

# Thames Path NATIONAL TRAIL



ISSUE 11

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2018



News for all who enjoy the Thames Path

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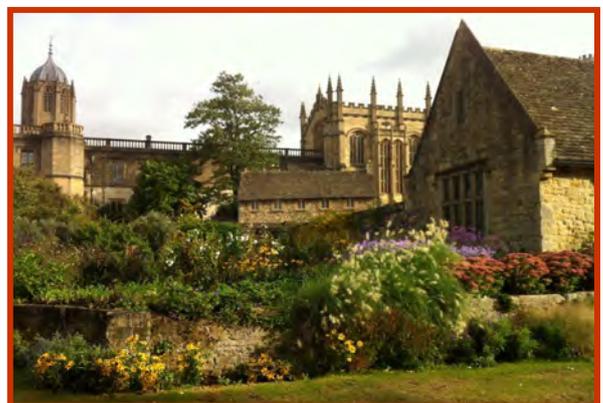
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## ARRIVAL OF AUTUMN



Autumn is with us, glowing on the trees and gusting round the corners after a summer that was memorable for its long, long stretch of childhood hot dry weather. An easy autumn circular walk around Christchurch Meadow shows off the spires and towers of Oxford; rowers and ducks along the Thames as it reaches Folly Bridge; a wonderful herd of Old English Longhorn cattle and a majestic display of trees. This flood meadow enclosed by the rivers Cherwell and Thames is open to the public all year round. It is a site long used for sport, recreation and leisure, was invaluable as a defence against the Parliamentarian forces in the Civil War, and was the location for the first balloon flight in England in 1784. A green, open space with splendid views, the Meadow offers a valuable refuge away from the city streets. Christchurch Meadow lies on the opposite side of the Thames Path by Folly Bridge, Oxford. The walk around it is just over a mile, but can take as many hours as you wish to complete it.

Visit: <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/visiting-christ-church/meadow>



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W [www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path/](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path/)

## Along The Trail

Along the Thames Path National Trail, the Oxford City widening and improvement works are now entering their final stages, once complete the works will allow for a far safer and easier level of use with superb widths for both commuters and recreational users as the trail and its river winds its way through Oxford City and beyond.

With this extended dry spell of weather, we've mobilised some heavier machinery onto the river bank with some larger access improvement projects now complete. Along the Thames Path, Cholsey to Mouldsford reach through South Oxfordshire, we've built a 40 metre boardwalk made entirely out of recycled plastic.... When is plastic good plastic? – when we can recycle it and put it to a good environmental use!

The boardwalk covers an area that gets seriously poached out during wetter weather, users then try to avoid the area by moving into Cholsey marsh which unfortunately creates yet further poaching and loss of important habitat. With support from Grundon's Waste Management and Trust for Oxfordshire Environment (TOE) and further part funding from National Trails, we've been able to build and install the boardwalk and so ensure this will not happen in future. The boardwalk allows greater access for all, helping to extend the summer walking season along this beautiful stretch of Thames Path through South Oxfordshire.

Grundon's and TOE offer grants to help improve access and environmental projects such as our boardwalk and without this financial support we would not be able to enhance our trail. To get onto the site the farmer held back on his planting for a couple of days and gave our Countryside Contractor machinery access across his fields. The Thames Path can be a very isolated location for site management and without the support of the Oxfordshire landowners, access for machinery would be an even greater challenge than it is.

Moving further downstream we've just completed our final phase of access improvements in Buckinghamshire along the Marlow to Temple reach. This time the works included a significant length of weldmesh and stone revetment, with pre-planted coir rolls, to take back and enforce areas of the bank

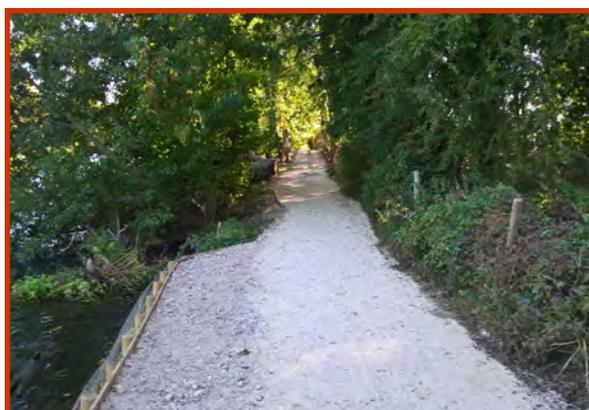
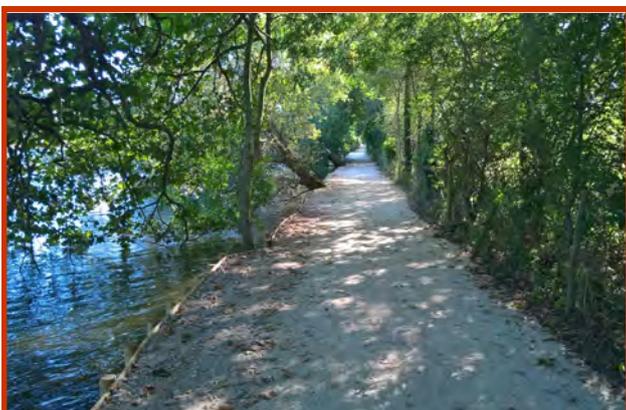


The new Cholsey boardwalk, part funded by TOE and Gundons Waste Management - Toni Robinson (left) Grundons Waste Management with Lynn Parker TOE Trust for Oxfordshire Environment and Steven Tabbitt, Thames Path Trail manager

that had eroded into the width of the trail as well as a new self-binding gravel path. Where possible we have maintained the trees growing in the bank and have worked our revetments around. The results I think speak for themselves and again without the landowner providing site access and storage in his adjacent field, these rather complicated works would have been almost impossible to achieve. Many thanks to Buckinghamshire County Council who supported and provided match funding for these works.

**For those fortunate enough** to be able to sustainably commute to work along the Thames Path on works such as the new Oxford City Improvements, or any other part of the Thames Path from Gloucestershire through to Greenwich, then this may well help to increase your productivity when you arrive invigorated at your place of work!

Thames Path Marlow before and after revetment and surface works



# EVENTS

You can join an event such as a guided walk, farmers' markets and fungi foray, or go and find your own way of enjoying the Trail - kicking autumn leaves, watching wildlife or just taking a walk...

1-30 Sept [Totally Thames](#)

See London's River Thames brought to life in a month-long season of events along the river's 42-mile (68km) stretch during the annual Totally Thames festival.

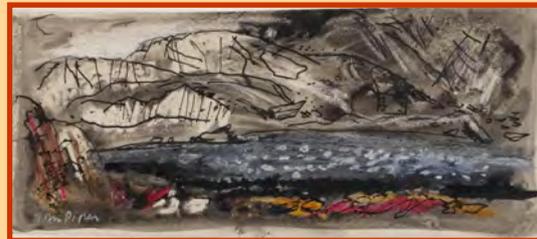
Sat 29 Sept, Sun 30 Sept [Apple and pear tasting](#)

National Trust, Greys Court, Henley-on-Thames.  
Head to the kitchen garden and taste the many varieties of apples and pears grown in the orchard.



5 Oct 2018 - 13 Jan 2019 [Approaching Thunder: 1940s British Prints and Drawings](#)

River & Rowing Museum, Henley  
Works from The Hepworth Wakefield's collection of 1940's prints and drawings by leading British artists of the twentieth century.



Sat 06 Oct 11:00 - 12:30 [Simon's Wood fungi foray](#)  
(National Trust, [Runnymede and Ankerwycke](#))

Join a local expert to learn about the weird and wonderful fungi in Simon's Wood, Crowthorne.

**[Chilterns Walking Festival](#)**  
6th-21st October 2018  
[www.visitchilterns.co.uk](http://www.visitchilterns.co.uk)

Visit our [website](#) for further details and more events. Some events require booking in advance.

**October Half Term**

[Chatterbox Trail](#), and [Estate walk](#), and Den Building  
(National Trust, Greys Court, Henley-on-Thames)

The estate is ablaze with colour from the leaves changing colour, the perfect time to take the children for a refreshing walk out on the estate, and crunch through the fallen leaves.

Runnymede: Riverside site of the sealing of Magna Carta  
(National Trust, [Runnymede and Ankerwycke](#))

From history talks to children's trails, there's something to entertain everyone in this patchwork of memorials, fields, art installations and rivers.

## AUTUMN CALENDAR OF KNOWN EVENTS ALONG THE TRAIL

October			
13/10/2018-14/10/2018	Centurion Running	<a href="#">Autumn 100</a>	Goring
27/10/18	Go Beyond Sport	<a href="#">Thames Trot</a>	Iffley, Oxford
November			
12/11/2018	Running Miles Ltd	<a href="#">Dorney River Run</a>	Dorney Lake

# What's the Trail worth?

Over the last year we've teamed up with Cranfield University School of Business and Environment to find out just that. Dr Parsons from Cranfield University was keen to rise to the challenge and so the University kindly waived their fees and the costs of sponsoring an MSc Student.

For the last year our student, **Louis Gaillot** has gathered both quantitative and qualitative data from numerous sources such as local businesses the trail supports, National Trails market research, through to local and national economic trends.

It's important for all partners to learn the economic benefits the National Trail has to offer in terms of health, and wellbeing through to Council taxes, house prices and business development.



## An economic valuation of the Thames Path National Trail.

**Context** The Thames Path is a 184-mile National Trail running from the river source to Eastern London. It crosses various counties and land areas, offering them many benefits.

**Aims** To evaluate the trail's financial outcomes on local and national scales.

**Methods**

The importance of the Path was reflected by either its annual visits or the surrounding population.

- **Retail**  
Estimation of a mean UK spending in outdoor equipment per visit to natural sites.
- **Local spending**  
Calculation of the average expenditures per visit to the Path.
- **Value-added**  
Reinvestment of local spending in neighbouring economy.
- **Council taxes**  
Property value is higher when getting closer to important trails.
- **NHS Savings**  
Reduction of inactivity costs due to sufficient exercise (150min/week) for National Trail's visitors.
- **Reduction of work absences**  
Decrease of work absences related to sufficient activity (150min/week) of some employees on the Path.
- **Productivity**  
Better mental and physical health increases work efficiency.
- **Crime**  
Around greenspaces, social cohesion is higher than its global average.



**Trail-related income (£ million)**

Reduction of crimes	46	
Companies productivity	811	
Reduction of work absences	8	
NHS savings	7	
Council taxes	8	
Value-added locally	76	
Spending at local businesses	421	
Retail of outdoor equipment	32	

**Annual values' estimates**

- Maintenance budget → £171,445k
- Direct benefits → £453M
- Indirect benefits → £956M.

**Conclusions**  
The trail benefits are worth the investment necessary to its maintenance.

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Trail officer: Mr Steven Tabbitt

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# Thames Path NATIONAL TRAIL



Created for the public to enjoy the beautiful landscape with its rich wildlife, flora and fauna, the 184mile long Thames Path National Trail is unique. It is the only long distance path to follow a river for most of its length and it's the iconic River Thames which gives the Trail its character and creates the countryside through which you walk. Starting in the Cotswolds as a track across water meadows and fields beside the infant River Thames, the Trail passes through villages in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, on surfaced pavements through historic cities ...until finally it passes through the capital, London, to the Thames Barrier in Greenwich. The Thames Path provides a walk alongside the 'liquid history' of a wonderful River.

The Thames Path Partnership is responsible for the management, development and promotion of The Thames Path National Trail to ensure a great trail experience for all. It involves a wide range of organisations and dedicated Trail volunteers help to maintain the route and keep it to a good standard for all who use it.



Plan your day visit or holiday to The Thames Path using our interactive online map:

[www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thamespath](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thamespath). Why rush? Pace yourself to the meandering river - if you like you can plan to walk the Trail a section at a time (there are 15 sections ranging from 9-15 miles, see map above)—and take days, weeks or even years to complete it!

Thames Path National Trail Office, Speedwell House, Oxford, OX1 1NE

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# Volunteer Task Diary

Practical work is carried out along The Thames Path and The Ridgeway to ensure walkers enjoy using it. Work is carried out by the National Trail Team, volunteers, local highway authorities, landowners and contractors. Volunteers are welcome to help maintain the Thames Path by joining the task team led by the National Trail Team. The location and activities for the next 3 months are shown below. Please ensure that you book early as the practical tasks are popular. **Locations for tasks may change and volunteer numbers can be limited due to type of task.**

**Volunteer to help with a task by contacting the National Trail Team.**

**Book in advance and as soon as possible.**

**E:** nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk **T:** 01865 810211

## Task Locations for Ridgeway and Thames Path



*Check the map  
for a task location  
near to you.*

### KEY:

**RW** = Ridgeway  
**TP** = Thames Path  
**HVC** = Hard Vegetation Clearance (hedge cutting, mulching, pole sawing etc)  
**FI** = Fingerpost Installation  
**GI** = Gate Installation  
**S** = Signage  
**WS** = Workshop  
**DBI** Display board installation

### Task Dates

#### October

8th - TP Workshop **S 2**  
 9th - TP Sonning **HVC 12**  
 10th - RW Great Kimble **G 14**  
 15th - TP Castle Eaton **FI 4**  
 16th - RW Barbury Castle **DBI 9**  
 18th - TP Sandford **HVC & FI 3**  
 22nd - RW Og. St George **NCN FI 8**  
 23rd - TP Shillingford **GI 2**  
 24th - TP Marlow **HVC 12**  
 29th - TP **WS 2**  
 30th - TP Marlow **HVC 12**  
 31st - RW Watlington **FI + Goring HVC 13**

#### November

5th - TP Cricklade - **FI 7**  
 6th - RW Lewknor + Chinnor - **DBI 1**  
 8th - TP Marlow **HVC 12**  
 12th - RW Lodge Hill **GI 14**  
 13th - TP Reading/Tilehurst **HVC 12**  
 14th - TP Workshop **S 2**  
 19th - TP - Chimney Clearance + **SI 2**  
 20th - TP Workshop **S 2**  
 21 - RW Compton + Bury Down **FI + small jobs 6**

#### December

3rd - RW - Lodge Hill **HVC 14**  
 4th - TP - Marlow Rugby Club **HVC 12**  
 5th - RW Signage Workshop **2**  
 5th - TP Central **HVC**  
 10th - RW Signage Workshop **2**  
 10th - TP Shillingford **HVC 2**  
 11th - RW Lodge Hill **HVC 14**  
 12th - TP Cerney Wick **FI 4**  
 17th - TP Moulsoford **HVC 13**  
 19th - Eynsham Workshop Planning **2**

**Note that we no longer receive post at Signal Court. Please contact us at Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford OX1 1NE. Thanks.**

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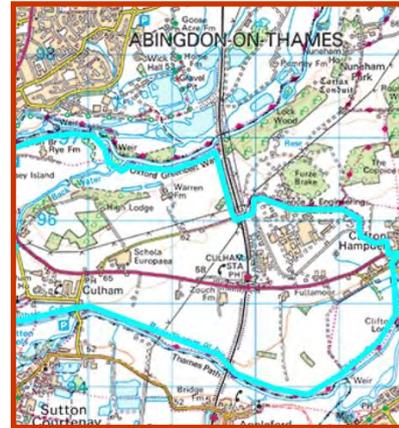
[W www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path/](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path/)

## Circular Walk Abingdon to Culham and Clifton Hampden

**Getting there by public transport:** bus to Abingdon or train to Culham station.

**Car Parks:** by Abingdon Bridge, Culham lock and the Barley Mow pub at Clifton Hampden.

**Refreshment:** plenty of choice in Abingdon, but elsewhere there is only the Barley Mow pub (very good) and a village shop at Clifton Hampden. Two other pubs along the way are now closed (2018).



**This 10 mile circular walk goes around a large loop**

of the Thames near Abingdon. Beginning on the Thames Path between Abingdon and Clifton Hampden, it cuts across country by the Culham Science and Engineering Centre and returns to Abingdon beside the river at Andersey island.

**If starting at Abingdon Bridge** take the Thames Path downstream, southwards, turning right if coming out of the town. After 2 miles, you pass Culham lock, another possible starting place with a car park. After another 2 ½ miles, you reach Clifton Bridge. To visit the Barley Mow, cross over the bridge and enter through its garden. If you have taken your own picnic, you can walk under the bridge into Clifton Wharf, an attractive meadow with places to sit. The church is worth the short climb to visit and to get a lovely view of the river and bridge.

**Continuing the circular walk** from Clifton Bridge, go up the village street past the shop to the traffic lights. Cross the main road and turn left for 50 yards to a footpath on your right. This path goes behind houses and around two sides of a field.



Clifton lock cut



Culham Science and Engineering Centre

**The path becomes** a hard-surfaced track around the edge of the Culham Science and Engineering Centre. This is where research into nuclear fusion (the Jet Project) has been done. In the Second World War, an airfield was here. Follow the boundary of the Centre around to the western side and look for a restricted byway that crosses the

railway line on a bridge. It is better not to take the footpath signposted 200 yards before the byway because there are stiles, steep steps and an unsafe crossing on the railway track.

**To get back to Abingdon**, turn right (northwards) to walk beside the railway down to the Thames. At the river bank, turn left and follow the river for about a mile.



Clifton bridge

Then the path turns away from the river for 200 yards before crossing one of the sidestreams of the Thames. This stream, called the Swift Ditch, was the original navigation channel and there are the remains of a lock, one of the first every built on the Thames, where a footbridge crosses the stream.

**When the path emerges** from a small wood, bear right to get back to the river bank and the path past moored boats to reach Abingdon lock. Here you meet the Thames Path again and Abingdon Bridge is in sight.

Visit the [Plan your Visit page](#) on our website for this and other circular and linear walks.

**Dick Mayon-White**



### NATIONAL TRAILS OFFICE

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### NATIONAL TRAILS WORKSHOP

Signal Court, Station Road,

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E: [nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**LIQUID HIGHWAY**

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**THE OFFICIAL BEER OF THE  
Thames Path NATIONAL TRAIL**

## IMPORTANT

### CONTRIBUTE, SUBSCRIBE, OR UNSUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

This **quarterly newsletter** goes out to our  
**volunteers, to parishes & businesses**  
along the Thames.

To **subscribe or unsubscribe** to our newsletter or  
to **advertise** in the next newsletter, contact us at  
[thames.path@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:thames.path@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

### Have you completed some or all of the Thames Path?



Claim your **free Thames Path completion certificate** from the **National Trails website** or order a **new style glossy certificate** which is posted to you for £5 plus delivery.  
[www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path/completion-certificate](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path/completion-certificate)



### **Spot** any problems on the Trail?

**Uneven or muddy surface? Broken gate or sign? Overgrown path? Please note the location with a grid reference, take a photo...then please let us know! Email: [nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

## THANK YOU

To all those who have  
donated their time or  
their money towards the  
upkeep of the Trail.



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