



The Watercress Way trail guide



Clockwise: Alresford- Itchen Abbas - Kings Worthy- South Wonston- Sutton Scotney- Micheldever Woods - Alresford

- **The Watercress Way charity** was registered in 2016 after locals campaigned to open for public access a mile section (1.6km) of the Mid-Hants/Watercress Line at Itchen Abbas, closed in 1973
- The aim is to increase access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders to the 11 km/7miles abandoned Watercress Line between Alresford-Kings Worthy, and the 6.4 kms/4 miles Didcot-Newbury-Southampton line (DNSL) between Kings Worthy-Sutton Scotney. Over 8km/5 miles of old railway track is now accessible for walkers and cyclists, and most of it for horse riders.
- Both old railways were important in starting the Victorian boom in watercress production, hence the name of the trail. Other rights of way, including historic livestock droves, minor roads and footpaths, have been chosen to make a circular 44km/26 mile route, waymarked for walkers.
- The route may alter slightly in the future if more disused railway line can be opened for public use.
- Our **website** shows a **cycling route**, several **horse riding** routes and suggested **shorter circular routes** all based on the main Watercress Way. www.thewatercressway.org.uk

| | | Guidance and points of interest | |
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| Sections | | The trail follows parts of other routes: Millennium, Arle, Three Castles, Wayfarers Way, Pilgrims Way, Three Castles, Wayfarers and St Swithun's Way. There are several interpretation boards to help along the way. Distances below are approximate. We recommend using an OS map/app in conjunction with this guide. | |
| 1. | FROM THE WATERCRESS LINE RAILWAY STATION ALRESFORD Pavements 2.5km | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the Mid-Hants Watercress Line carpark and Edward Knight Visitor Centre at Alresford station, walk west parallel to the railway line down Station Approach. • Turn right or north at the railway bridge on Jacklyn's lane. • At the crossroads, cross over Winchester Road (B3047). • Go up Pound Hill and start a 1km section along the pleasant lime tree lined The Avenue, past Bridge Road and the Toll House until New Farm Road. • Turn left up New Farm and follow the pavement for 0.7km, passing over the old Mid-Hants railway bridge (very narrow pavement here). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mid- Hants line was reopened after its closure in 1973 from east from Alresford to Alton for heritage trains. Spot the old railway carriages parked on top of Jacklyn's bridge, just east of the station. • Pound Hill was used for stray animals in the C19 th • You are walking parallel with the old railway line just to the left (South). Perins School extended its sports ground partly over the track. Look for the unusual octagonal toll house policing the 1705 turnpike toll road to Morn Hill, Winchester. You pass Arlebury Park, now flats, but once an imposing white Georgian house. • This deep railway cutting is partly overgrown and disused. An old green railway hut remains. |
| 2. | WATERCRESS BEDS Minor road and bridleway 0.75 KM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn sharp right at Spring Gardens, along a narrow road for 0.75km (no pavement) • Pass by all the watercress beds • Cross the footbridge parallel to the ford across River Itchen, too deep for cars. The Itchen's source is just upstream at Cheriton, then it meanders 45km/28 miles to Southampton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local names often give clues to the landscape: chalk springs are common in the area. • You are now following part of St Swithun's Way, a 55 km path from Winchester Cathedral to Farnham, named after C.9th Bishop of Winchester. Its distinctive logo has two bishop's croziers and a pilgrim's scallop shell • These are the last remaining traditionally run watercress beds in the area. Road transport has replaced the 1865 railway for London's market. |

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| <p>3.</p> | <p>RIVER MEADOWS AND RIVER CLIFF Grassy fields and gravel tracks 3KMS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Tichbourne Road, following a 0.25km bridleway uphill to reach the A31 Winchester-Alresford road. • Cross over this busy road, bearing left to East Lane/ Lovington Lane heading east. (no pavements) • Descend downhill and follow road for 1.1km to the Bush pub. • Turn sharp right in front of the Bush Pub and cross to the north side of the river Itchen over a Monet-style bridge. • Follow a gravel path next to river heading west, downstream, until path merges with the minor road at Itchen Stoke • Turn left through the kissing gate, on to a permissive path that bears across the meadows, keeping the houses of Itchen Stoke to the right. • Bear slightly left/south to cross the R Itchen via one kissing gate and a series of bridges. • Before going slightly uphill back to Lovington Lane, turn right into field through a kissing gate. • Follow the path slightly uphill through several fields and kissing gates down to Lovington Lane. Keep the large house Black Farm on the right • After last kissing gate turn right onto Lovington Lane and head down past the converted barn houses of Yavington Farm on the left for 1 km. • KEEP DOGS UNDER CONTROL HERE, LIVESTOCK GRAZING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The River Itchen river cliff gives distant views across the valley. The Mid- Hants line shows as a linear belt of trees on the opposite side of the river. Ash die back is a problem, many felled. • The floodplain meadows are a SSSI. Look for reed warblers, damsel flies, trout, wild watercress (DO NOT EAT, danger of liver fluke) • The Bush pub dates to the C17th • Ovington appears in the Domesday book as “Ofinetune” meaning ‘the place above’ in Old English- and it is indeed a small village above the floodplain! • The Itchen is rarely in one channel, having been channelised over the centuries to use for mills and to stop flooding. ‘Floating’ water meadows were regularly flooded by ‘drowners’ to raise winter temperatures and allow grass to flourish for sheep production. You will walk across several ditches here • Winchester to Alresford had 12 old manorial estates recorded in the Domesday book, including the river Itchen bank ones of Easton, Avington, Yavington and Ovington. ‘Ton’ means a settlement. • Itchen Stoke church is worth a diversion, just up the hill to the left across the B3047. Built 1866, it is a Victorian ‘jewel’ inspired by Sainte Chapelle France, with an amazing rose window. The old Mid-Hants line is another 0.25 km further north of the church, in private farmland |
| <p>4.</p> | <p>ITCHEN ABBAS VILLAGE PAVEMENTS, MUDDY LANES, GRAVEL TRACKS 2 KM</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay on Lovington Lane until just after small chalk pit quarry on the left • Enter the Meadows Nature Reserve through a gap next to a 5 Bar gate. It can be muddy, and several footbridges cross the multiple channels of the Itchen so it may be slippery too. Dogs MUST be on lead here. • Continue along the path with the wire fence to the right and cross the B3047 with great care. • Go through small gap in tall hedge, and follow a narrow permissive path along the vineyard to the right (not shown on maps). This parallels the B3047. • DO No turn up the first right bridleway (Three Castles Path but not waymarked) and take the second right via a small kissing gate going uphill. • The path veers to the left past a sewage works. Go through a kissing gate and enter Baring Close (cul-de-sac) • Turn right at Rectory Lane (no pavement), then take the first left after Winton Rd Cottages on to a narrow footpath which parallels the old railway track • At the end of the track turn right into a small housing estate called Little Hayes Lane. Follow the pavement down the hill past the Primary School. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignore signs for St Swithun’s Way going steeply uphill from Lovington Lane across a field • The River Itchen is one of only about 300 chalk rivers in the world, hence its high conservation value. • You will see great tussock grass clumps, butterbur plants which look almost prehistoric, and depending on the season, a rich assemblage of butterfly and bird life including kingfishers. You may spot trout in the river, but the white tailed crayfish is very shy and nocturnal. Cuckoos are common in Spring as they target the various warbler nests hidden in the tall sedges here. • Vineyards are making a great come back in the area, mainly for sparkling wine. Vines were cultivated in this part of Hampshire in Roman times. • The Victorians were famed for their adaption of landscapes for railways: You can see the old embankment covered in beech and ash trees as you go up the hill to Baring Close. • From Rectory Lane look left to see the white house called The Old Rectory but newer landscaping including a massive C.21st ornamental urn. To the right, maps show a deep cutting, but this was filled in post railway closure in 1973 for chalk farm waste. |

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| 5. | <p style="text-align: center;">ITCHEN ABBAS WATERCRESS LINE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pavements, minor roads and gravel tracks 1.6KM</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Northington Road cross over to pavement and turn left (south) • At the junction with the B3047 turn right. • Cross over Station Road • Turn first right up a small gravel lane at the footpath sign, continue to a 5 bar gate with pedestrian side access. Here you will see a leaflet holder with WW leaflets. • Take a left and continue for a relaxing sheltered 1 Mile (1.6km) walk along the old track. You pass Couch Green park and children’s playground on the left. • When you reach Martyr Worthy railway bridge turn left up a gentle ramp. • Turn right down a narrow road (no pavement) for 0.25km, heading south to cross the B3047 to the War Memorial down the lane past Martyr Worthy Church –quiet road no pavement • Ignore turnings to left and right until bottom of hill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worth a detour: turn right (north) to venture a few metres up Northington Road (no pavement) to see a the huge red brick viaduct dating from about 1895. • The Mid- Hants railway shut in 1973 after about 10 years of opposition to Beeching cuts. Station Hill Rd houses to the right are built on the site of Itchen Abbas Station. No public access other than the road. The original white railway cottages still exist. House names include The Halt and Beeching. • Look around for artefacts of the old railway line: concrete sleepers, gravel ballast, old signal telegraph poles. • You are walking not just on the track bed but on the South Downs National Park’s northerly boundary • Look out for the first Watercress Way interpretation board and 3 sleeper style oak benches, erected by volunteers in 2018. • Lovely views south (right) over Itchen valley and north across the downs, cleared by volunteers. Look for log piles left for invertebrates |
| 6. | <p style="text-align: center;">THE ITCHEN FLOODPLAIN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Grassy paths, fields, minor roads, 2.7 km</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the bottom of the hill, just before the river, turn right up slight incline, and follow the footpath through several metal kissing gates winding through fields parallel to the River Itchen. • Cross Easton Lane and go through a metal kissing gate (a diversion to the left takes you Easton Village with 2 pubs). • Continue along the footpath at the field edge, with the fence to the right. Pass through a metal kissing gate, continue along the footpath this time keeping the fence to the left). • A sharp left underneath the bank of the M3 through another metal gate now heading south towards the River Itchen • Then right through the M3 underpass. • There may be a stile or kissing gate into last field before B3047, keeping to the footpath on the left. Continue up a gentle slope to reach the main road. • Turn left and walk a few metres (no pavement) before turning left through overgrown paddocks with derelict farm buildings on the right. Pass through kissing gate across Mill Lane. • Follow the meandering path through trees to reach the A33.DANGEROUS CROSSING! Cross over at a narrow pedestrian point. Turn right then left up the footpath past the Post Office, looking towards the Cart & Horses Pub | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will now be following the footpath marked St Swithun’s Way. Martyr Worthy church wall has a Pilgrims Way sign of a scallop shell engraved in its wall • It is worth a slight detour to the bridge over River Itchen: magnificent views. • The water meadows here often have grazing cattle, beware • The lumps and bumps in the fields here are remnants of the floating meadow system seen at Itchen Stoke. • Look left to see St Mary’s Church, Easton. This is probably the earliest church and largest in the upper Itchen valley, dating back to the Normans in the C.12th • You may glimpse Abbots Worthy House on the right(north) built for the Baring family in the early C.19th but in Tudor style. • It is worth a short diversion at Mill Lane to look over the River Itchen and look at the Information Board on the left on the history of the local area • The Cart and Horses pub was a farmhouse, becoming a pub in 1760 and coaching inn on the turnpike road from Winchester-Basingstoke. • The Reading Room and almshouses remain from local Victorian benefactor Richard Turner. The ruins of his grand house lies behind the Cart and Horses pub. |

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| 7. | <p style="text-align: center;">KINGS WORTHY pavements, recreation ground, gravel and grass tracks 1KM</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the Cart and Horses pub, follow the footpath to the right, parallel with the A33. Turn left up tree lined Hinton House Drive, with 2018 award winning eco houses on the left • The footpath goes around the edge of Eversley Park but you can cut across diagonally , keeping the football pitches to the right and children’s playground to the left. • At the far end of the park, just beyond the Worthies Social Club buildings is a footpath to Lovedon Lane. Ignore the footpath to Gillingham Close. • At Lovedon lane turn sharp left, crossing over the old bridge of the Mid-Hants Line. (NARROW PAVEMENT) • Turn first left at the kissing gate and enter Broadview, a grassy linear park • Cross Wesley Rd via two kissing gates but visit the mosaic interpretation board just to the right. • Walk down Broadview grassy hill to meet Wesley Rd again cross over and bear right then first left: a staggered crossing. • Turn left up a small ascent also signed Kim Bishop’s walk • You are now on the old track bed of the Mid-Hants Line again: the fairly straight narrow path continues across the road bridge of Springvale Rd through scrubby woods • Continue through woods masking the Watercress line track bed and take the right footpath then bear left through Top Field toward the houses on Burnett Lane • Take the first left through kissing gate, signposted with footpath and continue through car park to a footpath until you reach the bottom of Burnet Lane • Left again to meet a footpath under height restriction barrier by Firs Crescent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To the left the scrubby field with woods are the old grounds of one of the large Victorian houses in the area: Kings Worthy House, burned down in the 1960s. The lodge survived. • The recreation ground was named after Lord Eversley, an eminent Victorian who lived at Abbots Worthy House and was an early advocate of opening spaces for public access. • An ancient packhorse route linking Winchester to Basingstoke. runs across Eversley Park, called ‘The Whiteway’ because of the chalk surface. • There are several boards around the Park giving more information. • Broadview is on top of a very deep infilled cutting of the Mid-Hants line. It is well named because of views SW across to Winchester. As you stand with the mosaic behind you imagine workers hand cutting the hard chalk in the 1860s, and JCBs filling it in for M3 waste in the 1980s. • Like all the disused railway sections, active management is needed to maintain a clear access and improve habitat diversity by layering of shrubs and glades • The Mid-Hants and DNSL railways did not intersect, but they individually joined the main line London-Basingstoke-Southampton line here at Winchester Junction. |
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| <p>8.</p> | <p>KINGS WORTHY to SOUTH WONSTON Gravel and grassy tracks, 6 km</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk under a series of old watercress railway line bridges • After the double bridge turn right through gate and walk up steps to top of railway line embankment • Follow old railway track bed (gravel and cinders) for 2 kms towards South Wonston. • Stop a while at Two Bridges, where the old DNSL split after its upgrading for WW11 traffic • Stop a while at Worthy Down Halt • At the Oxdrove turn left/ east. • Go under a height restriction barrier and take the first right along Drove Links Rd, a gravel track about 600m long leading to South Wonston Road. You will pass many pony paddocks . <p>OPTION: This junction is where you can shorten the WW trail by 5 km by turning right heading SE towards West Stoke Farm, and avoiding Sutton Scotney completely.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT MISS THIS! There are other informal paths up to the embankment if you do. Otherwise continue until you reach a road then turn left and then after 200m turn right onto a track down to the cutting • This part of the trail is full of artefacts from WW Two : look out for pill box defences for the Worthy Down Airfield . The railways like these only had a single track. This meant a sophisticated swapping of tokens was needed by train drivers and station masters to ensure only one train was in operation at once. This is still practiced on The Watercress Line heritage railway today. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two interpretation boards at Worthy Down Halt and further north near the Oxdrove intersection give a glimpse into the history of the area including Spitfire testing and famous people including Laurence Olivier and Bomber Harris when it was a military camp, and its previous use as Winchester's C.18th-19th racecourse. • The track to the north is called Christmas Hill, once a deep cutting but has become a landfill site with no access. • South Wonston grew rapidly from the turn of the c.20th when local farmland was sold off for development in one acre plots. Place names like Oxdrove and Gypsy Bushes suggest its earlier importance as a drove route from Salisbury- Alresford-Alton and for migrant gypsy hop pickers. There are also several pre-historic barrows. • In WW1 the building of Worthy Down airfield and camp encouraged the village's growth • South Wonston has a convenience shop on its main road. |
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| 9. | <p style="text-align: center;">SUTTON SCOTNEY LOOP Tracks, pavement, recreation ground, 5 kms</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn left / west (no pavement) for 0.5 km until see a bridleway directly ahead, as the road bears left into the village. • Follow the bridleway for 700m past allotments on the right, until a crossroads of 4 bridleways. • Take the first right, heading north to Sutton Scotney, passing through large arable fields. • Follow the signed path on the right before the farm buildings. (No Access sign ahead) • After about 1.75km you cross the old DNSL track, a distinctive tree lined linear feature still but now used for farm equipment storage (NO ACCESS) • Just after a biogas digester on the right you meet another bridleway bisecting your route. Bear left. • When you reach the road carry on along it for a few hundred metres then at the road junction turn right then follow the path immediately on the left following The Watercress Way sign onto a footpath heading NW across fields for 1 km, to enter Sutton Scotney via Victoria Hall carpark • Cross over Stoke Charity Rd keeping Victoria Hall to the right. • After a few metres on Oxford St, take a first right up Taylors Yard into Station Park (see Detour), then turn left to the end of the cul-de-sac. The footpath leads into the Gratton Doctors Surgery carpark and recreation field. • Take a sharp left heading North by the large a metal gate, skirting the edge of playing field, and pass to the right of the Pavilion and carpark • Bear right along the edge of the allotments and right again along the side of the River Dever bank • Turn left at the end of the park by the adventure playground heading east along a narrow footpath past a sewage works and houses called Cartagena • Turn left at Stoke Charity Rd (pavement) to the second turning on the right called Beggars Drove. • At Wonston Lane turn left, north, for just under 0.5 km until footpath heading east on the right . There is a small road to the left/north if you want to visit The Wonston Arms Pub. • Follow the path for 400m until you meet on the right handside a bridleway heading south back to the junction passed earlier towards South Wonston. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Wonston Lane look left down the road to see the dismantled bridge of the old DNSL. Farming has almost obliterated the line of the DNSL here, but the line of telegraph posts across the fields indicates its original route • Victoria hall was used by Lord Rothschild. Oxford St was part of the coaching route from Southampton to Oxford. One inn remains: The Coach and Horses. The Dever Stores convenience shop is just beyond Taylors Yard • DETOUR to Sutton Scotney railway bridge cleared by the WW charity in 2019: turn right in Station Park Rd, then left by its entrance parallel to road and grassy bank. See the interpretation sign at the bridge entrance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After years of dereliction, Metis housing development was built in 2018 on the old Sutton Scotney station and goods yard. • Gratton Recreation Ground is award winning for its design, upkeep, and conservation: look for the wildflower meadow by its carpark near the allotments. On the other side of the carpark is the DNSL embankment. • The Dever drains into the River Test. Only 320 such chalk streams occur globally. Look for brown trout and voles in this Site of Special Scientific Interest. It has long been diverted for fish ponds and watercress beds. Only few working watercress farms exist today. • So many roads in Hampshire are still called by their historic role: Beggar Drove • Wonston Arms is an award winning pub (limited food) |
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| 10. | The DROVES metalled roads and grassy tracks c. 15 km | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the bridleway to a staggered junction by some farm buildings you passed originally when entering Sutton Scotney, but now keep on left/SE to West Stoke Farm At South Wonston Rd turn left parallel to the road (NO PAVEMENT) and cross over the Stoke Charity Rd onto a wide gravel bridleway Ignore all farm track turnings and this 3 km track takes you to the A33 dual carriageway junction opposite a religious meeting house known locally as Lunways. TAKE CARE DANGEROUS CROSSING Cross straight over and carry on down the Micheldever woods/Northington Down/Totford Rd for 1.7 km, under the M3 bridge past the entrance on the left to Micheldever Woods car park. NO PAVEMENTS TAKE CARE As the woodland ends, look for the bridleway signed on the right of the road heading SE to Alresford. Stay on this gradually descending main track for 2.5 km, ignoring tracks off to the right and left until you get to Northington Rd height restriction barrier. Cross straight over through the next height restriction barrier. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for the plaque on the flint wall around W Stoke farm, commemorating its previous role in the c19th as a pub for passing drovers, herding livestock to Alresford markets and beyond. You are back on the Alresford Drove, a West-East track traceable on maps back to Stockbridge and east to Totford and the Woolpack pub and beyond. It is either still a gravel track or has been metalled into a road. On OS maps it is named. Wallers Ash is a typical shelter belt created of conifers or beech trees to help the corridor movement of livestock in these open rolling chalk hills without many hedges. The railway era led to their decline. Lunways was a coaching inn used for Winchester Racecourse at South Wonston in 18th and 19th C. You may have noticed how straight many of the roads are in this area. Many date back to Roman times, such as the A33 Itchen Woods and Michedeve Woods are working forests with mix of conifers and deciduous trees and bluebell carpets At Itchen Down look out for a trig point 130m above sealevel on the left and a windpump obscured by tall conifers and vines. Itchen Down: was the location of 19th C cricket |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue up a gentle incline for 0.5km until a staggered junction. Ignore the Three Castles path and take the next bridleway, ie straight on still heading SE. This is now part of the Wayfarers Walk After 500m pass under two height restriction bars crossing the Itchen Stoke minor road, carrying on gently downhill towards Alresford for 1 km. At the junction of bridleways, turn right under a height restriction barrier around the edge of a hill called Fob Down. This track meets Drove lane after 1 km, with another height restriction barrier next to a main gate into vineyards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three Castles Path is a 60 mile route from Windsor to Winchester castle via Odiham, commemorating King John's journey of the 13th C. The Wayfarers Walk is a 70 mile path between Inkpen Beacon in N Hampshire to Emsworth at the coast Look east across the Candover valley to Abbotstone, one of 2000 deserted villages nationally. Indentations in the fields middle distance show the outlines of the houses and church and mill here recorded in 1086 Domesday Book. It flourished until the 14th C, possibly falling victim to the Black Death. The water meadows looking south west here from Drove Rd were used for WW2 tank training. The old Watercress Line can be seen mid distance, with many trees cut down from 2019 from ash dieback. |
| 11. | GEORGIAN ALRESFORD Gravel path and pavement walking 2.3 km | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross Drove lane , and take the footpath parallel to Drove House on the right . The path is between its fence and a narrow field. Drop down to the River Arle through a kissing gate and pass by the Eel House Continue past Arlebury Recreation Ground and Car park to the right. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive new vineyards planted recently around Fob Down, for sparkling wine. Fob Down has a Romano-British settlement- perhaps wine making occurred here 200 years ago! Look for futuristic modern Drove House on the right. Have a look at the information boards on the C.19th Eel house- fascinating links to the Sargasso Sea Just after the entrance to Arlebury Recreation ground look for Hambone Junior Dog grave plaque just to the right of the footpath. He was a US army mascot in WW2 |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue along the river edge (do not turn up Dean Road). • Pass Amy's wild fowl feeding station and continue walking along the narrow path of the Millennium and Arle Valley trail by the River Arle passing the historic Fulling Mill. • Bear to the right up a gentle incline called Ladywell, passing a little spring fed stream to emerge at Mill Lane, the bottom of Broad Street | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This area was once famed for tanneries and fulling mills. Look for the C13 Fulling Mill and ancient ford across the River Arle. An information board here has an image of a horse and flatbed cart pulling watercress from the beds just visible on the other side of the river up to Alresford Station. Victorians called watercress sold in paper cones in London: 'poor man's bread' . • Chalk springs are the clue to watercress production. look for pike, trout, swans, ducks and voles |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk up the gentle hill, Broad Street, past Alresford's shops restaurants and houses • Emerge at the top of Broad St and continue straight over junction of East and West St to a narrow lane leading to St Johns Church. • Follow the footpath through the churchyard leading to a small walked path on the right emerging onto Station Road. • Turn left opposite the Public Toilets to return to the Watercress Line car park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Alresford is hardly new, being a planned settlement dating back to Bishop de Lucy in the C.13th • Livestock, especially sheep, fairs were held in Broad St for centuries, the last being 1972 • It is a remarkably well preserved Georgian town centre, with many surviving from its last major fire in 1689. • The houses have long narrow plots called burgage plots • Look out for Nos 48 blacksmith, No 50 US Army HQ WW2 and the Old Post House. Look at all the old coaching entrances now garages or converted into the main building, as in The Swan and Bell pubs. • Look for Napoleonic graves in St Johns churchyard • Find the plaque on the public toilets by Drs surgery about Portland spy ring • The Visitors Centre for the Watercress Line is worth a visit: named after one of its original directors Edward Knight, Jane Austen's nephew. |