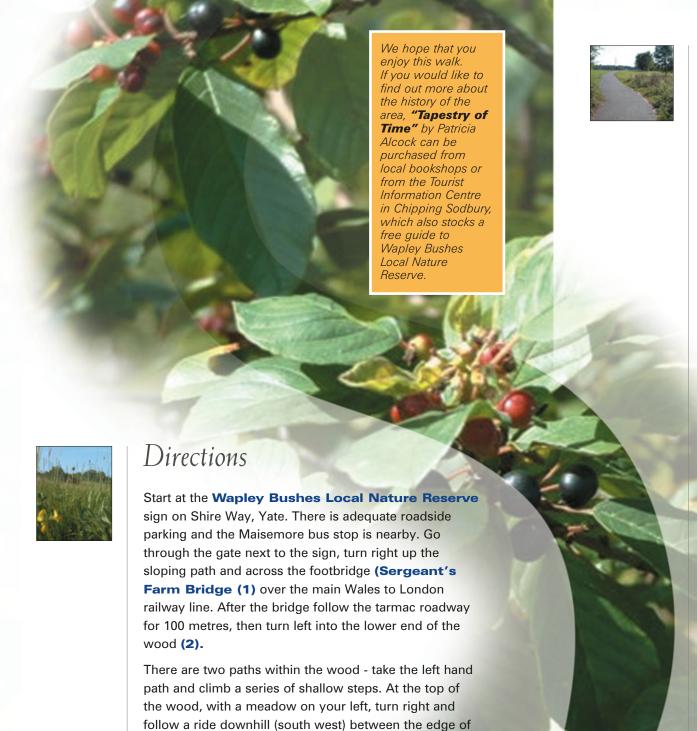


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- Sergeant's Farm Bridge
- Wapley Bushes Local Nature Reserve
- The Hamlet of Wapley

- St Peter's Church, Wapley
- 5 Westerleigh
- 6 Wapley Rank



the wood and a tall hedge.

## Directions continued.

Emerging onto Wapley Common, carry on westwards down to a kissing gate leading onto Besom Lane.

Turn left (south east) along the road and carry on up the hill.

Just past the old school building turn left along the drive to **St**Peter's church (4).

Retrace your steps back down the hill, turning west along the drive of Wychwell Farm, and continue to a "crossroad" of footpaths near Beanwood Farm. If you want to take a shorter route you can now turn right (north) and follow a footpath direct to Wapley Rank.

The main walk carries straight on westwards, then turns left along a lane at the back of some houses and into **Westerleigh Village (5).** Here you could pause at the New Inn (adjacent) or Ye Olde Inn (past the church).

The return route goes back up the lane behind the houses and straight on (north, then turning north east) across the fields and pony paddocks to **Wapley Rank (6)**.

Turn right along Besom Lane and then immediately left to follow the tarmac roadway through the gate and across Wapley Common, then cross the bridge again back to Shire Way.





## Points of Interest

- Sergeant's Farm Bridge across the railway is the only relic of a farm long covered by the housing estate.
  - Wapley Bushes Local Nature Reserve consists of two meadows and a piece of ancient woodland. The sloping meadow in particular is very rich in wild flowers, with some rare species, and is at its best in the summer. The wood contains a large rookery and many interesting trees and plants in spring there are large numbers of bluebells. The edges of the wood and the meadows are havens for butterflies in warm weather. In winter you can look out for strangely-shaped bracket fungi on the trees. You may see squirrels, rabbits, foxes and if you are very lucky some small deer. The Reserve is maintained by the Wapley Bushes Conservation Group, helped by the owners Dodington Parish Council together with South Gloucestershire Council and the Wildlife Trust.
    - Wapley, its church and beautiful views out across the valley. The name Wapley probably means "clearing by the spring", and the village is recorded in the Domesday Book, when it supported several ploughs and at least 6 slaves.
    - **St Peter's Church, Wapley** and its tower date from the 13th century, with various additions through to the 16th century. It contains the tomb of Sir John Codrington, who was the standard bearer to Henry V at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. Notice the old gravestones used to bridge the ditch at the doors of the church.
  - Westerleigh originated in Saxon times, and is also mentioned in the Domesday Book. The Church of St James the Great dates from the 13th century and has a richly carved stone pulpit. Much of the church was later rebuilt in the Perpendicular style. There is a choice of two pubs, the New Inn near the end of the footpath and Ye Olde Inne just past the church.
  - Wapley Rank appears to be four very ordinary council houses, but they were originally eight small miners' cottages. Coal mining was a major industry in this area from the 15th century onwards.