

Easy Going Route



Introduction



This easy going route around Cookham Village and along parts of the Thames Path National Trail is one of the prettiest in the whole of the Thames Valley. This is a very pleasant route year-round. The majority of the route is flat, and the surface is mainly either grass or tarmac. There are several bridges, the steepest of which

has a gradient of 1:4. Benches along the route provide a welcome resting place and refreshments are available both in the village and at The Bounty Cafe and Bar (seasonal) on the furthest point of the route at Cock Marsh. There are toilets at Cookham Lock (including disabled facilities) and on the corner of the High Street and Sutton Road.

There are several starting points

The most popular is from the National Trust unsurfaced car park (free) on Cookham Moor (P), west of the village and next to a pond where swans are usually nesting. From there two paths lead down to the river Thames; one, unsurfaced, to the left of the five barred gate, continues alongside the Strand Stream and the other crosses the centre of Marsh Meadow (grassed). A third and more accessible route to the riverside path is across Cookham Moor to The Crown public house and down Berries Road.



Contact Details

If you have any problems with the Public Rights of Way used in this leaflet, please contact the Rights of Way Team at the address below:

Public Rights of Way, Highways and Engineering Unit,
Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1RF.
Tel: 01628 683800

Email: PROW@rbwm.gov.uk

The local National Trust Warden can be contacted on:
Tel: 07818 427242

You can contact the Environment Agency on:
Tel: 08708 506506

The Lock Keeper at Cookham Lock can be contacted on:
Tel: 01628 520752

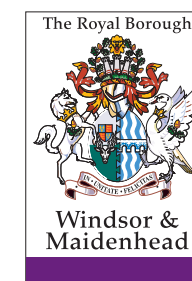
The Bounty Cafe and Bar details:
Open April 1 - Sept 30, midday til 22.30, 7 days a week.
Other times call ahead on 01628 520056

The Crown Public House: Tel: 01628 520163

For further information on the Thames Path National Trail please contact:

The National Trails Office on 01865 810224.
www.nationaltrail.co.uk

Produced by Woodside Communications



Published 06/08

THE VILLAGE ROUTE - B (2.5km)

Permission may be sought from the landlord of The Crown to use his car park to drop passengers; the driver can then continue to the car park on the Moor. Other parking in and around the Village is limited.

The tarmaced route down Berries Road is sign-posted where the road gives way to footpaths which pass the Sailing Club on your left. Cross a newly-built bridge over a small inlet and the river is before you.

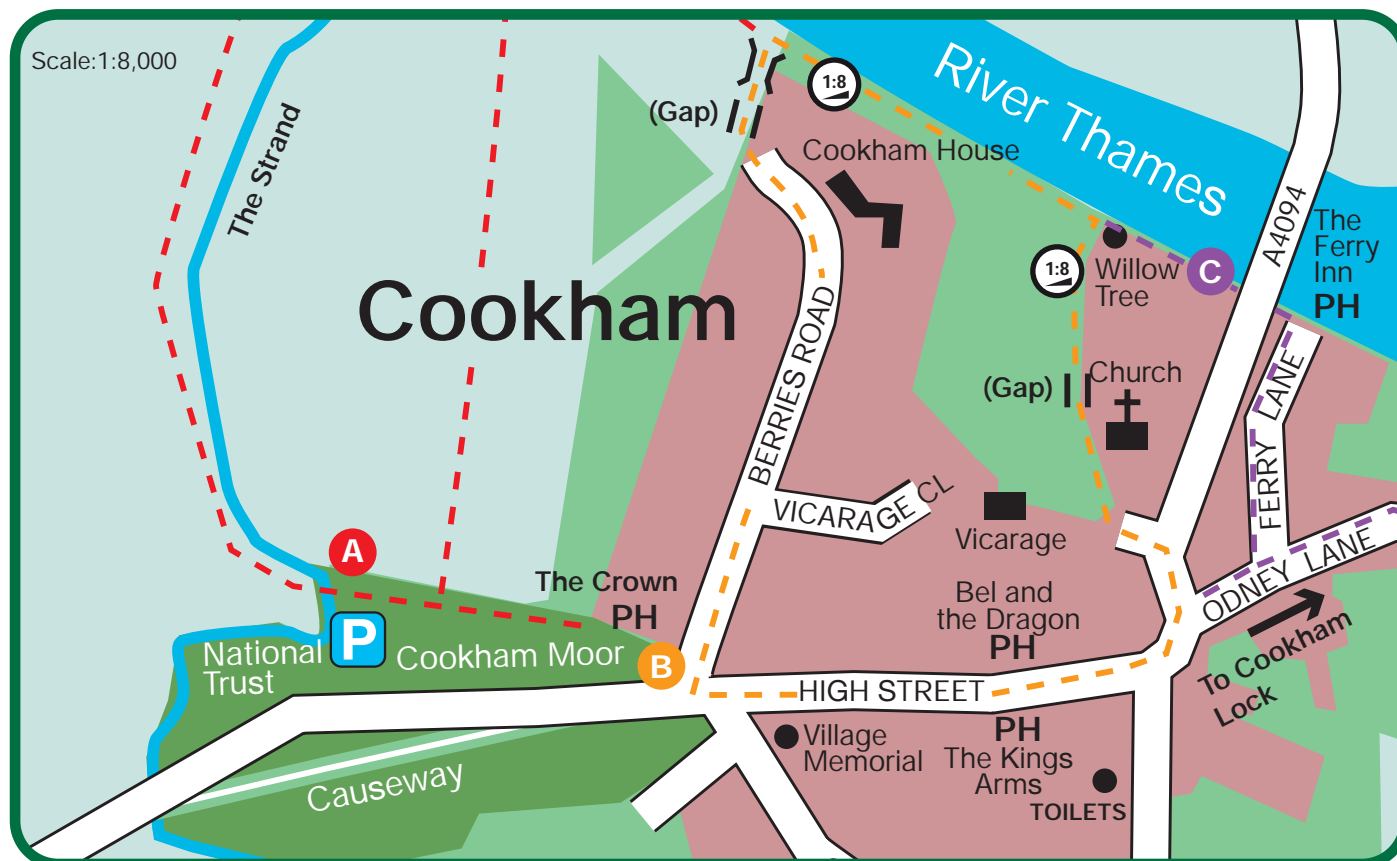


Before turning right at the sailing club, look out for the craft Monarch; her plaque bears testimony to her role as one of the thousands of small ships that made possible the evacuation and the saving of the lives of 300,000 men from Dunkirk in the early days of World War 2. Along the way look out for strangers to these waters. Besides the ever-present seagulls, terns have been seen fishing here; there will almost certainly be swans, ducks, moorhen, coots and the occasional great crested grebe. The riverbank is also a favoured mooring site. At the willow turn right away from the river and follow the route through the churchyard to the famous 11th century Church of Holy Trinity, a much-loved centre of an active parish life and one-time home of Stanley Spencer's famous painting of The Last Supper.

Continue through the churchyard and gates into Church Gate which brings you into Cookham Village. Immediately opposite there is the refurbished Stanley Spencer Gallery, once a Methodist chapel and now the home of Spencer's The Last Supper. Continue along the High Street, with the 14th century coaching inn, Bel and The Dragon on your right, and the 17th century King's Arms on the left. Close by is a welcoming tea-shop, once an antique dealers and, before that, thought to be where Stanley Spencer's grandparents lived. The names of the houses - The Old Apothecary, The Moorings - and a one-time butcher's tiled fascia established 1775 - give a clue to the past and varied occupations of the erstwhile villagers featured in Spencer's famous



paintings. The village is now well-known for its variety of restaurants and for its interesting and high-quality retail shops. Pass by the Forge Motor Company, which until the 1940s was still a blacksmith's forge.



Whichever choice of route you took, the route ends here at the village memorial to men of the village who died in both World Wars. Ahead you will see Berries Road, The Crown public house, and the National Trust car park.

LARGE CIRCULAR ROUTE - A (7.5km)

Starting from the car park on Cookham Moor (A), or The Crown public house on Berries Road (B), you can take a circular route along the open riverside, with the riverbank houses and marina of Bourne End to the right, and Cock Marsh to the left.

The path is punctuated by swing gates, bridges and RADAR operated kissing gates. Passing under the railway bridge and footbridge to Bourne End you will pass a row of houses and 'The Bounty' café. After this the path continues to follow the river until it turns inland at a small cluster of dwellings. Here a mid-field signpost will direct you southwards across a field to a RADAR gate. Continue along the well worn path and turn left at the foot of the escarpment. This unsurfaced path follows the base of the hill back towards Cookham.

Passing through several RADAR operated kissing gates you will come to another railway bridge. Pass under and immediately on your left there is another wooden kissing gate back into Marsh Meadow. On your left, notice a small plantation of trees planted by Cookham school children to mark the millennium.

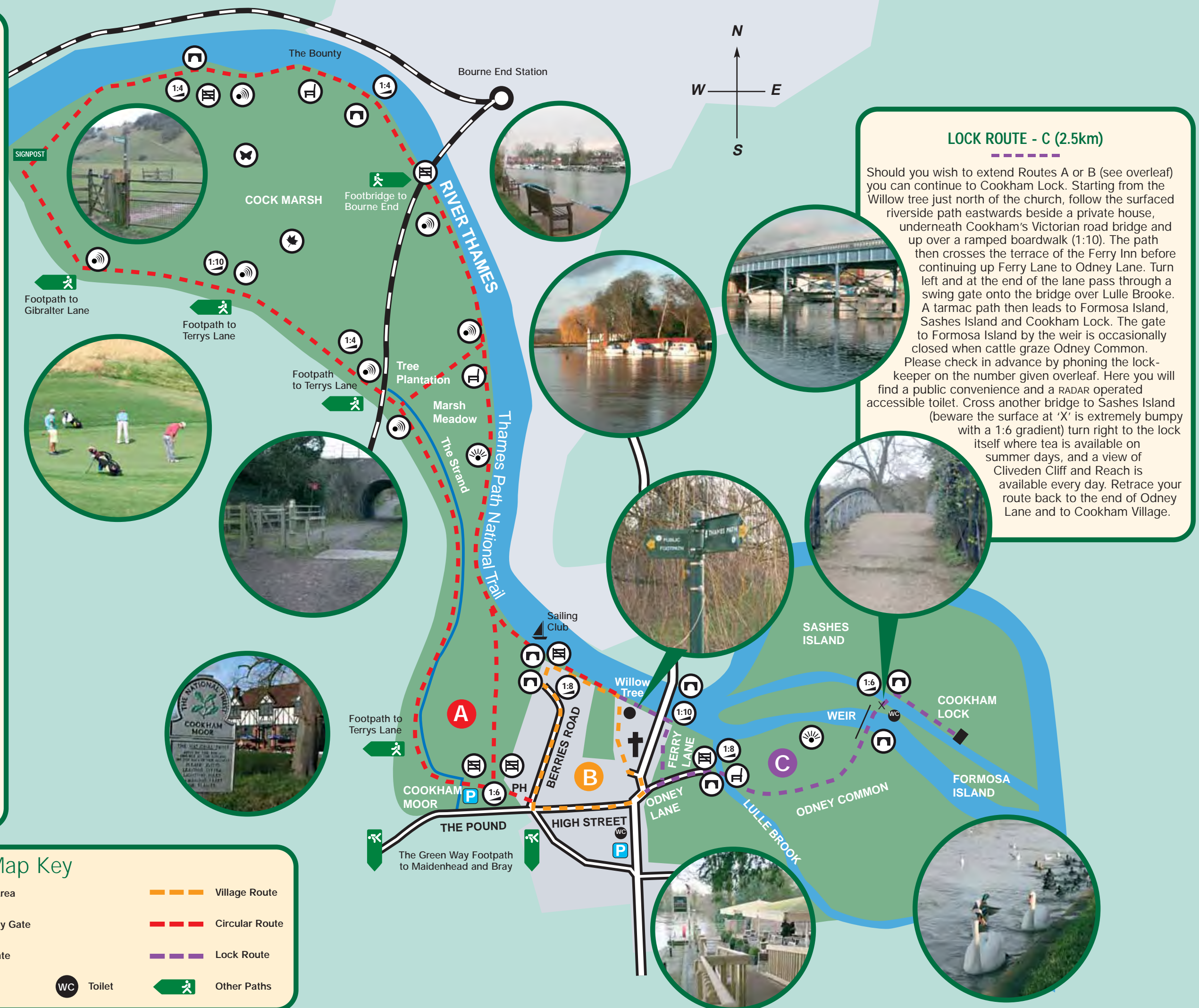
Here too, a prominent local farmer and land-owner has funded and provided for the establishment of a kingfisher sanctuary, while the golf club on the other side of the railway line has placed bird boxes in woodlands bordering the course and is considered home territory now by several pairs of Red Kite.

From here a grassed path cuts across the meadow to join back up with the Thames Path National Trail. Alternatively you can continue south along the unsurfaced track which runs parallel to the Strand stream – one of the few habitats of the water vole in the county. This path leads back to Cookham Moor and the National Trust car park.

Some parts of the circular route can be muddy and there are loose stones of up to 40mm. Some of the gates are quite close to the riverbank. However the views and the wildlife make this an interesting and worthwhile circuit.

LOCK ROUTE - C (2.5km)

Should you wish to extend Routes A or B (see overleaf) you can continue to Cookham Lock. Starting from the Willow tree just north of the church, follow the surfaced riverside path eastwards beside a private house, underneath Cookham's Victorian road bridge and up over a ramped boardwalk (1:10). The path then crosses the terrace of the Ferry Inn before continuing up Ferry Lane to Odney Lane. Turn left and at the end of the lane pass through a swing gate onto the bridge over Lulle Brooke. A tarmac path then leads to Formosa Island, Sashes Island and Cookham Lock. The gate to Formosa Island by the weir is occasionally closed when cattle graze Odney Common. Please check in advance by phoning the lock-keeper on the number given overleaf. Here you will find a public convenience and a RADAR operated accessible toilet. Cross another bridge to Sashes Island (beware the surface at 'X' is extremely bumpy with a 1:6 gradient) turn right to the lock itself where tea is available on summer days, and a view of Cliveden Cliff and Reach is available every day. Retrace your route back to the end of Odney Lane and to Cookham Village.



Scale: 1:12500

Map Key

- | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|----------------|--|----------------|
| | Good View | | Wildlife Area | | Village Route |
| | Approx Gradient | | Radar Key Gate | | Circular Route |
| | Bench | | Swing Gate | | Lock Route |
| | Woodland Area | | Bridge | | Other Paths |
| | WC Toilet | | | | |