



## Walk 4: The Belton Bracer

Distance: **3.7 miles / 5.9km** • Duration: about **2 hours**

Start point: **Whitchurch Civic Centre**

A largely level walk with a mixture of gates and stiles. There is also a flight of steps in Jubilee Park but these are easily avoided using the map as a guide.

### Shops and pubs

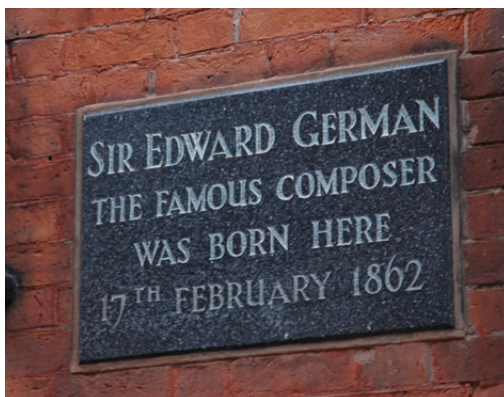
On the High Street, look out for Walkers, the bakery shop which is on the left, going down. Sometimes known as 'the old shop', parts of it date back to 1450 but most is 17th century.

### Joyce's Clocks

At the bottom of the High Street, is a modern clock by the Whitchurch clockmakers JB Joyce. The firm has operated in Whitchurch since the 18th century and its clocks can be seen in churches and many prominent buildings as far afield as South America and China. Naturally, St. Alkmund's in Whitchurch has a Joyce clock. For more information turn to page 19.



*Old cooperage, now Walkers Bakery*



### A famous son of Whitchurch

The composer, and also Mayor of Whitchurch, Sir Edward German was born in the Old Town Hall Vaults pub at the junction of High Street and St. Mary's Street in 1862. You can see his portrait in the Civic Centre.



*Waymarker along Hatton Way*

### Cyclists' and Walkers' Ways

Two noted Whitchurch cyclists, Cedric and Ruth Hatton, are commemorated by a plaque marking the Hatton Way (point 3). At the same location there is a marker and a mosaic showing that you are also on the Mercian Way which is the Shropshire section of National Cycle Route 45, which runs between Chester and Salisbury.

### Railway Connections

Whitchurch sits astride the Shrewsbury to Crewe line. It was once also connected to Ellesmere, Oswestry and Aberystwyth by the Cambrian Railway. The line closed in 1965 and unfortunately parts of the track-bed have been lost, otherwise it would have made an excellent off-road walking and cycling route to Oswestry and beyond.



*Cambrian Railway Signal Box*



*Belton Farm*

### Whitchurch – ripe, mature and tasty

Belton Farm maintains Whitchurch's tradition as a famous cheese town. Belton produces a wide range of award-winning cheeses available in leading supermarkets. A selection of these is available from shops in town. Look out for the distinctive Belton tankers collecting milk from local farms.

### Jubilee Park – worthy of the celebration

The park opened in 1887 to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The bandstand was added in 1908 and moved to its present position when the park was extended around 1990. The 'Old Mill' at the far end is a reminder that Staggs Brook still passes through the park albeit via underground culverts.



*Bandstand in Jubilee Park*

## Route description

From the Civic Centre **1** walk down the High Street and turn right through the pedestrianised area.

Go along Watergate Street, passing Bark Hill on your right, and then into Dodington. You will pass two disused churches, the United Reform on your left and St. Catherine's on your right where there is an information board. Continue past the Dodington Lodge Hotel and into Sedgeford on the far side of the mini-roundabout. In about 150 metres you come to a cycle track, the Hatton Way **2**.

Turn right on to the Hatton Way, which runs between Whitchurch Cricket Ground and an embankment of the old Cambrian Railway. At the far end of the straight section of the tarmac track, turn left and take the path across the field. Turn right up the track and take the left turn at both forks. Take care when crossing the Whitchurch bypass **3**.

After passing through five fields you approach the hamlet of Alkington **4**.

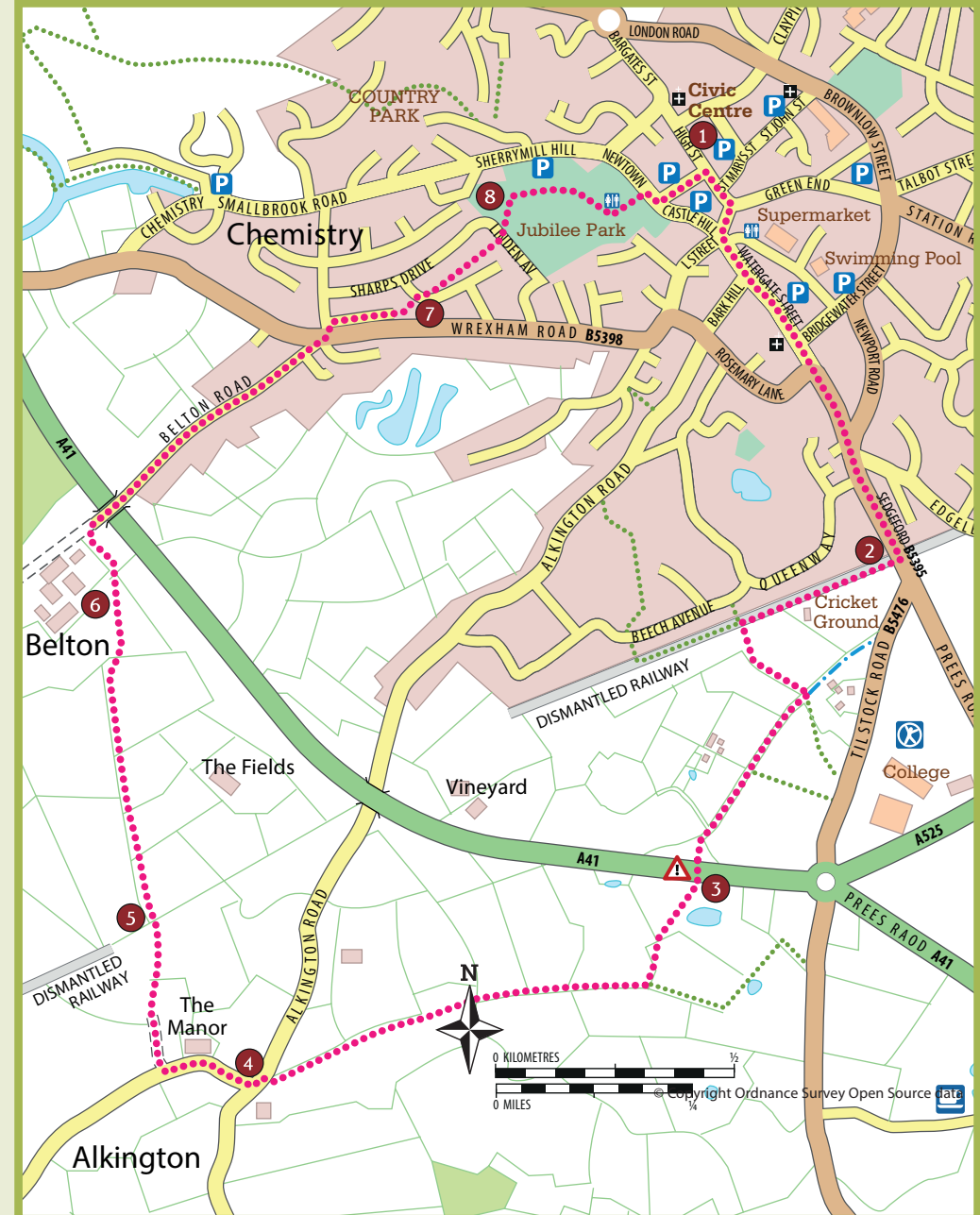
Turn left on to the road and then right at the junction 100 metres ahead. Opposite the junction look out for a 19th century VR (Victoria Regina) post box. Just past 'The Manor' take the stile on the right of a field gate. This will lead you back to the old railway **5**.

Keep to the left hand field boundary through the next four fields. From the fourth field, you will have a good view of the distant tower of St. Alkmund's, the parish church. The ground now slopes up towards Belton Farm **6**. The route now goes back over the Whitchurch bypass into Belton Road which you should follow all the way to its junction with Wrexham Road.

Cross Wrexham Road towards the bus shelter on the far side. Go across the grass behind the shelter and walk along the road in front of the houses. Turn left on to the footpath at the end of this bit of road which takes you between the houses into Meadow View Road **7**.

Cross the road and turn right. There is a small block of flats on your left and immediately after them, take the footpath to the left between the backs of the houses for about 150 metres before emerging at the top of Jubilee Park **8**.

Cross the road in front of you and go through the gap in the railings. You will notice St. Alkmund's Church ahead of you and St. Catherine's more distantly to your right. Take the path to the left and when it crosses another path, turn right towards the town centre and the railings round the play area. Follow the path round to the right of the railings and proceed up the flight of steps on the bank opposite towards Newtown car park at the top.



Turn right along Newtown and at the mini-roundabout turn left into Pepper Street past the Anchor and

Red Cow public houses and you are back at the High Street.