**No Secret Source, 24 miles. 20/03/2022 Rich Roberts**

Map OS Explorer OL3 (previously 119) 1:25 000

Start 8:00 – Lunch 12:30 to 13:30 – Finish 17:00

**Start Point -** Meon Valley Trail Car Park

https://w3w.co/giraffes.likely.jeep SU 64179 23638 GU32 1HS

**West Meon** - population of 749 people

The Manor of West Meon was listed in the Domesday Book as owned by the Bishop of Winchester.

A charter of 1205 confirmed the grant of land to the Prior and Convent of St. Swithun, Winchester, in whose hands it remained until the Dissolution of the Monasteries. In 1541 the manor was granted to the Dean and Chapter of Winchester by Henry VIII, and the maintenance of six theology students at each of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge was ordered. In 1544 the King changed this regulation, and the manor was granted to Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, in whose family the manor remained until 1677.

**Meon Valley Railway Line** – 22.25 miles, running from Alton to Fareham

The railway was authorised in 1896 and opened in 1903, making it one of the last railways of any size to be built to main-line standards in the United Kingdom. Passenger services were withdrawn after 5 February 1955, and the line was closed completely on 13 August 1968.

**Salt Hill –** Long Barrow

The barrow mound survives as a low earthwork orientated NE-SW and rectangular in plan. It is 44m long, 20m wide and survives to a height of 0.8m above the flanking quarry ditches.

Trig Point – Salt Hill Resr TP5793 SU675197

**Source of the River Meon**

34 km (21 mi) in a generally southerly direction to empty into the Solent at Hill Head near Stubbington

**East Meon –** population 1171

Contains bronze age barrows approx. 2000BCE

East Meon founded between 400 and 600CE

East Meon was chosen as "The Domesday Village" with a model in Winchester's Great Hall depicting the village as it was then – the model can still be seen alongside the famous tapestry at Bayeux in Normandy.

**The Thomas Lord –** Lunch

Named after the man who founded Lord’s Cricket Ground

**Warnford –** population 220

The Church of Our Lady, located in Warnford Park to the south of the village, is Grade 1 listed 12th Century, and contains relics of an earlier Saxon church.

**Meonstoke –** population 645

This area has been inhabited over 20,000 years

The Meonwara, a Jutish tribe settled in the Meon Valley in the 6th century, but the stoke in the village's name is of Anglo-Saxon origin.

**Old Winchester Hill**

On the summit of the hill is an Iron Age hill fort. Within the hill fort can also be found Bronze Age barrows. The barrows date from between 4500 and 3,500 BCE whilst the fort itself is believed to be Iron Age in origin. It was probably built in the Early or early Middle Iron Age (600-300 BCE) and fell out of use around the beginning of the Late Iron Age (150-100 BCE).

**Geology**

The Winchester-East Meon Anticline is one of a series of parallel east-west trending folds in the Cretaceous chalk of Hampshire. It lies at the western end of the South Downs, immediately to the north of the Hampshire Basin and south-east of Salisbury Plain.

The fold is around 35 kilometres (22 mi) long, running from north of Michelmersh near the River Test to East Meon in the valley of the River Meon.

To the east of Winchester, the fold swings southwards towards East Meon as the Winchester-Meon Pericline. This has a slightly westward plunge, reflecting the axis of the Wealden Anticline. To the west of the Meon is Beacon Hill. Towards the eastern end near Warnford the West Melbury Marly Chalk member is exposed in the Meon Valley and at East Meon; this represents the bottom of the chalk. Between these outcrops lie Old Winchester Hill and Henwood Down.

**Wildlife**

This unimproved chalk downland is home to a number of butterfly species, including the Adonis Blue, Chalkhill Blue, Common Blue, Dark Green Fritillary, Essex Skipper, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Silver-Spotted Skipper, Small Heath, Small Skipper, and the Speckled Wood.

