

Oakley Ramblers Club



Affiliated to HF Holidays Limited

A lovely sunny autumnal day dawned for our walk on Saturday 17th November, led by Richard and Heather Wilson.

Twenty walkers set out from Middleton adjacent to Longparish Village Hall, along a path leading to the village football ground where the local boys' teams were having a football match.

We then followed the Test Way north, alongside open fields and through wooded areas full of autumn colour. Crossing an old railway bridge and cutting which was originally part of the extension of the Andover & Redbridge Railway running from Andover to Southampton (affectionately known as the "Sprat & Winkle Line"). The line was built in 1882 and ran from Fisherton Junction through Wherwell and Longparish to Hurstbourne on the L&SWR West of England line.

Continuing along the Test Way we crossed the B3400 at Fox Cottages and up to the impressive Faulkners Down House, part of Apsley Farms, with its bio digester and farm for energy. They now produce 4 products: electricity, gas, fertiliser and CO₂.



(Their CO₂ capture and liquidification plant added in November 2016 is in full production, producing food grade CO₂).

Leaving the Test Way, the group started the return leg to Harewood Peak returning across the B3400 and down through the top area of Harewood Forest before heading across the fields to Forton and along the back road (part of Test Way again)

to the St Nicholas Church in Middleton and back to the carpark. After an enjoyable 6.5 mile walk many of us retired to The Cricketers in Longparish for a well-earned drink and lunch.