

## THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF THE COLNE VALLEY



### Points of interest/history



A) The lagoon and nearby lakes form part of an important SSSI for water birds. Just before a stile at the main road, explore the edge of the grass on the left to find a stone commemorating a dispute over water rights.

B) The splendid black walnut tree ahead was planted in the early 1800s by John Blagrove as part of his Ankerwycke Manor parkland.

C) On the hillside to your left is the RAF memorial at Coopers Hill which has the names of 20,000 airmen who died in WW2 with no known grave.

D) The old ponds on the left were formed as artificial fish ponds for food supply in Elizabethan times for the nearby Benedictine Priory.

E) The Benedictine Priory of St Mary Magdalene was founded in 1160 by Gilbert de Mountfichet, lord of the manor and village of Wraysbury. It catered for a small number of nuns, and operated until its dissolution around 1536 by Henry VIII. A post-dissolution mansion house was built by Sir Thomas Smith, Provost at Eton and Secretary of State for Queen Elizabeth I. The mansion house passed through several ownerships until it was partially demolished in about 1805 by John Blagrove. He built Ankerwycke Manor on a site to the north but this house too was demolished after a serious fire in 1954 following use as a gentleman's retreat in the 1930s and an Ealing Studios film set in the 1940s.

F) This ancient tree is 30 feet in circumference and has been dated as over 2,000 years old. The Magna Carta was sealed in 1215, quite possibly on this site. The yew is one of the 50 Great British Trees selected by The Tree Council in 2002 to spotlight trees in honour of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

G) "Magna Carta Island" is in the Thames to your left. It achieved its name in 1834 when George Harcourt of Ankerwycke Manor installed a stone slab there and had it inscribed with information about Magna Carta. In its wisdom, Ordnance Survey recorded this stone and the island name on its maps – thus is a legend born.

H) St Andrew's Church, Wraysbury, was originally built in the 13th c., but was rebuilt in 1862 by Raphael Brandon who added the stone spire. Two 16th century brasses inside the church are worth a visit.



## WRAYSBURY & ANKERWYCKE

CIRCULAR WALK  
19

4½ miles

A varied and picturesque walk along the Colne Brook, the magnificent Wraysbury Lakes, the National Trust Ankerwycke Estate and the village of Wraysbury



**Access:** Generally flat ground. A few stiles and steps. Certain paths and fields can be wet and muddy in winter.



**Refreshments:** Two pubs, The Perseverance (A), The George Inn (B). A café and some shops in Wraysbury, and one small shop in Hythe End.



**Public Transport:** Trains from Windsor and Staines stop at Wraysbury station. Buses: The 305 from Colnbrook to Staines and the 10/10A/10S from Slough to Heathrow T5 both stop in Wraysbury.



**By Road:** Exit the M25 at J3 and follow signs to Wraysbury, or follow local roads through Colnbrook and Horton or Datchet. **Parking:** Free 2 hour stay car park in Wraysbury High Street. Limited on street parking in Wraysbury Village. Parking at Wraysbury Station is subject to charges. Very limited on-street car parking in Hythe End.



**Postcode:** TW19 5DB (approx.) **OS Grid Ref:** TQ 005 741

**Latitude:** +51.4571, **Longitude:** -0.5541

**What3Words:** yoga.puppy.clap

Explore the  
**Colne Valley Park**  
Countryside on your doorstep



For points of interest/history, turn over when you see this 

**1)** The walk starts in the centre of Wraysbury Village. Look out for a footpath just opposite the red brick former church building. The path becomes Tithe Lane with the old buildings of Tithe Farm on the right. At the end of the lane turn right into Station Road. Continue over the railway.

**2)** Immediately afterwards, cross the Colne Brook on a bridge and turn right on a footpath signposted "Colnbrook Walk". Follow the path with the river bank and then the railway on your right. After 1/3 mile, cross the railway line via two stiles. Immediately fork left. Follow the footpath, soon with Hythe Lagoon on the left and the Colne Brook on the right  (A) Go up steps to the main road.

**3)** Turn right, cross the Colne Brook and follow Staines Road. Occasionally you will need to cross as the footway changes sides. After passing a sailing club, turn left down a permitted footpath, entering the National Trust's Ankerwycke Estate. Follow the path towards the River Thames.

**4)** At the water's edge turn right and follow the footpath. Take the second path on the right after about 1/4 of a mile. Cross the footbridge over the Wraysbury Ditch and go through a kissing gate  (B) Turn half right to another kissing gate.  (C) Continue up the brick-edged steps into yew woodland. Fork right.  (D) Follow the path to reach the priory ruins on your left.  (E) Further on to your right is the Ankerwycke Yew.  (F) Continue in the same direction for 100 yards to the beginning of an avenue of grey poplar trees. Turn left, go through a kissing gate, bear half right and cross the second of two bridges. Turn slightly left and cross the meadow towards a wooden gate. Go through a kissing gate into Magna Carta Lane.  (G)

**5)** Go through the kissing gate opposite onto a public footpath. Continue across fields, and through five more gates, to reach St Andrew's Church.  (H) Follow the path around the right hand side of the church to emerge into St Andrew's Close.

**6)** At the end turn right into Windsor Road. Immediately after the George Inn turn left into The Green. The road turns into a path, which passes the village pond (known as The Splash) on the left, crosses the Wraysbury Ditch and arrives at a second pub, The Perseverance. Here turn right into the High Street back to the start.

