

white admiral butterfly

countryside covered with such growth; a mass of thick, intertwined, prickly bushes

– which, before organised agriculture cleared it away, was how the ‘wildwood’ of ancient Shropshire might have looked; bear slightly right down field to cross next stile (bottom right corner).

- 8 down steep bank to cross bridge; turn half left, up steps to marker post; turn sharp right, follow stream (below, right) to cross next stile; ahead along fence through plantation of oak, ash, larch, scots pine to turn left, far right corner of wood.
- 9 up hill to marker post; ahead, slightly left, up to next marker; turn half right to cross stile/gap; down bank to turn right, downhill, along old road (‘Bakehouse Lane’ was the main road here before ‘New Road’ was built) to go through gate; straight ahead into village for 200m.
- 10 Just passed ‘The Bakehouse’ (left), after which the lane is named, turn left; up path, pass The Duck Inn, to New Road; turn left to village hall.

Finding Chorley, on most maps, can be quite a challenge – although the modern village is 1km from end to end, it is unusual in that it is three distinct, older settlements joined together – High Green (around The Chapel) to the east; Lower Chorley (around the farm of that name); and Chorley (around The Manor house known simply as ‘Chorley’) to the west.



Stroll 2 – Ducks and Bakehouses

Exploring woodlands, streams and the old main road to Chorley

Distance: 3 miles or 5km Time: (approx) 1½ hours

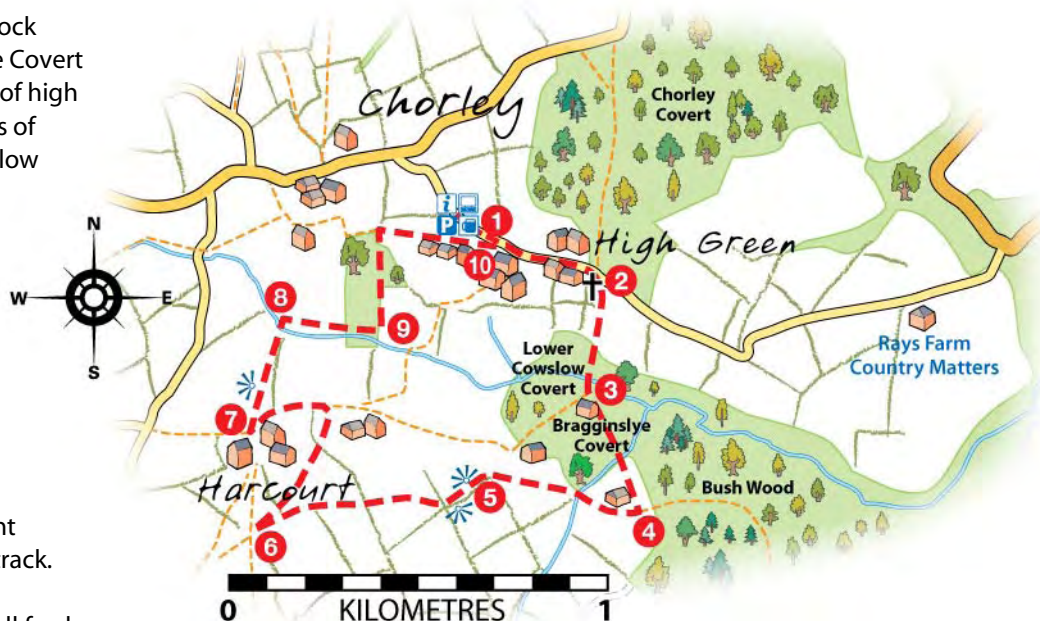
This shorter ‘ramble’ uses ancient footpaths, old lanes and short sections of village road. Parts can be very muddy after wet weather. There are 10 stiles, 9 gates and about 20 steps.



Start from Chorley Village Hall 1

- 1 Turn down New Road into village, passing Duck Inn (right); bear left by Lower Chorley (magnificent medieval farmhouse); up bank to High Green (woodlands here are an SSSI – protected habitat of rare butterflies, including the white admiral (once known as ‘white admirable’) which is here at the northern limit of its range) and the Silver Washed Fritillary.
- 2 turn right at Chorley Chapel (built 1878 by local families; well worth a closer look); down lane (50m); bear right (donkeys in paddock, right) down marked bridleway into Lower Cowslow Covert (silver birch, polar and ash trees); over stream bridge (look out for bluebells, honeysuckle and violets in season); up bank to waymark post; turn left, through paddock gateway.

3 Diagonally across paddock to gate into Bragginslye Covert wood - good examples of high oak trees with old stools of hazel below); follow yellow markers through wood (look out for clumps of holly); scramble across stream; up bank to cross stile; bear half-right over field (cottage, once derelict; said to be haunted, right; oak woodland Bush Wood, left) to go through gate at top right corner; turn right onto track.



4 Follow track (wade small ford; through gate/cross stile by cottage) *Look out for newly planted native-species hedgerows* (conservation and woodland management are high priorities here); poplars and willows in the wetter area near the ford; old apple, fig, and cherry trees near cottage to turn left, through gate, opposite point where track turns sharp right.

Straight ahead to cross stile bottom left field corner; follow stream (right) along edge of next two fields (cross stile between); through gate to track in small shady copse; bear round (right) to bridge.

6 Five footpaths meet here so care is needed to join the correct route: cross stream; through gate; turn half-right to climb up side of hill (stream below, right) pass large field oak to cross stile in hedge bank ahead; head diagonally over next field (cowsheds left) to turn left through gate in far left corner; bear half right over field to cross stile/steps down to track; turn left; follow bridleway for 200m.

5 Follow fence line 100m (views: Harcourt; Lower Chorley, right; Knowle Hill, left, 754ft [232m] is highest point in parish) to marker post; bear half-right (small stand of silver birch, right; look out for buzzards above); over boggy ditch.



7 Opposite second gateway (left) to dairy yard, turn right to cross stile (just beyond a field gate) in hedgerow (hedges like this were traditionally "laid" by hand to keep them in good condition; mechanised flailing is used now; since flails do not cut around cable poles, look out for living clues to how high and spindly hedges quickly become if left uncontrolled... now imagine the whole