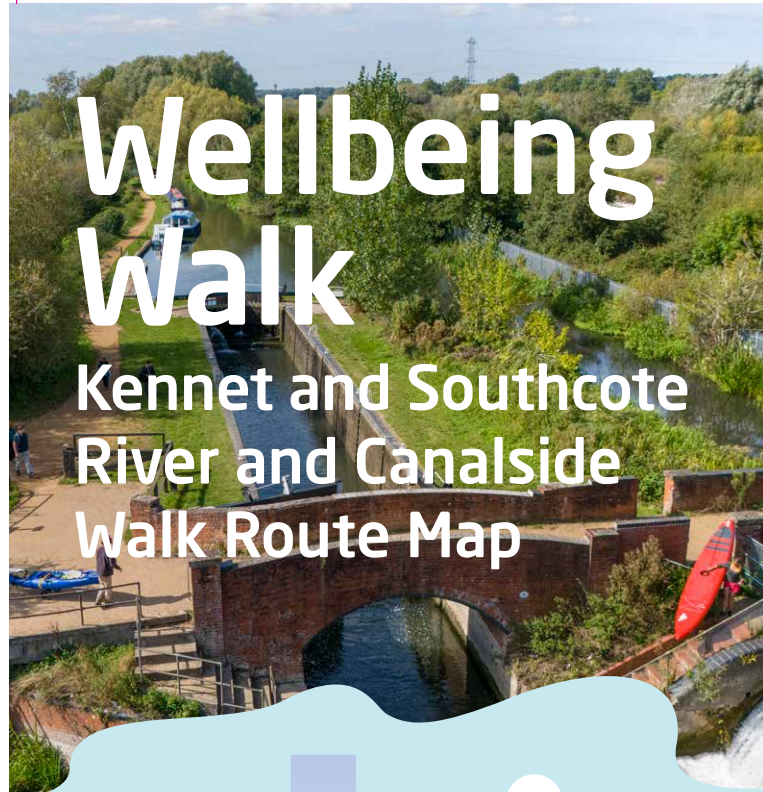


Wellbeing Walk

Kennet and Southcote River and Canalside Walk Route Map



Reading
Walking Routes



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Directions and Details

- A** Starting from The Oracle Riverside (by Wagamama restaurant), cross Bridge Street and follow the footpath on the south side of the River Kennet around the office building to the County Lock.
- 📷** The County Lock has the lowest rise of the locks on the Kennet as boats only rise or fall about 30 cm (1 foot) in the lock. The land on both sides of the river adjacent to County Lock was formerly part of the site of Simonds Brewery.



- B** Continue on the shared footpath route for NCN4 (following these red signs for the next couple of miles, until Milkmaid's Bridge at Southcote). Continue past Katesgrove Primary School and onto Elgar Road. At the end of Elgar Road, turn right into Waterloo Meadows. Walk alongside the playground and BMX track before walking alongside the canal, continue until you reach Rose Kiln Lane.

- 📷** Waterloo Meadows is an urban park, alongside the River Kennet. The park contains a wide variety of facilities and landscapes featuring long grass, thickets, brambles and copses of trees. The river is lined with willows and alder trees.



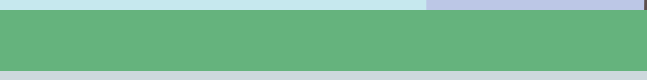
- C** At Rose Kiln Lane immediately after the bridge follow NCN 4 back down to the canal and turn right at the canal-side signposted towards Newbury. Continue along the footpath until reaching Fobney. Here you will also find the important wetland reserve of Fobney island and the lock itself.
- 📷** Fobney lock is the site of a Victorian Pump House (no longer in use, replaced by the water works you will have passed on your right a little earlier). Although it is now a little dilapidated, the pump house is still an impressive piece of engineering. Fobney island is a wetland nature reserve – an ideal habitat for birds, reptiles and amphibians.



- D** Continue along the canal-side towpath. You may also notice blue and yellow waymarkers signposting an English extension of the Camino de Santiago route. Cross over the river and its thundering weirs and sluices, pass under the Reading-Basingstoke railway line before reaching the point at which we leave the canal – crossing the striking white metal Milkmaid's Bridge. You will see Coley Meadows on the opposite bank.

- i** Camino de Santiago – The St James' Way is a medieval pilgrim route from Reading Abbey to the port of Southampton, where pilgrims would sail to northern Spain to complete their 'camino' (journey).

- 📷** Milkmaid's Bridge – Beyond the bridge you will see Southcote Mill and its delightful stream and gardens, a lovely photo background from the bridge. This narrow metal footbridge just before Southcote Lock links the Kennet and Avon Canal to the north bank and Southcote Meadows.



Walk Information

This is an 9km / 5.5mile circular walk, starting in the town centre and heading along the Kennet and Avon Canal, across Southcote Meadows and back via Prospect Park and west Reading to the town centre. On this walk you will enjoy views along the canal, be close to nature at Fobney Wetland Reserve and Southcote Meadows, see the historic Prospect Park before heading back into town along the leafy streets and avenues of West Reading.

Length 5.5 miles (9km) walk.

Duration 2-3 hours.

Difficulty Moderate – this walk is mostly flat with much of the walk on canal-side gravel towpath.

Suitability This walk is not suitable for wheelchair, stroller, and buggy users due to the stepped canal crossing at Southcote. The towpath can be muddy and even flooded after wet weather and in winter.

Start The Oracle Shopping Centre, Riverside RG1 2AG
///winner.hero.clues

End Broad Street Mall, Oxford Road RG1 7QE
///loads.loyal.tender

Sustainable Transport This is a circular walk starting and finishing in the town centre near to local bus stops and cycle parking. Buses back to town can also be found at Bath Road and Tilehurst Road on the route of this walk.

Car Park Queens Road car park or The Oracle car park.

Toilet Facilities Available at the start and finish as well as at various points on the walk route.

Useful Links

reading-buses.co.uk/services
what3words.com/about



- E** Continue over Milkmaid's Bridge and head north along the gravel track through Southcote Meadows. Pass under the railway (Reading to Newbury line) and over the burbling Holy Brook. Continue along Circuit Lane, over the roundabout and follow the cycle/footpath on the right which brings you on to the A4 Bath Road. Cross the road via the pedestrian crossing and turn right and then after a few metres enter Prospect Park.

- 📷** As you enter Prospect Park, on the hill-top amongst the trees, you will catch a glimpse of the white regency Prospect House – now The Mansion House. This park was originally part of the Calcot Park Estate and was sold to Reading Council. Prospect Park offers a large range of facilities, including a café, playground and multiple sports and leisure facilities.



- F** Walk straight on along Prospect Park footpath until you reach the car park, then turn right and follow the footpath to the exit from the park and cross over to Liebenrood Road and into Kearsley Road. A series of footpaths will take you to Southcote Road. After the first footpath, Hollins Walk, cross onto Bexley Court and then along Parkhouse Lane until Southcote Road.

- G** At Southcote Road turn left, then right onto Tilehurst Road, pass the southern entrance to Reading West Station and turn left down Brunswick Hill. Halfway down the hill turn right into Argyle Road which leads into Baker Street with its wonderful Georgian Villas terraces.

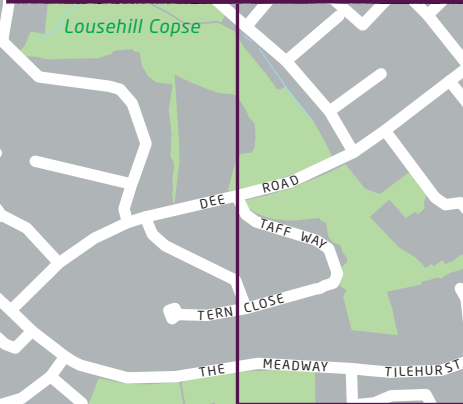


- H** At the crossroad of Baker Street with Russell Street, turn left and walk down to the junction with Oxford Road. On this junction is one of Reading's few remaining old cinemas the Pavilion.

- 📷** The Pavilion opened in Reading in 1929 as a cinema before closing in 1979 and becoming first a bingo hall and then a snooker hall. In 2012 Life Spring Church purchased the Pavilion and restored the building, opening it again for their church services and various other community events.



- I** Turn right onto Oxford road from the junction and it is only a short walk back into the town centre and to Broad Street Mall where this walk ends.



This Walk starts at the Oracle Riverside and head south along the River Kennet via Katesgrove and Waterloo Meadows.

After going under the A33 the walk continues along the Kennet and Avon Canal to Fobney Works and lock. Here you will also be able explore the Fobney Meadow Wetland Reserve before continuing along the canal as far as Southcote Lock.

After crossing over Milkmaid's Bridge the walk takes you through Southcote Meadow, under the railway line and through Southcote into Prospect Park. From here the walk takes you back into town through some of West Reading's quiet, leafy residential streets.



Along Baker Street, is a wonderful terrace of Georgian Villas. Further along at 55 Baker Street, just a minute or so off the walk route, is the former home of William Fox-Talbot - one the pioneers of early photography who invented the first photographic process using a negative image to make a positive print.



Legend

- Main route
- Muddy or uneven route

The footpaths in Waterloo Meadows, Fobney Lock and Meadows, the Milkmaid's Bridge and Southcote Meadows are not fully paved and may at times become soft, muddy and uneven.

