

# Thornborough

## Circular Walk

### Directions

- The walk starts from the car park just to the east of the mediaeval bridge. Cross the ancient structure and immediately follow the footpath to the right, through low-lying fields to White House Farm.
- Pass to the left of the farm and once again head across fields to cross a track, over a bridge, through a garden, re-crossing the track once more to follow on a parallel course to the Great Ouse.
- With the reservoir to your left, pass through a gate and follow what is quite obviously the route of an old canal.
- Just after the abandoned lock and a still obvious weir, turn right over several bridges to cross a stile. The path here is on the bank of the Great Ouse and leads to Thornborough Mill.
- After leaving the mill, go through a path to the right and cross a field, subsequently keeping the hedgerow to your left. Bear left through a gap in the hedge to meet up with a concrete farm track which leads to a road.
- Follow this downhill towards Thornborough and turn right at Hatchet Leys Lane to follow a grassy track between houses and on to the site of a mediaeval village. Follow this to Western Green Farm and head down the driveway to a metalled road. Turn left and immediately right passing Thornborough Mounds on your left and back towards the mediaeval bridge.



### Features of Interest

- 1 Dating from the 14th century, Thornborough Bridge is the only surviving mediaeval bridge in the county. Much of interest are the 'cutwaters' or v-shaped projections that were used to divert river debris through the arches and as passing places for pedestrians. A new bridge was built alongside in 1974 to take the pressure off the mediaeval structure, leaving it free for pedestrians.
- 2 Just before reaching Hydellane Lake, an iron age defensive enclosure dating from 300-200 BC can be seen to the left of the path. A socketed iron axe was found here and a cast of it is in the County Museum at Aylesbury.
- 3 The Buckingham Arm of the Grand Junction Canal was opened in 1801 and was active throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries mainly for coal and agricultural produce. Theoretically still operational until the Second World War, the branch was eventually dammed to prevent it from draining water from the main canal and was finally abandoned in 1961.
- 4 The Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve is managed by the Berks, Bucks and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust.
- 5 The old canal is particularly pleasant here with ancient hedgerows on the embankment, pools of water and the remains of an old lock. The canal bed plays host to colonies of frogs and grass snakes and if you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of a kingfisher.
- 6 To the south west of Thornborough, the footpath crosses the site of an abandoned settlement which once included a manor house and a chapel. An extension or 'end' of Thornborough, the village was active in the 13th century but by the 17th century had been deserted as a result of early enclosure.
- 7 Thornborough is a timeless largely stone-built village with two village pumps, a green and a little stream which meanders its way along roadsides and between houses on its way to the Great Ouse half a mile west of the village.
- 8 Two conspicuous Romano-British burial mounds lie just to the east of Thornborough Bridge. Excavations on the site have revealed a rich harvest of pottery and bronze artefacts including jugs and a lamp. Some 150 metres to the south have been found the remains of a Romano-Celtic temple.

#### Follow the Countryside Code:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control

#### Further Information:

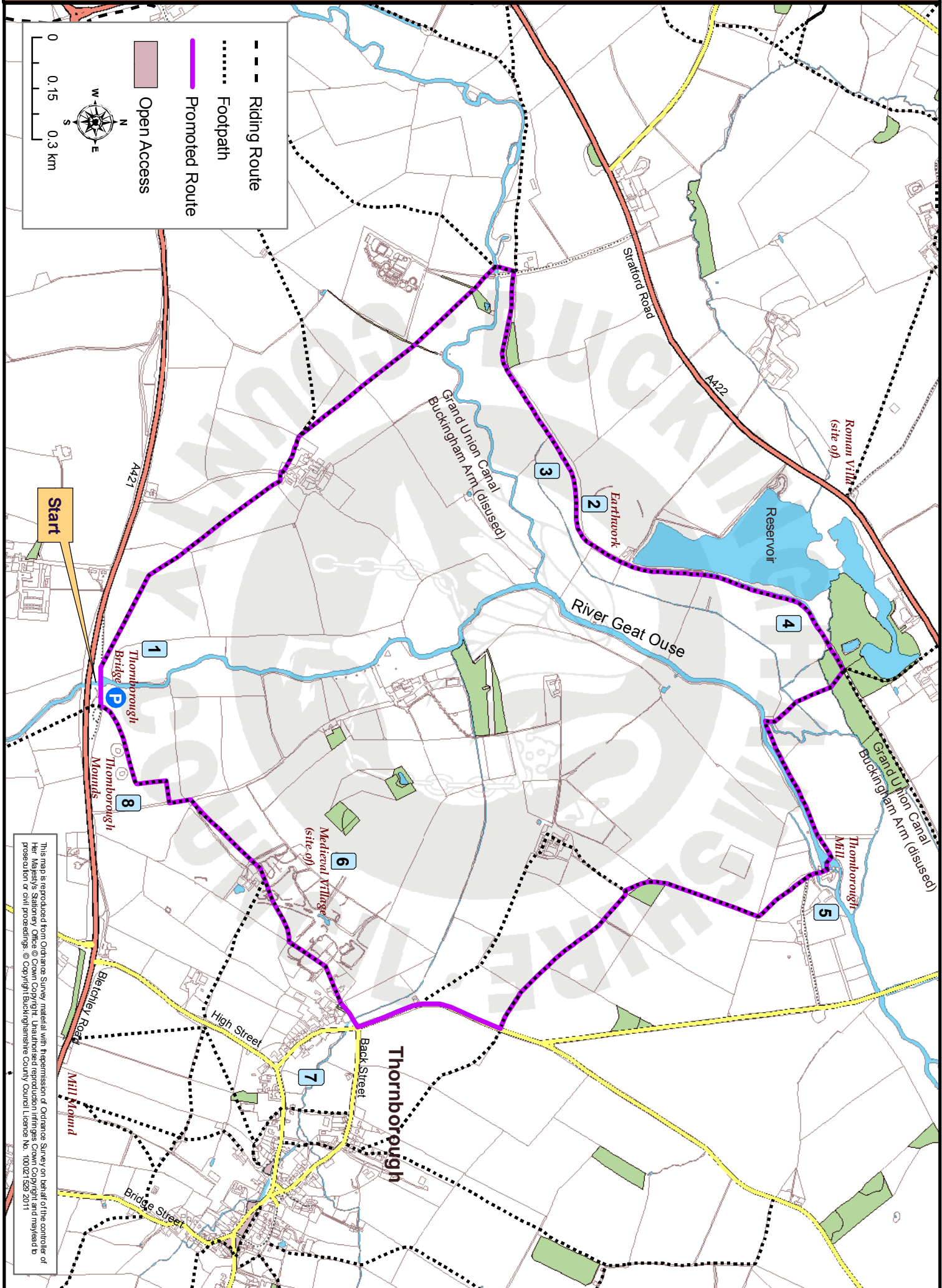
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# Thornborough Circular Route

Riding Route  
 Footpath  
 Promoted Route  
 Open Access

0    0.15    0.3 km



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