one outside. During the Dissolution the abbey itself was saved from demolition because part of it was a parish church. This was because it had, in modern terms, become "dual use" in the sense that it contained a church within a church – a substantial section being dedicated to St Lawrence and used solely by the townspeople. They purchased the abbey from The Crown for £100 in 1544. Then the part of the abbey that had saved the abbey, the church of St. Lawrence, was demolished. It is a quintessentially English church building and the largest parish church in the county.

The most recent stained-glass window is celebrating Florence Nightingale. It was installed for her bicentenary. The exterior is decorated with over 400 carved stone corbels, often with tales to tell:

<http://romseys.wix.com/romseyabbeycorbels>

La Sagesse Convent

Owned by The Daughters of Wisdom, an international Congregation of Religious Women dedicated to the poor and orphaned, to teaching and nursing, the convent was supposedly the scene where a 'miracle' happened: the Blessed Louis Marie de Montford cured Sister Gerard of Calvary (i.e.: a nun was brought back from the dead by a saint who had herself died 200 years earlier).

Lord Palmerston's Statue

One of several statues in the country commemorating Henry John Temple, born on 20 October 1784 in his family's Westminster house to the Irish branch of the Temple family, who later became 3rd Viscount Palmerston, and served twice as Prime Minister in the mid-19th century. He was in government office almost continuously from 1807 until his death in 1865, beginning his parliamentary career as a Tory, switching to the Whigs in 1830, and concluding it as the first Prime Minister of the newly-formed Liberal Party from 1859. He is best remembered for his direction of British foreign policy through a period when Britain was at the height of its power. Although Palmerston wanted to be buried at Romsey Abbey, the Cabinet insisted that he should have a state funeral and be buried at Westminster Abbey, which he was, on 27 October 1865. He was only the fourth person not of royalty to be granted a state funeral (after Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Nelson, and the Duke of Wellington).

King John's House (and Tudor Cottage and Heritage Centre)

Located in one of Romsey's oldest thoroughfares, Romsey Heritage Centre encompasses three buildings and offers a fascinating insight into 13th century life, as well as beautiful period gardens: Medieval King John's House, containing 14th century heraldic graffiti and remains of a rare (animal) bone floor, Tudor Cottage complete with traditional tearoom and the Victorian Heritage Centre with recreated shop and parlour. The house was actually built in 1256 and therefore forty years after the death of King John, but analysis of the beams shows that many of them had been re-used for the 1256 building, so there might have been a property before then that was built for King John or his entourage.

WALK DIRECTIONS

Leave either platform of **Mottisfont & Dunbridge Station** towards the road and – with the recommended lunch stop on the full walk, **The Mill Arms**, down the left – *turn right* along a tarmac road pavement. In 75m you cross the **River Dun** and in a further 60m *turn right* through a wooden kissing gate, a signposted footpath, signed for '**Mottisfont Abbey & Village Centre**', your direction 70°. Head for an – initially hidden – wooden kissing gate at the right end of a row of trees at the top of the sloping field. In 230m walk through the gate into an arable field and *veer left* to cross it along a usually well-cleared path, diagonally to its far-right corner (30°). After 50m or so, the top of **St Andrew's Church, Mottisfont** becomes (just about) visible behind some trees in the distance half-right. In 230m leave the field through a wooden barrier in a hedge gap and continue between hedge and fence. In 20m you cross a tarmac path and go through a metal gate by **Mottisfont Estate Path marker stone 5** into a large grassy field.

Bear right across the field between lines of newly planted trees towards some houses in the village of **Mottisfont**, and in 230m go through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate and walk towards a road. In 40m *turn right* along **Mottisfont Lane** (**unless** you want to walk the main walk or the main walk with Shortcut III, **but cut out** a visit to the 12th century **village church**, the **River Test** and some **views of Mottisfont Abbey Gardens**, in which case *turn left* and pick up directions a few paragraphs below: "In 90m..."). In 70m *turn left* with **Church Lane** at a three-way junction, in 40m pass the Abbey staff car park on the left and in 65m reach the driveway to **St. Andrew's Church** (visited later) on your right. Continue along the road for 150m to a bridge over a side arm of the River Test. On this stretch you can then see **Mottisfont Abbey and Gardens** to your left behind a wooden fence. **Only if you want to visit the Abbey Gardens**, continue along the road, in a further 120m coming to the left turn leading – through the car park – to its entrance. **Else** re-trace your steps from the bridge over the Test to the church and *turn left* for a visit. Upon leaving the church, go straight ahead out of a wooden gate onto a tarmac lane opposite a thatched cottage.

Here you have a choice:

For Shortcuts I or II, *turn left* along the lane and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Shortcuts I & II**.

For the two longer walk options, *turn right* along the lane and then *turn left* along **Church Lane** to re-trace your steps to the other end of the village, where earlier you emerged from a grassy field onto the road and continue along **Mottisfont Lane**. In 90m Bengers Lane joins from the left by the historic entrance gate to the Abbey on the right.

Here you have a choice:

For a shortcut, *turn left* along the lane and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Shortcut III**.

For the main walk, continue in the same direction (the road is now called **Oakley Road**), with Mottisfont Abbey's red brick walled **rose garden** soon on your right. In 360m *turn right* with a **Test Way** signpost and a **Monarch's Way** sticker on a fence post along a fenced path (with a hedge on your right). Where the path bears left, you have views on the right over or through the hedge to **Mottisfont Abbey**. In 680m emerge through a wooden kissing gate onto a tarmac lane opposite **Oakley Farm**. *Turn left* along the lane (**but first** you may want to *turn right* for 60m to a bridge over the Test River for a **scenic spot**, and also a view of the '**Mottisfont Oak**,' which has a maximum girth of 10 meters, is estimated to be 800-1100 years old and still thriving).

In 200m *turn right* with the **Mottisfont Estate Path marker stone 6** through a gap to the left of a double metal field gate and continue along a car wide farm track between hedges. In 150m you enter **Queenmeadow Copse** – an oak woodland with an understorey of coppiced hazel. The track bears right around a deer-fenced area and then makes a left-and-right turn to leave the fence behind and in another 200m *turn left* at a three-way junction with a Mottisfont marker stone. In 230m follow the track to the left at a fence corner with a Mottisfont marker stone (about 50m before a tarmac lane) to continue along a grassy field boundary. In 280m *turn right* up a bank with a Mottisfont marker stone and cross the tarmac lane. Continue with **Clappgate Copse** on your right (a very fine bluebell wood in season). In 150m you *turn right* with the wood boundary, now with a barbed wire fence on your left. In 700m – at the bottom of a slight drop, and with a stream running left to right in front of you – ignore a stile on the right into the wood and *turn left* with a Mottisfont marker stone, now with a fence on your left. In 150m ignore field gates on either side and in 40m enter **Great Copse** through a metal gate (by **Mottisfont Estate Path marker stone 7**).

You follow a winding path through this copse for 550m: in 130m you cross a streamlet down from the left and *veer up left*, in 200m *veer right* with a marker post (where a broad path joins from the left), in 90m pass a bench on your right, and in 100m a car wide forest track joins from the left, as you *turn right* along the track with a Mottisfont marker stone. In 40m pass to the right of a metal field gate and in another 40m you reach a tarmac lane. *Turn left* up the lane (**Jerrem's Hill**), immediately ignoring the tarmac **Back Lane** turning left. The road changes name to **Spearywell Road** and in 160m you *turn right* along a fenced path with a Mottisfont marker stone along the fringe of a wood. In 120m enter the wood and *turn up left* into **Spearywell Wood** (which is managed for timber) with **Mottisfont Estate Path marker stone 8**. In 100m ignore a car wide forest track turning right but in 150m (ignore a left fork en route) *turn right* at a T-junction with a broader forest track with a Mottisfont marker stone.

In 180m *fork left* at a three-way junction of tracks, soon passing a yellow marker post, and in 240m *turn left* with a Mottisfont marker stone. In 250m ignore a left turning track signposted to **Spearywell Car Park** to continue in the same direction uphill with a Mottisfont marker stone and a green marker post. In 150m you *turn right* with the path at a junction with a narrow path from the left, along the fringe of the wood, now with **Cadbury Wood** on your right and **Cadbury Farm** visible across a field on your left. In 250m pass a red marker post and reach a staggered five-way footpath-junction. The path from the left is **Shortcut III**. *Turn half right* down into the wood (225°) with a Mottisfont marker stone on your right-hand side, as well as with an estate path marker, a red topped marker post (ignore a footpath to the right).

*) In 260m continue in the same direction at a crosspaths with **Mottisfont Estate Path marker stone 2** and a red marker post on your left, in 260m ignore a track joining from the left and **[!]** in 100m *turn left* in a clearing with a Mottisfont marker stone, where a footpath turns right towards a bridge across a stream. Continue up a broad forest track. In 200m a track joins from the left (with red and yellow markers on a wooden post) and in 80m you leave the forest and *turn right* with a Mottisfont marker stone (at an unmarked four-way footpath junction) along a wide grassy track with bushes on your left and an arable field behind. In 130m continue with a wire fence on your right. Follow this path (which has very mud-prone sections), now with trees on your left, ignoring ways off, through a few short turns, always with a field on your right, and with a stream on your left after 280m, until – in another 300m – you go through an **underpass under the railway line**. In 100m *turn left* through a metal kissing gate **[!]** **just before** a two-railed bridge over the **Dun River**. Now walk through the **Dun Meadows** for 1.6 km all the way to **Dunbridge** – and the lunch stop **The Mill Arms**.

In more detail: follow a clear path (95°) diagonally across the – sometimes partially flooded – meadow, using a couple of plank bridges along the way to cross ditches, streams or boggy sections. In 400m leave this meadow over a stile and a plank bridge to follow a fenced path around to the right. In 20m walk through a wooden gate and in 15m *turn left* along the left-hand boundary of a smaller meadow. In 100m you walk through a gap in some growth and pass **Mottisfont Estate Path marker stone 3**, signifying the **Dunbridge Springs** area, fed by three freshwater springs. In 330m pass a thatched cottage on your left and in 40m walk through a metal kissing gate and follow the driveway away from the cottage. In 110m, where the driveway turns right, *veer left* to the left of a large oak tree and continue with a yellow marker on a gate post along the hedge on your left. In 220m pass an electricity substation on your left just before crossing the railway tracks (through a wooden kissing gate on this side, between metal railings and out through a wooden kissing gate on the other side). Continue along the gravel service road for the substation and in 230m walk through a gap to the right of a metal field gate and *turn right* along the opposite pavement of **Hatt Hill**. **The Mill Arms** lies 50m beyond **Mottisfont & Dunbridge Station**.

After lunch *turn right* out of the pub along **Barley Hill** road towards **Dunbridge village** (or through their car park) but **[!]** *turn up right* immediately at the corner of the car park along **Russell Drive**. In 75m this continues as a gravel track (still up **Dunbridge Hill**) and in 30m you *fork right* with a yellow marker on a fence post (i.e.: NOT through a wooden field gate). In 100m the path levels out and in 170m you continue in the same direction at a four-way junction of forest tracks. You go through a dip and in 140m leave the wood over a stile to the left of a metal field gate and *turn left* with a signpost. In 40m *turn right* along the field boundary with the wood on the left. From the wood's far corner, you follow a grassy path between arable fields (the left one being at a higher level) and curve gently to the left (i.e.: you head to the left corner of the distant **John's Hill Copse**). In 220m go over a stile in a fence onto a car wide farm track at a bend (with **views across the Test Valley to Michelmersh** village) and *turn right*. In 75m *turn left* with a signpost along a grassy field boundary, just before the track enters **Mount Copse**, soon with a barbed wire on the right. In 180m – at a three-way footpath signpost – a footpath joins from the left across the field from the wood's boundary. This is **Shortcut II**, the original Book 1 route. Continue along the field boundary.

****)** In 180m you go over a stile and go straight on uphill across an arable field, your direction 260° and in 100m continue over the brow of the rise. In 40m cross a farm track (**Mount Farm** is away on the right), with a fine view over the valley below, and continue downhill, aiming **to the left of a lone oak tree**. In 200m pass the tree and in a further 75m go over a broken stile and onto a tarmac road (with the driveway to **The Lawns** a little to the left). *Turn right* on the road's grassy verge and in 110m *turn left* with an overgrown signpost, your direction 205°. In 10m you pass a redundant stile and cross a stream to continue with a garden hedge on your right. In 60m go over another stile beside the house to continue straight on along a right-hand field boundary. In 50m – at the next stile – *bear left [!]* **before** the stile, keeping the field hedge on your right, your direction 165°. In 200m you go through a field gate into the next field, which you leave in 240m over a stile, with a wood now on your right-hand side.

In 110m you go through a metal field gate to continue along a farm track, soon passing a reed-filled pond on your left, with a larger pond about 50m to the right in a field. In 200m walk through a metal field gate and in 80m through a wooden gate. Continue along a gravel driveway, ignoring a footpath to the left over a stile, but in 40m **[!]** *turn right* through a wooden kissing gate along a fenced footpath, your direction 255°. In 35m you cross a driveway and in 30m *turn left* with the path. In 150m *turn right* along a road at a bend through **Newtown** hamlet and in 120m ignore a road to the right signposted '**Carters Clay**' and '**Lockerley**'. In 75m pass a post box on your left-hand side, and in a further 80m *turn left* down a tarmac drive (a signposted bridleway).

In 125m continue through a gap to the left of a metal field gate up into a wood, on an earth path. In 140m you have some pastures (an ex-golf course) on your left-hand side and follow the bridleway straight on, ignoring all ways off. In 140m you walk along a car wide track between trees (with **Dunwood Camp**, an **Iron Age hillfort site** (on the OS map) visible up on the right, once you have left the trees). In 600m this brings you to the **Sozo Ministries International** HQ on your right-hand side (formerly the golf clubhouse). Continue slightly to the left on a tarmac road (110°). This brings you, in 170m, to a T-junction with a road – and **Awbridge Danes** manor (on the OS map), across to your left behind trees. *Turn right* along the road's verge and in 130m *turn left* along a signposted bridleway, your direction 80°. The bridleway runs near the edge of a wood initially, then along an arable field's boundary, then re-enters the wood. Ignore all ways off. **[!]** In just over a kilometre, at a marked crosspaths, **[!]** *turn right* uphill with a footpath to a stile visible 25m above, your direction 150° (if you miss this turning, you will descend to a tarmac lane in **Lower Ratley**). Go over the stile and continue straight across an arable field (150°), to a stile just visible 280m ahead in a fence on an earth bank. In 150m you walk under an electricity line, where a footpath joins from the left (markers are placed on an adjacent electricity pole). This is **Shortcut I**, and also the **Test Way**. Continue in the same direction across the field to the stile.

*****)** You are now following the signposted **Test Way** all the way to the banks of the Test River on the fringes of **Romsey**. **But in more detail:** From the stile continue in the same direction across another field and – in 170m – go through a gap to the left of a metal field gate, cross a tarmac lane and *turn left* along a fenced path between a hedge on your left and a new quarry site on the right. Follow the path around to the right in 80m, in 90m cross a track linking two parts of the quarry and in a further 40m *turn left* along a car wide track to continue with a line of trees on your left (100° initially). In 230m ignore a car wide track descending to the right into a wood and in 35m **[!]** *bear right* with the Test Way marker post across a small grassy area, your direction 125°, ignoring the continuation of the footpath along the gravel track. [Or in other words: if you get to the brow of a rise and can see some industrial buildings across fields, you've missed the turning. Those buildings belong to **Roke Manor Research Limited**, creators of the **Hawkeye**-technology...]

In 40m *turn right* past a redundant wooden kissing gate with a Test Way signpost, downhill into **Squabb Wood**. Follow a meandering path through this lovely wood (a marked footpath joins from the left in 150m) all the way to the bottom of the drop (on the far side of a clearing), where you cross a stream over a two-railed plank bridge. The path then *veers right* to re-enter the wood. In 60m you *turn left* with a Test Way marker post at a footpath T-junction, your initial direction 150°. In 310m you go over a stream on a plank bridge and continue in the same direction. In 300m you cross over another stream on a plank bridge. In 60m you go over a plank bridge and a stile at the confluence of two streams (with the banks coloured ochre from the iron-rich water). After 70 – mud-prone – metres a fallen oak tree has been cut into logs and they have been used as wooden steps through the muddiest stretch. In 180m you exit the wood over a plank bridge with stiles on either side to continue *half right* across the **Test Meadows**, your direction 145°, with a curving low, wooded ridge on the right.

In 300m you cross a stream on a two-railed bridge with gates on either side to *veer left*, your direction 160°. In 170m you go through a metal kissing gate and over another railed plank bridge over a ditch and continue in the same direction towards some farm buildings in the distance, with the meandering Test River occasionally close on the left. Close to the end of the field you get first views of the top of **Romsey Abbey** to your left. Leave the meadow through a metal field gate, over a bank and through a metal kissing gate and follow a fenced path past some converted sheds on your right. In 20m join a gravel driveway and in 90m you go through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate and in 50m *turn left* with the driveway (a footpath joins from the right)

towards the **Test**. In 30m, on reaching the river (a very scenic spot), *turn left* (finally leaving the **Test Way**) to cross the river by **Sadler's Mill** (the only mill to be developed on the main course of the River Test) over a footbridge. Go on through a wooden gate and along a fenced tarmac path and in 120m over another river bridge by an entrance to the **War Memorial Park** on your right.

For the recommended route past all sights and tea stops, *turn right* into the park and walk along the right-hand side path (past the **Park Café**) and in 100m reach a WWII **Japanese Artillery Gun**. *Turn hard left* towards the **bandstand** (donated in 2002, with frequent early afternoon concerts) in the centre of the park and continue in the same direction on the other side of the bandstand past the **War Memorial** and the **War Horse Statue** to leave the park in a corner. *Turn right* and in 25m cross a bridge over yet another arm of the **Test River** on a road bridge to continue along the pavement of **The Meads**, with a stream on your right-hand side. In 110m pass **Bartlett's Almshouses** on your left, then ignore a road to the left to continue past **Temple Buildings** (with an interesting sundial) on your left-hand side and then the **La Sagesse Convent** (The Daughters of Wisdom House) on your right-hand side. In 40m **[!]** *turn right* along the **Abbey Hall** building (with some interesting roof trusses visible through the side windows) **[!]** *before* reaching the side entrance (**Jubilee Gate**) to **Romsey Abbey** on the left].

Walk through a gateway in 30m and *turn left* along **Abbey Water** with a moat and the rear of the **Abbey United Reformed Church** on your left. *Turn left* with the moat past the **Congregational Chapel Burial Ground** around to the church entrance and in 50m *turn right* at a T-junction with **The Meads** (with **Abbey Gateway**, the medieval entrance to the Abbey Compound, overarching the road on your left) to reach **Market Place** in 20m. You have **Lord Palmerston's Statue** in the centre of a roundabout. For an **out-and-back to Romsey Abbey** and **King John's House** *turn left* along Market Place past **Café Fresh**, and continue in the same direction along **Church Street**. In 70m *turn right* after the Tourist Information/Museum up a narrow alleyway to **King John's House** in 50m. Re-trace your steps to **Church Street** and cross the road to reach the entrance to the compound of **Romsey Abbey** in 65m.

In 30m you find a large **Saxon Crucifix** 30m away to the right on a green. The entrance is 30m further along. From the Abbey re-trace your steps to **Market Place** and cross it to the left of the **Town Hall** and walk down **Bell Street**. In 30m you *turn left* into **Cornmarket** (with the **recommended café No. 5 Bell Street** on your right) to pass **The Tudor Rose** pub on your right (and the **Old Corn Exchange** building on your left). Cornmarket then joins Market Place (with the **recommended brasserie The White Horse Hotel, The Exchange** and **Josie's** as well as a **Costa Coffee** and a **Café Nero** a little to the left) and the road continues as **The Hundred**. In 50m you pass **Reeve the Baker** on your right and in 35m **The Phoenix Bar & Eatery** on your left, where **Latimer Street** *turns left*.

Here:

- Either *continue in the same direction* along **Love Lane** (i.e.: leave The Hundred) to reach the **recommended pub The Old House at Home** in 170m;
- Or *turn left* towards the station, passing **Tea Cups**, the **recommended pub bistro The Olive Tree** and **Dish. Deli and Kitchen**, all in the first 70m (as well as **Cork & Bean** 20m down Latimer Walk opposite Dish).

Romsey Station is 550m away: along **Latimer Street/Station Road**, across a main road and up **Station Approach**. For London, you need to change trains at either Salisbury (go to the near platform) or Southampton Airport [Parkway] (trains depart from either platform) or at Southampton Central (go to the far platform).

Shortcuts I & II

**(Shortcut I cuts 9.7 km and 176m of ascent/descent, but has 770m of narrow roads with fast-moving traffic and one blind bend and some mud-prone paths)
Lunch is in Mottisfont Abbey or – off-route – in Kimbridge or Michelmersh**

You are now following the signposted **Test Way** all the way to the banks of the Test River on the fringes of **Romsey**. **In more detail:** In 150m, where there are two field gates off to your left, and there is a last cottage on your right-hand side, keep straight on, your direction 200°, along a car wide lane between hedges. In 65m you pass the lychgate to the new cemetery on your left-hand side. In a further 400m, at the end of the lane, you go through a metal field gate into a field. You continue straight on, under pylons, then bending slightly left with the path. In 250m, you cross the **River Dun** through a redundant metal kissing gate and over a wooden bridge to go uphill into a wood between wire fences. In 330m you cross a railway bridge (signposted **Test Way**) to continue along an earth-and-gravel track, your direction 195°. In 225m you reach a crosspaths in the woods.

Here you have a choice:

For Shortcut I as well as for a diversion to the **Kimbridge Barn Tea Rooms and Café** or the **Bear and Ragged Staff** pub for lunch, *turn left* here.

For Shortcut II, *turn right*, leaving the **Test Way**, along a signposted footpath, on a car wide track and pick up the directions below under **Shortcut II**.

In 90m you can spot a strange 'concrete wall remnants with assorted steel girders'-structure about 30m to the left in the trees. In 180m you walk through a wooden gate to the left of a double wooden field gate and *turn right* along a lane (**but for the off-route lunch stops** *turn left* and go back across the railway at a level crossing, in 60m reach the car park of **Kimbridge Barn Tea Rooms and Café** and in another 720m the **Bear and Ragged Staff** pub at a T-junction with the **A3057**, on the other side of the road. After lunch re-trace your steps to this point.) In 220m *turn left* off the lane with a **Test Way** signpost along a fenced path, with a large lake on your right and a **bluebell wood** on the left. In 320m *turn left* along the busy **B3084** and in 550m, by the drive to **Awbridge House** on your left and where the road turns right, you continue in the same direction away from the road with a Test Way signpost down towards a stile to the right of a rusty metal field gate (ignoring a driveway to **Awbridge Mead** turning left).

In 25m you *fork right* to the right of a metal field gate and continue along a mud-prone narrow path between trees. You get occasional views across the Test Valley on the left through the trees and in 300m you emerge through a metal kissing gate and *turn left* along a field's left-hand boundary. In 250m go over a stile to the left of a metal field gate to cross a farm track and continue in the same direction over a railed plank bridge with stiles on either side. In 140m continue in the same direction at a fence corner with the fence on your right-hand side and in 30m leave the field over a stile into a wood. Use a 40m long boardwalk across a boggy area and – in 50m – a plank bridge over a stream and follow a barbed wire fence across a grassy area. In 50m cross a gravel farm track, go over a stile and follow a fenced path around to the right. In 130m go over a stile by an overgrown field gate and *turn right* along a lane at a bend. In 240m **[!]** *turn up left* along a narrow gravel path to the left of a wooden fence to the left of the tarmac driveway to **Foxgloves House** (this is about 100m before a road T-junction).

In 50m *turn left* over a stile and *right* along a fenced path to continue in the same direction uphill, in 80m go over a stile and in 40m *turn right* across a stile in the corner of a grassy area between garden fences. In 40m *turn left* along the **B3084** and in 25m

turn right (where the road turns left) up a tarmac drive. In 50m *fork right* along the gravel drive to **Hilberry Farm**. In 110m continue in the same direction at a four-way junction of car wide tracks by the farm buildings and in 500m you enter a large arable field over a stile to the right of a metal field gate to continue in the same direction across it, following an electricity line. In 75m pass an electricity pole with footpath and Test Way markers on it and in another 30m reach a four-way junction of footpaths. The Main Walk joins from the right. *Turn left* towards to a stile 130m away in a fence on an earth bank and pick up the directions in the main text at the triple asterisk ***).

Shortcut II

(cut 8.1 km, 110m of ascent/descent and 1.2 km from the tarmac count)

In 60m you go over a stile to the right of a metal field gate and in 120m you cross the **B3084** to go through a wooden kissing gate and continue along a fenced path crossing a large grassy field to the right of a large artificial pond (an ex-quarry) with an island in the middle. The path curves round to the left, in 400m you *turn right* with the path and in 20m go over a stile into a large arable field. Continue in the same direction uphill towards the right-hand edge of **John's Hill Copse** 300m away. On the ascent you get views back **across the Test Valley** to **Michelmersh**. Pick up a car wide farm track at a bend, now with views ahead half right to **Dunbridge Hill** and **across the Dun Valley** to the left of it, to distant Downs. In 25m you go over a stile and continue in the same direction along the right-hand fringe of the wood, where the track turns right. In 150m, at the corner of the wood on your left, carry straight on, cross an arable field towards a three-way footpath signpost on the opposite boundary 50m away. The path from the right is the Main Walk. *Turn left* along the grassy field boundary and pick up the directions in the main text at the double asterisk **).

Shortcut III

(cut 4.1 km, 48m of ascent/descent and 650m from the tarmac count, but add 880m of arable field crossings)

In 55m you *turn right* by an overgrown metal field gate and a footpath signpost along a gravel car wide track but go left immediately through a gap to the left of a double metal field gate cross a large arable field diagonally on a usually well-cleared path towards the right of two large oak trees (300°). In 340m pass the tree (pleasant views in all directions from here) and continue in the same direction to the field corner, where – in 150m – you walk through a wide gap in trees and continue in the same direction through an adjacent arable field. In 390m you walk through a gap to the left of a double metal field gate and in 30m cross a road to continue along a gravel driveway between trees (signposted **Cadbury Farm House**). In 280m the trees on the left discontinue, just before **Cadbury Farm Cottage**, and you have extensive views across the **Dun Valley**. In 150m continue in the same direction where the driveway turns right to **Cadbury Farm House** and in 15m walk through gap to the right of a wooden field gate. In 130m pass a red marker post on your left just before a staggered five-way junction of paths just inside a wood. Ignore the first left-turning path along the fringe of the wood. The path from the right is the Main Walk. *Turn half left* down into the wood (225°) with a Mottisfont marker stone, as well as with an estate path marker, a red topped marker post, ignoring the footpath ahead and pick up the directions in the main text at the asterisk *).