

Walk Highlights

Otters live on the Itchen and other nearby stretches of water. They tend to be active at night, when they hunt the waters for eel and other fish. During the day they lie up in sheltered 'holts', such as under tree roots near the river. Thanks to conservation efforts, otter populations on the Itchen have recovered since the 1950s, when habitat loss and persecution caused drastic declines in numbers across the UK and Europe.



An Itchen Otter © Darin Smith

South of Kiln Lane, the **Itchen Navigation and the River Itchen flow side by side** with just a narrow bank separating the two channels. The Wildlife Trust has carried out wildlife friendly engineering works to prevent this vulnerable bank from collapsing. Now, plants along the edge of the rivers will protect the bank from erosion and provide a home for water vole and other wildlife.



The Navigation and the river flowing side by side © Polly Whyte

Otterbourne Park Wood is an ancient woodland managed by the Woodland Trust. It is home to many old oak, ash, maple and alder trees and boasts a wonderful display of ground flora in the spring. Ancient woodlands are over 400 years old and contain rare plants and lichens which are not found in younger woodlands.



Otterbourne Park Wood © Polly Whyte

The Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project is a Heritage Lottery Fund project managed by the Wildlife Trust, preserving an internationally important chalk river system for future generations. Find out more about the Itchen Navigation at: www.itchennavigation.org.uk



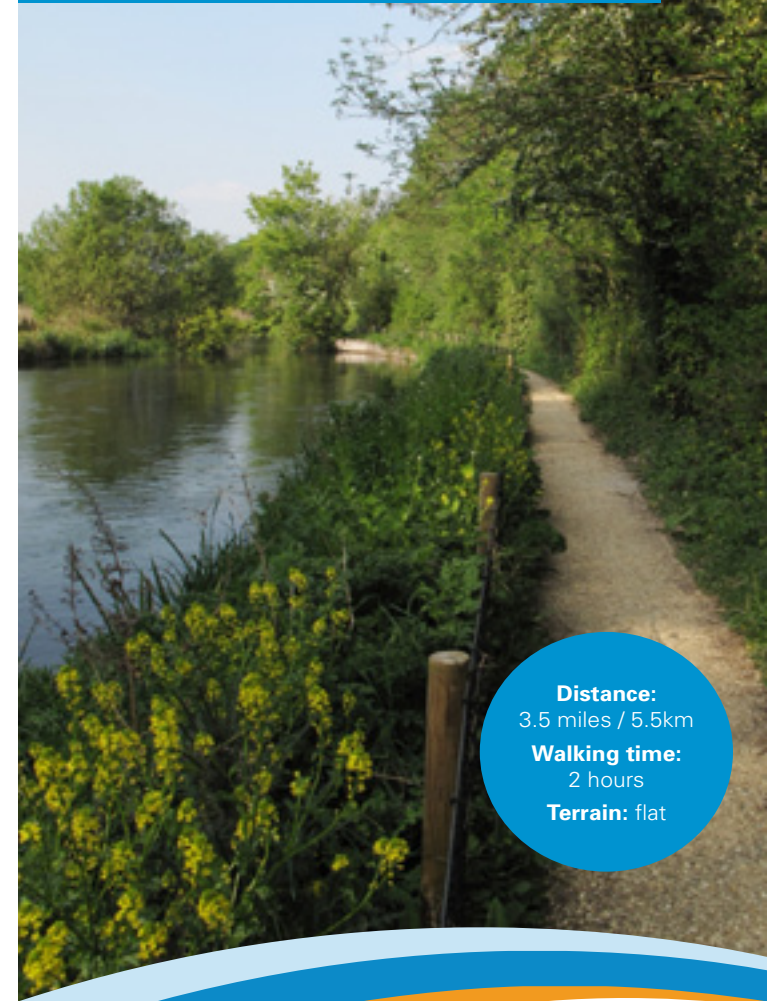
Hampshire & Isle of Wight
Wildlife Trust
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Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

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OTTER TRAIL Otterbourne



Distance:
3.5 miles / 5.5km
Walking time:
2 hours
Terrain: flat

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OTTER TRAIL



Follow in the footsteps of otters along the Itchen Navigation. Discover an old churchyard and wonderful ancient woodland on the outskirts of Otterbourne.

- 1 From Highbridge Road, take the Itchen Navigation path heading north.
- 2 At Kiln Lane, cross the road bridge and turn immediately right onto the Itchen Navigation path.
- 3 Just after the building on the left, take the track left away from the river. Go over the stile into the plantation.
- 4 Where paths cross in the plantation, continue straight on to the stile taking you out of the plantation. Continue straight on.
- 5 At the pond bear right.
- 6 Go over the stile and turn right heading under the railway line.
- 7 Where the track forks bear left and continue to the churchyard.
- 8 Turn right down Kiln Lane for 100 metres, then take the footpath left through the field.
- 9 At Otterbourne Park Wood, take the left fork of the path, then the left fork again.
- 10 Where the path forks, take the left path over the footbridge. Continue straight on up the incline.
- 11 Take the path left down to Pitmore Road, turning left down the road to reach Allbrook Hill and Highbridge Road.

