

# Paths for All

## AVON & BOURNE



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One of a number of watercourses to bear the name (which of course means simply 'river'), the Salisbury or Hampshire Avon has two sources – one near Devizes, the other just east of Pewsey – which meet at Upavon, and flow south through Enford and Netheravon, then via Amesbury and the Woodfords to Salisbury. To the east, and running roughly parallel from its source near Burbage, the River Bourne cuts through the chalk hills at Collingbourne Kingston, then south through Tidworth and the Winterbournes to meet its sister stream near Salisbury. There, along with the Nadder, Wylde, and Ebbel, the rivers combine and as the Avon flow on into the English Channel near Christchurch.

The coast lies many miles ahead of the waters that pass through our area. Here the two rivers are in their relative infancy, meandering gently past villages and water meadows, through soft drowsy valleys flanked by chalk hills and, to the west, the plateau of Salisbury Plain. Making full use of local knowledge and experience, this series of leaflets presents walks, carefully prepared to cater for a full range of capability and stamina, designed to show to full advantage the natural beauty, wildlife, history, and hidden aspects of this special area.



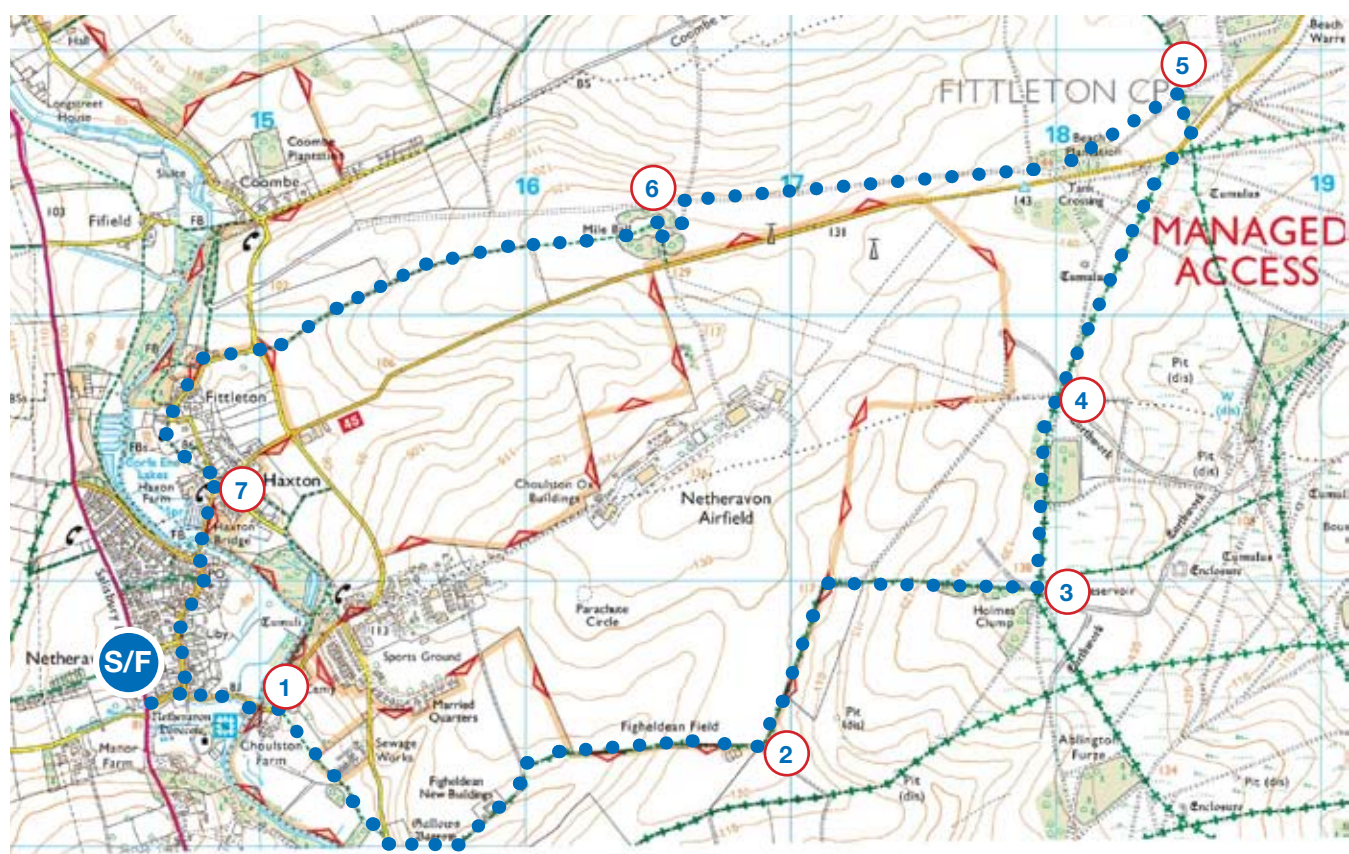
CIRCULAR WALK

## NETHERAVON AIRFIELD CIRCULAR WALK

7.5 MILES/12 KM  
2 - 3 hours

UNSUITABLE FOR WHEELCHAIRS & BUGGIES

Tarmac, tracks, uneven ground and grassland.  
8 kissing gates.



Start and finish at the Dog & Gun Inn on the A345



Fittleton Church

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From the car park at the Dog & Gun Inn turn left onto the A345 towards Salisbury. Take the next left turn signposted towards Airfield Camp and follow until the road forks to the left and right. Take the right fork towards Airfield Camp, follow the road around to the left past Netheravon church, over the river, to the kissing gate just beyond Choulston Farm.

**1** Leave the road via the kissing gate, crossing the field past the sewage works and through a further two kissing gates, then follow the fence line along the copse to a kissing gate onto the tarmac road. Turn right for a short distance to the Restricted Byway on the left. Follow this up the hill past Figheldean New Buildings and meander along the boundary of Netheravon Airfield, passing an old pillbox and barns on your right to reach a fork in the track.

**2** Turn left and follow the track between the airfield boundary and the penning past a public footpath sign on your right. The track then bears right and up the hill towards a small wood near Holmes Clump. Beyond the clump the track crosses a metal range road.

**3** Turn left between the two copses to a meeting of tracks on the range road.

**4** Turn slightly right and head for the distinct white boards in the distance. Follow the road to the right briefly, then take the Restricted Byway to the left. Follow this past a wood on your right to the next track crossroads.

**5** Turn left up the steady incline between the Beech's Plantation to Mile Ball.

**6** Turn left onto the track leading into Mile Ball, then right onto the Public Footpath into the copse. On exiting the copse walk along the edge of the field keeping the wooden posts to your left. Follow the path down between the hedgerow to a junction of tarmac road. Take the road ahead to Fittleton until a Public Footpath signed 'The Church'; go through the wooden kissing gate into Haxton church grounds. Walk through the cemetery and two further kissing gates into an open field; cross the field to the kissing gate in the left hand corner, go through the gate and turn left to join the tarmac road.

**7** Turn right to Netheravon, over the Haxton bridge and along the High Street past the library and school, around the bend to the right and back to the A345 and the Dog & Gun Inn.



One of the oldest operational military airfields in the country, if not the world, Netheravon was in continuous use from 1913 until 2012. Originally under the wing of the Royal Flying Corps, hangars, camp buildings, and landing areas were completed in the summer of 1913.

**1914:** The 700 men and 70 planes of the RFC meet at Netheravon in training to support the war effort.

**1918:** The Royal Air Force (RAF) is formed.

**1919:** No.1 Flying Training School (FTS) formed at Netheravon to train military and naval pilots.

**1930s:** Front-line bomber and fighter squadrons regularly pass through the airfield.

**1933:** John Tranum sets world free-fall height record, dropping from 20,000ft over the airfield.

**1939:** Ground defences installed and the Wiltshire Regiment deployed on the outbreak of war; defence is later provided by the RAF.

**1941:** Netheravon becomes the centre for airborne forces. No.38 Wing set up to allow co-ordination with 1st Parachute Brigade, HQ'd at Bulford Camp.

**1942:** FTS formally disbands. Netheravon has its one and only air raid of the war, a single German raider. No.295 Squadron and the Glider Pilot Exercise Unit formed

**1944:** In advance of D-Day, training for British involvement in airborne operations intensifies at Netheravon.

**1945:** Dakotas arrive at Netheravon, repatriating 800 liberated prisoners of war along with wounded troops and 3,000 soldiers of US 6th Airborne Division.

**1950:** No.27 Squadron becomes the last RAF flying unit to be based at Netheravon. Transferred to No.62 Group Home Command, it becomes the depot of RAF Police and the RAF Police Dog Training Squadron.

**1963:** The airfield passes to the Army.

**1966:** Military aviation returns with No.6 Flight AAC.

**2009:** 7 AAC leaves Netheravon for Middle Wallop.