



# The Green Way

## Introduction

The Green Way forms a waterside corridor from Cookham, through the centre of Maidenhead, to Bray. It provides a great opportunity for visitors to explore the diverse local landscape of farmland, park, village and town.

This leaflet sets out information on the route of the Green Way and its features of interest, enabling visitors to explore the network of paths for short strolls, circular walks or longer rambles. With links to the Thames Path National Trail also possible, there are more than 19 km of paths along and around the Green Way to enjoy.

The paths through the Green Way provide easy level walking and are clearly signed. There are numerous access points, as well as a number of car parks and links to public transport. From North Town Moor southwards to Bray the paths are surfaced, without stiles, and are ideal for walkers with push chairs. The paths from Maidenhead town centre to Braywick Park, and within the park itself, are suitable for wheelchair users.

Please be aware that not all paths are surfaced and that some, especially across the farmland and commons near Cookham, can get muddy after wet weather, so appropriate waterproof footwear is advised. Care should be taken when crossing roads and using tracks and paths accessible by motor vehicles and bicycles.



Widbrook Common

## Follow the Country Code

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

(Countryside Agency 2004)

## Wildlife on the Green Way

The diverse landscapes along the Green Way contribute to a wealth of local wildlife. Hedgerows, scrub, woodland, farmland, meadows, gravel lakes, ponds and streams are all present along the route, each capable of supporting a variety of plants and animals. Among the many species you may see are swans, mallards, moorhens, coots and herons. Dabchicks and kingfishers are often seen along the York Stream in Maidenhead town centre, as well as grey wagtails under bridges. Water rail, snipe and common sandpiper can sometimes be spotted in the area during winter. In summer willow and sedge warblers, chiffchaff and blackcap visit. At one time there was a colony of water voles along the stream bank in Cookham.

Dragonflies and damselflies present include Southern and Brown Hawkers, the spectacular Emperor dragonfly and the Banded Agrion. Most of the common butterflies can be seen and in summer sunny patches of nettles can be turned 'black' by hundreds of small tortoiseshell caterpillars.

Aquatic vegetation is at its best in high summer. White and yellow waterlilies grow in the deep waters of the Strand. Spiked arrow-head leaves, delicate pink water plantain flowerheads, strong stems of bur-reeds and small patches of the beautiful

flowering rush emerge from shallower water. Above the water purple loosestrife, marsh woundwort, hemp agrimony and comfrey can be present.



Wildlife on the Green Way

## Route of the Green Way

### 1 Cookham, Fleet Ditch and Strand Water

The Green Way starts its journey in Cookham. Here the stream system begins, fed by the River Thames via the new connection through the Old Marsh Ditch. The new connection was created in the 1990s to increase the flow of water through the streams and preserve their valuable waterside character.

The National Trust car park at Cookham Moor is an ideal starting point for visitors, providing the opportunity to explore the northern parts of the Green Way as well as the riverside landscape of Cookham Moor, Cock Marsh (to the north of the Green Way), and the Thames Path National Trail. The area can also be reached by a short walk from Cookham railway station.

The Green Way itself starts on the south side of the B4447 (opposite side of the road from the car park). There are two possible starting points: one near the junction with School Lane and the other near the bridge over the Fleet Ditch. The paths follow routes on each side of the Fleet Ditch and Strand Water, forming a circuit of about 2.5 km that can be used as a short circular walk.

The countryside around Cookham is a landscape of meadows and arable fields. There are splendid views up to the Mount at Cookham, whilst Cliveden House can be seen perched 60 metres above the River Thames. Taplow Court is another imposing feature on the Cliveden escarpment, especially when floodlit at night.

There are also several sites of common land in the Cookham area. North of the Green Way is Cock Marsh, which has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of its importance to wetland wildlife. Further south, near Strand Water, is Widbrook Common, an enclosed common of pasture where commoners can graze their cattle from mid-May to mid-November for a seasonal fee. The money originally contributed to an Apprentice Charity for local boys but the charity's terms were changed in 1973 so that girls could also benefit. It is now the Cookham Educational Charity.



Cookham Moor and Causeway



## 2 Maidenhead

At the southern end of Strand Water, where the White Brook (Widbrook) flows into the system, there are two possible routes to take you toward the outskirts of Maidenhead. The paths are signed and form another loop of about 2.5 km.



Farmland on Green Way East

Green Way East passes through part of Widbrook Common, before crossing the White Brook and continuing across farmland and past Summerlease Gravel Pits. Green Way West, after initially crossing farmland, follows the Maidenhead Ditch.

Further on, the boundary of Maidenhead is marked by Boundary Stones. Four dozen stones were purchased in 1934 by the local council, and those which remain around the town feature prominently in the historical and traditional ceremony of 'Beating the Bounds' around Maidenhead. It is possible to see a Boundary Stone from the Green Way East after it has crossed the White Brook. Both routes pass over the bund which has been created as part of the Environment Agency's extensive work on flood relief in the Maidenhead to Windsor area.

As you continue into the outskirts of Maidenhead you pass the site of one of the earliest recorded medieval settlements in the area, the moated Manor House of Elentone. Excavations of this site, now marked by walnut trees to the west of the cricket ground, have shown several ditches and buildings of different medieval dates. Much of the pottery used there was made locally; both animal husbandry and hunting took place, as well as some iron working.

Now a single path, the Green Way crosses the Maidenhead Ditch and enters North Town Moor, another area of common land owned by the National Trust. It then wends its way into the centre of Maidenhead, passing through Town Moor, a public open space bought in 1928 from the Lord of the Manor of Cookham by the Maidenhead Corporation, and then under the Bath Road (A4) alongside the York Stream. Please note that the route under the A4 can be flooded after periods of wet weather, typically during winter months.

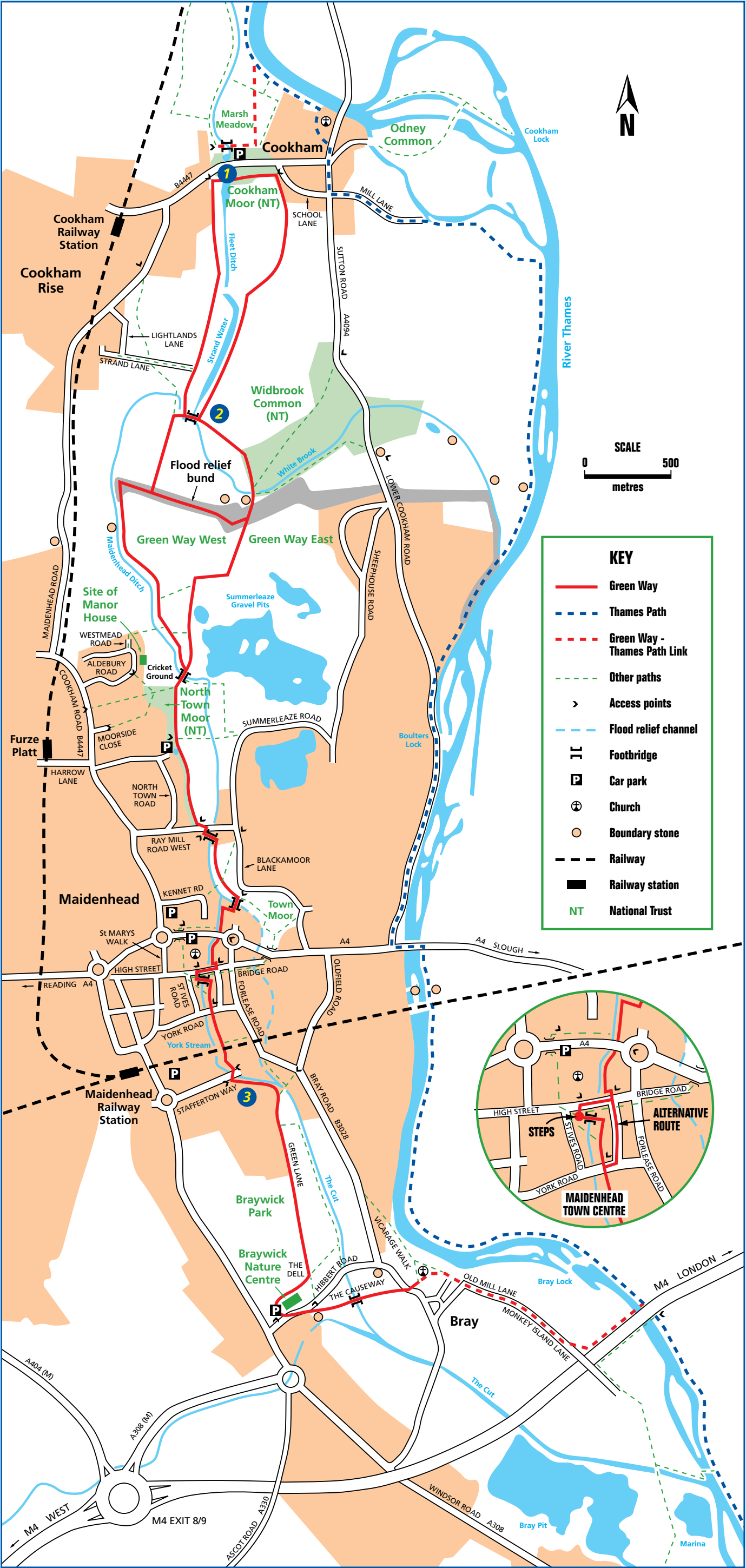
Maidenhead is the only town on the route of the Green Way. Now a busy commercial centre, it began as a coaching town where the main route west from London crossed the Thames. Its location and transport links have resulted in an extensive expansion and development into an important business centre in the south-east.

At the High Street the path leaves the stream briefly to pass over a bridge known as Chapel Arches, named for a medieval chapel that was built there in 1270. In the 1920s shops were built onto the bridge as part of the High Street.

The Green Way then continues past houses and offices, crossing York Road, and then underneath the railway line to Stafferton Way.



Maidenhead Ditch



## 3 Braywick Park to Bray

Passing out of Maidenhead, the Green Way reaches Braywick Park and The Cut. The park was once part of the estate belonging to Braywick Lodge, occupied in the 19th century by John Hibbert, a local philanthropist.

In 1987, it was extended by reclaiming an adjacent landfill site to make a large area of public open space. Part of the park has been designated a Local Nature Reserve for its importance to wildlife and there are various paths throughout, including one alongside The Cut, making it an ideal site for short walks.



Green Lane in Braywick Park

The park is also home to Braywick Nature Centre, owned and managed by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Situated at the southern end, next to the car park, the Centre has been established to provide education and information to the public about environmental issues, countryside and wildlife matters. There are displays and exhibitions about the history of the surrounding area, and a variety of leaflets available ranging from local history to nature trails. Further details on opening times, as well as events at the Centre are available from the Royal Borough (please see Useful Contacts).

Now nearing the southern end of the Green Way, the route passes through the car park and across Hibbert Road. After crossing The Cut a final time along the causeway, the Green Way ends in the village of Bray.



The Cut at the causeway near Bray

However, it is possible to continue walking and reach the Thames Path National Trail from the southern end of the Green Way. To do this, walk through Bray village and join Monkey Island Lane, which leads to a path over the Thames alongside the M4 motorway. The National Trail is on the other side, and if you follow it upstream it crosses back over the river at the Bath Road (A4) and runs through part of Maidenhead and back to Cookham.



## Public Transport

The Green Way can be accessed by short walks from three railway stations; Maidenhead, Cookham and Furze Platt. Further information on services is available from the National Rail Enquiry Line on 08457 484950 or [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

In addition the local area is served by a variety of bus services, and timetable information is available from Traveline on 0870 608 2608

## Walking For Health

The network of paths along the Green Way allow visitors to go on a short stroll, a circular walk or a longer ramble. Visitors can use the paths available to work out routes for regular walking to improve their health and fitness, while exploring and enjoying the local countryside.

The British Heart Foundation recommends 30 minutes of brisk walking five times per week. Walking can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, strokes, diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, bowel cancer and Alzheimer's disease, and can help with high blood pressure, anxiety, stress and weight loss. Walking can also increase life expectancy, confidence and stamina.

Walking is simple and free, and you don't need any special equipment other than suitable footwear.

The guide below shows how many calories per mile you can burn by walking!

	Weight in Kilograms						
	45	54	63	72	81	90	100
2.0 mph	65	80	93	105	120	133	145
2.5 mph	62	74	88	100	112	124	138
3.0 mph	60	72	83	95	108	120	132
3.5 mph	59	71	83	93	107	119	130
4.0 mph	59	70	81	94	105	118	129
4.5 mph	69	82	97	110	122	138	151
5.0 mph	77	92	108	123	138	154	169
6.0 mph	86	99	114	130	147	167	190
7.0 mph	96	111	128	146	165	187	212
Speed	Calories burned per mile						

Source: [www.aboutwalking.com](http://www.aboutwalking.com)

To find out more about the benefits of a Healthy Lifestyle please contact one of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead BodyZone Gyms - see [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk) for details.

## Useful Contacts

### Environment Agency

An independent public body which provides a comprehensive approach to the protection and management of the environment by combining the regulation of land, air and water. For further information about the stream systems on the Green Way, please contact the Press Office on 0118 9535 555

### Thames Path National Trail

For further information on the Trail please contact The National Trails Office, Environment and Economy, Holton, Oxford OX33 1QQ.

Tel. 01865 810224 [www.nationaltrail.co.uk](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk)

### Maidenhead Civic Society

The Society aims to protect and improve many aspects of the environment. Please contact the Membership Secretary.

[www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk](http://www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk)

### East Berkshire Group of the Ramblers' Association

The group helps to protect and restore public rights of way and seeks to develop new footpaths. It operates a Path Warden Scheme and undertakes practical conservation work. Regular walks are held to which newcomers are welcome and a series of local footpaths maps and booklets of short walks are available. Please contact the Membership Secretary.

Tel: 01753 662139 [www.eastberksramblers.org](http://www.eastberksramblers.org)

### Braywick Nature Centre

The Centre is owned and managed by the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

Tel: 01628 777440 or 01628 796227

[www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/bnc\\_index.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/bnc_index.htm)



Wildlife on the Green Way

### Public Rights of Way:

The paths in this leaflet can be followed on the Ordnance Survey Explorer Series map numbers 172 and 160.

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 or email: [prow@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:prow@rbwm.gov.uk)

This leaflet was produced with the support of The Environment Agency, Maidenhead Civic Society and the Ramblers Association.



For further information on public rights of way in the Borough, please see [www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow\\_index.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow_index.htm)

We also have a series of leaflets on healthy walks in and around our parks and open spaces, for copies please contact

Tel: 01628 683800



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