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.

Stotty Strollers

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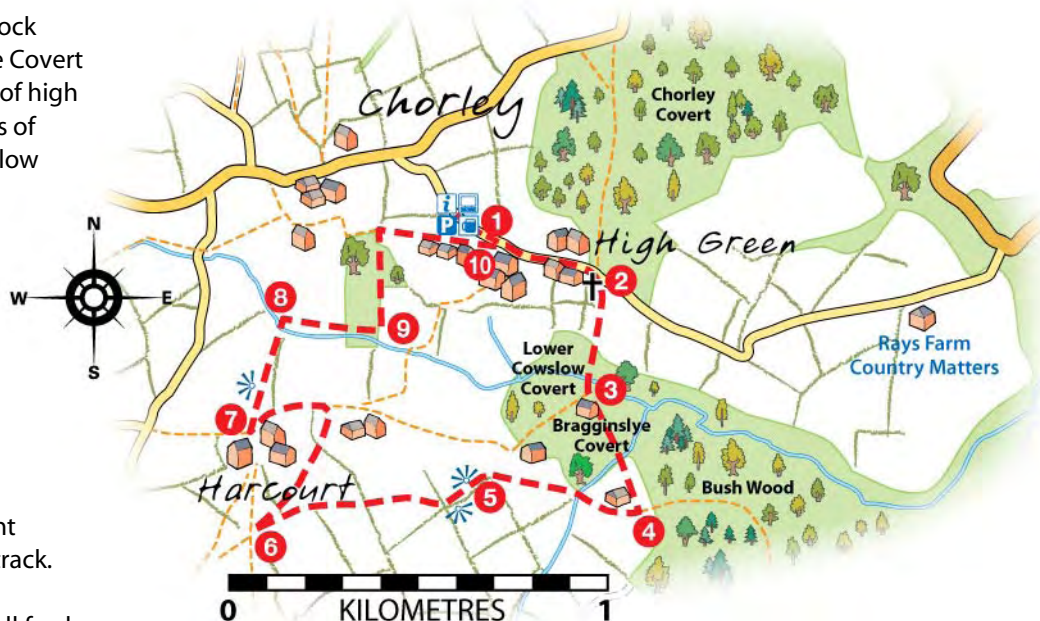
4 Follow track (wade small ford; through gate/cross stile by cottage) *Look out for newly planted native-species hedgerows* (conservation and woodland management are high priorities here); poplars and willows in the wetter area near the ford; old apple, fig, and cherry trees near cottage to turn left,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

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.

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.

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*