

# Thames Path NATIONAL TRAIL



ISSUE 10

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2018



News for all who enjoy the Thames Path

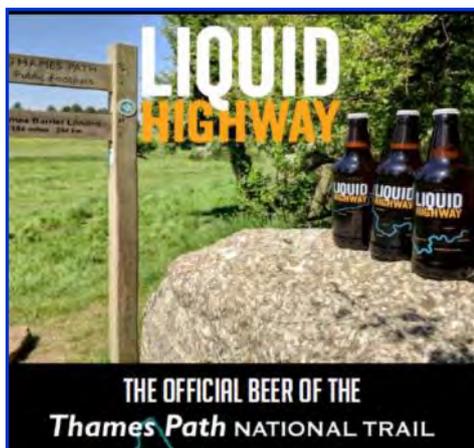
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## Liquid Highway - The Official Thames Path National Trail Beer



It has finally arrived.... LIQUID HIGHWAY....The official beer of the Thames Path National Trail! We've teamed up with Tom at the Hop Kettle Brewery & Red Lion Pub Cricklade. Liquid Highway is an English golden ale that balances a light maltiness with a combination of traditional and new English hop varieties. East Kent Goldings & Challenger hops in the boil then dry-hopped with Jester & Target to bring a familiar spiciness followed by orange marmalade flavours & hints of citrus.

Boris Johnson tells Thames Path National Trail Chair, Steve Good . . .  
*"This great tasting modern English Ale should be exported on a huge scale to the entire World Market, it tastes great".*

Why the name? The Trail brings to life the liquid history of England and the river has been used as a highway for many centuries! Liquid Highway is a thoroughly English yet modern Ale that represents the Thames! It is currently for sale in bottle, cask and keg in the [Red Lion Cricklade](#) and can be bought online at <https://www.hop-kettle.com/bespoke-beers/liquid-highway/>

For every drop sold, a donation from the brewery is made towards maintaining, enhancing and promoting our Trail. If you know of pubs/bars/stores who might be interested in stocking the beer/kegs/bottles please let us know: [thames.path@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:thames.path@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



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## Along The Trail **Summer Buzziness**

**Summer is upon us and the mowers along the Thames Path are buzzing like bees!** A 'bug thanks' for all your efforts in helping keep the Thames Path open, if you are out walking, working on tasks or monitoring for us during this hot spell, don't forget to keep cool! Drink plenty of water, keep applying the sun cream and don't forget to wear a hat.

**With the dry spell** we've managed to mobilise some heavier machinery onto the river bank with three or our larger access improvement works now complete. Along the Pangbourne/Purley reach, we've built a 50-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 this area by moving into the marshy meadow which unfortunately then creates yet further poaching



Before (above)—and after (left) the access improvement work at Purley

and loss of important habitat. With support from the local landowner - Springs Farm, and West Berkshire Council we have been able to build and install the boardwalk and so ensure this will not happen in future. The boardwalk will also allow greater access for all, helping to extend the summer walking season through this beautiful stretch of Thames Path, which runs through West Berkshire and its back drop of the wooded Chiltern Hills.

**In Streatley, West Berkshire and Hurley**, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, working with landowners and the Borough Councils, new keeping surfaces have been put down, again along areas that get seriously poached out during the wetter periods. Here we've used Coxwell self-binding gravels from the Thames Valley. These self-binding gravels were once part of a Thames coral reef millions of years ago, and it's the coral within the gravel that acts as the binding agent. It does require a delicate laying procedure of both moisture and heat and ideally a relatively dry summer to allow the gravel to bake. It gives an appearance of a sealed surface, but it is in fact porous – quite an important factor when working on the largest water catchment area in England!

**Your monitoring reports are crucial** for such works as they help direct where we need to spend our funding, so please do keep those reports coming in paying attention to surface areas that are muddy, river banks that have eroded, vegetation management as well as our trails furniture – missing signage, gates and bridges that need attention. If you can attach photos of the issues to your emails then it really does help us gain better insight.



Before access improvement work at Streatley



After access improvement work at Streatley

*Coxwell self-binding gravels from the Thames Valley are used. These self-binding gravels were once part of a Thames coral reef millions of years ago, and it's the coral within the gravel that acts as the binding agent.*

## Youngest Person to walk the entire Thames Path?



### Who is the youngest person to walk the entire Thames Path?

We're not sure, but have recently been contacted by Liz who walked with her daughter Rosie aged 10 years old. Here is Liz's account of their adventure...

*Rosie and I started walking over the first May Bank Holiday and completed the 40 miles from The Source to Newbridge. We stayed in a self catering cottage in Lechlade with husband James and son Oliver (8) acting as our support.*

*In mid May we did 3 short walks to complete the 20 mile Newbridge - Swinford - Botley - Radley sections. Over May half term we walked the 124 miles from Radley to the Thames Barrier. We rented a campervan and stayed in Henley and Chertsey. We were blessed with glorious weather, at times much too hot! And we only had one very wet day (coming into Henley).*

*Rosie is an amazing walk-*

*ing companion, always smiling and determined to finish. We came up with some fun games and loved spotting wildlife. There were so many ducklings and goslings. It was a wonderful precious time to bond with her and I will never forget it. Her favorite moments were coming into Moulsoford, looking for the next Ice Cream Van (we even saw an Ice Cream Boat near Hambledon) and meeting the firefighters (coming into Marlow) who were walking the path in 6 days. They were an inspiration to us and our daily mileage seemed to increase after we had met them! One of them was carrying the 30kg Google earth camera on his back,*

*and we were amazed when he was happy to kneel for a photo with Rosie.*

*We are raising money for three charities close to us as a family. The Alexander Devine Childrens Hospice, The Motor Neurone Disease Association and PEEK vision. So far including gift aid we have raised nearly £1700. The 'just giving' page link is here: [Virgin Money Giving | Walking the length of the Thames Path](#)*

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CALENDAR OF LARGE KNOWN EVENTS ALONG THE TRAIL SUMMER 2018



**10-11 Aug Wargrave & Shiplake Regatta**

**Come and enjoy a couple of days by the river...**

a great and exciting atmosphere, fun races to watch, bar and food tent, plus bouncy castles and ice cream vans for the kids...

Visit website: [wsregatta.co.uk](http://wsregatta.co.uk)

**SEPTEMBER**

Sept	Organisation	Event	Start	End	Website
8 & 9th	Action Challenge	Thames Path Challenge	Tower Bridge	Henley	<a href="#">Thames Path Challenge -</a>
23rd	Parkinsons UK	Walk for Parkinsons	Oxford		<a href="http://www.parkinsons.org.uk/">www.parkinsons.org.uk/</a>

**The Reading-on-Thames Festival**



7 Sept 2018 - 16 Sept 2018

A brand new arts and cultural festival for Reading, which launched in 2017 to showcase arts, culture and heritage in Reading inspired by and against the backdrop of Reading's wonderful waterways.



<http://readingplaceofculture.org/>

**Totally Thames**

Presented by the Thames Festival Trust

1-30 September



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.

Visit website [Totally Thames](#)

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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!

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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.**

Volunteering

**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](mailto: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: FI = Fingerpost Installation G = Gate GC = Grass cutting S = Signage MC = Maintenance Cut  
MTS = Monitor Training session TBC = To be confirmed WS = Workshop**

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

### Task Dates

#### July

- 23<sup>rd</sup> TP Grafton **GC 3**
- 25<sup>th</sup> TP Cricklade/ Ashton Keynes **GC 7**
- 26<sup>th</sup> RW Wantage **GC 10**
- 30<sup>th</sup> TP Lechlade/Kelmscott **GC 4**

#### August

- 1<sup>st</sup> RW Liddington Hill **GC 9**
- 7<sup>th</sup> RW Blowingstone to Sparsholt Firs **GC 10**
- 8<sup>th</sup> TP Clifton Hampden & Little Wittenham **GC 13**
- 9<sup>th</sup> **WS 2**
- 20<sup>th</sup> RW South Stoke **GC 2**
- 21<sup>st</sup> TP **WS 2**
- 22<sup>nd</sup> TP Chimney Meadows **GC 4**
- 28<sup>th</sup> TP & RW Ashton Keynes & Ogbourne St George **FI 7**
- 29<sup>th</sup> Western TP **S** Location TBC
- 30<sup>th</sup> TP Grafton **GC 3**

#### September

- 3<sup>rd</sup> RW Bury Down Display Board Installation **8**
- 4<sup>th</sup> TP Sonning **MC 12**
- 5<sup>th</sup> TP Inglesham **MC 7**
- 7<sup>th</sup> RW & TP North Stoke Village Hall **MTS 12**
- 10<sup>th</sup> TP Oxford sections **MC 3**
- 11<sup>th</sup> RW Wendover Library **MTS 14**
- 12<sup>th</sup> RW MTS Court Hill Centre, Wantage **10**
- 17<sup>th</sup> TP Shillingford to Benson **MC 2**
- 18<sup>th</sup> TP Chimney Meadows **MC 4**
- 19<sup>th</sup> RW Princes Risborough **G 14**
- 24<sup>th</sup> RW West **MC**
- 25<sup>th</sup> TP Marlow **MC 12**
- 26<sup>th</sup> TP Chimney Meadows **MC 4**

## Thames Path: Dorchester & Little Wittenham

Dick Mayon-White, regular National Trails Volunteer, offers two lovely walks of 2 miles or more from Dorchester to Day's Lock, then along the Thames Path to the mouth of the Thame and back to Dorchester. You can find them on our website too, complete with map alongside other circular walks. Visit our [Plan your visit pages](#) and select '[Circular and linear walks](#)'



Starting from the car park in Bridge End, close to where the Henley Road crosses the Thame in the shadow of the Abbey, walk down the road past the public toilets to the start of the village green. Cross the junction of lanes diagonally to go into Wittenham Lane and on to the footpath by the edge of a field.

At the corner of the field, turn right along the path beside the Dyke Hills (the remains of an Iron Age settlement). Recently, the path has been fenced on both sides - aesthetically unfortunate but makes the direction easier to follow.

The path meets the Thames Path, near Day's Lock at the foot bridge to Little Wittenham. Here you have a choice: to cross over the river and climb to Wittenham Clumps (1 mile) to enjoy the magnificent views. Or turn left along the Thames Path for a circular walk.



View from Wittenham Clumps towards the River Thames

**Bus services:** [X38/X39/X40](#)

This route travels from Reading into Oxford and pulls into a bus stop which is a short walk from the village centre.

**Car Parking:** There is free car parking at Bridge End, Dorchester. There are a few car parking spaces by Little Wittenham church and another free car park on the hill of Wittenham Clumps which may be more convenient for some walkers.



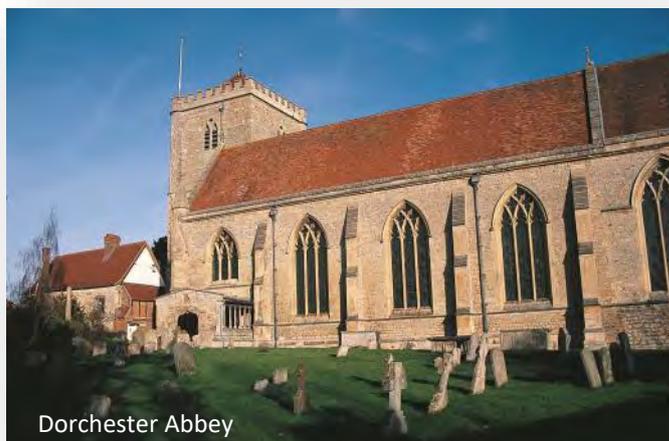
Bridge across the River Thames

*National Trail  
Volunteers often  
have their lunch  
break by this  
bridge.*

After a mile along the Thames Path, you reach the bridge across the River Thames which flows from Aylesbury.

For the shortest route back to Dorchester, turn left before the bridge and walk between the wire fences back to Wittenham Lane and the car park to complete 2 miles. A better way (although a mile longer) is to cross the bridge through a gate and look at the information board built by the Hurst Meadow Trust. There is a grassy path along the riverside meadow on the east side of the Thames, which leads you to the Henley Road. Cross this road to Overy Lane. At the end of the lane, a footpath sign shows the way beside the mill to Hurst Meadow. Walk across or around Hurst Meadow, which is an island in the Thames, to return to Dorchester High Street via Manor Farm Road and Queen Street. There is a good choice of places to eat in Dorchester, and the Abbey is well worth a visit.

Dick Mayon-White  
July 2018.



Dorchester Abbey

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**NATIONAL TRAILS WORKSHOP**

Signal Court, Station Road, Eynsham, OX29 4TL

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End Notes



**IMPORTANT**

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

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

If you no longer want to receive it, you may withdraw your consent at any time by unsubscribing.

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) or call 01865 810211

