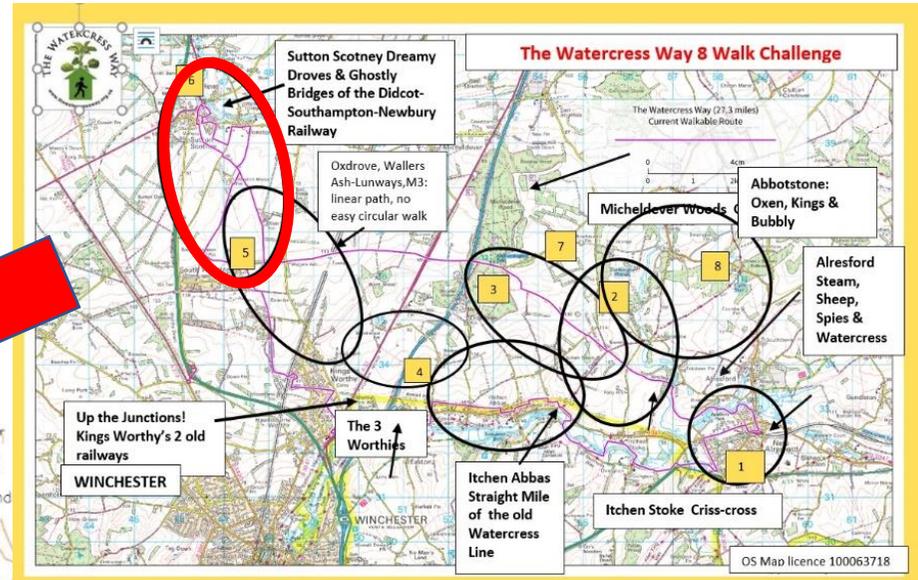
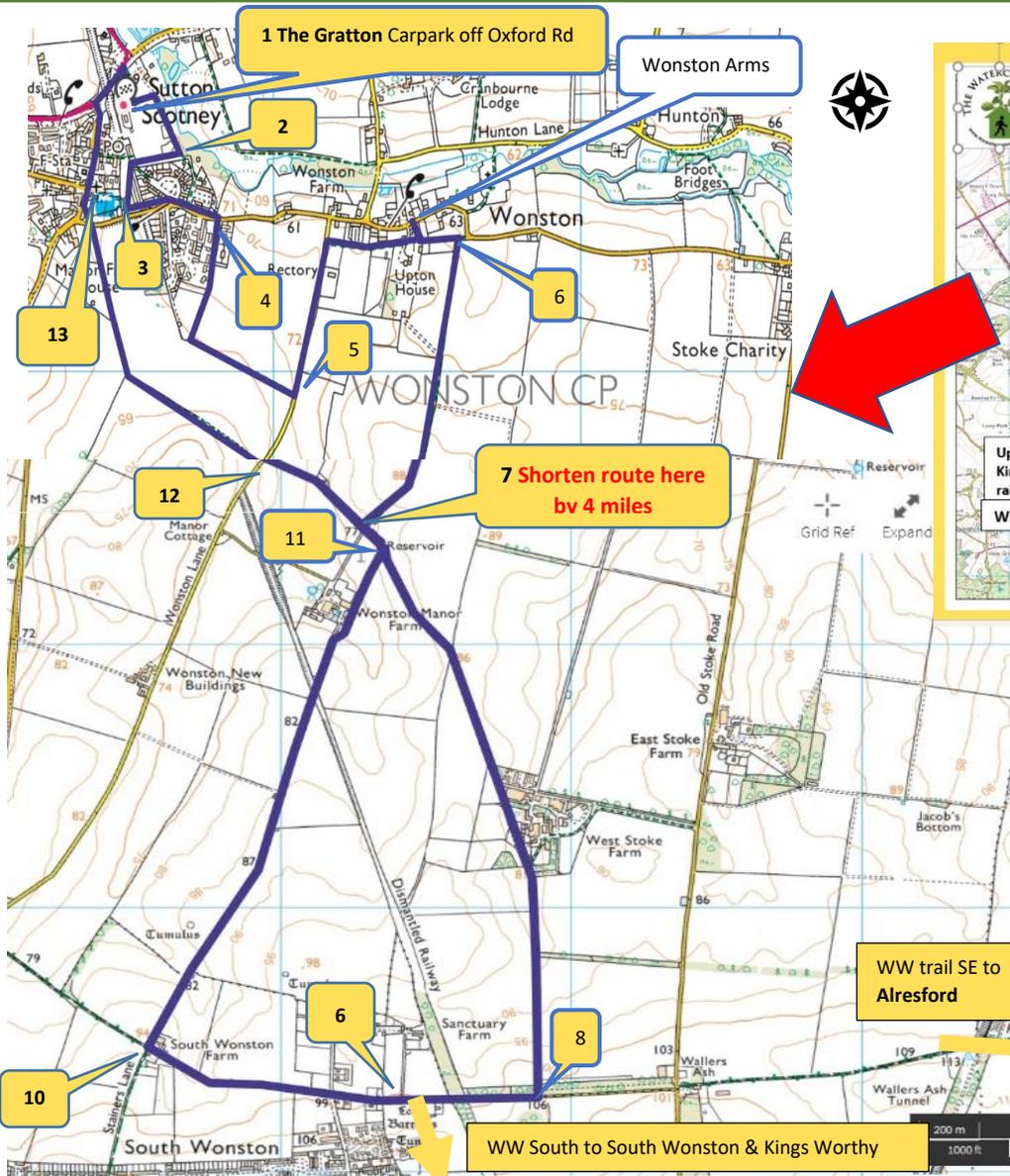


# Watercress Way 8 Walk Challenge: No 6/8 Sutton Scotney Dreamy Drovers and Ghostly bridges 1, 4 or 7 miles



A **circular, flexible walk**, 6.5 miles of which is along the northern part of the Watercress Way. Sutton Scotney is a pretty village rich with heritage and stories. This walk follows the banks of the sparkling River Dever and visits the track bed of the old Didcot-Newbury-Southampton Railway (DN&SR) & historic livestock droves.



**ACCESS:** Start from The Gratton Recreation Ground carpark (1) off Oxford Rd

OS Map SU 4652339864

Post Code SO21 3LE.  
**What3words:** advancing. implanted. weddings.

**Buses** from Winchester & Basingstoke No 86

Two **pubs:** The Dever Arms, Coach & Horses, & **village shop**, The Dever Stores.

**Wheelchair access** for a mile loop in the village centre, stages 1,2,3,12. One section 3-13 has no pavements.

**This route** is suitable for children (The Gratton has a popular children's play area) & dogs under control (sheep). It is on pavements, & gently undulating grassy and gravel tracks with some minor roads with no pavements. The droves can become overgrown. Several kissing gates. OS map app: [Watercress Way 5 or 12 km loop Sutton Scotney \(ordnancesurvey.co.uk\)](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk)



WW trail SE to Alresford

WW South to South Wonston & Kings Worthy



[www.thewatercressway.org.uk](http://www.thewatercressway.org.uk) for information on walking, cycling & horse riding routes, heritage & wildlife, contacts & how to support our work on increasing access to the old railways & conservation. Charity No 1167675 . Find us on social media, TripAdvisor, YouTube. O.S. Map Licence 100063718. **Please follow the latest Government Countryside Code**

**Directions with watchpoints. Stages 1-7-12 & 10-12 are each 4 miles long . Whole route 8 miles if follow all stages 1-12**

**Some background heritage:** Sutton Scotney was once an important agricultural station transporting watercress & pigs especially. To the west side of the car park is the grassy embankment of the DN&SR built 1882/, built as far as Shawford (via the famous Hockley viaduct near St Catherine's Hill) . It closed 1962/4, & after years of dereliction, housing was built in 2018 on the old station & yard. Farming & landfill has almost obliterated the line of the DN&SR, but glimpses can be seen at several stages of the walk. The charity's interpretation boards in The Gratton (1) and at the Stoke Charity Rd bridge ( 3) give more information

Sutton Scotney & the old Station	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. From Gratton park car park off Oxford Rd, skirt the edge of the award winning playing field, and pass to the right of the allotments, passing by the Watercress Way's bench &amp; interpretation sign. Then follow the path right, south alongside the River Dever bank. <i>You may spot trout &amp; vole holes. This tributary of the River Test is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest .</i></li><li>2. Turn right at the southern end of the park by the adventure playground, heading west to the GP surgery's carpark. Cross straight over to a footpath with a lamppost in the middle(!) and enter the housing built on the old station yard called Old Station Park/ Station Drive</li><li>3. Turn left at the end of Station Drive and follow the footpath to the entrance of the bridge. <i>Sutton Scotney railway bridge was cleared of much landfill by the charity in 2019 .See the interpretation sign at the bridge entrance. Peep through the gate to see the blackened bridge roof from years of steam train soot!</i></li></ol>
Droves to the East & South	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Cross the Wonston Rd (pavement) after the bridge, to the second turning on the right, a gravel path called Beggars Drove. <i>(This has some typical sharp turns of livestock droves, designed to give shelter to sheep and cattle on their long journeys across Hampshire)</i></li><li>5. At Wonston Lane turn left for just under 0.5 miles until you see a footpath heading east, on the left. Follow for approximately 400m. About halfway along is a small lane to the left (north) which gives access to The Wonston Arms Pub <i>(limited food but nationally renowned CAMRA pub)</i>.</li><li>6. Take the first bridleway right, heading south, before you get to the Stoke Charity Rd. Follow this south</li><li>7. Choice at this <b>staggered 4-way junction</b> by some farm buildings. (you will pass these buildings again on the return in Stage 10-11). <b>To take the shorter loop skip to stage 11.</b> Otherwise, turn left to take the gravel/grass track to West Stoke farm <i>(an ex drovers pub called The Red Lion )</i>. You pass a walled garden and tennis courts and then parallel a long driveway heading south.</li></ol>
Crossing the DN&SR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>8. At Alresford Drove, the minor road heading into South Wonston, turn right and continue along this road for 0.5 Km <b>(no pavements)</b> <i>You cross over the old DNSL railway line, look out for the bridge. It's been filled in by waste since 1963 closure, so the railway cutting has disappeared.</i></li><li>9. When Alresford Drove road takes a sharp left turn into South Wonston, you carry straight on following a bridleway for 700m, past allotments on the right, until you meet farm buildings at Stainer Lane &amp; a crossroads.</li><li>10. Turn right at this crossroads of bridleways, heading north towards Sutton Scotney, with large arable fields either side of you. After about 1.75km you cross the old DN &amp; SR track. This is a distinctive tree lined linear feature - now used for farm equipment storage <b>(no access)</b>.</li><li>11. Just after a biogas digester on the left you meet the bridleway seen in Stage 7-8 bisecting your route. Turn left heading NW along a bridleway which becomes Wonston Manor Farm Rd.</li><li>12. Turn right when you meet the minor road of Wonston Lane. <i>(Look left down this road to see an abandoned bridge of the old DNSL)</i> Then after 50m turn left onto a footpath heading NW across fields for 1km, to enter Sutton Scotney via Victoria Hall car park. <i>The telegraph poles across the field show the obliterated railway line. Victoria Hall was used by Lord Rank from 1939, to show films to locals. His celebrity guests included Marilyn Monroe .</i></li><li>13. Cross over Stoke Charity Road keeping Victoria Hall to the right. Walk along Oxford Rd, <i>part of the coaching route from Southampton to Oxford. Look for the 1762 coaching pub The Coach and Horses on the left, with a plaque about the Swing Riots of 1830. Next door is the original thatched fire station.</i> The Dever Stores is on the right. At the roundabout, turn right, along the footpath through the old parapets of the old DN&amp;SR railway bridge and take the first right back into The Gratton. You will see allotments and the carpark . <i>Spot the wildflower bank between the car park &amp; playing fields</i></li></ol>

Written by DoE volunteers and Kim Adams Trustee June 2021. Photo courtesy of Hampshire Cultural Trust

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