

# Notes for Walk the Route 2010 from Broughton via River Ouzel (6miles)

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> Sep at 10.00am starting from The Old Rectory, London Road, Broughton, Milton Keynes, MK10 9AA**



1. The **Old Rectory** is a Grade II listed building with C17<sup>th</sup> origins. The K6 telephone box outside the property on the green is also Grade II listed. **Broughton Brook**, which flows into the River Ouzel north of here, used to form the boundary between the 2 Saxon parishes of Broughton and Milton Keynes.
2. Pegging out is taking place for the outline of the new **Broughton Pavilion**. At the community consultation event in Feb'10, lots of local people showed interest in water-based activities, so it is hoped that the final plans will be able to accommodate canoeing and other water sports. The £1.8m, cable stayed suspension bridge across **Broughton Brook** was commissioned by English Partnerships in 2004 as a landmark feature.
3. If we had the Waterway Park built through MK we could have 8km of unfettered, direct, safe, traffic-free and pleasant path for walking and cycling through the Eastern expansion area – north east to the employment area, west to the city centre, south east to Kingston. These are the prime conditions for getting people out of their cars and onto their bikes and feet, according to research by Sustrans. And if the brook was widened here, there would be the opportunity to link to the new district parks here at Broughton and in the EEA, and encourage local angling, canoeing, etc.
4. The **River Ouzel** rises as a chalk stream near Dunstable Downs and flows through Milton Keynes through much of its natural bed in Ouzel Valley Park. However in places, small oxbow lakes, now heavily vegetated, form quiet havens for wildlife, and mark where the river has been diverted from the main channel.
5. There are several Scheduled Ancient Monuments in this stretch of Ouzel Valley Park in Woolstones - the remains of **medieval fishponds** and a medieval moat. The fish ponds date from the 14th century. They were built near the river so a supply of fresh water could be maintained. Fish was important in the middle ages because the Church forbade the eating of meat on Fridays and during Lent. Most people ate salted fish, but those who could afford it had fresh fish whenever possible; it was something of a status symbol to be able to do so. These ponds would have produced fish for the manor house and for sale or to be given as presents. The most common fresh water fish were pike, eel, bream, tench, roach and perch. Carp was not introduced until the 16th century; trout was not valued as a food.
6. **Great Woolstone** and **Little Woolstone** are two historic villages in modern Milton Keynes, now called jointly **Woolstone** or **The Woolstones** and forming the heart of a new district of that name. The village and parish name comes from the Anglo-Saxon "Weitfraige's Tun". Holy Trinity Church, Little Woolstone, dates from the 13th century. The **canal broadwalk**, managed by The Parks Trust, allows you to walk, jog or cycle from Woughton on the Green through to historic Linford Manor Park, on good paths but within sight of the water and its colourful traffic of narrowboats.
7. **1<sup>st</sup> interpretation board** and 2 waymarker posts mark the point of the original planned junction of the B&MK with the **Grand Union Canal** (pound level 71.8mAOD) – a rise of 13.4m from the normal water level of Willen Lake (58.4mAOD) – typically 5 locks of around 2.5m each would be required to navigate this incline. This route was originally chosen as simple because land not in use and in public ownership and gave us a direct route from the south shore of the lake at a time when we did not know if we would be able to go through the lake. It now seems certain that we can, and this opens up the other route possibility which we'll look at on the way back.
8. **Bridge 82** carries a sign announcing the planned B&MK Waterway. Our volunteers spend a lot of time talking about the project and publicising the vision – it's a key part of what we do, and we would love to find more volunteers who'd man a stand, hand out leaflets, help with publicity design and the website etc. Campbell Park **Pavilion**, headquarters of The Parks Trust (a registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee) established in 1992 to

Historical Sources: R.A. Croft & D.C. Mynard, 1993, The Changing landscape of Milton Keynes

P Woodfield 1986, A Guide to the Historic Buildings of Milton Keynes

Broughton Conservation Area review (Oct 09) [http://www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/archaeology/documents/Broughton\\_CAR\\_final\\_text\\_24-03-10\\_reduced.pdf](http://www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/archaeology/documents/Broughton_CAR_final_text_24-03-10_reduced.pdf)

and <http://www.campbell-park.gov.uk/cp-parish/parish-stories/sites-interest>

own and manage, in perpetuity, the strategic open space in Milton Keynes. The Parks Trust are a keen supporter of the project, and along with its sister agency the Forest of Marston Vale in Bedfordshire, the B&MK Trust, the 3 local authorities (MK, Central Beds and Bedford), British Waterways, the Environment Agency, Renaissance Bedford and MK Partnership (the two bodies responsible for managing growth in the area) are coming together to form a Consortium to progress the planning and construction of the waterway project.

9. [Bridge 81b](#) over the Grand Union affords a stunning viewpoint back between the Gullivers Parks and across Willen Lake. The attractions of the possible new route are clear; the issue is how the partners can best work together to make it a reality. It would help further enhance the appeal of MK as somewhere people want to live, work, play – and invest in. So ... BMK is not just a canal, but a series of waterway parks and great living environments. Let's hope we can make it happen. The Trust achieves what it does because of the skills and imagination of its volunteers, and we hope you'll support us and maybe start to get involved.
10. The [promontory](#) is a key feature of the lake, giving lovely views across [Willen Lake](#), which was created in 1973. The South lake is used for watersports and the north lake provides a sanctuary for waterfowl. Obviously, sharing a waterspace needs to be well managed, and this is what we can learn from partners such as EA and BW.. This might be the entry point into the lake, at the end of a long broad green glade. This route needs only 3 locks (or just one - England's deepest lock might be the next 'big thing for MK?) and so would be cheaper to build. The Waterway might be the stunning centrepiece of a redesign of the Willen Lake area, bringing isolated commercial leisure land in the Newlands grid square into use and sitting at the heart of a sculpture park linking Willen to Campbell Park to the city to the Central Stations as the central 'arc' of the city.
11. The Parks Trust has a 125 year lease on [Willen Lake](#) with the freehold owned by Anglian Water who are responsible for the flood control structures. Our plans also involve generous paths and spaces on either side of the waterway so that different users can co-exist. It's a new waterway designed for 21<sup>st</sup> century tourism and leisure uses; we don't have horses so we don't need towpaths; but we do need paths suited to buggies and wheelchairs and bikes and long handled fishing rods!
12. A double lock will take the route up out of Willen Lake with an aqueduct carrying the waterway across [the River Ouzel](#). This is agreed to be the only safe way to cross the Ouzel, which can vary in height and flow. Before passing under V11 Tongwell St the waterway will lock down alongside the Holiday Inn in Fox Milne.
13. Developers provided the [newt pond](#) Greater Crested Newt mitigation area, to protect Britain's largest and most endangered species of newt during development of Atterbury. The ponds are to be taken on and managed, long term, by the Parks Trust. A new culvert will be built to take the waterway under H6 into the Atterbury Employment area from Northfield.
14. A diversion of the path following the waterway route was been in place during construction of the [Hindu Community Centre](#) and temporary landscaping of the Atterbury Employment site, the waterway is planned to run south of here, before locking down into Broughton Brook. We hope that we may in time be able to locate joint education activities here at the community centre, so that schools and others can have safe trips out which cover a wide range of aspects of the national curriculum. The MK Hindu Association is one of over a hundred stakeholder organisations that the Trust works with closely to shape the plans for the waterway.
15. In Broughton, [St Lawrence's Church](#) dates from the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, and is thought to be a rebuild of an earlier church on this site. Significant features include "a splendid array" of C15th wallpaintings with more yet to be uncovered, brasses and ancient bells, 2 dating to late C15th. The church is open specially for visitors today.

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