

Walk 5.

STATION ROAD WOOD LOOP

Abbreviations: Turn right **TR**, turn left **TL**, straight on **SO**, footpath **FP**, bridleway **BW**.

Distance: about 1.7 miles (2.7k). Time: about 45 minutes. Difficulty: Easy

The walk starts at the **Abbot's Mitre Public House**.

1. Leave the pub and **TR**. Walk along village street for about 100 yards.
2. **TR** down gravel track. This is **Cart Lane** (indicated by a finger post with a cart carved on the finger). Walk along the track with houses on both sides. It soon becomes a path between trees. Walk up the hill. At the top the path widens to a broad grass path along the edge of a field on your left. Look back and to your left and admire the view. Continue **SO** along this path until you reach an obvious junction and the gates to **Hunts** (John Deere dealers).
3. **TR** and walk along a permissive FP. You will see agricultural machinery on your left. Continue along a wide scalping/grass path until you reach a gate. Duck under a wooden bar on the right. You are now on **Drove Road**.
4. **TR** and walk down Drove Road until you see a gap in the hedge on the left marked by finger post saying Permissive **BW**. NB. At this point there is a dog poo bag dispenser and a dog poo bag disposal bin.
5. **TL** and walk along this grassy track which runs parallel with **Little Drove Road** on your right. Continue **SO**. There are several gaps in the hedge on your right. The one you should take is about two thirds of the way along this path where the ground on the right opens out and a high leylandii hedge starts. Also, there is a telegraph pole on the right of the gap.
6. **TR** and go through the gap. Immediately on your left you will see a fingerpost pointing to a path on the left. Ignore it. Cross the road. You will see the entrance to **Test Valley Farm** on your left. Just past this you will see a fingerpost indicating a narrow path in front of you.
7. Carry **SO** along this path. There is barbed wire fence on the left and beyond it some dilapidated farm buildings. On the right there are wooden fences. These are the back gardens of the houses in Station Road. The path veers to the left and then to the right. When you come to the last wooden fence you are about to enter **Station Road Wood**.
8. Carry straight on through woodland along an obvious path. You will see Chilbolton Sewage Works on your left and then pass a large oak tree on your right with overhanging branches. Carry **SO** until you reach some steps with a wooden handrail. Go down the steps and **TR**. The path that goes SO leads to a concrete road and beyond that a wooden kissing gate. Ignore this unless you want to visit **West Down Nature Reserve**.
9. After turning right follow the narrow path until you reach the road (**Coley Lane**). You will see a bench and green refuse bin. Look left and you will see a fingerpost saying **Test Way** and pointing to a gap in the hedge on the other side of the road.
10. Cross the road and walk on for a few yards; then **TR** through the gap in the hedge. On your left you will see the **Coronation Tree** and beneath it a bench. This commemorates the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen. There is a fine view of the **River Test**.

11. After a few yards you will see a narrow path on your right. **TR** and walk along it. You are now on the **Test Way**. You will see some attractive water gardens on your left and the garden of Watch Cottage on your right.

12. Follow this path which is bordered by a high fence on the left until you reach a pedestrian gate. Go through it. You have reached the **War Memorial Playing Field**. If you have a dog, please put him/her on a lead.

13. You have a choice. You can either:

- carry **SO** in the direction of the pavilion and exit the playing field by a gate in the left hand corner of the field. Here there is a poo bag dispenser and a waste bin. Go through the gate and onto a wide gravel track that passes the Old Cottage on the right;
- or
- veer to the left. You will see a large metal roller. Head in that direction. Just beyond it to the left you will see a pedestrian gate. This is the route of the **Test Way**. Go through it and **TR** and follow the narrow path through trees until it emerges onto wide gravel track with the Old Cottage in front of you.

13. You have now reached **Chilbolton Cow Common** a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). You will see the Purlegigg Stream on your left. Follow the gravel track as it bends to the right in front of the cottage until you reach a footpath/bridleway sign and a dog poo box. You will see a tarmac road in front of you (**Joys Lane**) with a gate and a cattle grid.

14. At this post **TL** and walk along the wide gravel track and through a gate (often open). You will see three houses in front of you. The centre one is the Old Inn. About half way to the Old Inn you will see a double manhole cover (BT) on your right and immediately after a grass path heading off diagonally to your right. Follow this path. It leads towards a small bridge over the **Abbot's Stream**. Cross the bridge and go through the gate. Please make sure you close it. A narrow path goes between gardens to the left and the right. Follow this path. You will come to the village street and the **Abbot's Mitre** is in front of you.

That's the end of the walk. I hope you enjoyed it.

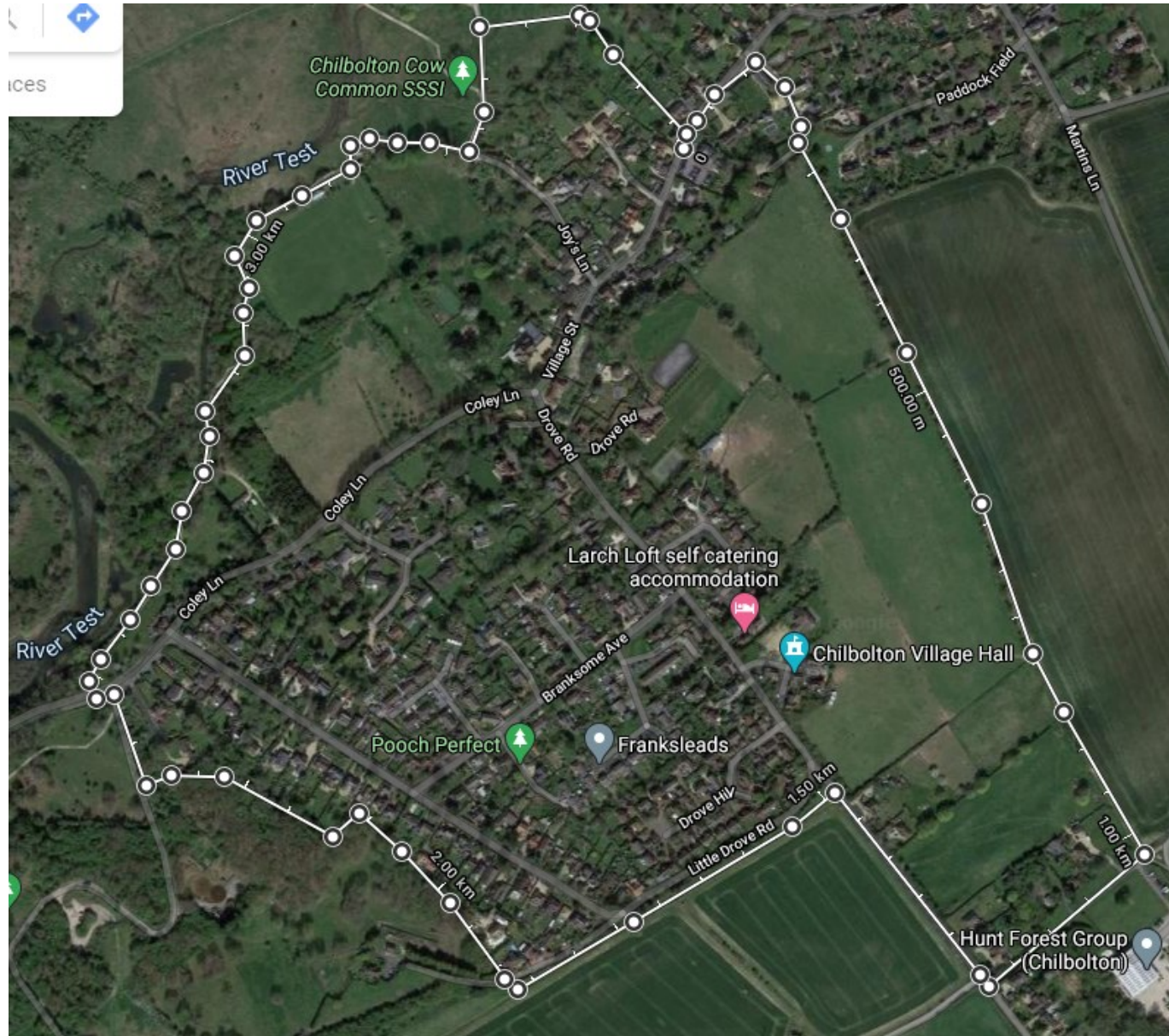


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