

Teston Walk Summary

Distance: 3 miles (4.7 km) - allow 1hr 30mins

Start/finish: Teston Bridge Country Park or Wateringbury Station

Ground conditions: Teston Bridge Country Park site is liable to flooding, this can make it impassable and becomes very muddy in the winter. The walk takes you through a mixture of open grassland, wood, scrub and wetland mainly along tracks and footpaths with a small amount of walking on roads.

Views: Good views of the Medway Valley

Refreshments: The Riverside Restaurant at Bow Bridge, Wateringbury tel 01622 812120.

Toilets: at Teston Bridge Country Park

Grid Ref: Teston Bridge Country Park TQ 208, 352, Wateringbury Station TQ 692, 528

Ordinance Survey map: Explorer 148

Travel Info

This circular walk can be easily started from Teston or Wateringbury

By train

You can take the train to Wateringbury, starting and finishing the walk from here.

By car

To Teston Bridge Country Park: From the A26, turn onto the B2163 at Teston and follow signs for Teston Bridge Country Park

To Wateringbury Station: From A26 take the B2015 to the station

Parking

There is plenty of car parking at Teston Bridge Country Park. There is a charge of £1 a day and the gates are locked in the evening.

Visit www.explorekent.co.uk to find out more about this site.

There is limited free parking at Wateringbury station.

By Bus

Buses run regularly from Maidstone and Tonbridge to Teston (the Street) (6mins walk from Teston Bridge Country Park) and Wateringbury Hotel (10 mins walk to the river).

FOR MORE INFO ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT GO TO www.traveline.info OR CALL 0871 200 22 33



With thanks to The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation for their support in the creation of the Teston River Walk.

Medway Valley Countryside Partnership (MVCP) is a not for profit organisation that works to enhance and protect the local countryside in the boroughs of Maidstone and Tonbridge. MVCP encourage people to explore and enjoy this unique part of Kent.

These leaflets have been produced by the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership as part of their Riverside Communities Project.

To find out more about the Partnership and the Riverside Communities Project visit www.medwayvalley.org or call 01622 683695

This leaflet is available in alternative formats.

The information on this leaflet is for guidance only and condition may vary. For any problems concerning the paths, please tell us on Kent Report Line 0845 345 0210



Teston River Walk

This walk is always a favourite with good views of the Medway Valley. It takes you through a variety of wooded and grassland areas and can also be easily linked to the West Farleigh walk if you would like a longer walk.



Enjoy the views of the Medway Valley

With kind support from the Ernest Cook Trust



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The National Lottery®
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Teston Walk



Cottages along the route



Barham Court



Barn Owl

This walk is about three miles long, it takes you right next to the river and through a mixture of wooded and grassland areas with good views of the River Medway and Maidstone. If you wanted to walk a bit further it can also be linked to the walk for West Farleigh (see separate map).

There is one hill which is fairly steep and several cattle grids along the way. Dogs will need to remain on their leads over the farmland. Word of warning – the area around Teston Bridge Country Park is very prone to flooding in the winter and at times can be impassable.

The directions are from Teston Bridge Country Park, but the walk can easily be started from Watlingbury.

Look out for:

Barham Court, which derives its name from the Bearham family. Their Norman name was 'Fitz Urse' which means 'son of a bear'. Randal Fitz Urse was one of the four knights who murdered Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1170. In 1932 a fire destroyed much of Barham Court, but it was quickly restored by Sir Herbert Baker, who also took the opportunity to make some alterations. It is now a successful business centre.

Bridge – The bridge at Teston is a listed structure, made of Kentish ragstone probably during the 15th century. It originally had seven arches, now only six. The large pointed centre arch was rebuilt in 1793 to allow larger vessels to pass underneath.

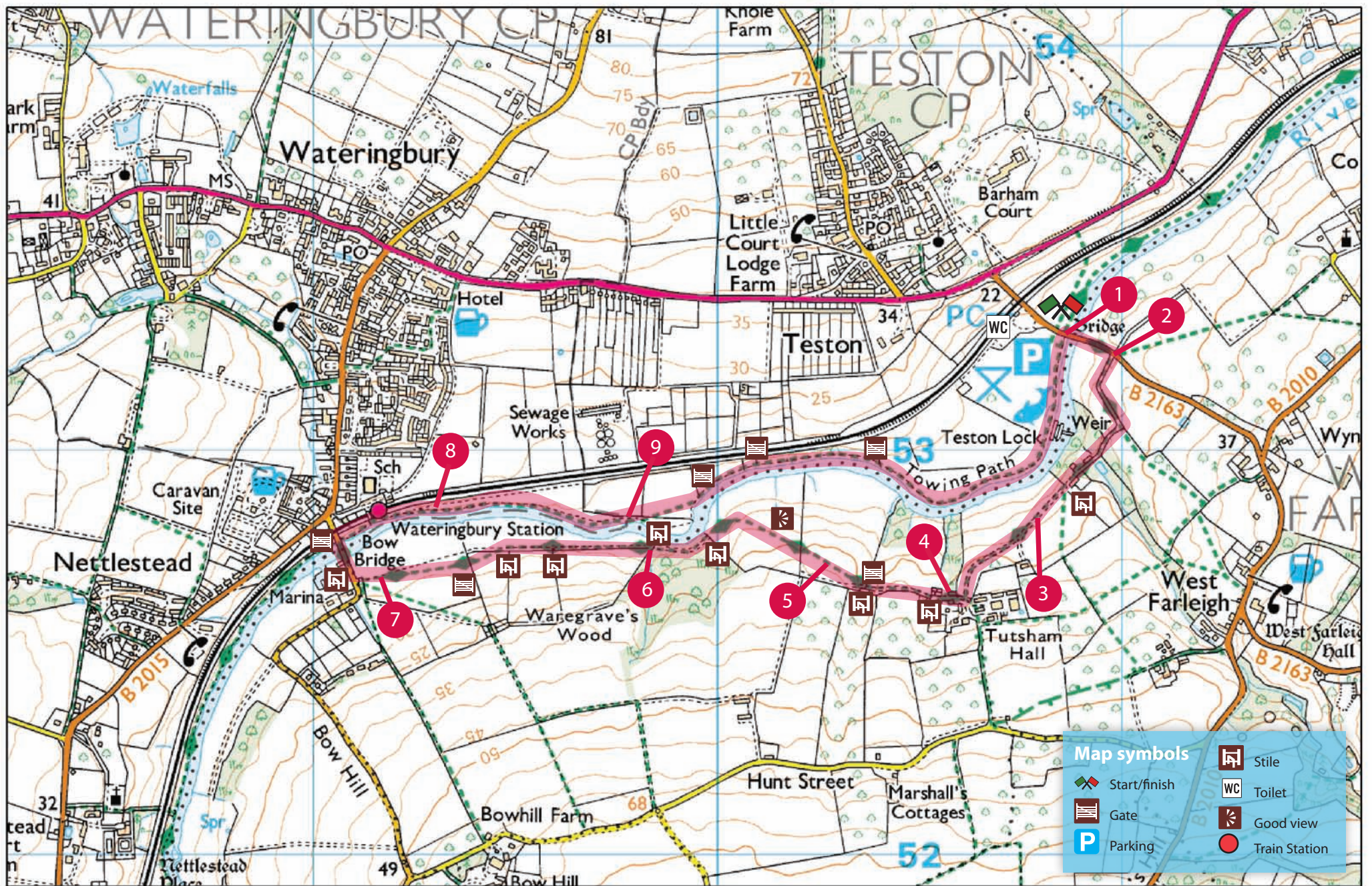
This walk takes you through **Teston Bridge Country Park**, where you can enjoy the open grassland and mix of riverside vegetation. Kingfishers can often be spotted long this stretch, as can Common Tern in the Summer.

If you happen to be there in the evening watch out for **Barn Owls** hunting in the long grass and the **Daubenton, Pipistrelle and Noctule** bats that follow the river course.

Facts

Teston is pronounced '*Teeson*.' It is alleged that this was due to the mistake of a sign-writer, employed by South Eastern Railway, who misspelled the name of the station (writing 'Teston' instead of 'Teeson'). This spelling was then adopted while the old pronunciation was kept. Neither the sign nor the railway station exist any more.

Rev. James Ramsay, who advocated the abolition of slavery, was based at Teston. Rev Ramsay organised anti-slavery meetings with William Wilberforce and William Pitt at Teston (as well as in London). He died 1789, aged 56, and was buried at Teston.



Produced by the KCC Analysis Information Team (AIT)

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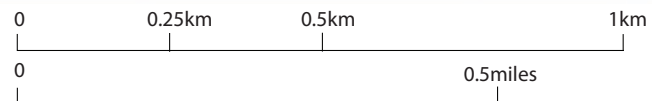
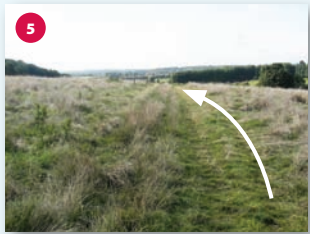


Photo guide



Directions

1 From the car park bear right over Teston Bridge. Take care over the bridge as it is narrow and the road is fairly busy - but there are passing places. Continue along the road - taking care as there is no footpath.

2 Turn right into a road marked with a 'T' sign and a 10mph limit. There is also a footpath sign on the left-hand side of the road.

Follow this country lane past a row of Kentish weather boarded cottages.

3 Keep to the farm road, crossing the stile or cattle grid, past a pill box and huge old oak tree.

The path divides just before the oast houses - keep to the right-hand path .

At Tutsham Hall bear right, past Tutsham Hall.

4 Follow the track through the farmyard and over the stile.

Keep following the track past a barn on your left and through a gate into a field.

5 Carry on across the fields. The wooden poles signify the footpath.

The footpath descends, climb over the stile and into Wargrave Woods. The woods can be particularly muddy, and small streams form during periods of heavy rain.

6 Continue out of the woods, and across fields, following a wire fence heading over a couple of thin wooden bridges and through a kissing gate until reaching Bow Bridge.

7 At Bow Bridge go over the stile and bear right over the bridge, taking care of traffic.

Just before the level crossing gates turn right on to the footpath. This takes you through gates and into Bow Bridge Marina.

8 The path forks, take the right hand track next to the river.

9 The path cuts through vegetation heading slightly away from the river, this path then rejoins the riverside.

Continue to follow path through grassland, willows and areas of scrub.

Pass the lock and weir back to Teston Bridge Country Park.

This walk often floods during heavy rain, so can be waterlogged and very muddy.

