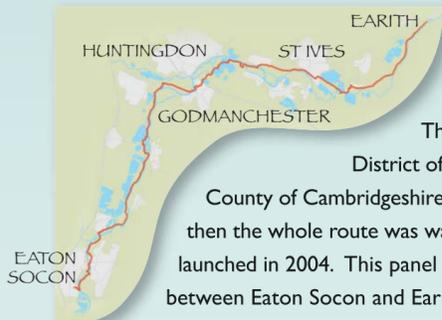




Welcome to the Ouse Valley Way

The Ouse Valley Way is one of the longest river valley walks in Britain. It follows the route of the River Great Ouse for approximately 150 miles from its source at Syresham near Brackley in Northamptonshire.

It runs through Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, and into the sea at King's Lynn.



The first section through the District of Huntingdonshire in the

County of Cambridgeshire was opened in 1990, then the whole route was waymarked and launched in 2004. This panel is one of a series between Eaton Socon and Earith. It shows the route to Buckden Marina near Offord Cluny plus two of the circular walks suggested along this section. You will find a detailed map useful as you go. The next panel is at Buckden Marina.

What you will see Take time to explore the ancient landscape along the Great Ouse Valley and you will be rewarded in many ways. The beauty of the great flood-plain meadows is outstanding. Their management has remained unchanged for millennia and they are rich in flora and fauna, as are the neighbouring tracts of lakes and reedbeds, some of which are of international importance for wildlife. Enjoy the tranquillity of the gently meandering river with its picturesque villages and historic market towns, and discover their architectural and cultural heritage. The panels will give you a taste of all this, plus some fascinating local archaeological discoveries.



Sedge Warbler



Hobby



Red Fox



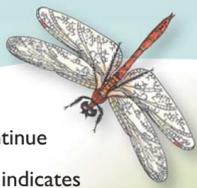
The extensive gravel workings that created Paxton Pits uncovered an array of archaeology from mammoth bones to flint tools. Across the river, Great Paxton Church is worth a visit as it is one of only three surviving Anglo-Saxon aisled churches in England.



In the early 20C the Trimmings family grew plantations of Cricket Bat Willow on islands at Little Paxton. This willow produces light, tough wood that does not splinter. The firm continues, now at Huntingdon, as 'Hunts County Bats' producing over 20,000 bats worldwide each year.

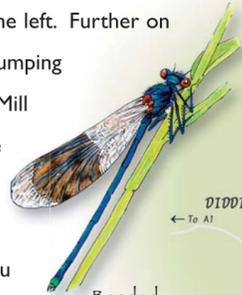


Ruddy Darter



This section Continue along Hayling Way. A left turn indicates the first circular walk back which also leads to the Visitors' Centre at Paxton Pits Nature Reserve. The Ouse Valley Way continues along

the river bank with a meadow area and the lakes of the Reserve on the left. Further on still it passes a water-intake pumping station before arriving at Offord Mill and Buckden Marina. From here, the second and longer, circular walk via Manor Farm and Boughton Lodge Farm will also take you back to the Visitors' Centre.



Banded Demoiselle



Brown Hare



Blackthorn

YOU ARE HERE

— Ouse Valley Way Paxton Pits Nature Reserve to Buckden Marina 3 miles
- - - Footpath link First circular walk 1.8 miles - Second circular walk 7 miles
- - - Public footpath Next information panel

For your safety

- Wear suitable clothing and footwear
- Do not attempt the walk if the river is flooded or at risk of flooding – check with the Environment Agency if unsure. Visit www.flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk
- Never swim in the locks or gravel pits – they are dangerous, deep and cold
- If you swim in the river, once in avoid the margins and look out for warning notices for blue-green algae
- Do not touch Giant Hogweed which looks like very tall Cow Parsley. It can cause a serious rash
- Keep your dog under control, especially around sheep and cattle – see the Countryside Code below



Cormorant



Kingfisher

Kingfishers are often to be seen here. The continuous grating songs from the reeds and along the path will be from Sedge and Reed Warblers. You may also catch a glimpse of a Red Fox.

Stinging Nettles thrive in the damp conditions. In summer, look closely and you may recognise the red threads and tiny pink flowers of the rare, parasitic Great Dodder spreading through its leaves. Here and along the river bank look out for the early white spring blossom of Blackthorn followed by plump, purple sloes in the autumn. Other hedgerow shrubs to note are Hawthorn, Dog Rose, and Elder with its aromatic floral blossom.

If you take the second circular walk keep an eye on the open fields for a glimpse of the charismatic, long-legged Brown Hare. Its black-tipped ears will confirm the sighting.



Female Nettle



Male Nettle



Nightingale



Great Dodder on Stinging Nettle



Reporting an issue

If you wish to report an issue on the Ouse Valley Way please visit the Cambridgeshire County Council website www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk and go to 'Report a highways fault'



Remember the Countryside Code

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Park cars and bicycles carefully so access to gateways and driveways is clear
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Follow paths but give way to oncoming walkers on narrow stretches
- Leave no trace of your visit. Take all your litter home
- Don't have BBQs or fires
- Keep dogs under effective control
- Dog poo: bag it and take it home



Great Ouse Valley Trust
Our landscape for life

The Great Ouse Valley Trust exists to protect, promote and enhance the special landscape of the Great Ouse Valley in Cambridgeshire.

www.greatousevalleytrust.org.uk



This panel was funded by Highways England's A14 Legacy Fund and delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with the Great Ouse Valley Trust.

Text by Great Ouse Valley Trust 2021
Illustrations and design by Coral Design Management 07821 1981 14
Maps updated from the originals commissioned by HDC's Countryside Services
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Paper was produced from the Paper Mills at Little Paxton for 184 years from 1799. The raised causeway known as 'the Traps' ensured workers could reach the mills in times of floods. The site is now modern housing.