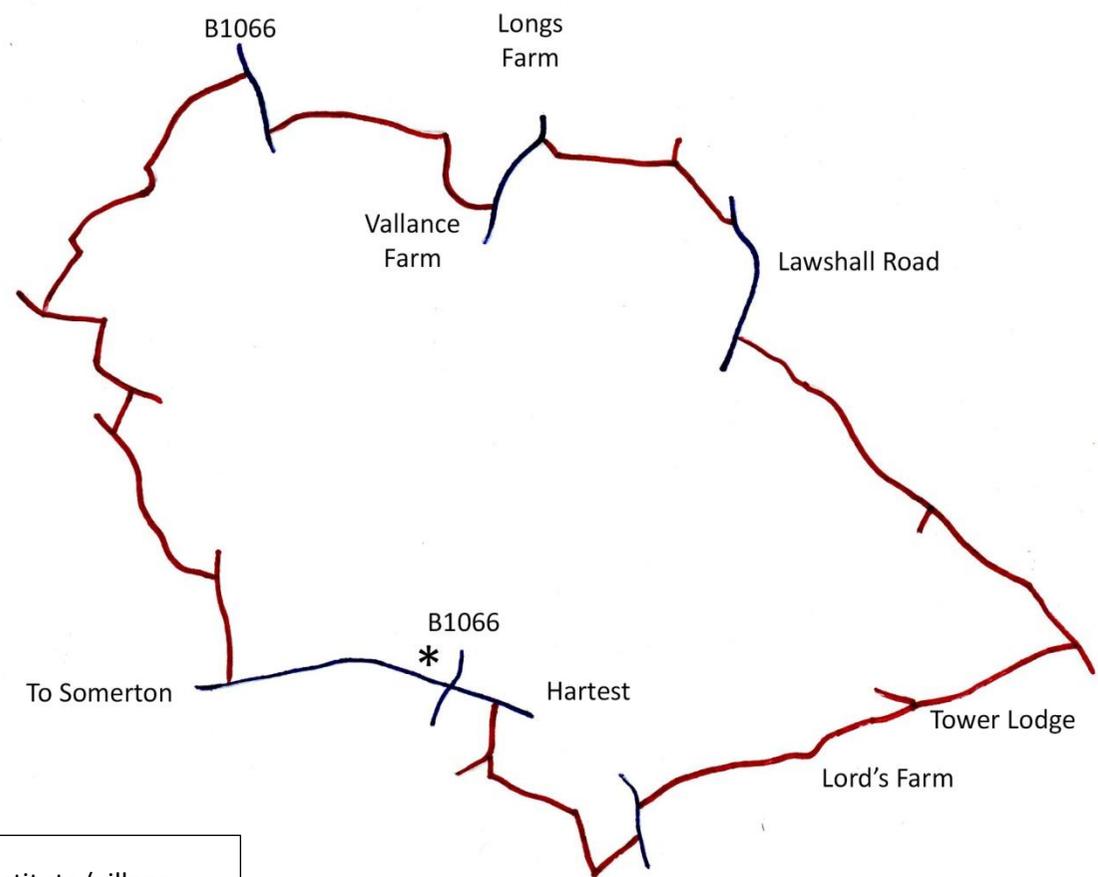


WALK 12: HARTEST



* = Hartest Institute (village hall) – start of walk and car park
Blue = Roads
Red = Footpaths

You can start this 5.5 mile walk from the car park at Hartest Institute, on the right at the beginning of Somerton Road. Walk up this road (which is fairly quiet as it goes no further than Somerton) and just before a farm on the left, turn right down a tree-lined track (marked "Smithbrook Lane" on the O.S. map). There's a stream at the bottom: here you can choose – either continue up the other side of the valley till, at a T-junction you turn left on a path; or as suggested on my map, you follow a finger post on the left, up a few steps and out into a field. Follow around the bottom side of this field and where it leads into the next field turn right up the side, by a hedge. This will bring you up to meet the path you could otherwise have taken. Turn left: the path goes through the middle of a field and makes a right-angled turn up to the top where you'll find a couple of white plastic chairs. (Time for a rest already?!) Turn left here and in a few yards at the bottom of a dip, turn right along the right side of the next field. As the field boundary bears left go through a gap into the next field and follow the boundary of that field all the way to a road (B1066). Turn right here; in a short while (before you've come across any houses) turn left along the side of a field with a tree-lined boundary on your right. A gap in the corner leads into another, much larger field and you follow a twisty route round the boundary (near Vallance Farm) to eventually reach a narrow road. This is a dead-end road which ends at Longs Farm. Follow it to the left in the direction of the farm and just as you come to a sign for the farm, turn right uphill with a tall hedge on your right. At the top, if you turn 5 yards to the right and dip into the next field you'll find a useful bench with a nice view for a short rest (if no-one else has bagged it first!). Now retrace your steps out of the field and back the previous 5 yards to continue in the direction you were going before that short diversion. At the far side of the field you're crossing, there's a junction of paths: take the one on the right and keep a hedge on your left. You'll be led down to a road (Lawshall Road). Turn right and walk for a few hundred yards. You'll see a gate on the left: you don't need to open it as there's a pedestrian gap just to the left. You'll find a well-made track on the other side: you're now in the Chadacre Estate. Follow this for quite some distance until there's a junction and a concrete road leads off to the right with a tall hedge on your left. This road goes in a straight line along the side of a field, beyond which there's a few cottages – one on the left is called 'Tower Lodge'. Shortly after there's a split: take the left track towards Lord's Farm and just before the farm buildings veer off to the right along a grass track. There are good views here down towards Hartest and you'll shortly come to a road with Hill Farm on your right. Go left along the road and then off again immediately next to the first house on the right. You're on the left side of a field – not a large one – and as you enter the next one, turn immediately right along the side of the field. You'll start going downhill and there's a hedge-gap for you to go into the next field. The path goes quite steeply downhill but before the bottom you'll turn right into a small wood and eventually see that you're walking along the boundary of the extensive garden of The Crown public house. Then you're at the road. Turn left up the side of the village Green, cross over the B1066 to find the Institute car park and (hopefully) your vehicle where you left it earlier