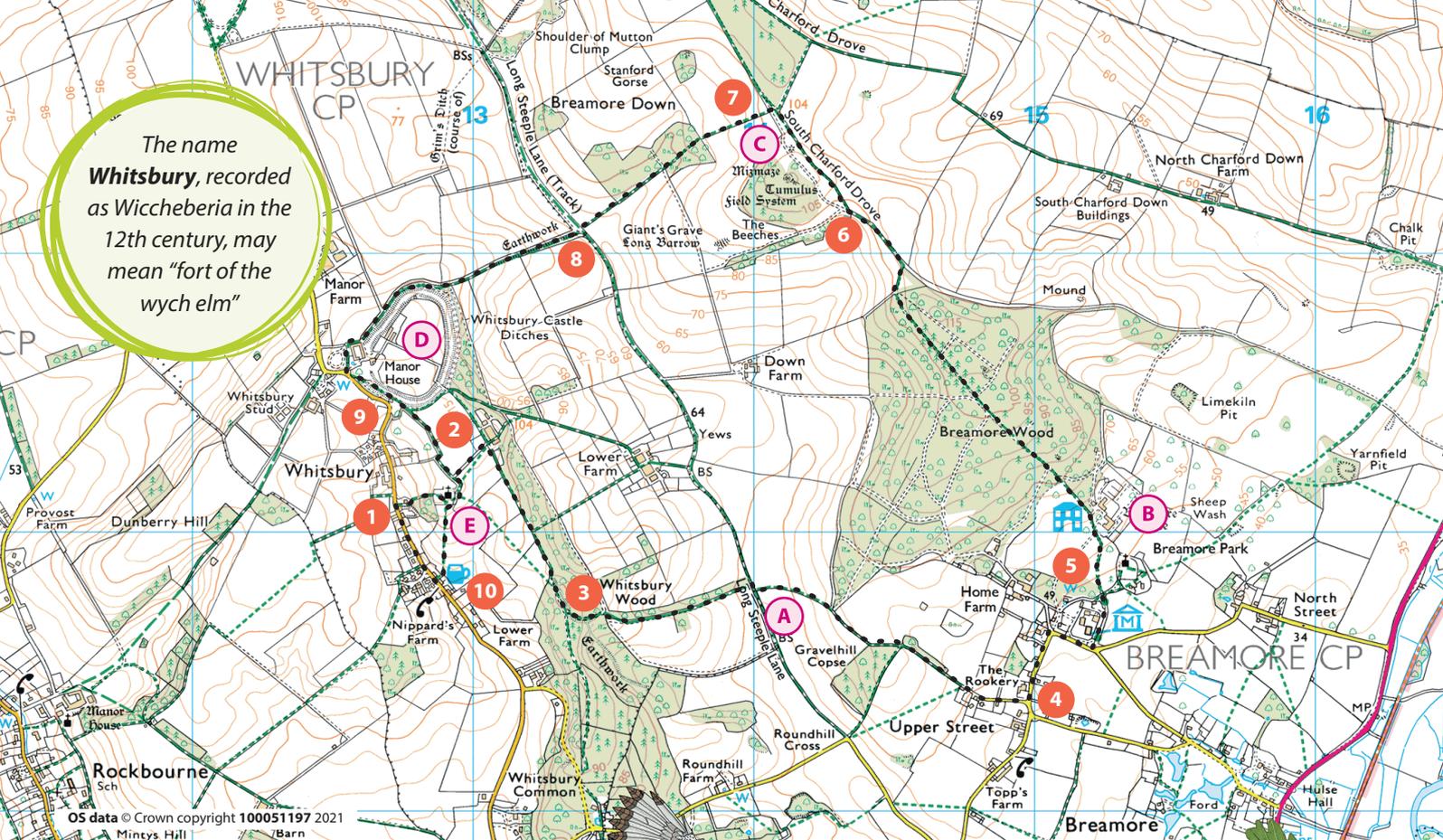


The name **Whitsbury**, recorded as *Wiccheberia* in the 12th century, may mean "fort of the wych elm"



## Directions

Turn right out of the pub car park and follow the road up through the village. **1** Turn right up a narrow pathway between hedges to the left of 'Carpenters' (house). The path is signed 'Footpath to St Leonards Church' from the road.

Follow the path to the church, entering the churchyard through a gate. Go to the left of the church to another gate at the end of the churchyard. Turn left onto a lane, after approx. 100m turn right, **2**, between paddocks following 'Footpath' signs.

Turn right in front of the buildings and follow the track with paddocks on your right and a hedge on your left. Ignore the footpath to the left and continue straight along this track into the woodland. Follow the dirt track through the wood to a fork (**3**, signed), take the left fork and follow the track down through the woods. On reaching the edge of the wood, take the grassy track straight ahead and follow this down a gently sloping grassy track to a gate onto Long Steeple Lane.

Turn right onto the lane and, after approx. 20m, left onto a narrow path running up a hollow between two fields. Go through the gate at the top and follow a dirt path through pretty woodland.

Continue straight on to emerge onto a small country lane, continue ahead. Follow the lane (Rookery Lane) to a junction, **4**, turn left and continue, following the lane round a distinct right-hand bend, passing a walled garden to your left. At the next junction turn left, following signs to 'Breamore Church.'

Follow the lane to the gates of Breamore House (**5**) - if the house is closed, use the green button to the right of the gates to open them. Proceed along the driveway (a public bridleway), passing the house and buildings to your right and continue along the track (now dirt/gravel) into the woods. Stay straight ahead on this track to emerge on the far side of the wood.



Tawny Owl



Shortly after the track opens on to a wide grassy area, the bridleway bends to the right, stay straight ahead on the more indistinct grassy track heading up to the woods and a sign for the Mizmaze **6**. Note: If you do not wish to visit the Mizmaze continue along the bridleway to the right

Having visited the Mizmaze turn left out of the woods and follow the grassy path around the woods to drop back town to meet the bridleway at the corner of the field. Follow the bridleway between a fence on your left and hedge, right. After approx. 50m turn left, through a metal swing gate, **7**, signposted 'Footpath to Whitsbury'.

Follow this path down, through a wooded area, past a barn to your right and straight ahead up a slope to a stile. Cross the path in front (**8**) and continue straight ahead up the hill, with a fence and open fields to the right.

Where the path passes a gate, continue straight ahead to reach the impressive stable yard at Whitsbury. Follow the path (now tarmac) to the right, in front of the thatched stable building, and then left. Stay left on the lane and turn left **9** into a driveway, signposted 'Whitsbury Manor Stud, Visiting Mares and Stud Office, Church.'

Go through the gates and follow the driveway and where it widens and bends left, take the gravel track to the right, signed 'Church.' Enter the churchyard by the gate you passed through earlier, walk around the churchyard to the left, to leave by a gate facing a paddock and open views.

Head diagonally down to the right through the paddock (please ensure dogs are on leads) to a gate **10** in the hedge. Take the narrow path to emerge on the village road, next to the pub. Alternatively, retrace your steps from the beginning of the walk and head back to the pub round the church and down the road.



## Points of Interest on this route (see map overleaf for locations)

**A Long Steeple Lane** is a drove road. Between the Middle Ages and the Industrial Revolution, drove roads linked the wild corners of Britain with the growing demands of towns and cities where livestock could be brought to market. Routes ran over isolated ridgeways and kept away from villages.

**B Breamore House** was completed in 1583 by the Dodington family, and was built on the site of Breamore Priory. The building underwent minor changes in the 18th century and underwent considerable restoration after a major fire in 1856.

**C Mizmaze:** The Breamore Mizmaze is thought to date to the 12th or 13th centuries. Turf, and paved church mazes would have been used for penances: according to tradition, monks used the maze for their penances, painfully traversing it on their knees with prayers said at fixed points along the path:

the folds of the maze may also have represented the folds of sin.

**D Whitsbury Castles**

defences date to the Iron Age period, having been constructed and used between

**St Mary's Church** of England's most important Angle-Saxon churches

Owl carving near Breamore House



The line of drove roads are often marked by evergreen trees towering above the hedge-line, usually Scott's pine, laurel, or holly



Whitsbury Church

the sixth century BC and the mid-first century AD. Hillforts are generally regarded as centres of permanent occupation, defended in response to increasing threat of warfare. It must have made a strikingly white hill, especially from the east. Today trees mask the perimeter of this private land.

**E Whitsbury Church.** The church of St Leonard built in late 13th-century style, comprising chancel, north vestry, nave, and west tower. The material is flint, interspersed with stones, and with brick buttresses and an 18th-century tower, rebuilt in 1878. The interior is 19th century.

A moderate walk across paddocks, open farmland and clear woodland paths. Starting at Whitsbury the walk heads out to Breamore House and the Saxon church, to the Mizmaze and back to the Cartwheel Inn.

With thanks to **Graham Thompson** for recommending this route.

**Start Point:** Whitsbury Village.

SU037201 OL22 Explorer New Forest and 118 Explorer Shaftesbury & Cranborne Chase | W3W: redeemed.blankets.seasonal

**Parking:** Available at The Cartwheel Inn **for customers only**, or on street (please park with care and consideration).

**Terrain:** Moderate. A few short sections with steep inclines.

**Length:** Approximately 5.75 miles (9.3km)

**Approximate time:** 3 hours

**Dogs:** This route passes paddocks and fields, please ensure dogs are kept on leads around livestock.

**Good to know:** The Spring bluebells in Breamore Wood are worth seeing!

**Refreshments:** The Cartwheel Inn in Whitsbury – check opening times and parking arrangements.

*The information is only intended as a general guide. Please check local arrangements.*

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[cranbornechase.org.uk](http://cranbornechase.org.uk)



Respect everyone  
Protect the environment  
Enjoy the outdoors  
Follow advice and local signs



Illustrations by Sal Meedings



[cranbornechase.org.uk](http://cranbornechase.org.uk)



## Whitsbury Wander

Circular walk from the attractive village of Whitsbury to Breamore House and the Mizmaze

WALK #  
**W27**

