

Thames Path NATIONAL TRAIL



ISSUE 8

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2017



News for all who enjoy the Thames Path

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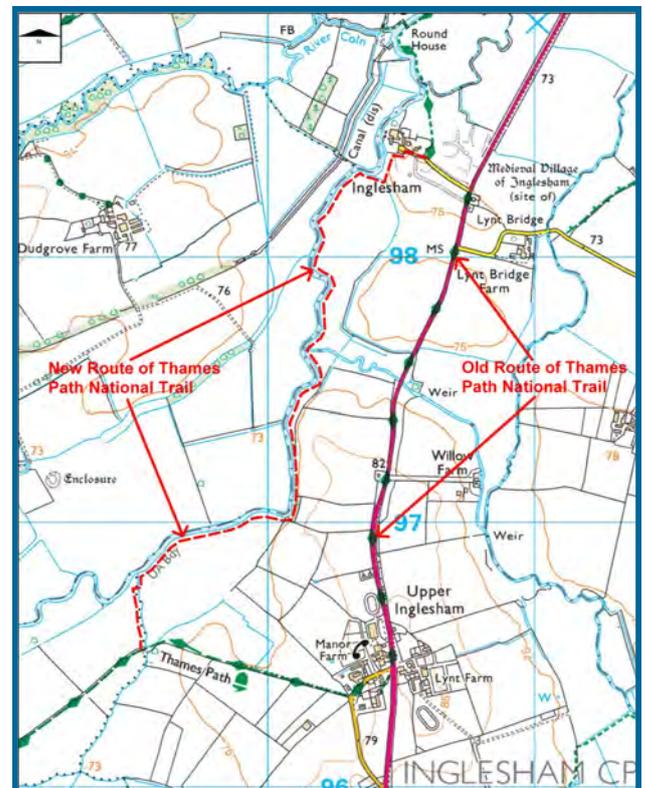
New Inglesham Section Open

We're ending this year with a reason to be cheerful! Following final negotiations with landowners, the Thames Path National Trail has a new route between Upper Inglesham and Inglesham. The Thames Path no longer follows the verge of the A361. It is now off road and mostly follows the river. New signage has been created and installed by our fantastic volunteers who have also installed gates along the route. Bridges have been installed by Swindon County Council.



The section is fully open and available for public use, so please follow signage on the ground and not Ordnance Survey (OS) maps or guide books for this section. Guide books and maps will be amended in time, when new reprints occur.

We hope you enjoy this new and lovely section of [riverside walking](#).



Thames Path National Trail Office, Speedwell House, Oxford, OX1 1NE
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Circular Walk: Wallingford to Benson

This walk uses the Thames Path to Benson and returns through Preston Crowmarsh and Crowmarsh Gifford. It is one of three walks in and around Wallingford described in a leaflet produced by Wallingford Town Council (https://www.wallingford.co.uk/files/wallingford_walks.pdf).

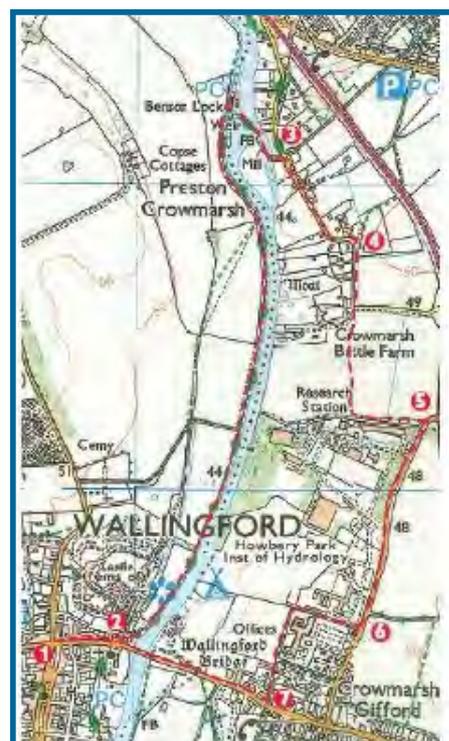


Thames Path at Wallingford

From the town centre walk down the High Street to the river to find the Thames Path by the Boat House pub. Turn left (northwards) to go along the Thames Path to Benson (about 1 mile). This section of the Thames Path has been re-surfaced and is in very good condition.

At Benson lock, the Thames Path crosses the river on the weir to Preston Crowmarsh. If you want to stop for lunch, the Benson Waterfront café at Benson Marina is very popular. This is a short distance from the weir, if you turn left along the lane to the main road (A4074).

To continue the walk, turn right on the lane by the weir to go through Preston Crowmarsh which has lovely flint and brick cottages. When you get to Crowmarsh Battle



Barns, now the offices of several research companies, straight ahead there is a permissive path that takes you around two sides of a field. Going through the kissing gate on to Benson Lane, turn right and walk along the pavement past Howbery Park. A Victorian mansion stands in the grounds of this park. The park became government property in the 1930s and is the home of companies doing important environmental research, particularly on hydrology.

Soon after passing Howbery Park, turn right down a track that ends in a sports field. The official route goes along the side of the field, to the main street in Crowmarsh Gifford. Alternatively you can walk across the sports field to find a small nature reserve and a path that reaches the riverside park.

From here, you cross Wallingford Bridge to complete the circular walk. A diversion is to explore the castle, once an royal palace with great military significance. Enter the castle gardens from Castle Street, or the castle meadows from the Thames Path. The view from the top of the keep is well worth the climb. You can find this walk on [Wallingford Town Council](http://www.wallingford-town-council.gov.uk) website or on our website [Plan your visit page](#) under *circular walks*.

Dick Mayon-White



Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire

*This
will be
the first
nature
reserve
to span
the
River
Thames*

Saved: The missing piece of wildlife jigsaw



The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust has been successful in its appeal to raise £220,000 towards the purchase price of farmland at Duxford Old River. **BBOWT gave a big 'Thank You'** to everyone who responded to the public appeal for Duxford Old River, 113 acres of farmland, which now forms part of Chimney Meadows nature reserve. **The Thames Path National Trail runs along the river bank giving a fabulous view of the Chimney Meadows Reserve and the newly created nature reserve.**

They gave six reasons why the newly purchased land is important:

1. Duxford Old River is the missing piece of the wildlife jigsaw

Duxford Old River is 113 acres of farmland on a stretch of the Thames. This will slot perfectly into the existing Chimney Meadows nature reserve - just like the missing piece of a jigsaw.

2. It will create BBOWT's second biggest nature reserve

Duxford Old River is opposite our 645-acre Chimney Meadows nature reserve. Together, they will create BBOWT's largest nature reserve in Oxfordshire, making a huge haven for wildlife.

3. This will be the first nature reserve to span the River Thames

Adding Duxford Old River to the Chimney Meadows nature reserve creates the first nature reserve on both sides of the river, anywhere along the Thames.

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4. Mother Nature will lead the way and take her course (with a little helping hand)

This is an important chance for Mother Nature to lead the way. Allowing the Thames to flood onto the land and hold water in ponds and pools will provide much-needed and undisturbed habitat for birds such as snipe and teal to overwinter.

5. Wildlife will be undisturbed in the backwaters

The old river meanders are natural playgrounds for otters and water voles, and safe havens for fish to spawn. The reeds are full of dragonflies and damselflies.

6. You have helped to keep Duxford Old River safe from an uncertain future

BBOWT has restored land at Chimney Meadows to its former glory, helping it to become a haven for wildlife. Buying Duxford Old River will safeguard wildlife habitats for perpetuity.

The full cost of buying Duxford Old River was £575,000. £220,000 was raised from BBOWT members and supporters through the public appeal.

BBOWT also received generous grants from individual donors, as well as trusts and foundations including: Viridor Credits Environmental Company, The Banister Charitable Trust, The Schroder Foundation, Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE2) and Grundon Waste Management Ltd. A special thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund and players of the National Lottery.

Photo credit: Andrew Marshall



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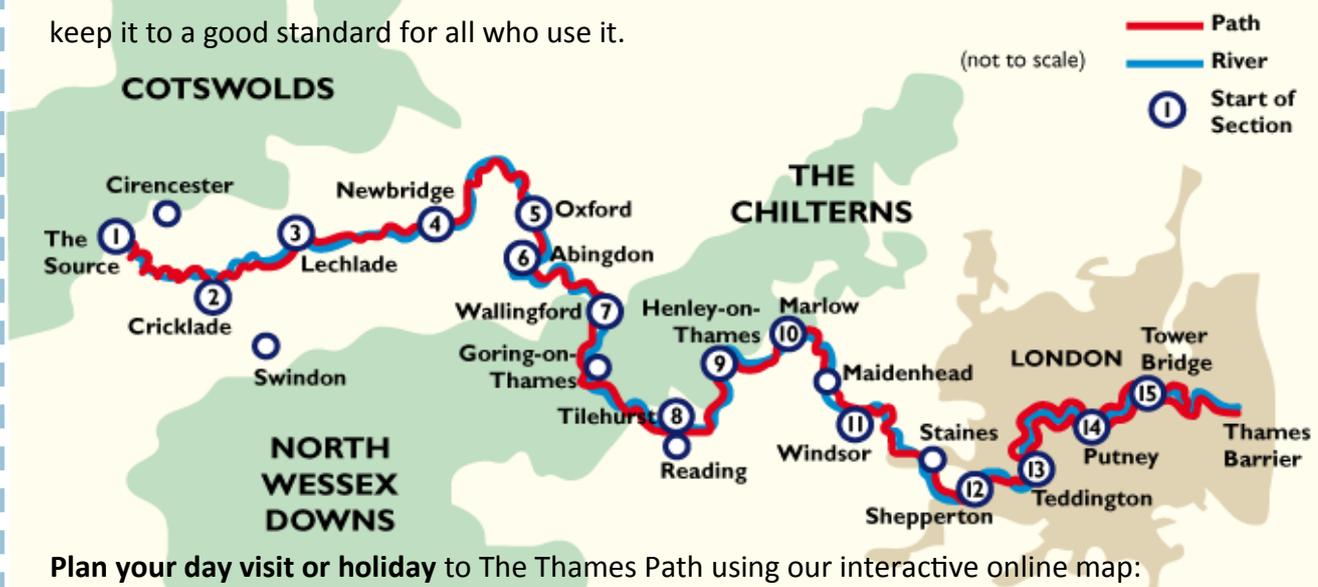
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Thames Path NATIONAL TRAIL



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. 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!

The Thames Path Companion guide lists details of campsites, B&Bs, hotels, self-catering cottages and inns around the area. Other useful contacts, such as taxis, hospitals, vets, are provided as well as car park locations. It costs £4.95 plus postage and is available from our online shop: www.shop.nationaltrail.co.uk

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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

G = Gate S = Signage W/C = Winter clearance TBC = To be confirmed SP = Sara Piggott

Task Dates

December

4th RW Watlington **W/C 1**
5th TP Oxford **W/C 3**

January 2018

8th RW Workshop **2**
9th SP Leaving Day **TBC**
15th TP Workshop **2**
16th RW Tring **S 5**
17th RW Workshop **S 2**
18th RW Workshop **S 2**
22nd TP Workshop **S 2**
23rd RW Compton **S 6**
24th RW Workshop **S 2**
25th RW Workshop **S 2**
29th TP Workshop/TBC Chivery **S 2**
30th RW Compton **S 6**
31st RW Workshop **S 2**

February

1st RW Workshop **S 2**
5th TP Ashton Keynes/workshop **S 7**
6th RW TBC Chivery/Compton **S 6**
7th RW Workshop **S 2**
8th RW Workshop **S 2**
12th TP Ashton Keynes **S 7**
13th RW Wantage **S 6**
15th RW Workshop **S 2**
20th TP Ashton Keynes **S 7**
22nd RW Workshop **S 2**
26th RW Wantage **S 6**
27th TP Ashton Keynes **S 7**
28th RW Workshop **2**

March

5th TP Ashton Keynes **G 7**
6th RW Wantage **S 6**
12th RW Ogbourne **S 8**
13th TP Dorney reach **W/C 11**
19th RW Watlington **W/C 11**
20th RW Ogbourne **S 8**

April

9th TP Lechlade/buscot **S 4**
10th TP Ashton Keynes **G 7**
16th TP Lechlade **G 4**
17th Workshop **2**
23rd TP Chimney **M 4**
24th RW Snap **M 8**
30th TP Marlow **ST 12**

Whether reporting by phone or by email, please add a grid reference and a photo is also very useful!

Along The Trail

I thought you might be interested to know about some of the larger works and other projects that have recently taken place along the trail. Here is a summary of completed contractor works :



Pangbourne new surface and bridge ramping



Marlow weld mesh revetment and surface



Streatley Piling



Oxford City piling

- **A new surface** has been installed either side of heavily poached out sections around the Dolphin Meadow, Pangbourne in West Berkshire.
- **A new surface** has been installed connecting Marlow with Temple Lock, Buckinghamshire. Several sections of weld mesh and stone revetment works have also been completed along this reach.
- **Further downstream** from Marlow Town and as part of the EA flood defence works Marlow, a section of Thames Path has been surfaced and reveted, trees have been removed and a new flood defence wall has been installed.
- **Sheet piling revetment** works have taken place in Streatley, West Berkshire.
- **Oxford City sheet piling revetment works** have taken place - Folly Bridge to Donnington Bridge.
- **The London condition survey** is well underway with a finish date of around the end of January. Once all the data has been uploaded into our GIS system CAMs I'll be sharing the data with all London partners to see how we can move forward with some of the unique challenges we face as our trail winds its way through the capital.
- **The Port of London Authority** has begun revetment works on their landholdings, Beverley Brook to the Wetland Centre, south bank, Richmond. The trail will remain open during the builds.
- **Greenwich Council** has begun works on a linking promenade/bridge just beyond the Barrier. Once complete this will join the Thames Path extension with the existing riverside route and take users off the busy A206. Works are expected to be complete Spring 2018.

..and **programmed works taking place**, weather permitting beginning January 2018 – Oxford City improvement works - new surface widening, clearance, further revetment works and destination signage has been programmed into 3 phases of delivery. Phase 1 will start on **8th January 2018**. **The Trail will be closed with diversions in place. For diversion maps please visit our website.**

- **A new boardwalk** will be installed through a very marshy area along the trail in Purley, West Berkshire.

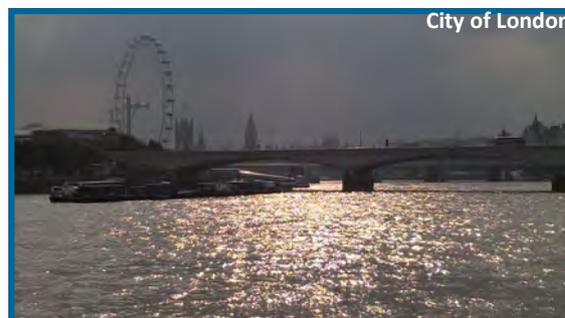
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Working with Ashton Keynes Town Council, in Wiltshire, we are working on a strategic signage project to encourage users to utilise the Parishes community shop and pub facilities which are away from the trail.

Further meetings have been programmed in with Sustrans, Natural England's Coastal Access team, Kent and Bexley Council as we explore ideas on how the Thames Coast Path could cross the river Darent or follow it inland to cross over along the A206. We will also discuss the branding for the new 'coastal Thames' Path.



The event calendar on our website is working well and we are hosting another Thames Path event forum to be held in Reading in January. The event calendar isn't just about the larger sporting and walking events happening along the trail. If your Town or Parish is holding an event along the Thames, please do encourage the organiser to upload the information onto the calendar.

You may be aware now that our Volunteer Coordinator, Sara Piggott, will be leaving us in January to take up a new post as a Countryside Ranger with West Sussex. Over the last 9 years Sara has helped shape our Volunteer Scheme and ensure we are conforming to the vast and many risk assessments, insurance documents and Highway Authority procedures that are required to get us out onto the trail as well as offering training, support and encouragement for our volunteer tasks. She has greatly enjoyed the time spent with us but particularly working with you guys, and she assures me it is the lure of the Brighton night life that is tempting her away....and not getting away from her line manager! I'm sure we all wish her Bon Voyage and every success in her future endeavours! For the time being please do bear with us as we run through the various protocols of recruitment to find another coordinator, but I'm afraid we'll be running on a reduced timetable for a while, but in the mean-time please do keep those reports coming in and together we'll find a way to sort out the issues!



With most of our grant and additional budgets either spent or allocated during this time of the year, we have started to plan the larger works for 2018/19. Your reports and users feedback help focus our efforts and budgets to the sections of the Thames Path that need attention, but if you do have any additional works, projects and ideas that you would like to be included into the 2018/19 works programme, or would like to discuss further with me, then please do get in touch nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk or thames.path@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

As always a huge thank you for all your hard efforts you put in to help maintain and enhance our National Trail. Steve Tabbitt

Farmers Markets Online: working with the NFU

The Thames Path is undoubtedly one of the best known walking routes in Britain - a 184-mile journey from its source in the hills of the Gloucestershire Cotswolds through to the Thames Barrier at Greenwich. Market research suggests that more than a quarter of visitors to the Thames Path spend upwards of £200 per visit.



More than 21 million people are estimated to have visited the Thames Path last year and the Thames Path Trail website receives, on average, 50,000 hits per month. Food and drink producers along the Thames have been invited to take advantage of a free promotional opportunity from The Thames Path National Trail. Producers can advertise their business or event on the Thames Path website free of charge.

The Thames Path National Trail Manager Steve Tabbitt says *"I receive lots of emails and requests from the public wanting to know where they can purchase fresh produce and locally sourced food along the Thames. I thought it would be great to raise awareness of the free advertising facility on the Thames Path National Trail website among food and drink producers, farm shops and farmers' markets. We want to help show what fantastic food is being produced along the Thames and how great English farming is beside our best-known river, so I contacted the NFU to ask for help in spreading the word!"*



A farm shop can advertise on the [interactive map](#) and events such as farmers' markets can be advertised on our [events calendar](#). When uploading details of a regularly occurring event, it is only necessary to upload the information once and then click on the repeat dates. Businesses and individuals simply need to register on the Thames Path National Trail website to be able to advertise a business or event free of charge.

Website: www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path Twitter: @NTThames

If you have any further questions please contact the Thames Path National Trail Manager, Steven Tabbitt, by email steven.tabbitt@oxfordshire.gov.uk

NATIONAL TRAILS OFFICE ADDRESS**Speedwell House, Oxford, OX1 1NE****Information 01865 810224 Volunteers 01865 810211****E: thames.path@oxfordshire.gov.uk****W: www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thamespath****NATIONAL TRAILS WORKSHOP****Signal Court, Station Road, Eynsham, OX29 4TL****E: nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk****Thames Path NATIONAL TRAIL****Do you love the Thames Path?****Would you like to donate to help us maintain and improve the trail?****If 'yes' scan above or visit Nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path for more information.**All donations are managed through Walk Unlimited, a not for profit organisation registered in England. Reg. No. 06595464. Transactions are completed via Paypal.National Trails Office, Speedwell House, Oxford, OX1 1NE**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

**THAMES PATH GIFTS**

Maps and guide books also for sale, visit Thames Path website the National Trails Shop

LOVE THE TRAIL?

Buy this classic enamel pin badge to celebrate the 20th anniversary of this much loved Trail. Perfect for your hat, your rucksack or your lapel, wear it to show your support for the National Trails.



A quality mug in a contemporary design listing memorable places along the Trails. If you've walked the Trail then it's a must!

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