

Temporary Internet Leaflet

(Please note that all our leaflets are currently undergoing redesign for Internet use)

THORNBOROUGH

Circular Walk - The walk is about 4.5 miles long and is best started at Thornborough Bridge. The way is clearly marked passing several features of archaeological, historical and nature conservation interest in a quiet rural part of Buckingham.

THE WALK - This route is about four and a half miles long using footpaths that have been waymarked. It offers several features of interest including the impressive burial mounds near Thornborough, the Old Thornborough Bridge, the remains of a deserted mediaeval village and a nature reserve along the disused Buckingham Canal. The walk skirts the quiet and attractive village of Thornborough.

FEATURES OF INTEREST

1. Thornborough Bridge is the only surviving mediaeval bridge in the County. It dates from the fourteenth century. Of interest are the “cutwaters” or V shaped projections that were used to divert river debris through the arches and as passing places for pedestrians. The new bridge was built in 1974 to take the growing traffic, thus ensuring the preservation of the mediaeval bridge which is a scheduled ancient monument.

2. Iron age earthworks. Just south of Foxcote Reservoir, an iron age defensive enclosure dating from 200 300 BC can be traced. A socketed iron axe was found and a cast of it is in the County Museum at Aylesbury.

The Circular Walk follows the course of the Buckingham Canal just to the east of Foxcote Reservoir.

3. The Buckingham Arm Canal. The Buckingham Canal, off the Grand Union Canal was opened in 1801. With a decline in traffic brought about by the railways in particular, the Canal became disused by 1910 and officially abandoned in 1961. Coal was the main trade. The course of the Canal can still be followed.

4. The Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve. The old canal is particularly pleasant here with ancient hedgerows on the embankment, pools of water and the remains of an old lock. This part of the canal was bought by the Berks, Bucks and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) in 1972 as a nature reserve.

5. Foxcote Reservoir is also a nature reserve, aimed at providing an undisturbed wildfowl refuge. Access is by permit only available from BBOWT. Bewick Swans may be seen here and along the meadows of the Great Ouse.

6. Thornborough Mill was mentioned in the Domesday Book, and was a working mill until about 1940. Eel traps on the Ouse were common in this area.

7. Deserted mediaeval village. Just to the south west of Thornborough the footpath crosses the site of an old manor with a chapel dedicated to St Lawrence. An extension or “end” of Thornborough, the village was active in the thirteenth century but by the early seventeenth century it was deserted as a result of early enclosure when sheep and cattle grazing were more profitable to some than homes! Remains of the village can be traced on the walk.

Thornborough Village. This attractive village has good stone farms and cottages. Fine buildings, the Green, stone walls, the two village pumps, the stream and excellent views all contribute to the charm of the village which is protected from insensitive development by being declared a Conservation Area.

8. Thornborough Mounds. Two conspicuous burial mounds lie just to the east of Thornborough Bridge. They are Roman in age, probably second century, and are quite rare. Excavations by the Duke of Buckingham in 1840 yielded a rich harvest of bronze lamps, pottery and bronze artefacts now housed at Cambridge University's Museum. The area is protected by being declared a Statutory Ancient Monument.

Refreshments. May be had at the Two Brewers Public House and the shop next door at Thornborough and the Lone Tree Public House on the A421 east of the bridge.

Parking. Ideally on the slip roads both sides of Thornborough Bridge. If starting the walk in Thornborough village please park with care and consideration.

Bus Services. X32 bus service linking Milton Keynes and Buckingham stops at Thornborough Post Office throughout the week (check local timetables).

PLEASE FOLLOW THE COUNTRY CODE

