



# The Watercress Way

## Circular Walk from Kings Worthy to Itchen Abbas



The Watercress Way charity was registered 2016 after locals campaigned to open up a mile section of the abandoned Watercress Line for walkers and cyclists at Itchen Abbas. The aim is to increase access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders to the 7-mile old Watercress Line between Alresford-Kings Worthy, and the 4 miles Didcot-Southampton line between Kings Worthy-Sutton Scotney. Over 5 miles of railway track is now open. Other rights of way, including historic livestock droves, are used to make a way marked circular 26 mile route. The route may alter slightly if we can open up more disused railway line for public use.

**A circular walk from the Kings Worthy gateway to Itchen Abbas**  
**The Watercress Way**  
**7.9 miles/ 12.7 km**

This can be shortened to 3.75 miles if bus used.

Martyr Worthy Church

Itchen Abbas Church



This route, suitable for walking & running, passes through 4

villages in the beautiful rolling chalk downland of the River Itchen, and along 2 sections of the Mid-Hants railway known as the Watercress Line.

**Parking** Tubbs Hall SO23 7PJ.

**Bus:** No 67 Winchester- Petersfield (infrequent & no Sunday service)

There are four pubs along the route, great for those important refreshments. (Cart and Horses, Chestnut Horse, Cricketers, Plough)

Expect to see **other users:** cyclists & horse riders. Suitable for **children** and **dogs** under control (livestock & wildlife). Tracks are mainly well drained on chalk, with gravel sections. Not all roads have pavements. Many kissing gates.

The route follows part of the Watercress Way marathon length trail, in the **South Downs National Park**.



The yellow line shows the SDNP boundary

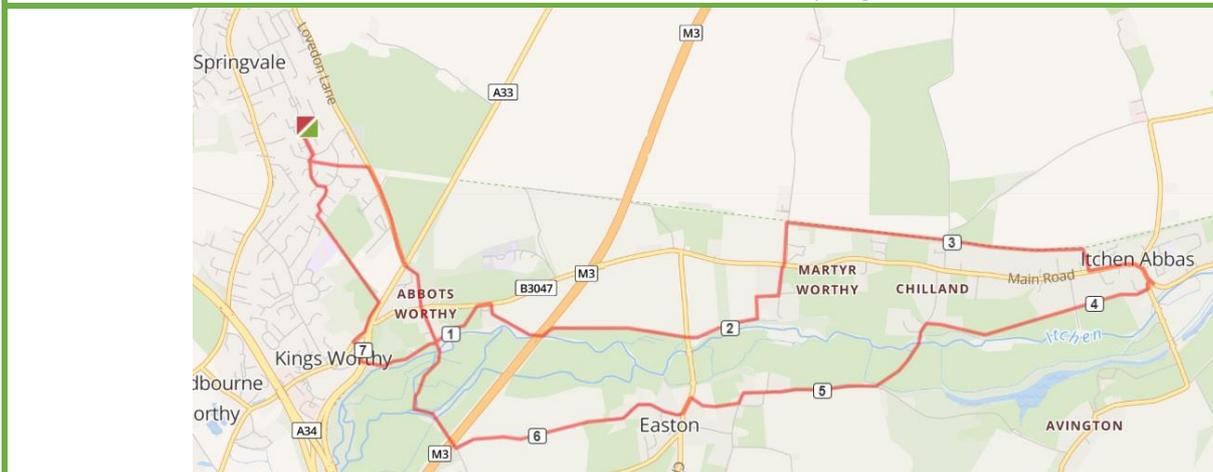
**Start** from Tubbs Hall & Kings Worthy Community Centre, Fraser Rd, SO23 7PJ. OS Map: OL 32 (start point: grid ref. 491 336)  
[http://gb.mapometer.com/running/route\\_4161944.html](http://gb.mapometer.com/running/route_4161944.html)



The Watercress Way NE of Winchester, Hampshire, is **waymarked for walkers**. It follows parts of two Victorian railway lines closed mid C.20th, linked by historic rights of way including old livestock droves.

The charity (No 1167675) set up in 2016 welcomes supporters: volunteers & sponsors.

A **donation** online for this publication would be gratefully received via [www.thewatercressway.org.uk](http://www.thewatercressway.org.uk)  
 contact us at [info@thewatercressway.org.uk](mailto:info@thewatercressway.org.uk)



See [www.thewatercressway.org.uk](http://www.thewatercressway.org.uk) for more walks, cycle routes and horse riding routes. Become a **'friend'** & receive regular updates. **Help** fund the charity's work on increasing access to the old railways & conservation work. We are on **TripAdvisor** and **social media**.

Sections on map	Sub -Sections	Point of interest and watch points
•	<p><b>Start: Tubbs Hall &amp; Kings Worthy Community Centre, SO23 7PJ</b> (free parking available)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go left onto Pound Road, after 175 yds turn right into Wesley Road then after a further 50 yds turn left onto Lower Broadview</li> <li>At the top of Lower Broadview stop to look at the village mosaic, then cross the road and continue to Upper Broadview. After 170 yds turn right down Lovedon Lane for a short distance crossing the old railway bridge. Carry on down Lovedon Lane to A33.</li> <li>Follow Mill lane to B3047, and cross to lower Mill Lane.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spot the <b>Watercress Way waymarkers</b>, designed in 2017 by the founding charity, established 2015.</li> <li>Broadview is a filled in deep cutting of the Watercress Line, shut 1973. Carefully managed by Worthy Conservation Volunteers, helped by Watercress Way charity volunteers to keep biodiversity</li> <li>The 2019 houses to the right off Lovedon Lane are eco-friendly, and a beautiful wildflower meadow is a feature</li> <li><i>A33 junction very busy! No pavements along Mill Lane</i></li> <li>The information board about the old mill is just at the bottom of Mill Lane, and views over the R Itchen just to the right of the board, worth a look.</li> </ul>
•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turn sharp left, following signs east for The Watercress Way. At the end of slight hill turn right onto the B3047, and after 80 yards take the foot path to the right.</li> <li>Follow under the M3 then turn immediately left, parallel to M3 until a kissing gate. Go sharp right and follow field boundary on your right for 700 yds, until another kissing gate and grass field (often has cattle). One more kissing gate just before crossing Easton Lane.</li> <li>Follow the footpath for a further ¼ mile, through a series of kissing gates until reach Church Lane in Martyr Worthy</li> <li>Walk north up quiet lane past Martyr Worthy church: St Swithun's, towards B3047. Cross the B3047 road onto Bridget's Lane</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have now joined The Watercress Way.</li> <li><i>No pavement just a verge on B3047</i></li> <li>Martyr Worthy church dates to 1251, linked to convent of St. Swithun. The modern 112 mile pilgrims' route, called St Swithun's Way, has a waymarker of a shell &amp; 2 croziers (hooked staffs), representing St Swithun and St Thomas a Beckett. One is inset in the church wall.</li> <li><i>No pavements on Church Lane</i></li> <li>Pass to the right of the English Heritage Listed war memorial.</li> <li><i>Take care, dangerous crossing over B3047, no pavements on Bridget's Lane</i></li> </ul>
•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow Bridget's Lane north up the gentle hill until old railway bridge.</li> <li>Turn left down gently ramped incline onto old railway track made of smoothed ballast.</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pause to read the first interpretation board designed by the WW charity with its ' track facts' , or sit on one of three benches donated to the WW by Itchen Valley Parish Council using Boomtown festival grants.</li> <li><b>Look out for artefacts:</b> old telegraph poles, ballast chippings, sleepers, as well as <b>wildlife:</b> King Alfred's Cakes fungi (black nodular fungi, used for tinder in medieval times), wild garlic, badgers, buzzards, red kites, and chalk blue butterflies</li> </ul>
•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exit old railway line at the 5 barred gate, with its <b>leaflet box</b>, the first installed on the Watercress Way.</li> <li>Turn left, heading east downhill along pavement of B3047.</li> <li>Cross over Station Road</li> <li>Cross Northington Rd bearing right past the Village Hall</li> <li>Cross over B 3047 before you get to the Plough Pub to bus stop</li> <li>Turn left towards St Johns Church along Avington Rd</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are next to Itchen Abbas Station here, <b>NO ACCESS</b>. Not much of the old Watercress Line was redeveloped. Its few houses have interesting names: Station House, Railway Cottages, The Halt</li> <li><i>It is worth a short diversion left up Northington Road (no pavement to admire the striking 1865 viaduct</i></li> <li><b>Itchen Abbas</b> is the largest village in the upper Itchen valley, dating from Saxon times.</li> <li>The Plough, once called The Trout, is a 19th C Coaching Inn. Charles Kingsley possibly wrote some of The Water Babies there.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the footpath named the Itchen/Pilgrims Way until you meet Lower Chillandham Lane, on the edge of or through 3 fields with several gates then a long gravel path next to a high red brick wall to a few steps.</li> <li>• Turn left down Chillandham Lane, cross the River Itchen via a permissive path. See the interpretation board at the first bridge</li> <li>• When you meet Avington Rd turn right for 1/3 mile to the Chestnut Horse pub</li> <li>• Take footpath alongside the right of the pub across paddocks (look out for llamas) and follow to Easton Lane.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After the first section before a gate /kissing gate into sloping field down to R Itchen, you cross a <b>lime tree avenue, with a memorial garden</b> on the site of <b>Lord Grey's</b> old fishing cottage on the left towards the riverbank. Grey was Foreign Secretary in 1914 and took Britain to war, famed for his saying 'the lights are going out in Europe'.</li> <li>• <b>Chilland</b> was a major ford across the Itchen. You pass the <b>old water mill</b> and water 'race'</li> <li>• Look at the interpretation board here on wildlife.</li> <li>• You may see the distinctive British White cattle, introduced by the Hants and IOW Wildlife Trust for their selective grazing to increase diversity in meadow flora.)</li> <li>• The Chestnut Horse was a favourite of President Carter when trout fishing. There is another pub around the corner : The Cricketers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn left (for 100 yds), then turn right along Church Lane, this turns into a bridleway after ¼ mile.</li> <li>• Follow for a further ½ mile to Long Lane and turn right on road, going north under the motorway.</li> <li>• Take the footpath which goes immediately in front of the old Fulling Mill cottages, cross a small bridge, then immediately left and follow for 1/3 mile across floodplain of the Itchen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep an eye out for kites, herons in the meadows and hares in the large rolling arable fields</li> <li>• Some water meadows here on the right/north have been raised by M3 waste to provide better drained pastoral fields.</li> <li>• Easton Church is worth a visit.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At Mill Lane turn sharp left after the information board. Follow for ¼ mile, carefully cross A33 and turn immediately right walking on the grass for 60 yds.</li> <li>• Turn left up to the Post Office and you will come out opposite the Cart &amp; Horses pub. Cross the road to the pub and turn right following the footpath for 250 yds to Hinton House Drive. Turn left up drive which becomes a path with Eversley Park on the right and Kings Worthy School on the left. Ignore paths into the park, and continue short distance to turn right into housing development.</li> <li>• Turn left onto Frampton Way and after 150 yds turn left down Wesley Road and follow back to Tubbs Hall, Kings Worthy Community Centre.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You pass several beautiful old Georgian houses here.</li> <li>• Have a look at the interpretation signs in Eversley Park, describing the work of Eversley and the areas importance as an old droving route for livestock before the coming of Victorian railways.</li> <li>• A short distance further on from Tubbs Hall there is a small parade of shops and post office.</li> </ul>