

# Walking in Thatcham

2024



West Berkshire  
C O U N C I L

# Five Ways to Wellbeing

There are lots of free and meaningful things that we can all do every day that will improve our mental health and wellbeing.

We want to encourage you, your community and local organisations in West Berkshire to adopt the Five Ways to Wellbeing. Explore this map for tips on how you can do this:

- 1 Connect
- 2 Keep learning
- 3 Be active
- 4 Give to others
- 5 Take notice

Why not commit to achieving your 'five a day' and improve your mental health and wellbeing? There are lots of ways you can do this in Berkshire [here](#).



# 1. Connect

## Wellbeing Walks

We offer free, regular, led [Wellbeing Walks](#) for people of all abilities. Our walks are friendly, welcoming and empowering and they are a great opportunity to explore the outdoors, discover new places and meet new people.

Our walk leaders are trained volunteers who are on hand to provide encouragement and support to walkers of all abilities.

The walks are free and easy, ranging from 30 to 90 minutes. Some walks stop for coffee afterwards in a nearby cafe; a good opportunity to socialise and relax after the walk.



## 2. Keep Learning

Thatcham is one of Berkshire's most historically exciting locations with sites across the Bronze (2,500BC - 750BC) and Iron (750BC - 43AD) Ages as well as evidence of life during the Roman period.

Thatcham could be one of the oldest continuously inhabited places in Great Britain. Its name derived from the story of a Saxon chief named Tace who claimed this place as his settlement, or 'ham'.

### Chapel of St Thomas the Martyr

Originally claimed to be dedicated to St Thomas the Martyr in the 14th century, the Chapel served as a religious base for Thatcham for 250 years and thereafter became abandoned. It later was repaired and renamed the [Old Bluecoat School](#) for poor boys until it closed in 1914 to then become an antique shop and an annex to another local school.

### [Kennet and Avon Canal](#)

The Kennet & Avon Canal, at 87 miles long, links London with the Bristol Channel, and passes through some spectacular landscapes including Wiltshire and the rolling Cotswolds. You can walk along the canal to the town centre of Newbury.

## Monks Chambers

This charming building is thought to have been built around 1540. Until 1900 the building was divided into four cottages, which became two, and then one independent building. Evidence of stairways amongst its timber frames still exists. The origins of its name derive from monks that may have stayed there in the past.

You can also visit [Newbury Library](#) to access more learning resources about West Berkshire, or [West Berkshire Museum](#) to uncover more amazing moments in history.





# 3. Be Active

## Run Together

If you're new to running, or just out of practice, there are a number of free running groups especially for beginners in West Berkshire to help you get off on the right foot. These are organised in partnership with [Run Together](#).

The weekly sessions are fun, friendly, and free of charge, taking place in parklands and open spaces. They're suitable for complete beginners or those who've been inactive for a while - you just need to wear some comfortable clothing and trainers to join in.



## 4. Give to others

There are so many opportunities in Thatcham to give to others, which as one of the Five Ways to Wellbeing has been proven to create feelings of happiness. This can be volunteering like the walk leaders of our [wellbeing walks](#) who arrange and run their own regular walk. Or backstops and mid markers who help manage the groups when they grow as keeping a team of 20 walkers together at all different paces can be a challenge.

With various roles across Berkshire available, you may like to consider volunteering yourself. Explore the opportunities we have available on our [website](#), from library assistants to community IT support.

The wellbeing walks community often become good friends and build their own network of support and encouragement which also helps people with staying connected. By using the beautiful pathways of West Berkshire we protect them and they are secure for future generations.

Remember your day forever - capture yourself or your group on your walking route with a photo near your favourite view or rest stop! We love to see your photos on our [Instagram page](#). Tag us [@westberkshire](#).

## 5. Take notice

It can be hard to turn away from our busy lives and pause, and enjoy the moment we are in. There are places in Thatcham where you can practice this such as the grounds surrounding the Thatcham Memorial, Thatcham Woodland and along the Canal.

Walking is such a good way to get close to nature. Thatcham is near the river where you can enjoy the sound of rushing water and the sights of dragonflies and ducks, the slow movement of a canal barge and the shapes it makes in the water.

Focusing on details helps us to access a sense of calm through taking notice.





# Walking in Thatcham

Walk to improve your health, your mind and your environment. Here are a few places in Thatcham you can walk to visit.

- 1 Chapel of St Thomas the Martyr
- 2 Kennet and Avon Canal
- 3 Thatched row of timber-framed houses
- 4 Skate park
- 5 Monks Chambers
- 6 Thatcham Learning Centre



# Accessible Walking

West Berkshire Council is committed to enabling and improving access for all. This map may be available in other formats upon request to the Council on [publichealthandwellbeing@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:publichealthandwellbeing@westberks.gov.uk).

For further information about access for people with disabilities, email [info@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:info@westberks.gov.uk) or visit [www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk).

## Disclaimer

Care should be taken on all routes. The Highway Code and the usual rules of road safety should be observed.

Extreme caution is advised when near water and railway lines, especially with young children.

Whilst we try to ensure the accuracy of all routes, we do not accept liability for any use made of them by you.

The routes are intended as a guide only, neither the Council nor any officer or agent of the Council will be legally responsible for any inaccuracies.

Routes and paths shown on the map are not necessarily rights of way. Some routes may only be open during business hours of the premises they serve.

# Contact

If you would like more information on the walking routes in Berkshire or would like to get in touch, please contact us at

**West Berkshire Council**

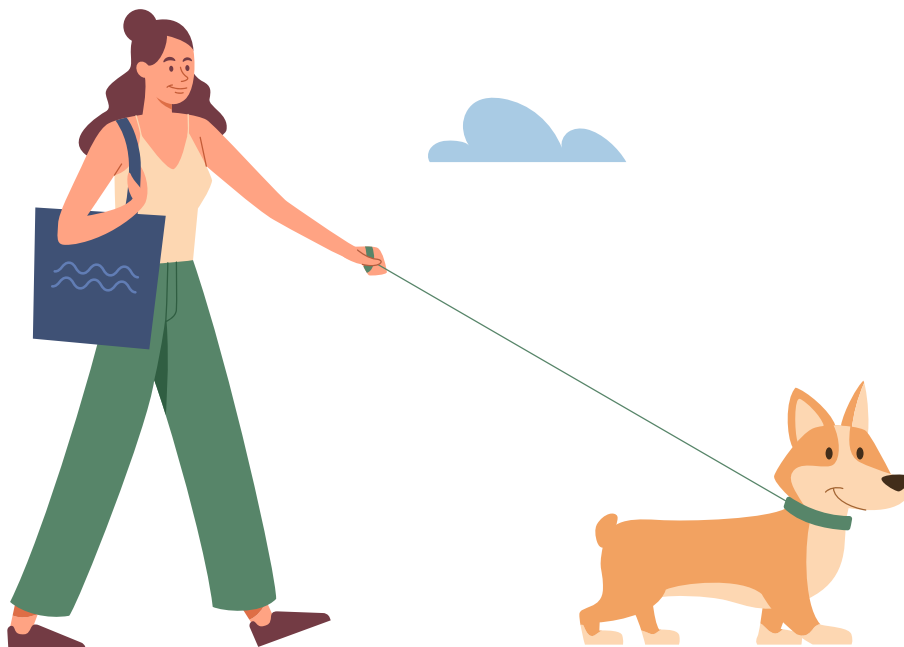
**01635 551 111**

[publichealthandwellbeing@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:publichealthandwellbeing@westberks.gov.uk)

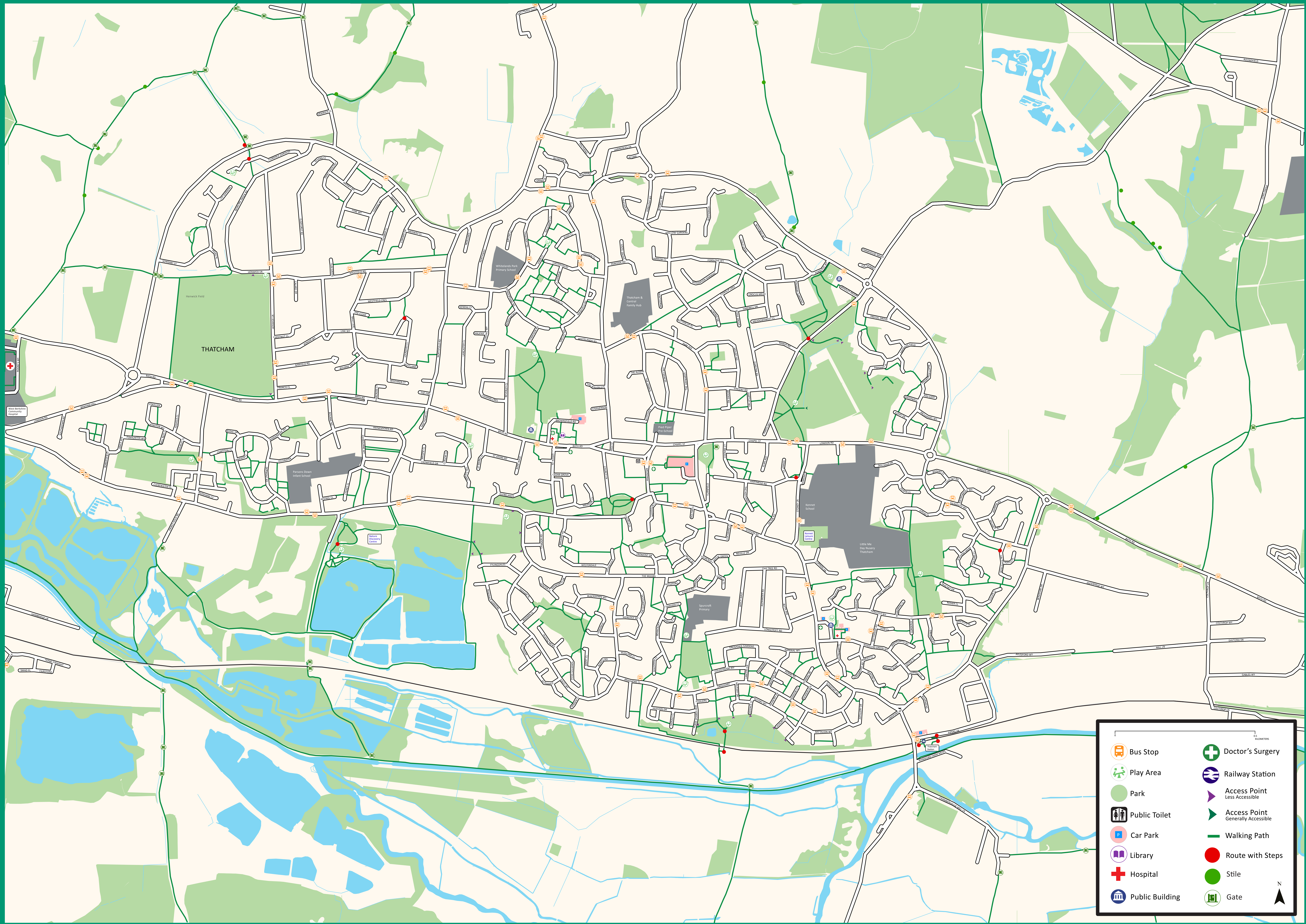
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THATCHAM

	Bus Stop		Doctor's Surgery
	Play Area		Railway Station
	Park		Access Point Less Accessible
	Public Toilet		Access Point Generally Accessible
	Car Park		Walking Path
	Library		Route with Steps
	Hospital		Stile
	Public Building		Gate

