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UK Government



# Walking Map

4.

Oundle Riverside Walks



River Nene

## Route Info:

**Duration:** 1-2 Hours / route

**Difficulty:** ★★☆☆☆

(Crosses busy road)

**For use alongside Ordnance Survey:** OS Landranger 141 / OS Explorer 224



## Oundle Riverside Walks

The River Nene offers a stunning backdrop for a range of waterside walks through the historic town of Oundle.

A good place to start any of the three walks is from Oundle town centre itself - giving you the opportunity to enjoy this picturesque market town with its thriving shops and eateries, as well as a range of historical buildings, including the Talbot Hotel (built with stone from nearby Fotheringhay Castle) and the Oundle Museum.

Barnwell Country Park offers a tranquil respite a short walk from the town centre.

**Any of the three walks featured here can be accessed from this central point and take approximately 1.5 hours each to complete.**

### Oundle .....

Oundle, has been occupied continuously since the Iron Age. In Roman times, there was an extensive settlement at Ashton, near the old railway station.

The first written reference to Oundle occurs in Saxon times: the Venerable Bede writing in the 8th century states that Saint Wilfrid died 'in his monastery in the region of Oundle'. This suggests that Oundle was already a place of some importance. The town comprises many listed buildings, churches, restaurants, pubs, cafés and shops, including two supermarkets.

The **Talbot Hotel**, with its charming stone frontage, is reputed to have been built from materials salvaged from the destruction of **Fotheringhay Castle**. The castle is famous as the site of the execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

A market is held every Thursday throughout the year and a **Farmers Market** is held on the second Saturday of each month.

### Cotterstock .....

Mentioned in the Domesday Book (AD 1086), but the village has a much longer history of settlement. During the 18th century, a **Roman villa** was discovered and many finds were made in the area, including mosaic pavements, bones, building materials and smaller artefacts.

Sadly, the mill at Cotterstock was destroyed by fire; what remains is a private dwelling, but you can still imagine this area as a hive of activity. Barges would have anchored in the stream, with carts of every description bringing wheat and carrying away flour or food for livestock.



### Ashton .....

The pretty village of Ashton was re-built in local stone and reed thatch by the Rothschild family at the start of the 19th century. **Ashton Mill** was converted at the same time to supply the village with water and electricity.

### Barnwell Country Park .....

This area of formal gravel workings is a patchwork of willow fringed lakes, ponds and meadows, all bounded by a beautiful backwater of the **River Nene**. The park is a haven for wildlife including kingfisher, reed and sedge warblers and the elusive otter. The lakes, rivers and ponds support a rich water life, including several species of dragonfly, freshwater stick insects and large pike and carp.

The park has much to offer the visitors including nature trails, waterside walks, bird hides, visitor centre and picnic areas.

The large woodland play area is a favourite with children of all ages and the fishing lakes attract anglers from all over the county. The park is open all day, every day with free admission (car parking charge applies), and the visitor centre has a range of free activity sheets for the children as well as skulls and nature games.

### Wildlife .....

When you explore the banks, woods and hedgerows along the River Nene, there is a wealth of wildlife for you to discover and enjoy. Grey herons are often seen standing motionless or quietly stalking their prey (including frogs, slugs and fish) along the water's edge. Eels are a favorite food. Most often seen in the early morning or at dusk, otters are making a welcome return to the English countryside.

Young otters, known as cubs, spend all their time with their mother; the male otter known as a "dog" lives alone. The Broad-bodied Chaser is one of many dragonflies you may see on warmer days.

There are about 40 species of dragonfly and 16 species of damselfly in Britain. You can tell the difference between them in three ways, dragonflies are usually bigger, fly much faster and when at rest keep their wings outstretched.

Damselflies are small and slender, with a light, floating flight. When resting most fold their wings close to their bodies.

#### Images: (L-R)

Barnwell Country Park, River Nene at Oundle, Oundle Wharf, North Lakes at Barnwell Country Park.



# Key Sites along the Way!



**1. Church of St Andrew's**  
St Andrew's was originally a Norman church, with a wide tall chancel added in 1338 when a college was founded here by John Giffard, Canon of York. Featuring a number of unique architectural features and stunning memorials.



**2. Parish Church of St Peter**  
Nestled in the heart of Oundle, St Peter's was founded by the Abbey of Peterborough in the 8th century, and today stands as a stunning example of architecture with a number of unique features, including a 15th century brass lectern and its restored needle spire.



**3. Oundle Chapel**  
The War Memorial Chapel was designed by Arthur C Blomfield, who had built the Great Hall and several boarding houses for Oundle School. Consecrated in 1923, the chapel contains a significant collection of unique stained glass.

[www.oundleschool.org.uk/building/chapel](http://www.oundleschool.org.uk/building/chapel)



**4. Oundle Museum**  
The museum hosts a range of historical exhibits from the prehistoric to modern times, including many exhibits from the Roman, Saxon and Medieval periods.

01832 272735 | [www.oundlemuseum.org.uk](http://www.oundlemuseum.org.uk)



**5. Barnwell Country Park**  
A stunning 37 acre country park featuring walking trails, lakes, and childrens play areas.

[www.northnorthants.gov.uk/barnwell-country-park](http://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/barnwell-country-park)

## Other Points of Interest:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  Pub             |  Church  |  Public Toilets |
|  Shopping        |  Parking |  Accomodation   |
|  Cafe / Tea Room |   |  |

## More Information:

This leaflet is to be used with an **Ordnance Survey Map 224** as not all rights of way are included.

Please be sure to check weather and travel arrangements before beginning walks. In the event of an emergency please be sure to make note of the following numbers:

- Emergency Services: **999**
- Northants Police Non-emergency Service: **101**
- Northants Fire & Rescue Service: **01604 797000**





## Respect Everyone

- Be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking.
- Be nice, say hello, share the space.
- Follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available.



## Protect the Environment

- Take your litter home - leave no trace of your visit.
- Do not light fires and only have BBQs where signs say you can.
- Always keep dogs under control and in sight.
- Dog poo - bag it and bin it in any public waste bin or take it home.
- Care for nature - do not cause damage or disturbance.



## Enjoy the Outdoors

- Check your route and local conditions.
- Plan your adventure - know what to expect and what you can do.
- **Enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory!**



## Report a Problem

If you wish to report a problem or fault on this route, please scan the QR code or visit the Street Doctor portal at [northnorthants.gov.uk/streetdoctor](https://northnorthants.gov.uk/streetdoctor) where you can pin point the issue and receive a case reference ID.



## Discover Northamptonshire Hub, Rushden Lakes, Rushden, NN10 6FH



[info@discover-northamptonshire.co.uk](mailto:info@discover-northamptonshire.co.uk)



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West  
Northamptonshire  
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VisitEngland

## Also available in this series:

1. Aldwincle, Wadenhoe & Lyveden
2. Fotheringhay to Woodnewton
3. Rushden to Thrapston
4. Oundle Riverside Walks
5. Woodford, Denford & Ringstead