

# Welcome to The Flich Way



The Flich Way Country Park stretches almost 15 miles along the track of the former railway line between Braintree and Bishops Stortford which opened in 1869. Although the last passenger train ran in 1952, goods continued to be carried until the end of 1971. Most of the track was removed in 1972 with the final stretch towards the Bishops Stortford end going in 1974.

Volunteers at Roynie Stn



Originally purchased by Essex County Council in 1980 as a possible alternative route to A120, the site opened as the Flich Way with the first Ranger appointed in 1994 and provides a safe, traffic-free environment for walkers, cyclists and, in some sections, horse riders.

A variety of landscapes and habitats can be found along the Flich Way ranging from open stretches affording views of farmland on either side of the track to enclosed areas such as the Dunmow Cutting.

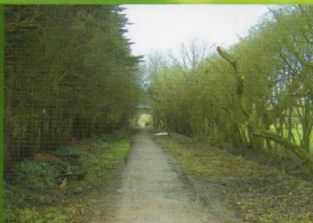


Picnic Area High Cross Lane East

The Flich Way is managed by ECC

Country Park Rangers, assisted by volunteers from The Friends of the Flich Way. Rangers are based at the adjacent Great Notley Country Park which can be easily accessed from the Flich Way. They can be contacted on 0333 013 2900.

Gore Road Bridge



More information and details of events here and at other Country Parks can be found at [www.visitparks.co.uk](http://www.visitparks.co.uk)

The Flich Way forms part of National Cycle Network Route number 16.



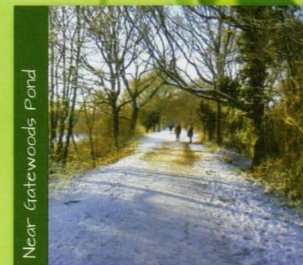
Flich Way in Spring



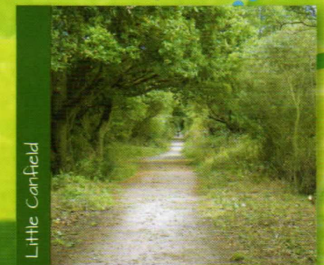
Frog at Graunts Court



Sleepy Toad at Felsted



Near Gratewoods Pond



Little Canfield



Working at Start Hill



Volunteers, Rayne Stn



A120

Start Hill

B1256

Stane Street Halt

### Hatfield Forest

Hatfield Forest is a rare living example of a mediaeval forest. In the early 12th century it was part of the great forest of Essex along with Epping and Hainault, its primary aim being to provide deer for the King's table. Consisting of woodland, grassland, lake and marsh, the forest contains over 800 ancient trees, some over 1,000 years old. Now a site of Special Scientific Interest, Hatfield Forest covers over 1,000 acres and is managed by the National Trust. Access to the forest can be gained directly from the Fitch Way which runs along its northern edge.

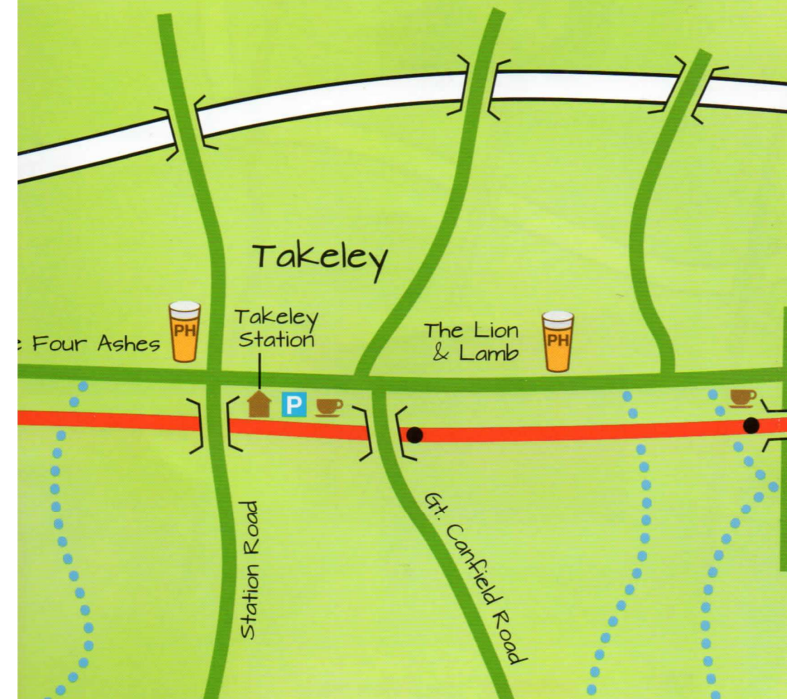
Parking Charges may apply. **P**

Bus En

Field Scabious



The Fitch Way is readily accessible by Public Transport. Trains run from Liverpool Street to Braintree (via Witham), Stansted Airport or Bishops Cleeve stations. Bus route number 133 runs between those points and includes stops at Dunmow and Takeley. The route broadly follows the former Stane Street, B1256 road. Please check relevant timetables before starting your journey.



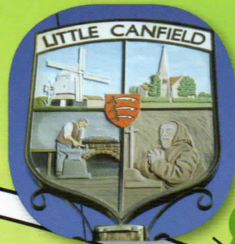
Migrant Hawker Dragonfly



The Dunmow Cutting provides one of the richest and species diverse areas of the Fitch Way. Access to the Dunmow Cutting can be made from the signed entrance midway along the Dunmow bypass. No parking is available adjacent to this entrance. Before reaching the cutting itself, the track follows a boardwalk through a lush wetland area where damselflies and dragonflies can be seen. The path leads under the bridge to the cutting where long stretches of the south facing side are cleared each year. Vegetation has also been thinned on the north side of the cutting to allow sunshine and a greater flow of air. Chalk loving plant species can be found here, as can butterflies such as Gatekeeper, Common Blue and Orange Tip. The cutting can also be reached from Buttleys Lane, off B1256.



Dunmow Cutting Winter



A120

B1256

Easton Lodge Halt

High Cross Lane West

High Cross Lane East



Bee Orchids



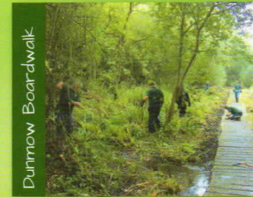
Dunmow Cutting Spring



Common Spotted Orchid



Orange Tip Butterfly



Dunmow Boardwalk

Great Dunmow

Buttleys Lane

Dunmow Bypass

Dunmow Cutting

Boardwalk

A120

The Kicking Dickey

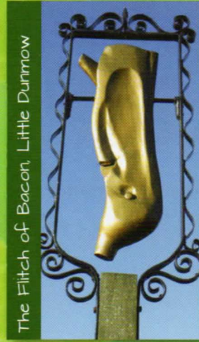


Fitch Way under snow



The building of the new A120 dual carriageway has resulted in a gap in the Fitch Way, the former railway track finishing on the Eastern side of Great Dunmow. Cyclists and walkers wishing to re-join the track on the western side of Great Dunmow should follow the blue and white National Cycle Route 16 signs through the town. Access can be regained at the marked access point on the south side of the Dunmow bypass, B1256, Startford Road.

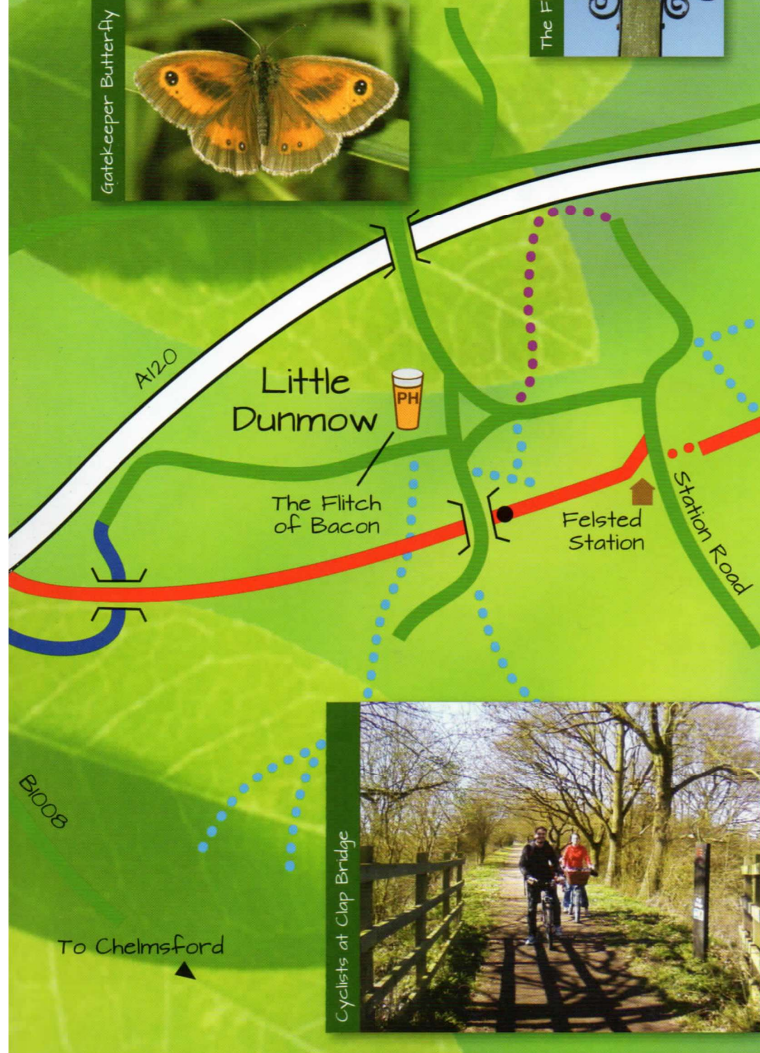
Great Dunmow is an ancient market town, mentioned in the Domesday Book and famous for the Dunmow Fitch Trials. The competition to win a fitch or side of bacon, is said to have been held since the 12th century. The Trials are held every four years and are open to married couples from around the world. They must satisfy a jury that in twelve months and a day, they have not "wished themselves unmarried again".



The Fitch of Bacon, Little Dunmow

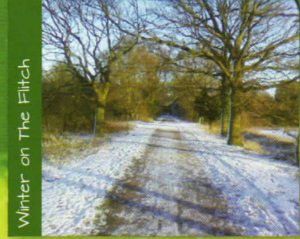


Gatekeeper Butterfly

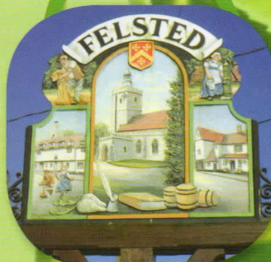


Cyclists at Clap Bridge

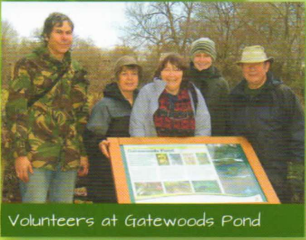
To Chelmsford



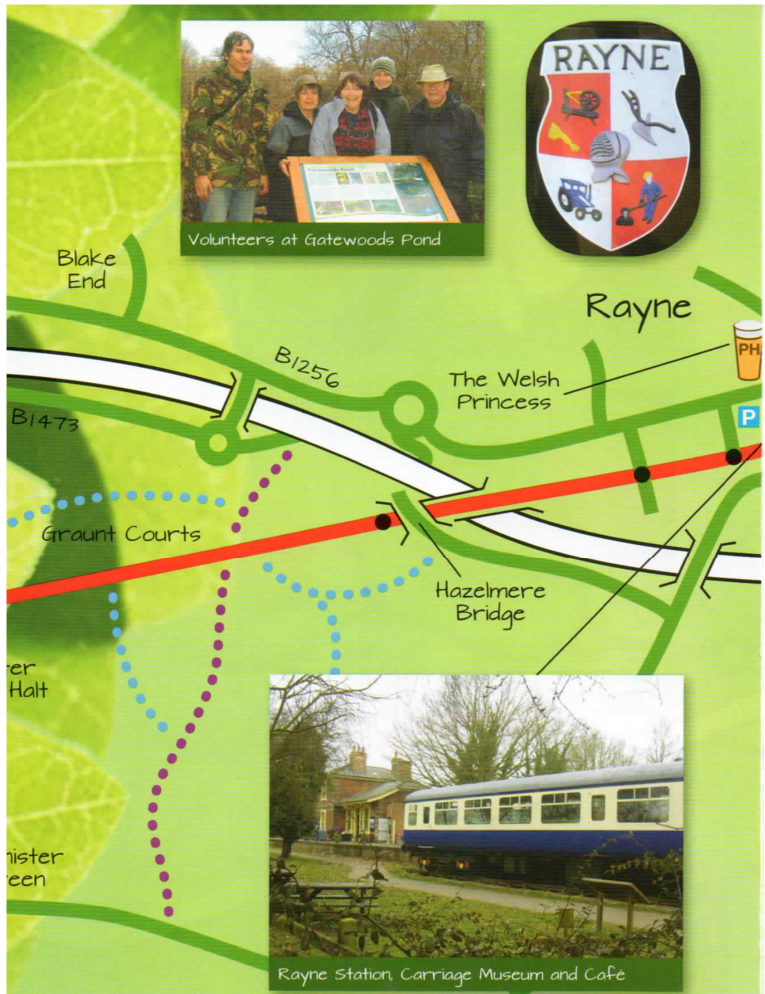
Winter on The Fitch



Fitch Way Primroses



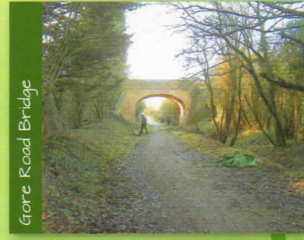
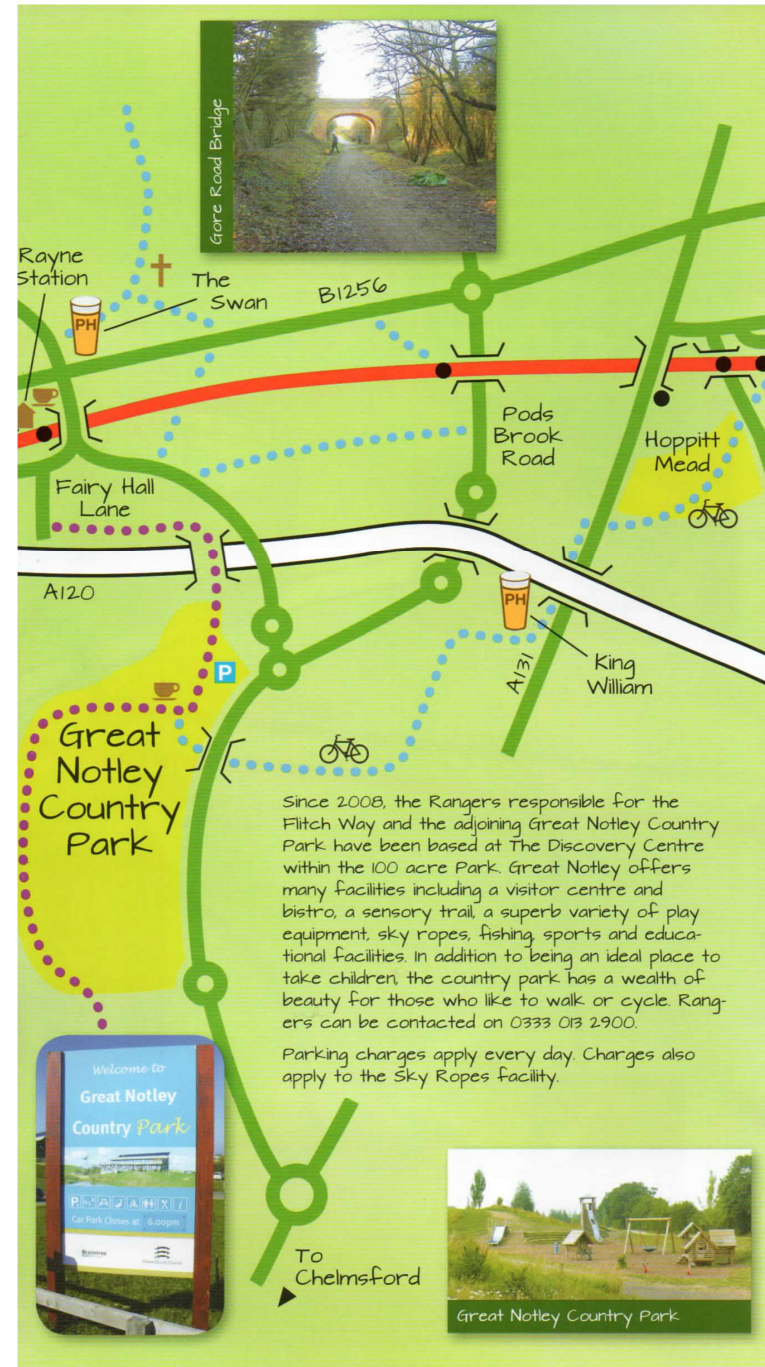
Volunteers at Gatewoods Pond



Rayne Station, Carriage Museum and Cafe

built in 1866, Rayne Station was one of the busiest on the line. It consisted of Station Master's house, ticket office, lamp room and toilets as well as a goods yard and shed, coal yard and cattle dock. The main building was restored in 1994 and later converted into a tea room which became the Booking Hall Cafe in 2009. The cafe serves a range of drinks and snacks and is open every day from 9.30 to 3.30 October to Easter and 9.30 to 5.00 thereafter. For more information on the cafe, visit [www.thebookinghall.co.uk](http://www.thebookinghall.co.uk) or call 01376 320859.

In 2013, the Friends charity purchased a railway carriage which can be seen alongside the platform, for the use of visitors and the local community. Free to enter, it contains a working model railway of Rayne Station and surrounding area as it would have been around 1945, together other items of railway history and photographs and information on the Fitch Way and the work done by Friends' volunteers along the track. The carriage is open to the public on most weekends between 11am and 3pm but opening days and times can change if volunteers are not available.

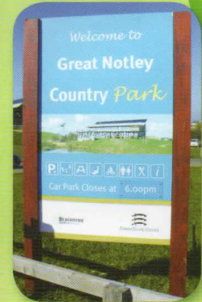


Gore Road Bridge

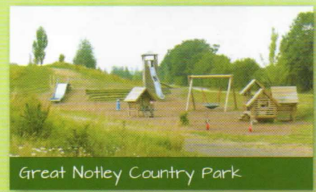
Great Notley Country Park

Since 2008, the Rangers responsible for the Fitch Way and the adjoining Great Notley Country Park have been based at The Discovery Centre within the 100 acre Park. Great Notley offers many facilities including a visitor centre and bistro, a sensory trail, a superb variety of play equipment, sky ropes, fishing sports and educational facilities. In addition to being an ideal place to take children, the country park has a wealth of beauty for those who like to walk or cycle. Rangers can be contacted on 0333 013 2900.

Parking charges apply every day. Charges also apply to the Sky Ropes facility.



To Chelmsford



Great Notley Country Park



Volunteers at Little Durrum

This leaflet has been designed and produced by The Friends of the Fitch Way and Associated Woodlands who work to help maintain the Fitch Way under the guidance of the Country Park Rangers. The Friends has been a registered charity since 2005 and membership is open to anyone over the age of 16. Full details and photographs of the range of work undertaken by the Friends can be found on our website at [www.friends-of-the-fitch-way.org.uk](http://www.friends-of-the-fitch-way.org.uk)

Volunteers meet at Rayne Station at 9.30am every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the year. Volunteers also work each Wednesday on footpaths throughout the county.

If you would like to be a volunteer, details of how you can do so can also be found on our website.

Please use the Fitch Way with consideration for others. Cyclists do not have priority over foot traffic and should slow down when approaching walkers or children on the Path. Motor cycles are not permitted.



There is no charge for this leaflet and we hope that it helps in your enjoyment of the Fitch Way. A suggested donation of £1 would help raise funds for the Friends charity, which exists to raise awareness of the Fitch Way and to help our volunteers maintain the former track and surrounding areas. Copyright 2011 Re-printed 2012, 2015 & 2017

Donate at <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/friends-of-the-fitch-way-and-associated-woodlands>