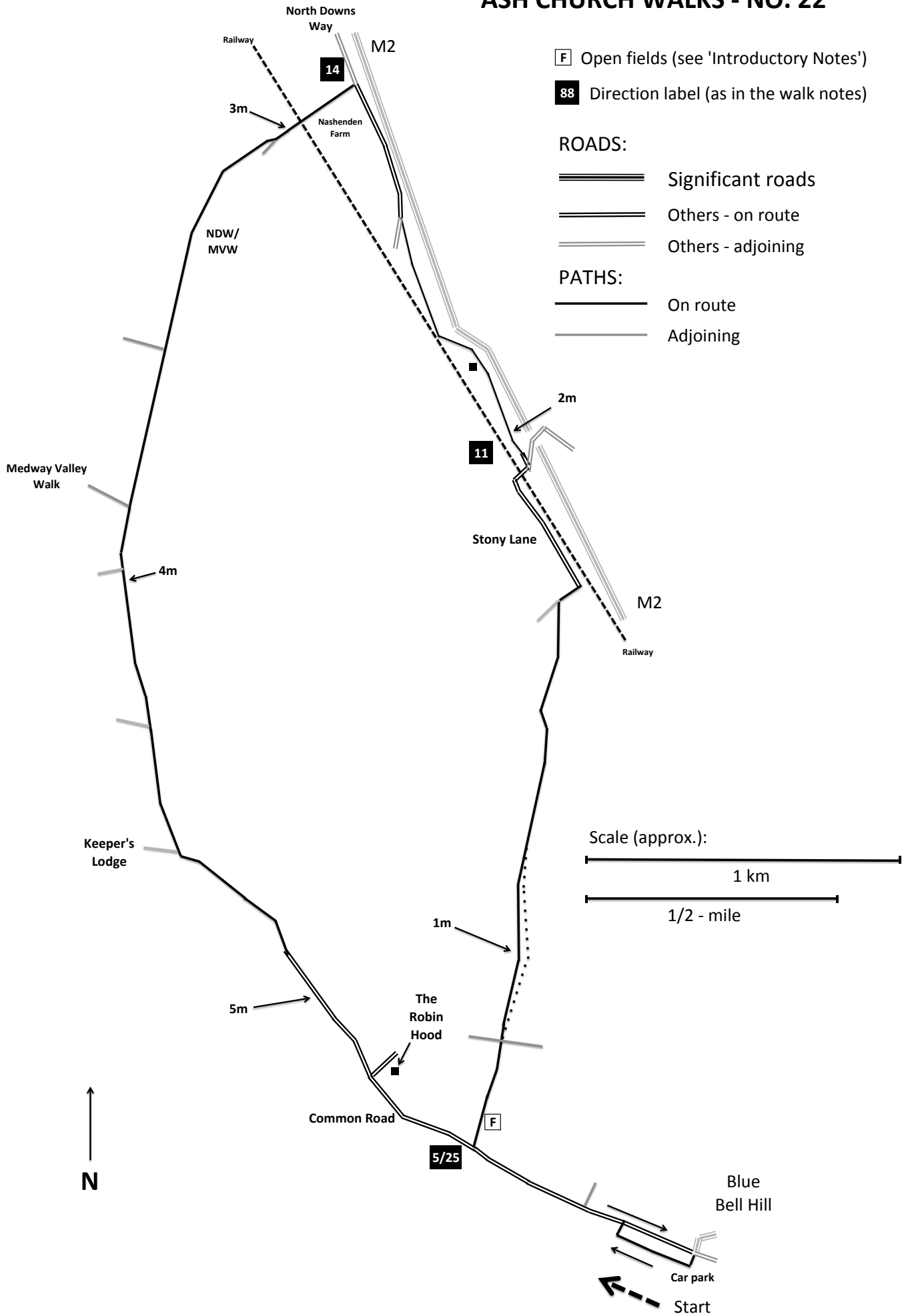


ASH CHURCH WALKS - NO. 22



ASH CHURCH WALKS - No.22 (30 June 2019) - 5.91 miles
(Blue Bell Hill - Syle Wood - Nashenden - [North Downs Way]
- Blue Bell Hill)

Classic views were highlights on a very hot day. The Robin Hood also featured near the end.

Roads and hindrances:

Even after a period of good weather the walk down through the wood (Direction 7) was uncomfortably muddy. But the narrower, winding track on the right makes things easier.

The roads are very quiet.

Notes taken: June 2019

The start and finish is at the car park off Common Road, Blue Bell Hill (ME5 9RG).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		From the Blue Bell Hill car park turn right (from the point of view of a car driving into it), and walk along, passing the information board and keeping the magnificent view on your left.	743 621	
2	3	Go ahead through a wooden kissing gate, briefly into trees.		
3		At the end of the trees immediately turn right, up a brief, gentle rise. (There is a NDW waymark post, but it is not well positioned for us when coming from this direction!)		
4	4	At the top go through another wooden kissing gate, and turn right for a few yards. Then pass a redundant MKG and turn left along the road.	741 623	
5	11	[Map point] !!!F!! Soon after the end of the houses on the left, leave the road and the NDW by turning right, past a redundant MKG, along the signposted footpath across the field. The line is slightly to the left of the nearest pole at the edge of the line of trees on the other side. (Bearing 020.)		
6	13	On the far side go over a footbridge and follow the path as it forks left into trees.		0.69
7	16	At a meeting of paths, the route essentially goes straight ahead, down a little dip at first, and continues along the woodland track, gently downhill. But if it is, as often, excessively muddy, an easier alternative on the right, winding but more or less parallel, presents itself for much of the way to start with (before bending away to the right), avoiding the muddiest section.		
8	35	Meeting a broader track at the bottom, merge right into it.	739 642	
9	36	Turn left to go alongside the railway on a metalled roadway.		1.68
10	41	Cross the railway, after climbing up and swinging right to reach the bridge.		

* ***"Mins."*** is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

!!F!! : Field crossing might be unmarked. See 'Open Fields' in 'Introductory Notes' for some thoughts about dealing with this.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
11	42	[Map point] After the bridge, swing left with the road; then immediately leave it by the unmarked roadway which goes down to the left, over the traffic barrier, to continue alongside the railway.		
12	53	Merge right, into the roadway joining from the pumping station.		2.54
13	55	Continue ahead, passing beside gates.		
14	59	[Map point] Rejoining the NDW at a junction, do not follow it ahead, but take its uphill direction by turning left.	733 659	
15	61	At the end of the road, after the last house, continue ahead along the path.		
16	62	Go ahead across the bridge over the railway.		
17	63	Walk beside the gate, and still continue ahead.		
18	64	Where the path divides, a little before the top, take the right fork (still NDW) passing an information board and soon swinging left to regain the original direction. From this point on the walk is simply a direct, but often scenic, route ahead back, gently uphill for the most part, to Blue Bell Hill.		3.06
19	83	Continue ahead, uphill, passing the junction with the Medway Valley Walk on the right.		3.86
20	86	And on, still uphill, at another junction. [The group paused at this point to enjoy the open space on the right, and the view.]		
21	94	And once again ignore the path on the right.		
22	99	Swing slightly left next to the driveway to Keeper's Lodge.		4.58
23	105	Continue ahead as the path becomes a roadway.		
24	111	Pass on the left (or detour to use) the driveway to the Robin Hood.		
25	116	[Map point] Continue ahead (passing the point at which the walk left the road at Direction 5).		5.43
26	125	Turn right into the Blue Bell Hill car park, the starting point of the walk.	743 621	5.91

* *"Mins." is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.*

FOR THOSE WHO WALK WITH THEIR DOGS

See footnote on next page.

FOR THOSE WHO WALK WITH THEIR DOGS

I do not venture to give advice about walking with your dog. As well as the joys, you will be well aware of the issues involved, and particularly that relationships between dogs and other countryside animals potentially involve mutual suspicion, or worse.

But what this footnote does try to do, in response to requests, is to give some indication of the nature of the walk from a dog's point of view, to enable you to decide whether it is suitable.

The percentage distances on the right should be self-explanatory.

The information in the middle column may look a bit cluttered, but I think it should enable you (if the detail is of interest) to mark up within a few minutes a print-out of the walk notes, so that you have some idea what might be round the next corner.

The risk in all this is that **things change so quickly** in the agricultural working world; and what I describe might become misleading after subsequent changes. I have done my best, but there is no guarantee that you will find the information up to date!

ASH CHURCH WALKS - No.22	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road		0
Quiet road \$\$	4b, 8-11a, 12-13, 23-25	34
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock		0
Field (or edge) without livestock **	1b, 3, 5, 11c, 17-18a	24
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	1a, 4a, 11b, 14-16	8
Woods	2, 6-7, 18b-22	35

** This is not a promise, just a statement of fact - that, having walked these sections perhaps two or three times, I have found no animals or any sign of them.

\$\$ Again, not a promise that there will be no traffic to worry about. Just a personal judgement of conditions as I have found them.

STILES: There are currently no stiles on this walk.