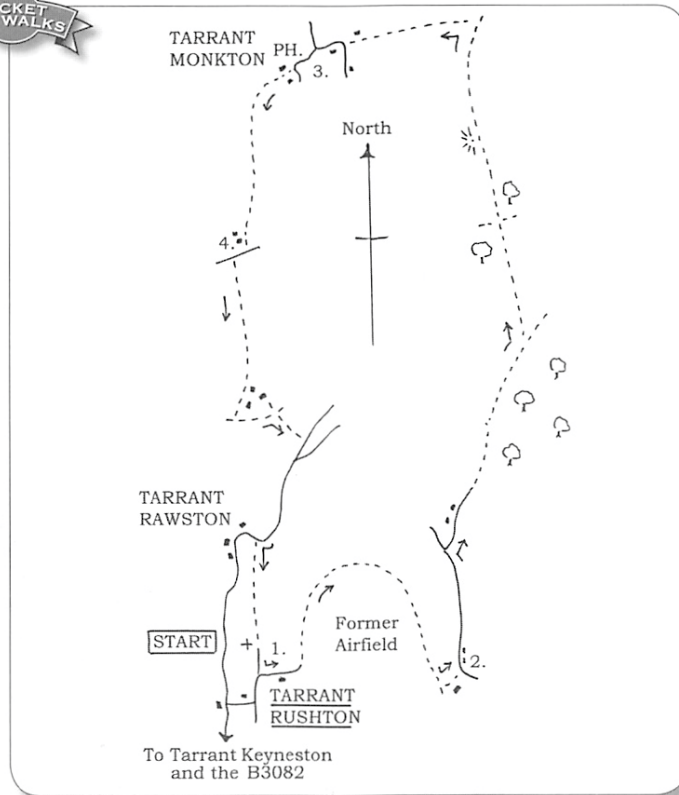


# The Langton Arms



- 1 Walk back along the lane away from **St Mary's church** for 150 yards to a junction marked by a small wooded green. Turn left, and follow a lane uphill in the direction of **Tonnegar House**. In 350 yards, where this lane ends, pass through the gateway ahead and walk ahead along a short section of track to reach the perimeter road of the former **Tarrant Rushton airfield**. Follow this concrete strip — now a bridleway — to the left for  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile all of the way around to a former hangar. Turn left in front of the hangar, and walk past a memorial to join the lane at **Windy Corner**.
- 2 Turn left along this lane, passing a bungalow on the right, to reach a junction in  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile. Fork right, and follow this lane for 250 yards to a point where it becomes a track. Follow this track into **Hogstock Coppice**. In 250 yards, at a fork, take the right-hand track that continues to border **Hogstock Coppice**. In 600 yards, at the next fork, keep left, slowly veering away from the woodland. In  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile, at a junction, keep following the main track ahead and, at the next junction, in another  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile, turn left and follow **Turner's Lane** downhill for  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to a road junction in **Tarrant Monkton**. Follow the road around to the right, passing a row of thatched cottages on the right, to reach a ford. Cross the bridge by the ford, and continue along the lane to reach the **Langton Arms**.

- 3 Walk up through the gravelled car park ahead, the village church on the left, to a gate and stile just past the pub. Beyond this stile, follow a tarmac track that runs to the right of a property up to another gate and stile. Cross the paddock ahead to a pair of stiles in the far right corner and, in the adjoining field, turn left and walk along to a gateway in the corner. Follow the left-hand field boundary ahead for 200 yards to a stile and, in the next field, bear half-right to a gate in the far right corner of the field alongside some coniferous trees. Beyond this gate, turn right and walk past some farm buildings to a gate and footpath on the left, 25 yards past the last barn.



- 4 Pass through this gateway, and cross the field ahead, bearing slightly right, walking in the direction of **Luton Farm** in the distance. Cross a stile at the bottom of the field, before walking across the middle of the next field to a stile in the hedgerow opposite. Beyond this stile, cross the field opposite to a stile in the opposite field boundary at the right-hand end of a belt of trees. Beyond this stile, follow the left edge of a field bordering **Luton Farm** to reach a gate and farm road. Turn left, walk down through the farm complex to reach a crossroads at the entrance to the farmhouse. Turn right, and follow a lane to a junction in 300 yards. Turn right again, and follow the road ahead for 600 yards to a gate and footpath on the left, just past a right-hand bend and immediately before the **river Tarrant** and the buildings of **Tarrant Rawston**. Follow this path across the first field — bearing slightly left — to a handgate opposite, before crossing a second field to a gate at the left-hand end of some trees. Continue ahead past the churchyard in **Tarrant Rushton** to return to the parking area.

The route through the fields



**The Langton Arms**, a brick and thatch hostelry deep in the Tarrant Valley, boasts that it offers 'all that you want in a pub and so much more'. Dating from the 17th century, here is a traditional village inn that still features its separate lounge bar and public bar, both with a number of real ale pumps. The unusual and varied menu runs to such options as a Dorset game pie — where customers can choose from pigeon, rabbit or game — whilst the fine real ales include brews from the Ringwood and Hopback Breweries ([www.langtonarms.co.uk](http://www.langtonarms.co.uk)).

**Walking across the downland** above Tarrant Rushton, it is difficult to imagine up to 3,000 people making this windswept hilltop their home. Yet during the last war, 298 and 644 Squadrons of the RAF, together with 'C' Squadron Glider Pilot Regiment, managed to base that number of service personnel in this secluded corner of north Dorset. From Tarrant Rushton airfield, Halifax bombers flew secret missions deep into Germany, including dropping supplies and arms to the Resistance. The airfield site is today little more than a vast arable field, although the perimeter roads, a number of hangars and a fitting memorial to the servicemen based here still remain. Below the airfield site runs the diminutive River Tarrant, one of Dorset's smaller rivers that has nonetheless managed to lend its name to no fewer than 8 villages along its 10-mile course. Thatched cottages, isolated farms and historic churches populate the valley, with the drove tracks on the surrounding downland providing fine vistas across this quiet and little-explored part of the county.

**Distance** 6 miles.

**OS Explorer** 118 Shaftesbury and Cranborne Chase. GR 937061

Tracks and fieldpaths in and around the Tarrant Valley.

**Starting point** The parking area near the church in Tarrant Rushton. The Langton Arms lies in the village of Tarrant Monkton, 4 miles around the circuit.

**How to get there** Initially make for Tarrant Keyneston, 4 miles southeast of Blandford Forum on the B3082 Wimborne road. Follow the minor road by the True Lovers Knot Inn signposted to Tarrant Rushton and, in one mile, by the village hall, turn right into this small village. In 150 yards, keep left at a junction and follow the signs to St Mary's church which lies at the end of a cul-de-sac

