



The Seven Wonders of Billesley Walk

Walk designed by Environmental Youth Pests,
a group of local young people
aged 10 – 14 years

Photographs and research by Kate Wyatt



Warstock and Grendon NRF Community Project



A walk around the Billesley Ward in South Birmingham



Seven Wonders

- ▶ Stratford Upon Avon Canal
- ▶ Priory Fields
- ▶ Scribes Lane Path
- ▶ Trittford Mill Pool
- ▶ The Dingles
- ▶ Chinn Brook Recreation Ground
- ▶ The BMX Track

Introduction

This walk was designed by a group of young people living in the Billesley Ward of South Birmingham. They were brought together to work on local environmental issues, part of which was to research the local green spaces. While doing this they discovered many of the green spaces linked to form a loop. The idea for this walk came from that discovery.

The young people have also completed several clean-ups as well as designing a sculpture which will be placed on Chinn Brook Recreation Ground.

The 4½ mile walk begins at Warstock Community centre and passes through seven areas of natural beauty and open public spaces. These are; The Stratford Upon Avon Canal, Priory Fields, Scribes Lane Path, Trittiford Millpool, The Dingles, Chinn Brook Recreation Ground and the BMX Track and surrounding area. These areas are looked at in more detail in this booklet and information given about each.



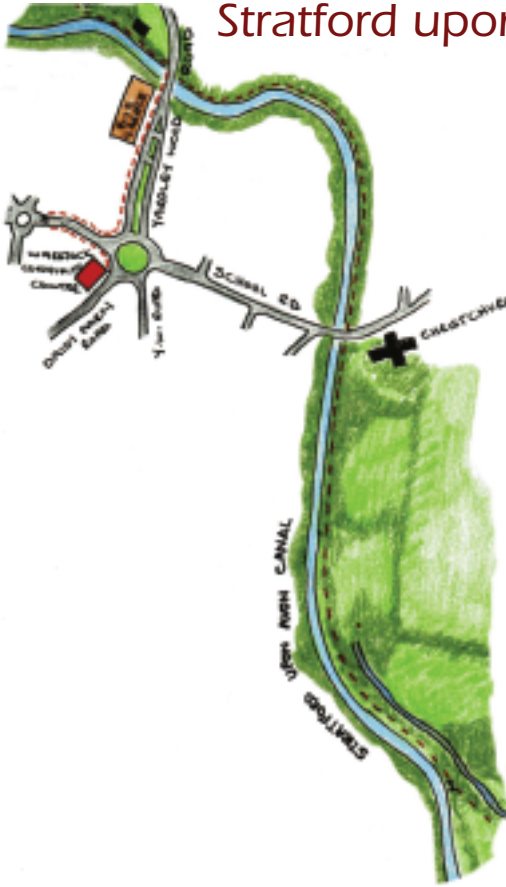
Walk

Turn left out of the community Centre and left again at the roundabout into School Road. Cross at the zebra crossing heading back towards the roundabout and left into Yardley Wood Road. You will pass a bus garage on your left and walk over a bridge spanning the canal. Turn left immediately past the bridge heading down onto the canal tow path. Turn left onto tow path passing under the bridge.



Stratford upon Avon Canal

This canal runs 25½ miles from King's Norton Junction, where it joins the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, to Stratford-upon-Avon, there it joins the River Avon.



Walk

Continue along the tow path passing under a second bridge which is where School Road passes over the canal. Up to your left at this point, Christchurch can be seen, you may even hear the chiming of the bells if you are lucky. Keep heading along the tow path until you come upon the first gateway to your left which takes you into Priory Fields a nature reserve.



Priory Fields

Although owned by Birmingham City Council, the land is leased to the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and managed by them as a nature reserve. Interesting walkways across the site introduce you to a number of habitats, including heathland and wildflower meadows. The adjacent pool, sadly, is private fishing ground but its location only helps to improve the overall effect of this selected site.

Walk

There is a well trodden path to follow keeping the houses to your right hand side. Follow the path ahead through the heathland, across a meadow and crossing a small stream. You will pass the pool to your right which used to be the site for a windmill in times gone by. Continue along the path which will bring you out onto Priory Road. As you face the road there is a cut through buildings slightly to your right, Millside. Ahead you will need to cross another small road and pass round a small playground of grass before the path takes you through some trees and onto Scribes Lane Path. Turn left onto the path.

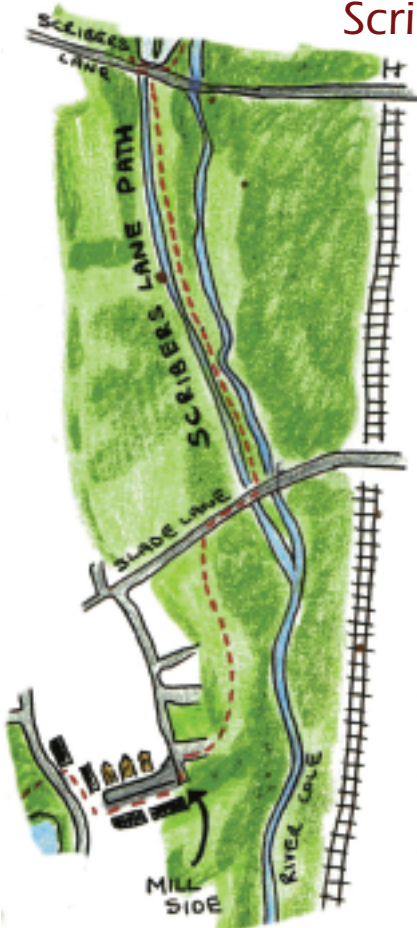


Scribers Lane

This site at the most southern end of the Millstream Way was recently landscaped and new settling pools have been introduced providing excellent habitat for reed and marshland species of bird life.

Walk

Continue along the grass path keeping the River Cole to your far right. When you come to Slade Lane, turn right and walk a short way along the road before turning left once again to walk alongside the Mill Stream. Continue until you come across another Road, Scribers Lane where you will enter the area of Trittifford Mill Pool ahead of you.

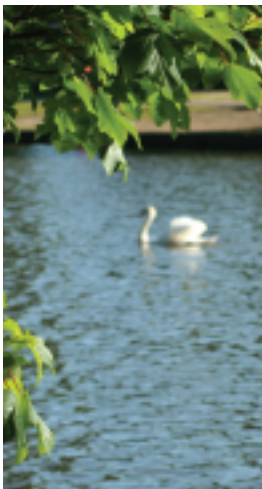
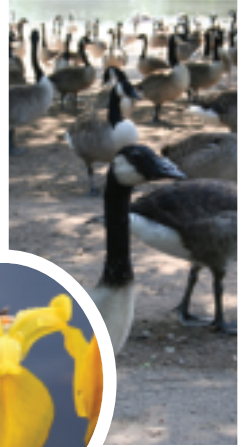


Trittiford Mill Pool

This seven-hectare site has a large pool that used to serve one of the many mills that were dotted along the River Cole. Now used by fishermen, the place is a great nesting site for Grebe and Swans and by the huge flocks of Canada Geese that frequent many of our parks and pools.

Walk

Turn right almost immediately, crossing sluice gates to your right and then head around the pool keeping it to your left hand side. You will be able to see the river Cole to your right at times. Take note of the wide variety of bird life that use this pool. Once around the right hand side of the pool you will see ahead a small patch of grass and a junction with a small roundabout. Step through the gap in the fence and cross Highfield Road. Head right for a few meters before going through the gap in the fence onto The Dingles. Keep the river and Chinn Brook to your left at this point.



The Dingles

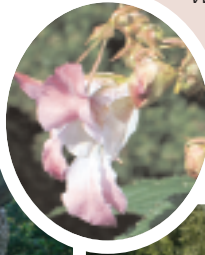
This site is a continuation of the Millstream Way and brings together the River Cole and its major tributary the Chinn Brook, that both rise initially several miles away within yards of each other before going their separate ways and joining again here.

The site is important archaeologically because the old Millrace that served the mill, which once stood there, is still very evident, as is the ridge and furrow landscape.

Walk

Walk along the grass pathway keeping the river and brook to your left. You will come across a sculpture on your right, The Throne of Creation by Graham Jones. A short distance past the sculpture you will be able to cross the river and head left, back down the other side of the river. You will emerge onto Trittiford Road.

Cross at the zebra crossing and turn left, past the park and enter Chinn Brook Recreation Ground.



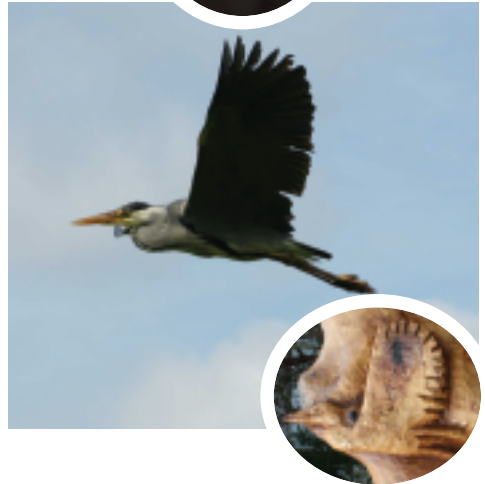
Chinn Brook Recreation Ground

Located across the road from Trittifford Mill Pool, this site is bisected by the Chinn Brook, a major subsidiary to the River Cole that it joins across the road. A large area of the grassland is managed for wild flowers and is best seen during May/June before the dominant grasses take over.

Walk

You will pass a sculpture here called A Monument for Billesley. This was designed and crafted by young people from the Environmental Youth Pests Group alongside Graham Jones a local sculptor.

Walk alongside the brook to your right until you reach the bridge. Cross here and then along the path now keeping the brook to your left. Continue along the path until it bring you out at Yardley Wood Road. Diagonally to your left and across the road you will see the entrance to the BMX Track and surrounding area.



The BMX Track Area

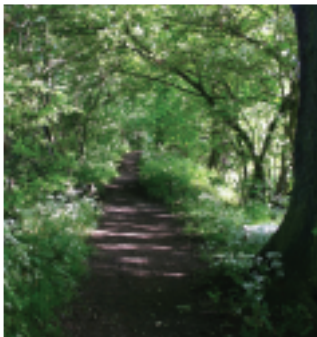
This area has partly been laid out as a track for young people with bikes. There is also a small woodland and pond as well as areas of grassland. Foxes can sometimes be seen drinking from the Millstream which runs alongside the road.

Walk

Turn left as you enter the area and walk towards a small wooded area. An overgrown pond can be seen through the trees to your left. Continue along the path, through the trees until you see the canal ahead of you. Turn left onto the tow path.

Keeping to the tow path, make your way to the bridge where you first came down to the canal. Walk up the path, back onto Yardley Wood Road and retrace your steps to the Community Centre.





Our thanks go to the Young People of the Environmental Youth Pests Group who worked so hard to complete several different aspects of Environmental Work in this area. Thanks too, go to the leaders of the project, Rama Bharadwa, Donna Carter, Angela White and Kate Wyatt.

The environmental project, of which this walk was just a part, won two awards. The young people of this project won the County Neighbourhood Watch Youth Award 2006 for their work, and staff won the Selly Oak Constituency Award for Innovation 2006.





*None of this would have been possible though
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West Midlands Police Street Champions Fund

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Selly Oak Constituency



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