



CIRCULAR ROUTE

## Milton Keynes Ouzel Valley



Start/End: Willen Lake South

Distance: Full Route 12.6 miles, Short Route 4.5 miles



## HERITAGE SITE INFORMATION

### Section 1

Willen Lake to Woughton Medieval Village (3.6 miles)

**Willen Lake** is one of the largest purpose-built stormwater balancing lakes in the UK. Its primary purpose is to intercept the river Ouzel. North Lake is a key wildfowl site attracting up to 2,500 wild birds, with a wide variety of migrating waders in spring and autumn. South Lake is devoted to recreational pursuits, mainly dinghy sailing and wind surfing, but also boasts Aerial Xtreme adventure rope course.

Refreshment Spots  
One4Six / Lakeside



Willen Lake



Willen Lake Aerial Xtreme

**Milton Keynes Village** originally Saxon, this small village is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Its name derives from the 'DeCatrines' or 'Keynes' family who owned the manor during the 13th century. The village contains many timber framed and thatched buildings including The Swan Inn, Burley Cottages and Ivy Cottage. Other notable buildings are the Church, Rectory and School House. See [www.mkheritage.co.uk/tva](http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/tva)

Refreshment Spot  
Swan Inn



Milton Keynes Village Church



Swan Inn

**Bronze Age Gold Torcs** and bracelets (1100-800BC) were unearthed from a dig in Monkston Park, declared treasure trove and are now in the British Museum. **Woughton Medieval Village**, it is not known why it became deserted – at some point in history the villagers moved to where Woughton-on-the-Green now stands. You can still make out medieval ridge and furrow farming patterns, platforms where houses once stood and the wide sunken way – Meadows Lane – leading past the former Manor site.



Monkston Park Gold Torcs



Site of Medieval village



## HERITAGE SITE INFORMATION

### Section 2

Woughton Medieval Village to 'Magiovinium' (3.2 miles)

**The Open University** or OU was formed in Milton Keynes in 1969 and is centred on the historic Walton Hall. It is Milton Keynes' biggest employer with over 5,000 staff on site and is the foremost distance learning institution in the world.

**Walton Lake** is a disused 'balancing lake' allowed to fill with reeds, creating a very different habitat from the open waters of most of the city's other lakes. A boardwalk into the reedbed, linked to two birdhides, offers fantastic opportunities to see bird and waterlife close-up.



The Open University



Walton Lake

**Caldecotte Lake** has given up an Ichthyosaur, a sea-living dinosaur from around 150 million years ago (now on the wall of CMK Reference Library) and a late-medieval boat (c.1540 AD) a type unique this far north in the UK.

**The Caldecotte Arms** pub windmill may be modern, however a watermill dating to the late 1600s was excavated in the area now occupied by Caldecotte Lake south, near the deserted medieval village of Caldecotte.

Refreshment Spot  
The Caldecotte Arms



Fossil of Ichthyosaur



Caldecotte Arms

**The Roman Garden** at Dobbies Garden World, which opened in 2006, developed from an idea to commemorate the Roman past of the area. James Dobbie started the company in 1865.

**Magiovinium** was a Roman fort which later grew into a small town on Watling Street. Excavations for the construction of the A5 dual carriageway revealed Roman cemeteries and artefacts including a possible coin forger's hoard.

Refreshment Spot  
Dobbies Garden World



Roman Garden



Find from Magiovinium



## Section 3

'Magiovinium' to Woughton On The Green (3 miles)

**Fenny Stratford** was an important staging post along Watling Street and ancient market town until 1665 when the town was devastated by the bubonic plague. In 1805 the Grand Junction Canal from London to Braunston opened, passing through Fenny Stratford.

**Fenny Lock** To overcome a local problem during construction Fenny Lock was installed as a temporary lock and remains to this day, deemed too costly to remove.



Fenny Lock and swingbridge



The Red Lion

Refreshment Spot  
The Red Lion



## Simpson

The old church of St Thomas has been largely reconstructed and altered many times. Simpson House opposite Walnuts School is Grade II listed. Many other buildings have historical significance. Simpson was the first village to see new development. It still has a rural feel as it is now almost completely surrounded by linear parks and the canal runs alongside it. **Simpson Manor House** is on the site of the medieval manor. The house itself was pulled down in around 1810.



St Thomas Church



Site of Manor House

## Woughton On The Green

The original village was recorded in the Domesday Book as *Ulchestone* with a population c120. The Green is a scheduled ancient monument site, the extensive earthworks evidencing the growth of the village until its decline after the enclosure of 1769.

**Ye Olde Swan** originally constructed in the 1600s has historical associations with highwayman Dick Turpin.



St Mary's Church



Ye Olde Swan Inn

Refreshment Spot  
Ye Olde Swan



## Section 4

Woughton On The Green to Willen Lake (2.8 miles)

The medieval fish ponds date from a 14th century fish farm belonging to the manor house. They were built near the Ouzel so a supply of fresh water could be maintained.

**Little Woolstone church**, described in 1755 as 'a poor mean building', with a wooden turret at the west end. West of the church is the farmhouse, a 17th century red brick building, considerably altered and modernised. The Mill House on the River Ouzel, is a 17th century stone house with an upper story of half-timber and a thatched roof.



Site of Fishponds



Little Woolstone Church

**Great Woolstone Church Farm** and Dovecote was built in the late 1500s of timber with a brick front added in the 1700s. In the 1800s the farm was home to William Smith who pioneered the use of steam engines to plough fields – an example is on display at MK Museum.

**Holy Trinity Church** dates from the late 1200s although excavations revealed foundations of a Norman church and Roman occupation.



Dovecote



Holy Trinity Church

Refreshment Spot  
The Barge Inn



The **Grand Union Canal** winds its way through Milton Keynes creating a haven of tranquility. Canal boats first travelled from London to Birmingham, through what is now Milton Keynes, in 1805. The Canal prospered until 1838, when the London to Birmingham Railway opened and took away a great deal of trade.

**Campbell Park** is named after Lord Campbell of Eskan, first Chairman of Milton Keynes Development Corporation. It is the largest City Centre Sculpture Park in the UK. 'Head' is by artist Allen Jones.



Bridge over canal



'Head' sculpture Campbell Park



## Heritage Cycle Trails

### Trail C Milton Keynes Ouzel Valley

<b>Start:</b>	Willen Lake South
<b>Distance:</b>	Full Route 12.6 miles, Short Route 4.5 miles
<b>Duration:</b>	3 1/2 - 4 1/2 hours
<b>Note:</b>	Full route involves minor 30mph roads and trails near waterways and may not be suitable for children and/or inexperienced cyclists.



For 2008, Milton Keynes has revamped its three Heritage Cycle Trails A – C to be bigger and better than before. In addition, a brand new Trail D – North West Milton Keynes has been designed by a group of young volunteers supported by the Make a Difference Team. Trails start either at Willen or Furzton Lakes and take you around some of the magnificent scenery and hidden heritage that Milton Keynes has to offer. Additional Heritage Cycle Trails are planned for 2009, meanwhile, cycle, walk, jog or run and discover Milton Keynes for yourself.

Trail leaflets are available from Discover Milton Keynes, Silbury Boulevard, near door 7 of the centre:mk shopping centre, and local museums or libraries, or can be downloaded:

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/cyclemk](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/cyclemk)  
[www.destinationmiltonkeynes.co.uk](http://www.destinationmiltonkeynes.co.uk)



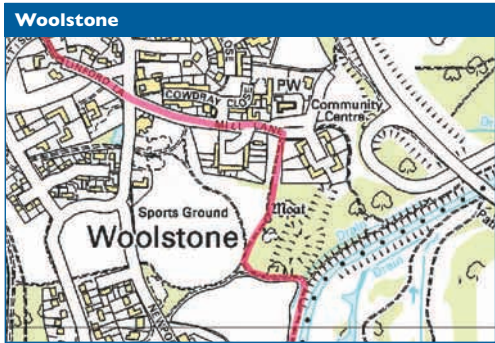
Destination Milton Keynes  
MILTON KEYNES  
HERITAGE ASSOCIATION





**17.** At the church turn left along Mill Lane to The Barge pub. Cross Newport Road with care and head up Linford Lane. Cross Pattison Lane. Head under the H6 Childs Way and head slightly uphill past the rear of Gullivers Eco Park back to the Grand Union Canal.

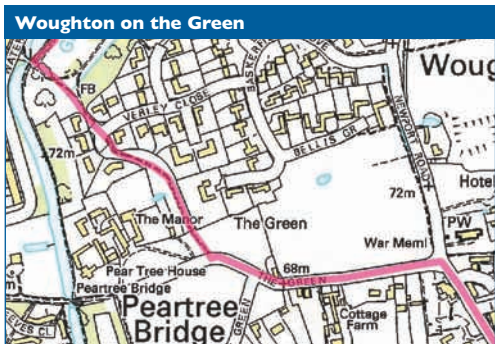
**16.** As the river bends to the right take the path left circling the medieval moat, picnic tables and children's play area, passing between it and the cricket green along the path to Great Woolstone church.



**15.** Almost immediately (and before you cross the river) head down to river again as earlier, but this time turn left and head north with river on your right passing under the H8 Standing Way. Continue along the river passing until you come to Little Woolstone, Medieval Fishponds, Woolstone Manor and church.

**14.** Follow NCR6 signs through housing to canal and at bridge turn right and head up canal keeping it on your left. At next bridge turn right away from canal across fields and join redway up to main road H7 Chaffron Way.

**13.** Pass through Ye Olde Swan car park, turning left away from the church and past Village Hall to The Green. At Green take small path on right parallel to black railings to pass white house on your left.



**12.** Join Newport Road and head north, passing Saddington and Foxton Roads. At Castle Rose take redway under the H8 Standing Way and continue along Newport Road into Woughton-on-the-Green, to Ye Olde Swan.

**11.** Continue along path through gate to Simpson Road. Turn left to church and pass through churchyard into High Street. Continue past village cottages to end of road and under H9 Groveway into Woughton Park.

**10.** At the Simpson village sign, cross the road and join redway. Turn left through the next gate and head across the fields towards Simpson Church. Marked in the field lies the old site of Simpson Manor House. Pause to read the interpretation board.

**Bike Hire**



**Bike Hire available at Willen Lake.**  
Available from Whitecap Leisure behind Lakeside.

**18.** Go over the bridge and take the second right up to 'Head' sculpture where NCR6 and NCR51 meet. Turn right at 'Head' to follow redway a short distance to next bridge (81b) turn right and head back to Willen Lake between Gullivers Land and Eco Park.



**1.** Starting from One4Six Coffee Shop, head south past the Lakeside Pub to South Lake past the Adventure Xtreme Ropes Course (on your right). Turn right onto NCR51 over the miniature railway tracks and under the H6 Childs Way to head up to and over the bridge crossing the River Ouzel.

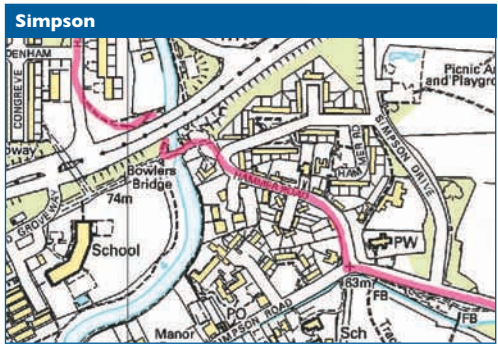
**2.** Turn left following the river before then bearing right onto the redway and past the houses keeping the new school in the distance (Middleton Primary) on your right. Follow the path towards Milton Keynes Village Church, and its roadside entrance. Note the historic buildings on either side. At the end of the redway turn right along Willen Road to the Swan Inn.



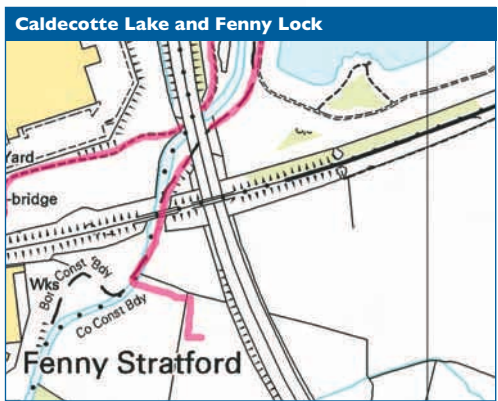
**3.** From the Swan Inn bear right along the road until you reach the pond and can join the redway on the right opposite Dorman's Close. Continue along it past new housing across the road, downhill under H7 Chaffron Way into Monkston, and turn right following the H7 until you reach the River Ouzel. Carry on over the bridge, turn left down to the riverside.  
[Short-cut route: jump to No 15.](#)

**4.** Continue South along the Ouzel Valley pathway some distance along the river under the road (H8 Standing Way) to Walton Lake and on the left you will see the Open University. Take care to close gates and avoid any sheep or cattle.

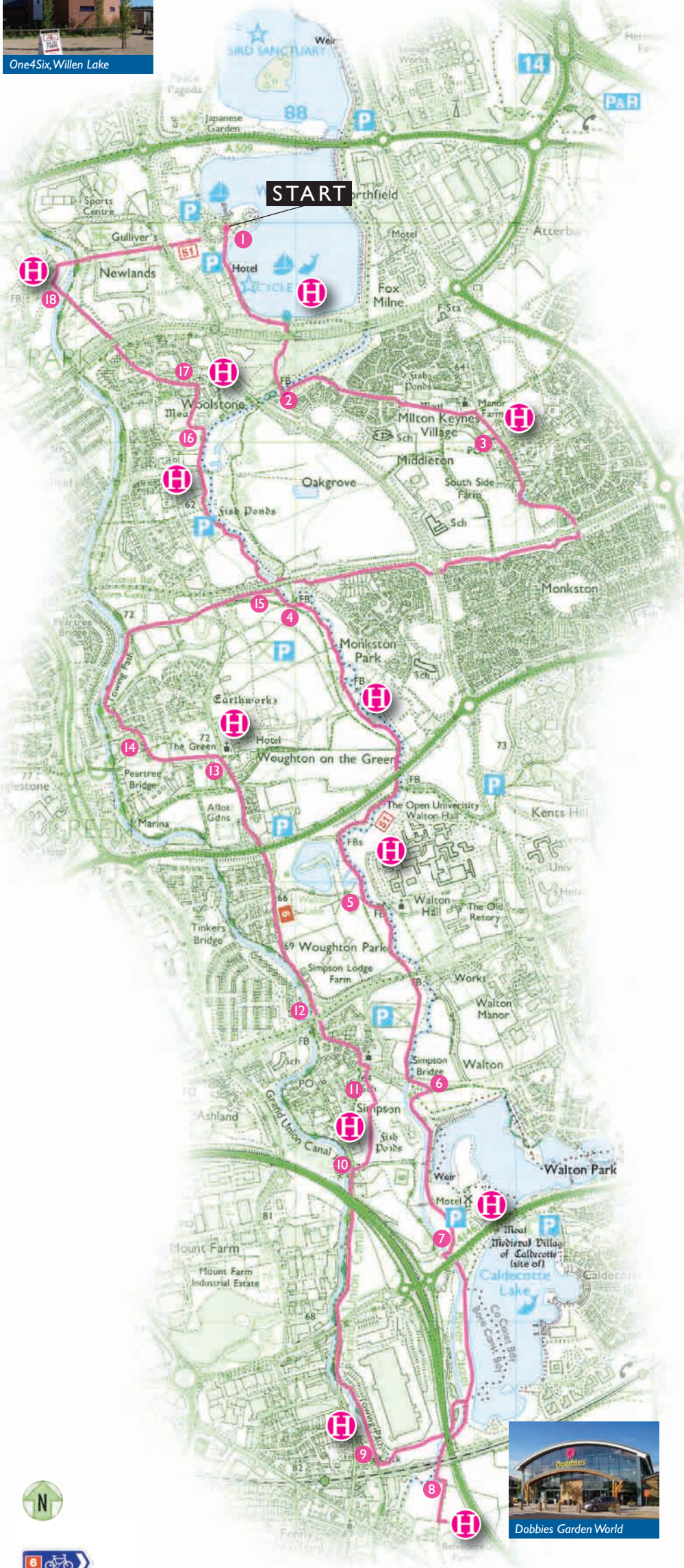
**5.** Bear left after Walton Lake and continue down the riverside path, keeping river on your left. Continue past St Michael's Church, under the H9 Groveway and on until you reach Simpson Road. (Note Simpson Church in the distance on the right).



**6.** Turn left and cross the bridge, turning right through the small car park and bear right down onto Caldecotte Lake. Head past the lake on your left and weir on your right towards the windmill and the Caldecotte Arms.



**7.** From the Caldecotte Arms follow the lakeside path under the H10 Bletcham Way and continue along the lake ignoring a wooden bridge on your right until you reach a new redway bearing right. Take this redway as it follows the River Ouzel and passes under the A5 and railway bridges, and follow the redway across the field to Dobbies Garden World, the site of the former Roman settlement of Magiovinium.





NCR = National Cycle Route

**9.** Cross the Fenny Lock Swing Bridge if in place and turn right up Simpson Road. Alternatively, exit Fenny Lock on the path heading north and follow it down to and along Simpson Road, under the A5 and towards Simpson village.

**8.** Return via the redway to Caldecotte Lake and turn left across the wooden bridge you previously ignored and turn left almost retracing your steps on the other side of the River Ouzel, up towards Fenny Lock and the Grand Union Canal. Here you can see the Red Lion Inn, Pump House and Swing Bridge.