

Oakley Ramblers Club



Affiliated to HF Holidays Limited

The cold wet weather on Friday 15th November did not deter eight brave Ramblers from joining Sandra Jamieson and Chris Williams on a “secret mission” quiz trail around Whitchurch. The group split into two teams of five and set off at slightly staggered times armed with a set of directions to follow and clues which had to be solved along the trail. After a rather shaky beginning by the first group whose leader (who shall remain nameless) misread the order of the directions and clues, the second group quickly overtook the first group and forged ahead.

The trail took us along a track called “The Weir” which led to the Fulling Mill and across the River Test to Whitchurch churchyard. We continued into the centre of the town then up a narrow steep footpath called “Chatters Lane” which eventually took us down to London Road and back to the centre of town again. From there we continued to the Silk Mill where we solved our final questions before retiring to the Silk Mill café for some very welcome refreshment. Over lunch we compared answers and completed the “mission” to discover a secret code.

All agreed that the trail had been a fun and interesting way to learn much about the historic town of Whitchurch.

On Sunday morning of the 24th November the ramble was centred on Odiham. I chose this walk as the guidance said “the fields around North Warnborough may be waterlogged (which they were) but the lanes can be used instead (which we did!).”

It was a pleasant day for walking, albeit a little damp at times, when twelve of us set off from the Wharf carpark in Odiham. Our route took us up past the Waterwitch before turning off between the houses and out to the fields to the south of Odiham. Following the path for about half a mile around the edge of the fields we wended our way passed the church and tennis courts before eventually reaching the Alton Road. A brief stop to view the chalk pit which was featured on a map of the area dated 1739 and is linked to stories of an incident involving an airship belonging to the RNAS before the First World War.

At the roundabout we headed down West Street, past Robert Mays School and then took the footpath at the side of the school towards North Warnborough, eventually crossing the lift bridge over the canal. Following the lanes we crossed the main road near Mill House, continued across the fields and under the A287, stopping briefly at Newlyn's Farm Shop and café, before



crossing back over the A287 and back along the canal to our starting point. Ten of us then returned to the Waterwitch for lunch.