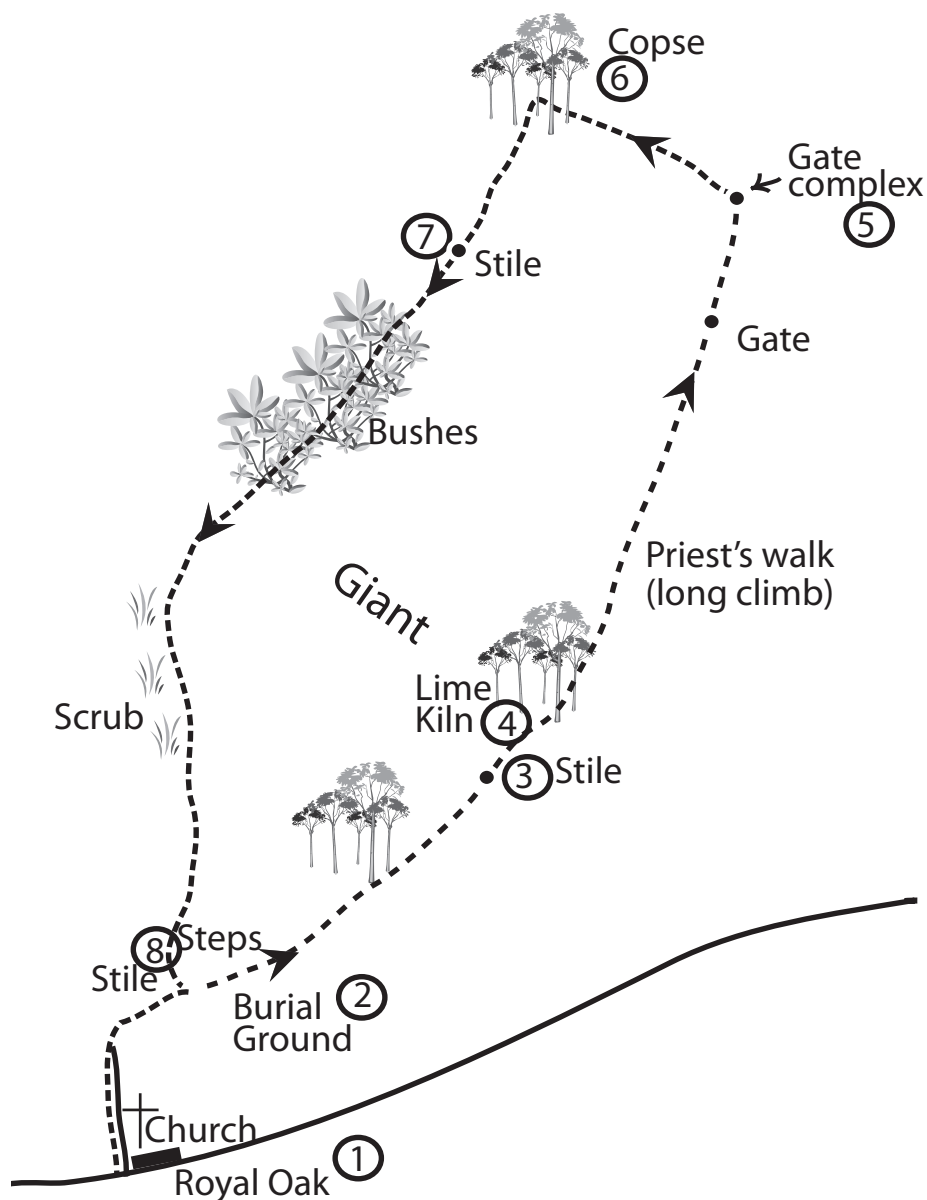


Around the Giant

4kms (2.5 miles)



Where: A circular walk around the Giant, which overlooks the village.

Why: Each side of The Giant affords good views of the valleys below. The slopes below the Giant are well known for the variety of butterflies. The best place to view The Giant is from the car park at the top of Duck Street, just off the A352.

What you need to know: A long steep climb and similar descent. Can be muddy and slippery in wet weather.

Route Description: From the Square (1) walk up Abbey Street. Pass the duck pond and go through the iron gate on your right into the burial ground (2). Take the left path up to and through a second gate. Bear right and follow the grassy track across and up a slope to a way-marked stile. Follow the path with a hedge on the left to a stile and down to a bridleway (3). Turn left and follow the track. This is known as the Priest's Walk and would have been a pilgrimage route from Cerne Abbey to the neighbouring Milton Abbey and also predates the near-by Alton Lane.

After several metres as the track turns right, notice the site of the old chalk quarry and the remains of a limekiln a few metres north of the path (4). The quarry has not been in use since at least 1900 but would have been the source of most of the white chalk blocks (clunch) and grey chalk blocks used in the building of the older village houses. The limekiln was used to bake the white chalk as the first stage in the production of lime putty, which would have been mixed with sand (from the Upper Greensand formation) to provide lime mortar for building.

The track climbs for over 1km until a gate is reached. Enter a level field keeping the fence on the left until a gate/rail complex is soon reached (5). Turn left through a small gate and cross the field to the corner of a copse with a multi-fingered post (6). Turn left and follow the path across to a stile ahead on the field boundary (7). Don't follow the more obvious track to the left but go ahead until you shortly pick up a more distinct path. This leads down through bushes and out onto Giant Hill. Here the path leads across and under The Giant with good views all the way.

The Giant is under the care and protection of the National Trust and is normally not open to visitors. More information about the Giant can be found on the information board in the car park at the top of Duck Street. Pass under The Giant, down the steps (8), over a stile a few metres ahead and into the field. Cross until you reach the burial ground to complete the circuit.

(Walk compiler: David Burgess)