

Westmarsh (5.5 Miles; 8.8 km) March 2022

This is a circular walk from Ash Village.

Ordnance Survey Leisure Map OS 150 My Three words: freezing.causes.departure

1. Start from the Ash village centre carpark CT3 2AW cross the road and continue north up Chequer Lane to the A257 Ash bypass.

2. Cross the road with care (this is a 60 mph A road) and proceed along Cop Street Road for 250m. Take the footpath (EE72) on the left diagonally crossing a field in a NNW direction ignoring an east-west footpath and continuing to an opening in the field hedge ahead.



3. Go through the opening in the hedge into the next field and walk straight across to a further opening in a field hedge.

4. Go through this opening and continue in a NW direction diagonally across the field to an opening in the Alder hedge and follow footpath through the orchard in the same direction.

Follow this footpath through two orchards until you reach a footpath post. Go through Alder hedge and bear left for three rows of trees and then take diagonal path across corner of orchard to the road (Knell Lane). Turn right along this road for 50m and take the footpath (EE70) on the left along the edge of another orchard keeping the orchard on your left for 550m passing the buildings of Downfield Farm and Beconsfield House, continuing on a track to a metalled lane junction with Wass Drove directly opposite and Ware Court on the left.

5. Carry straight on along Wass Drove (NNW) passing Westmarsh Village Hall on the right. After 450m Wass Drove meets the Stour Valley Walk long distance footpath.

6. Follow the lane round to the left for 350m then to the right into the hamlet of Westmarsh. Here is a splendid, thatched house, Cooks Farm House.
7. Continue following the lane for 100m then follow the metalled road left, ignoring the footpath ahead. See Westmarsh Heritage noticeboard by the Old Post Office. After 250m go left again for 500m passing Barton Farm and Wingham Barton Manor on the left. You can see the spire of Ash church in the distance.
8. At the road junction two footpaths are present, ignore the one heading SW to the hamlet of Sheerwater and go straight ahead onto a footpath (EE81) heading south towards Hoaden.

On reaching an orchard after 600m keep to the left of the windbreak hedge with the orchard on the left and passing the farm buildings and crop storage warehouses of Hoaden House on the right.

9. After these buildings, on the left are caravans for farm workers, walk ahead with the caravans to the left, at the end turn left keeping the hedge on your left then follow the footpath (EE85A) for 150m to a metalled lane. Turn left for 20m to a footpath on the right. (EE85A)
10. Follow this footpath for 200m to the corner of a fence and turn left for 20m to a footpath on the left. (EE85A) Follow this footpath east along a fence past the buildings of Overland Farm.
11. At the eastern edge of the fence turn diagonally left across the field for 250m to connect with a bridleway (EE86) heading east to Little Knell Farm.
12. Follow the bridleway which leads to a lane through the farmyard. Just before the farmhouse take the footpath (EE103) on the right heading south through a gate and orchards. At a second orchard bear diagonally left through the trees (no obvious footpath) then follow the fence line keeping the old orchard on your left. At the gate turn right through hedge and then proceed diagonally across field onto a metalled road, Knell Lane.
13. Turn right onto Knell Lane and proceed south for 300m passing Chequer Court to the A257 Ash Bypass. Cross the road with care to the bridleway (EE464) opposite and slightly to the right which leads to Molland Lane into Ash Village.
14. Follow the Lane and where it veers to the left after 250m take the narrow footpath (EE123B) on the right passing the right-hand side of a house onto a field. Carry straight on across the field to a set of steps leading down into Gilton at the west end of Ash village, Be aware these steps lead straight onto the main road through Ash. The Volunteer Pub is opposite the steps if you need a well-earned pint! (or soft drink if you're the driver).
15. Cross the road carefully and turn left and follow the road back to the village centre car park. The car park is opposite the Chequer Inn.

