

# Grand Western Canal



**COUNTRY PARK**  
**LOCAL NATURE RESERVE**

## Visitor Information



**RECREATION**



**HISTORY**



**WILDLIFE**



# Abbotshood Cycle Hire

Greenway, Halberton, Devon, EX16 7AE

**Open all year round      From Dawn 'til Dusk**  
**Free delivery and collection**

**With easy access to 11 miles of towpath on  
The Grand Western Canal**

**Follow the Brown tourist signs in Halberton**

**[www.abbotshoodcyclehire.co.uk](http://www.abbotshoodcyclehire.co.uk)**

**Telephone: - 07958 916165/01884 820728**

## THE BARGE HALBERTON

Locally produced  
food and real ales



Function room, coach parties catered for,  
skittle alley, pool, darts.

5 minutes walk from the Grand Western  
Canal.(turn down the lane beside Swing  
Bridge, and then right along the main  
road)

Open: Mon – Fri, 12 noon to 2pm and  
5pm -11pm; Sat and Sun 12 noon to  
11pm/10.30pm.

Food served: Lunchtimes and evenings  
every day except Sunday evenings and  
Wednesdays.

**Tel: 01884 820316**



## The Prince of Wales Holcombe Rogus

Character 17th Century Pub  
with Restaurant

Idyllic setting on the Devon/Somerset  
Border, near to the Grand Western Canal

**Opening Times: Mon 5.30pm-11pm,**  
**Tues-Thurs 12noon-3pm and 5.30pm-11pm,**  
**Fri-Sat 12noon-3pm and 5.30pm-**  
**12midnight, Sun 12noon-3.30pm**  
**and 6pm-11pm**

Food served lunchtimes and evenings,  
carvery on **Sun** lunchtime

**Tel: 01823 672070**

**[www.theprinceofwales-uk.com](http://www.theprinceofwales-uk.com)**

## Welcome to the Grand Western Canal

The Grand Western Canal Country Park meanders through beautiful mid-Devon countryside and quiet villages between Tiverton and Lowdells (near the Somerset border). Declared a Country Park in 1971 and a Local Nature Reserve in 2005, the Canal is a wonderfully relaxing place to enjoy the rich heritage of yesteryear, and the profusion of wildlife and scenic landscape that characterise the Canal today.

Extending for eleven and a quarter miles, the Country Park provides a great location to enjoy walking, cycling, boating, fishing and picnics. More information on these activities is provided in this guide.

The Canal Basin in Tiverton is well signposted from the M5 and A361 and provides car parking, public toilets, a small visitor centre, gift shop, boat hire, Tea Gardens and a floating café/bar. It is also home to the much-loved horse-drawn barge that has been taking passengers for trips along the Canal since 1974. Other



Tiverton Canal Basin. Photo: Philip Brind.

smaller car parks, picnic sites and canal-related businesses are dotted along the length of the Canal (see map in centre pages).

The Country Park is a sensitive site, with many different activities taking place in the same area, so please help us to balance the needs of different users and of wildlife by being considerate at all times. Please refer to the Towpath Code of Conduct inside the back page for more information.



Warnicombe Bridge. Photo: N. S. Bathurst.

# History

Originally part of an ambitious scheme to link the Bristol Channel with the English Channel, the Grand Western Canal was proposed as a way for shipping to avoid the long and perilous journey around the Cornish peninsula, and as a route for transporting goods, including coal from South Wales, into the heart of Somerset and Devon.

The section from Tiverton to the limestone quarries at Westleigh (also known locally as the Tiverton Canal) was completed in 1814, but the costs had escalated hugely (proving this is not just a modern-day phenomenon!) due to the use of steep embankments and deep cuttings to keep the Canal on a level contour.



Stone being loaded onto barges at Whipcott Wharf.

This massive overspend delayed construction of the next section to Taunton for many years, but eventually it was completed in 1838. By then any plans to link the Canal with the English Channel had been abandoned, but for a short time the Canal was profitable, mostly carrying coal and limestone, much of which was burnt in limekilns and used for improving agricultural land.



Lily harvesting near Swing Bridge.

The advent of the Bristol & Exeter Railway, took much of the trade from the Canal, and in 1865 the section from Lowdwells to Taunton was sold to the railway company and abandoned. However the limestone trade continued on the 'Devon section' until the 1920s when persistent leaks led to the damming-off of a section near Halberton.

Apart from a small lily-harvesting business, the Canal slowly choked up with reeds and was largely abandoned until the 1960s, when proposals to use the Canal as a linear landfill site and possible route for a road galvanised local support for preserving the Canal.

The campaign to save the Canal proved to be successful as in 1971 Devon County Council took on ownership of the canal and declared it a Country Park. Since then a substantial investment in dredging and relining the Canal has been made and the Country Park is now a popular visitor attraction and thriving local amenity.

Many original structures dating back to the Canal's heyday are still to be found in the Country Park. Many are protected by Grade II listing, including the Tiverton Basin and Waytown limekiln complexes, 15 road bridges over the Canal (designed by John Rennie) and the 40m-long Waytown Tunnel. Other notable structures include milestones, culverts, wharves, accommodation bridges, an aqueduct and a lock.



Poster advertising a walk as part of the campaign to save the Canal.



The Waytown limekilns, which have benefited from restoration work undertaken in recent years by the Canal Ranger Service and volunteers from the Grand Western Canal Trust and the Waterway Recovery Group.

# TIVERTON CANAL CO

For People who Love . . . Boats, Horses, Wildlife & Water



## Barge Trips • Boat Hire • Cafe Bar

### The Ducks' Ditty Bar



### Take a Trip on a Horse-Drawn Barge

**The Barge:** All-Weather 75 Seater Barge with Upholstered Seating and Modern Toilet Facilities.

**On Board:** Bar, Real Ales, Draught Lagers, Ciders, Quality Wine, Tea/Coffee, Snacks, Ice Cream & Gifts.

**Public Trips** run to Timetable (see web) ✦

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**Evening Trips** - Peaceful **or** Lively Party.

Buffets **or** Fish & Chip Suppers.

Peaceful Floodlit **or** Background Music,

Band, Disco **or** Karaoke. **for more details**

**go to our website or call for a free info pack.**

### At The Wharf

✦ **The Ducks' Ditty Floating Cafe Bar:**

Fully Licensed, Permanently Moored at the Wharf.

Quality Wines, Real Ales, Draught Lagers

Freshly Ground Coffee & Loose Leaf Tea.

✦ **Horse-Drawn Barge Trips:** (see web for info)

✦ **Boat Hire:** Canoes, Rowing & Day Boats.

✦ **Canal Shop:** Canal, Horse & Country Gifts.

The Wharf, Canal Hill, Tiverton, Devon

EX16 4HX Tel: 01884 253345 [www.tivertoncanal.co.uk](http://www.tivertoncanal.co.uk)



### THE GLOBE INN

SAMPFORD PEVERELL

Tel 01884 821214



Welcomes walkers, fishermen, cyclists, boaters and all users of the canal.

Open all day everyday, the only pub with direct access to the canal towpath.

Snacks and full meals served lunchtimes, evenings and all day Fri-Sun.

Carvery Friday and Saturday night, all day Sunday. Booking strongly recommended for Sunday lunchtime.

Two large bars ♦ Function room  
En-Suite Accommodation ♦ Car Park



### HALBERTON COURT FARM SHOP

Halberton, Devon, EX16 7AW  
Telephone: 01884 829543

with

LLOYD MAUNDER  
WESTCOUNTRY  
FAMILY BUTCHERS

### Opening hours

9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat

10am-4pm Sundays-PYO Season only

Supplying Farm Grown Fruit & Vegetables  
Home-made Cakes & Preserves and much more

Cream Teas and light lunches at our  
**NEW TEAROOM**  
open throughout the Summer



### The Canal Tea Rooms & Garden

Please come and visit us and enjoy some refreshments in our tranquil, award-winning garden.

Open every day from early April to early October ~ 10am - 6pm

The tea rooms and garden, in the grounds of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Lime Kiln Cottage, offer beverages, a good selection of light home-made meals, cakes, desserts and ice-creams.

We are renowned for our Devonshire Cream Teas, which include freshly home-made scones, accompanied by strawberry jam and Devon clotted cream.

Located at the end of the car-park, Grand Western Canal, Tiverton.  
Telephone: 01884-252291



EX16 4HX Tel: 01884 253345 [www.tivertoncanal.co.uk](http://www.tivertoncanal.co.uk)

## Wildlife

The Canal supports a rich and vibrant variety of wildlife and provides a great opportunity to get close to nature. In recognition of this, the Canal was declared a Local Nature Reserve in 2005.

### Birds

The Canal plays host to a range of bird species. Waterfowl are found along most stretches - Moorhens, Mute Swans and Mallards are a common sight. Kingfishers are commonly seen fishing along the Canal between late summer and early spring.

The hedgerows, trees and wildflower-rich canal banks provide food and shelter for many bird species. Those particularly associated with the watery margins include Grey Wagtail, Reed Bunting, Reed Warbler and Sedge Warbler. Rarer sightings within the Country Park include Water Rail, Little Grebe (Dabchick) and Snipe.

### Mammals

Most mammals are shy creatures but if you look carefully, particularly near dusk or dawn, you may be able to spot Roe Deer, Foxes or Badgers in or around the Country Park. A number of bat species use the Canal for feeding and as a safe corridor to travel between roosts and feeding areas. The Canal Ranger Service lead bat walks each year when you will be able to see, hear and learn more about the bats found in Country Park.

One of the most elusive mammals to be found along the Canal is the Otter. In recent years they have made a strong recovery in the Westcountry and evidence of their activity is being recorded regularly in the Country Park.



Kingfisher.  
Photo: Andrew Stuthridge.



### Plants

The Canal is a mass of colour in spring and summer with an abundance of wild flowers growing along the water's edge. Unlike many other canals, the bankside vegetation at the Grand Western Canal is allowed to grow throughout the summer providing a profusion of wildflowers and the insects which feed on and around them.

Hedgerows run beside the towpath throughout most of the length of the Canal, providing ideal habitats for many birds, mammals, plants and insects. These are 'laid' by traditional methods periodically to promote their vigour. You may see examples of recently laid hedges where the stems are partially cut and bent over, winding between poles to create a living fence. Some fantastic examples of mature Oaks may be found within the hedgerow and new 'standard' trees are left to grow on at intervals, when the hedges are laid.

### Insects

The Canal is also a hot spot for butterflies and dragonflies in spring, summer and early autumn, feasting on nectar and smaller insects sheltering in the vegetation. The section of canal between Sampford Peverell and Westleigh is particularly rich in dragonflies, including the rare Scarce Chaser, and an information panel telling you all you need to know about where, when and what to look for is located near Ebear Bridge.

### Wildlife recording

The Rangers - with the help of a few dedicated volunteers - participate in survey work and the collation of casual records throughout the year. We have good records for the birds, butterflies and dragonflies, and much work has been done on surveying aquatic and bankside plants. The Ranger Service would be interested to know about any sightings of rare or notable wildlife along the Canal.



## Management of the Canal

The Country Park is owned and managed by Devon County Council, in partnership with Mid Devon District Council and is looked after by the Canal Ranger Service, who are based in the Canal Basin in Tiverton. In addition to maintaining the park, the Canal Ranger Service runs an annual programme of events, supervises volunteers and contractors and provides an education service for schools. Their contact details are provided on the back page of this guide. Their work is led by the Canal Management Plan which can be viewed at [www.devon.gov.uk/gwcmmanagementplan2009-2014.pdf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/gwcmmanagementplan2009-2014.pdf)

The routine maintenance of the Country Park includes mowing and strimming along the towpath, car parks and picnic sites, operating the weedcutting boat (which prevents weed from choking the Canal), trimming trees and hedges, and installing gates, fences, benches and information panels.

### Dredging

Unless the Canal is periodically dredged, it would eventually silt-up, preventing boating and angling and leading to a deterioration in wildlife habitats. Most of the Canal was dredged between 2002 and 2007 and further 'spot dredging' will be carried out where necessary over the coming years.



Dredging near Swing Bridge.



Towpath resurfacing near Halberton.

### Towpath resurfacing

Since 2002, seven and a half miles of towpath has been resurfaced using crushed stone from the quarry at Westleigh. This work has focussed on previously muddy or uneven sections of footpath with the aim of improving conditions for wheelchair and mobility buggy users in particular.

### Hedgelaying

The Country Park contains nine miles of hedgerow that borders the towpath. As part of the Country Park's Countryside Stewardship Scheme agreement, over three miles of hedgerow are being restored through a combination of hedgelaying and hedge planting. Hedgelaying is a traditional form of hedge management which promotes thick regrowth from the base of the hedge and creates a bushy hedge which acts well as a stockproof barrier and provides great habitat for wildlife.



A volunteer hedgelaying.

### Culverts

Between 2009 and 2013 a major project to clean and repair the Canal's 33 culverts is taking place. The culverts are 3-foot wide stone or brick 'pipes' which allow water from streams and ditches to flow under the canal, but over time they tend to fill up with silt and debris which must be cleaned out to allow inspection and repair.



**Bed and Breakfast** at the 900 year old **Priory** in Halberton is a 21<sup>st</sup> century version of what a 12<sup>th</sup> century Priory would have offered, i.e. rest and relaxation to the weary traveller.

The recreated **Medieval Gardens** and **Tea Rooms** can be booked for weddings birthdays, hen nights, and garden tours and talks. Visit our website:

[www.theprioryhalberton.co.uk](http://www.theprioryhalberton.co.uk)

Or phone Dawn on **01884 821234**



### Hornhill Bed & Breakfast

4 star accommodation with en suite/private bathrooms in historic country house with fine panoramic views. Five minute walk to Canal Basin.

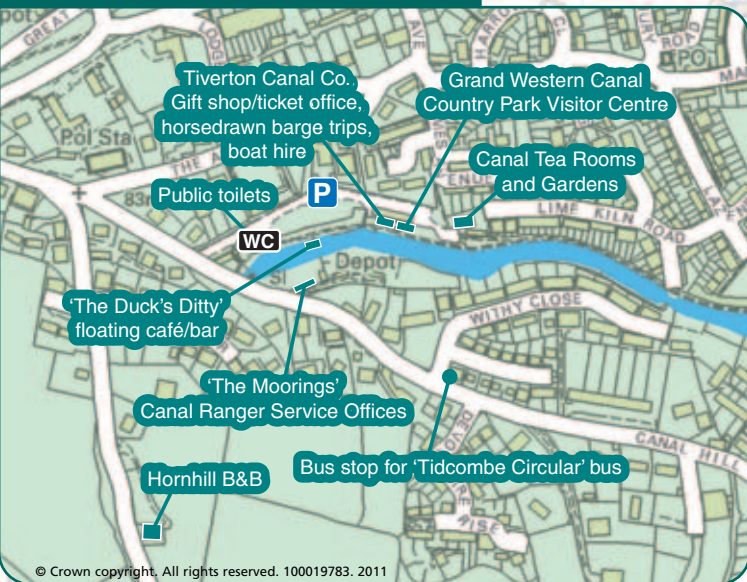
Hornhill, Exeter Hill, Tiverton, EX16 4PL

Tel: **01884 253352**

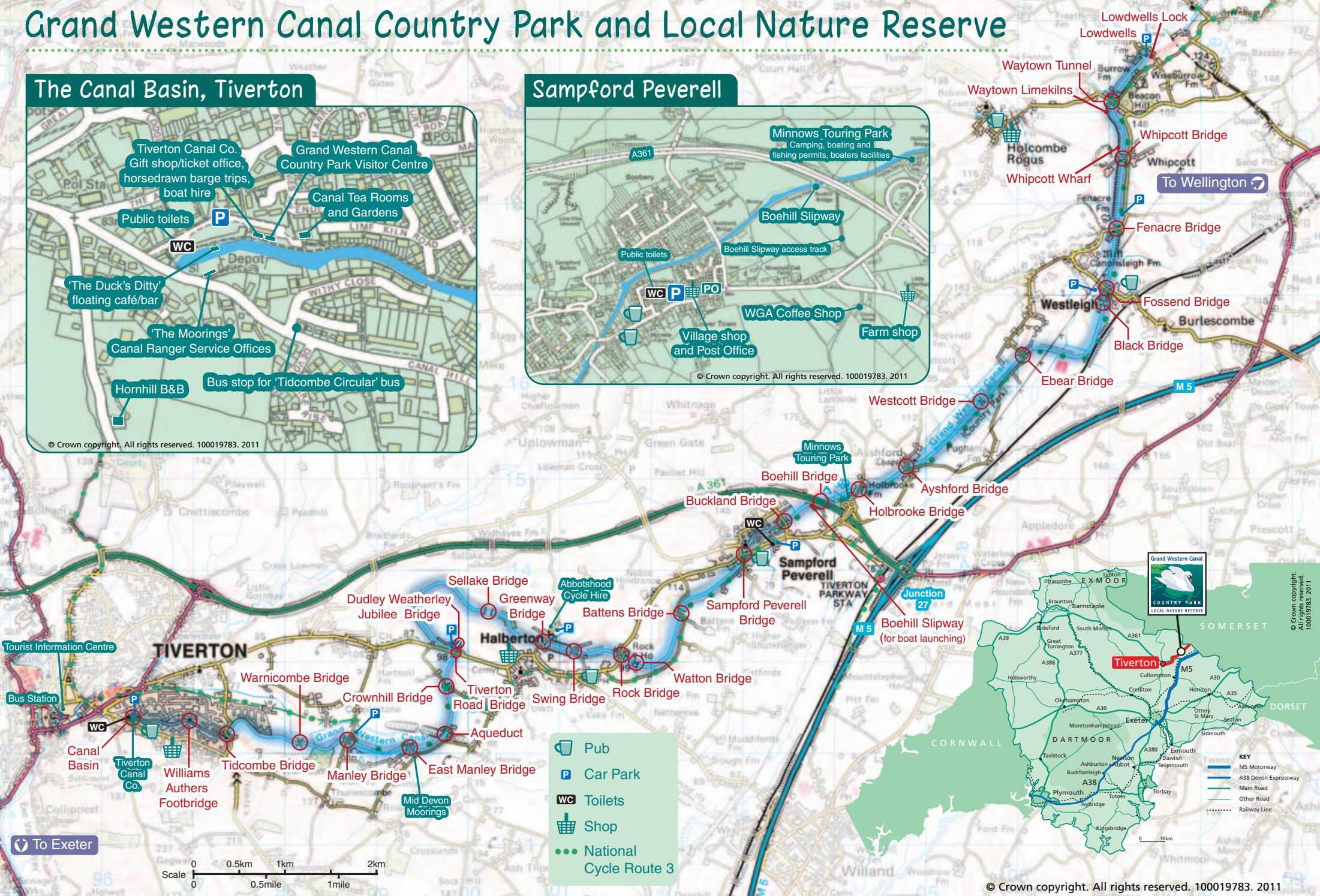
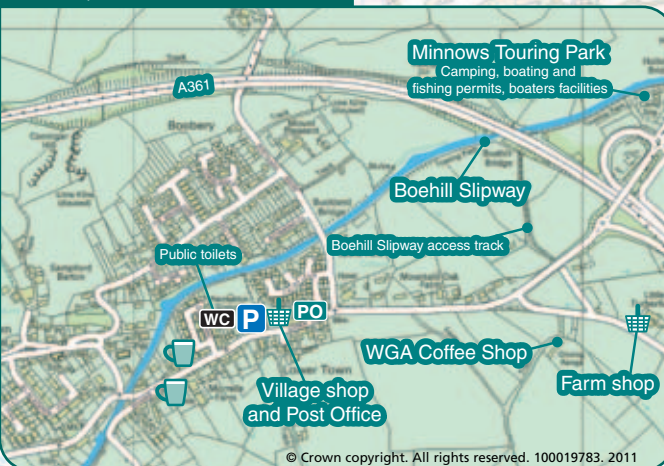
email: [hornhill@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:hornhill@tinyworld.co.uk)  
[www.hornhill-farmhouse.co.uk](http://www.hornhill-farmhouse.co.uk)

# Grand Western Canal Country Park and Local Nature Reserve

## The Canal Basin, Tiverton



## Sampford Peverell



## Walking

The Country Park is a popular place to enjoy a flat, easy walk in the countryside. You have the opportunity to stroll near settlements and services or to get away from it all and explore the quieter sections at the northern end of the Canal.

The Canal towpath is a public right of way that runs beside the Canal for the full eleven and a quarter miles. The towpath has been extensively resurfaced. Access points are located throughout the length of the Country Park. Several circular walks incorporating the towpath and the local footpath network are possible. Please see [www.devon.gov.uk/gwcwalking](http://www.devon.gov.uk/gwcwalking) for more information.

Every 6 weeks the Canal Rangers lead a healthy walk starting at various points along the Canal, as part of the Tiverton Walk and Talk programme. For more information please visit [www.wfn.naturalengland.org.uk/walkfinder/south-west/tiverton-walk-talk](http://www.wfn.naturalengland.org.uk/walkfinder/south-west/tiverton-walk-talk)

Picnic sites are located at the Canal Basin in Tiverton, Crownhill Bridge, Tiverton Road Bridge, Greenway Bridge, Sampford Peverell, Whipcott Bridge and Lowdells.

Please refer to the Towpath Code of Conduct inside the back page of this guide for more information on the considerate behaviour expected of all towpath users. If feeding ducks, please be aware that bread is not very good for their health so please limit to small amounts or better still use proper duck food (available at the Canal Basin gift shop).

## Dogs

**Dogs are welcomed, but must be kept under control at all times.** Dogs must be kept out of adjacent farmland and away from waterbirds, especially during the nesting season in the spring and early summer.

Dog fouling is a serious issue in the Country Park. Not only is it a health hazard for children, unsightly, and disgusting to walk in, but it is significantly changing the fertility of the banks, leading to more nettles and less wildflowers. Dog mess bins are provided at access points throughout the length of the Canal and **dog owners must pick up and remove any mess their dog makes.** The Country Park is regularly patrolled by Mid Devon District Council enforcement officers who will issue £50 on the spot fines to any dog owner failing to remove their dog's mess. The maximum fine is £1000.

Visitors to the Country Park are encouraged to report any dog owners they witness failing to remove their dog's mess - particularly regular offenders. Please telephone 01884 234382 with a description of the dog/owner/vehicle, the time and the location.



## Boating

Canoeing and boating are wonderfully peaceful ways to explore the eleven miles of canal, but a permit must be bought in advance. These are available from:

- **The Canal Ranger Service** - The Moorings, Canal Hill, Tiverton. Tel. 01884 254072 (Weekdays 9am - 4.30pm. Advisable to ring ahead)
- **The Tiverton Canal Co.** - Old Stable gift shop, Canal Basin, Tiverton. Tel. 01884 253345 (Easter - end Oct)
- **Minnows Touring Park** - Holbrook Bridge, Sampford Peverell. Tel. 01884 821770 (Mar - Oct incl.)
- **Mid Devon Moorings** - East Manley. Tel. 01884 252178
- **'Best One' convenience store** - 4 New Parade, Anstey Crescent, Canal Hill, Tiverton (400m up Canal Hill from Canal Basin). Tel: 01884 254238 (Daily 8am - 10pm)
- **Holcombe Rogus village shop** - Pound Hill, Holcombe Rogus. Tel. 01823 672693
- **Online at [www.devon.gov.uk/gwcboating](http://www.devon.gov.uk/gwcboating)** - 'Portable unpowered' permits only - fill in form and post with payment. Permit posted back within 3 days of receipt of form and cheque.

### Current permit prices (2011/12) as follows:

#### 1. Portable un-powered boats (Any boat without an engine)

Day	Week	Year
£5	£12	£50

#### 2. Short-term powered boats (any powered boat without a fixed mooring along the Canal, staying on the Canal for a maximum of two weeks at any time)

Length	Day	3 Days	Week	6 Months	Year
Under 12ft/3.66m	£10	£20	£30	£80	£100
12ft/3.66m and over	£15	£25	£35	£100	£130

#### 3. Moored boats (Any boat with a paid mooring – either with Mid Devon Moorings or a GWC Mooring Agreement)

Length	0 – 3 Months	3 – 6 months	1 Year
Under 30ft/9.14m	£80	£130	£200
30ft/9.14m and over	£100	£180	£280

There is a 25% discount available for under 18 year olds purchasing permits for portable unpowered boats. There is also a 25% discount for groups of 4 or more purchasing permits for portable unpowered boats, but this cannot be combined with the under 18 discount, above.



Trailed boats can launch at the public slipway between Sampford Peverell and the A361 (opposite the turnoff to Tiverton Parkway train station). The padlock combination code for opening the Boehill Slipway barrier and the Dudley Weatherley Jubilee Lift Bridge will be issued along with your boat permit. Portable boats may be lifted in at any of the car parks along the Canal. The owners of any boats that require craning in must first contact the Canal Ranger Service.



Trailboat launching at Boehill Slipway.

Please note that the maximum speed limit for boats is 4mph and a breaking wash must not be created. **It is imperative that boats pass the horsedrawn barge on the offside and must never come between the barge and the horse, nor moor on the towpath side between the Tiverton Canal Basin and East Manley Bridge. Always slow down when passing moored boats and take particular care on bends.** More information on boating is provided when purchasing a permit, including a copy of our Waterway Code of Conduct leaflet. See [www.devon.gov.uk/waterwaycodeofconduct](http://www.devon.gov.uk/waterwaycodeofconduct)

### Moorings and hire boats

Moorings are available near East Manley Bridge from Mid Devon Moorings (Tel. 01884 252178 or [www.middevonhireboats.co.uk](http://www.middevonhireboats.co.uk)). The Tiverton Canal Co. offers horsedrawn barge trips, plus rowing boats, canadian canoes and motorised day trip boats for hire (Tel. 01884 253345 or [www.tivertoncanal.co.uk](http://www.tivertoncanal.co.uk)).

Visiting boats are allowed to moor overnight anywhere along the towpath, but must not moor between the Basin visitor centre and East Manley Bridge, from Easter to November as they will impede the horsedrawn barge. Residential moorings are not available on the Canal.



The canal is perfect for a peaceful paddle.



**Beautiful Country Moorings** at Orchard Farm, in quiet countryside just 2 miles from Tiverton Basin (see map, centre pages).

**Facilities:** Water, fuel, gas, rubbish/toilet disposal, lawn and parking, electric on maintenance landing next to winding hole.  
**MID DEVON MOORINGS**, Orchard Farm, East Manley, Tiverton, EX16 4NJ  
 T: 01884 252178 [www.middevonhireboats.co.uk](http://www.middevonhireboats.co.uk)

## Minnows Touring Park

### Beside The Grand Western Canal

The ideal centre for walking, cycling, canoeing or fishing on the Grand Western Canal.

Hardstandings for caravans and motorhomes, children's play area, small tent area, electric hookups, launderette and modern heated toilet and shower block. Leisure boats may take on water from the landing stage, and boat trailer storage, chemical loo disposal and shower facilities are available by arrangement.

Sampford Peverell, Tiverton, Devon EX16 7EN  
 Tel 01884 821770 • Fax 01884 829199  
[www.ukparks.co.uk/minnows](http://www.ukparks.co.uk/minnows)

Caravan Club Affiliated Site • AA 4 Pennants •  
 Camping and Caravan Club Approved • Top 101Site • BH&HPA Member



## Fishing

The Grand Western Canal provides a quiet and relaxing venue with a good range of coarse angling opportunities. Of particular note are the summer Tench and winter Pike and Perch fishing. An excellent mixed fishery with above average stocking levels, means that the Canal presents a good challenge to anglers of all abilities, with the chance to find a quiet spot and enjoy the peace and tranquillity. Angling platforms, located at various points, allow suitable, safe access for the less-abled angler. There is no closed season. For more information please visit [www.devon.gov.uk/gwcfishing](http://www.devon.gov.uk/gwcfishing)

Angling rights on the Canal are leased to the Tiverton and District Angling Club. In addition to holding a valid Environment Agency Rod Licence, a permit must be purchased in advance. Current angling permit prices and outlets are as follows:

Permit Prices	Day	Year
Under 10s	Free	Free
Juniors (10-17)	£3	£8
Seniors (18+)	£5	£28
OAPs	£5	£15

- Exe Valley Angling, Westexe, Tiverton (Tel. 01884 242275)
- Minnows Touring Park, Sampford Peverell (Mar – Oct, Tel. 01884 821770)

Please ensure that your tackle does not impede other towpath users, and, if using extendable poles, please move them promptly when walkers or cyclists are approaching.

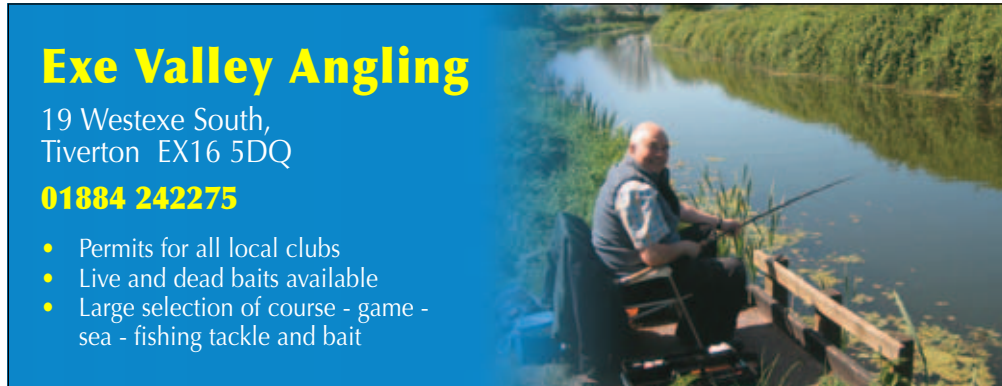
Take care not to snag your fishing tackle on offside vegetation. Please take all litter home with you and do not dig the banks. Please refer to the Towpath Code of Conduct inside the back page of this guide, and visit [www.devon.gov.uk/waterwaycodeofconduct](http://www.devon.gov.uk/waterwaycodeofconduct) for more information on the considerate behaviour expected of all Canal users.

### Exe Valley Angling

19 Westexe South,  
Tiverton EX16 5DQ

**01884 242275**

- Permits for all local clubs
- Live and dead baits available
- Large selection of course - game - sea - fishing tackle and bait



## Cycling

Cycling is a popular way for families and individuals to explore the Country Park. Cyclists can take in much of the changing scenery along the Canal in a relatively short period of time. Circular routes are possible using the surrounding minor road network and the disused railway line between Tiverton and Manley Lane. National Cycle Network Route 3 follows much of the Canal.

The towpath is generally flat and smooth, but cyclists are advised to dismount at Waytown Tunnel where the slope is quite steep.

**Cyclists must dismount and walk under bridges and give way to pedestrians and the horses drawing the passenger barge at all times.** Please ensure that

pedestrians are aware of your approach by using a bell or by calling ahead, before you pass. Please be patient with anglers using extendable fishing poles. The Country Park is primarily for quiet and relaxing recreation for all users, so please cycle steadily and responsibly. Please refer to the Towpath Code of Conduct inside the back page of this guide for more information on the considerate behaviour expected of all towpath users.

Cycle Hire is available from Abbotshood Cycle Hire, next to Greenway Bridge in Halberton (Tel. 01884 820728), who are happy to deliver and collect cycles anywhere within the Canal corridor, by prior arrangement.



## Information for disabled visitors

The Country Park provides good access for wheelchair and mobility buggy users as the towpath is largely flat and even and is surfaced with compacted limestone chippings and dust. However, care is needed when passing under bridges, where the path is narrow (especially at Ayshford Bridge).

There are steep concreted slopes immediately on either side of Waytown Tunnel that may cause difficulties for some visitors, mobility buggies and wheelchair users.

A 'Tramper' off-road mobility buggy is available to hire from Abbotshood Cycle Hire beside the Canal in Halberton (see advert on inside of front cover). The buggy is provided as part of the South West Countryside Mobility scheme. Membership of the scheme is required, but once arranged, enables access to 'Tramper' mobility buggies and 'Wheelyboats' located at countryside sites throughout the South West – visit [www.countryside-mobility.org](http://www.countryside-mobility.org) for more information. Abbotshood Cycle Hire also offers a number of innovative trikes and bikes for disabled users.



Tramper mobility buggy

The Canal Basin and car park provide good disabled facilities with ramps and handrails provided. The car park has five parking bays for disabled drivers. The public toilets in this car park included a toilet for disabled users, accessed with a RADAR key. There is also a toilet for disabled users, opened with a RADAR key, in Sampford Peverell beside the village car park.

Entry to the Country Park at all the main access points (particularly beside road bridges) has been improved in recent years through the installation of two-way, self-closing gates. For further information or assistance, please contact the Ranger Service (Tel. 01884 254072).

Four fishing platforms for anglers in wheelchairs have been installed at points along the Canal. These may be found near Crownhill Bridge, Tiverton Road Bridge, Greenway Bridge and Ebear Bridge.

## Education

The Grand Western Canal Country Park and Local Nature Reserve is an excellent site for school visits. The Park provides a variety of hands-on educational opportunities for groups of all ages and abilities.



### Facilities

- 11¼ miles of beautiful, historic canal
- Two classrooms
- Information centre
- A variety of habitats, including three ponds, hedgerows and a wildlife garden.
- Equipment and resources for all activities
- Toilets
- Car/Coach parking

### Activities

- Lifecycle Invaders
- Pond Explorers
- Minibeast Inspectors
- History of the Canal
- Habitats and Animal Adaptations
- Earthwalk



All the environmental activities are led by our ranger team. Full or half day sessions are available. We can adapt the sessions to suit the requirements of your class, and we are happy to include additional subjects or activities that could link to projects that the schools are currently involved with. Currently activities are designed for Key Stage 1 and 2 however Secondary schools/Colleges are welcome to use our facilities.



### How do I book?

To book, please ring the Ranger Service on 01884 254072 or email: [gwcanal@devon.gov.uk](mailto:gwcanal@devon.gov.uk)

## Little Turberfield Farm Shop

Locally produced meat, poultry and vegetables; homemade sausages and burgers; freshly baked pies and pasties; and soft drinks available.

**Open:** Tues - Thurs 8am-5pm, Fri 8am-5.30pm, Sat 8am-3.30pm. **Closed:** Sun & Mon

**The shop is 500m from the canal:** Turn off the canal towpath at Boehill Bridge. Follow the track, cross the road and head towards Tiverton Parkway Station.





# TOWPATH CODE OF CONDUCT

Making the towpath  
safer for everyone



Please use a bell and ring it twice when approaching pedestrians and anglers. This will provide a signal that you wish to pass when it is safe to do so.

Consider how you would like to be treated!

## Towpath code of conduct for all users

- **The horse pulling the passenger barge has priority over all other users.** Please stop and make way well before it passes.
- **Pedestrians have priority over cyclists** but must not unduly block the towpath when aware a cyclist is approaching.
- **Considerate cycling is permitted** provided this code of conduct is followed.
- **Give way to oncoming users at bridges.** Most of the bridges have poor visibility so check that someone isn't already coming through. Never try to pass oncoming walkers or cyclists under the bridge – there is insufficient width or headroom to do this safely. Cyclists must dismount and walk under bridges where signs indicate this is required.
- **All users are obliged to keep the towpath free from obstructions to other users.**
- **Consider other users and the environment.** The Canal and the land beside the towpath have many historic structures and valuable wildlife habitats that people enjoy. **Please take your litter home with you.**

## Code of conduct for pedestrians

- **Listen for Two Tings.** **Two Tings** is not an order for you to get out of the way. It is to make you aware that the cyclist is looking for a safe opportunity to pass. You should allow passing as soon as it is safe to do so. We advise pedestrians not to use headphones whilst walking the towpath, as you may not hear a cyclist's Two Tings.
- **Allow cyclists to pass.** Allow cyclists to pass as soon as it is safe.
- **Be considerate to cyclists** Remember that cyclists need room to stop and brake. If a cyclist stops or waits for you to pass, thank them and they are more likely to be considerate again next time.

## Code of conduct for cyclists

- **Ring with Two Tings.** Use a bell, giving **Two Tings** when approaching pedestrians, particularly when approaching from behind. Ringing with **Two Tings** is not an order to pedestrians to get out of your way. If you do not have a bell, politely call out 'excuse me' well before you reach other users. Be aware that some pedestrians and anglers may have visual or hearing impairments and may not hear your **Two Tings**.
- **Pass people slowly. Give people space.** Slow down when approaching pedestrians and anglers and only pass when it is safe to do so. Extra care should be taken when passing children, less able people and animals. Pass on whichever side pedestrians make open for you. Be patient and courteous. Saying 'thank you' to pedestrians or anglers who move to let you pass will make them more likely to move next time.
- **Ride at a sensible speed.** The towpath is not suitable for cycling fast as there are many other users, narrow sections and lengths with uneven surfaces. Anglers are often difficult to see amongst the bankside vegetation, dogs often pop out of hedges and people may emerge from gateways or linking paths.
- **Cyclists must dismount and walk under the bridges where indicated.** There have been many near misses and several accidents reported when cyclists have ridden under a bridge and met cyclists or pedestrians coming the other way. A very serious accident could occur if a cyclist were to hit the passenger barge horse under a bridge.
- **Dismount and make way for the passenger barge horse well before it passes.**

## Code of conduct for anglers

- **Anglers are obliged to keep the towpath free from obstructions to other users.** Tackle must be kept off the towpath and rods must be promptly moved out of the way when cyclists or pedestrians approach. Listen out for **Two Tings** and try to position yourself so as to be visible to approaching cyclists. If a pedestrian or cyclist stops and waits for you to move equipment, they are more likely to be considerate again if you thank them. Anglers must move rods, umbrellas and themselves completely out of the way to the far side of the towpath if the passenger barge horse is approaching.
- **Take care when casting.** Please take particular care of towpath users, boaters and offside landowners when casting. Please take care not to cast into overhanging trees on the offside as lost tackle is a serious threat to canal wildlife.

## Code of conduct for dog walkers

- **Dogs must be kept under control at all times.** They do not necessarily have to be kept on leads at all times, but this is strongly advised in busy areas and when cyclists are approaching. Dogs must always be kept within sight and away from angler's equipment.
- **Always clear up after your dog.** Dog mess on or beside the towpath can spoil a visit for everyone and poses a serious health risk – particularly to children. Dog mess disposal bins are located at all major towpath access points. It is an offence to leave dog mess behind, with fines of up to £1000.
- **Do not allow your dog to chase or worry wildlife, other dogs or people.** Dogs must be kept out of adjacent farmland at all times.

**Please Note:** Horse-riding and the use of quad bikes and motorcycles is not permitted on the towpath. Mobility buggies are allowed but must not exceed 4mph (brisk walking pace).

# How to Get Here

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## By Bus

There are regular services to Tiverton from Exeter, Barnstaple, Crediton and Taunton. Once at Tiverton Bus Station, it is a half mile walk up to the Canal Basin (the Tourist Information Centre beside the bus station can give directions, if necessary). Alternatively you can catch the Tidcombe Circular bus service which stops just past the Canal Basin, and near Tidcombe Bridge.

There is a regular service between Tiverton, Halberton, Sampford Peverell and Tiverton Parkway Train Station and Exeter. Access points to the Canal are very close to the bus stops in Halberton and Sampford Peverell. There is an occasional service between Tiverton and Burlescombe. For more information on this and other public transport services in the region, call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33.

## By Train

Tiverton Parkway Train Station is located between Sampford Peverell and M5 Junction 27, six miles from Tiverton. The station is served by most trains approaching from Exeter and Taunton. The Canal is half a mile from the station. Take the road away from the station, following the brown signs to the Canal, passing the farm shop and bearing right at the fork before the main road. Cross the main road and follow the track opposite which leads to the Boehill Slipway and the towpath.

## By Car

The Canal Basin in Tiverton is well-signposted from the M5 J27, the A361 from Barnstaple and the A396 from Exeter. For access to the central section of the Canal either leave the M5 at Junction 27 and follow the A361 North Devon Link Road, taking the first exit to Sampford Peverell; or take the road from Tiverton to Halberton, passing Blundell's School. To access the northern end of the Canal leave the M5 on Junction 27, follow the A38 to Wellington and follow signs to Burlescombe.

# Contact Information

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For more information about the Country Park please contact:

**Canal Ranger Service, The Moorings, Canal Hill, Tiverton, Devon EX16 4HX**

**Telephone:** 01884 254072    **Email:** gwcanal@devon.gov.uk

**Web:** [www.devon.gov.uk/grandwesterncanal](http://www.devon.gov.uk/grandwesterncanal)

The Canal Rangers work Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm and occasional weekends when leading events. The office answerphone provides details of emergency numbers for reporting serious incidents outside of normal office hours.