

- A** In the Avalon Marshes area fields and plots of land are predominantly separated by a series of historic drainage **ditches** known as **rhynes**, (pronounced reen), they are also known as **wet fences**.
- B** **Cossington Station** opened in 1890 as the only intermediate station on the single line Bridgwater branch of the then Somerset and Dorset joint railway. This section was dismantled as part of the Beeching Cuts in the 1960's.
- C** There are many **Roman saltern mounds** that pepper the landscape, the small artificial mounds are made up from by-products of salt extraction including ashes, sediment, pottery and broken briquetage.
- D** Built between 1940 and 1942 the **Gold Corner pumping station** was put in place to supply the 4,500,000 imperial gallons of processing water required by the WWII munitions factory at Puriton.
- E** Historic **pollarding** of the willow trees in the area encouraged the growth of new shoots, called withies, which could be periodically cut and used for the production of artist's charcoal and baskets.
- F** Part of the ancient Polden Estate of Glastonbury Abbey, **Cossington** has a rich history of local industry including roman salt works, quarries for blue and white lias and limestone, agriculture and turbaries (peat cut for fuel).
- G** Listed as Ceptone in the Domesday book, as Chauton in 1303 and Chelton upon Poledowne in 1664; the name **Chilton Polden** is thought to trace from its position on limestone, and from the hill on which part of the parish lies.

**More information about this walk and others can be found at**  
[www.avalonmarshes.org](http://www.avalonmarshes.org)

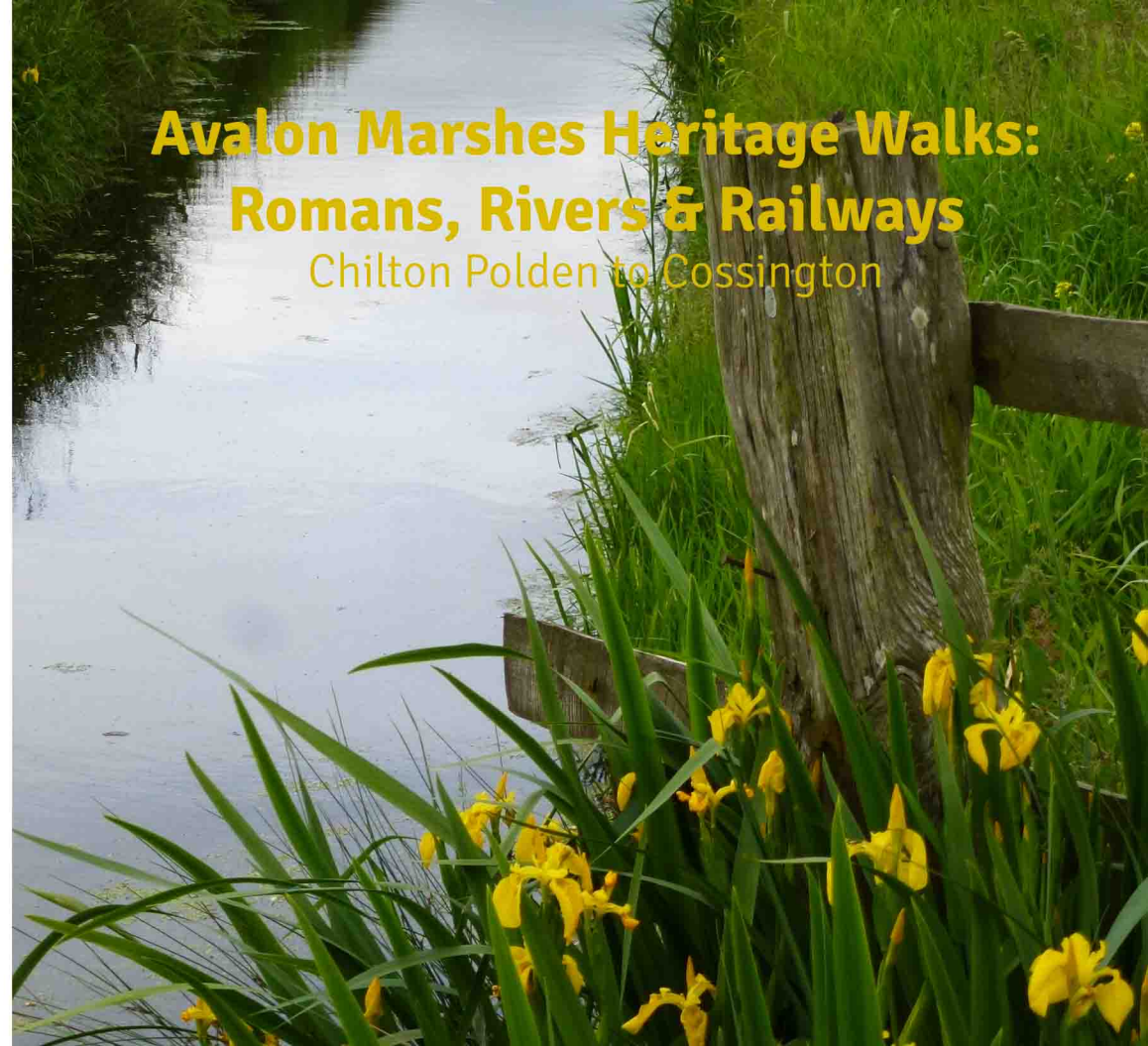
**Acknowledgements:**

Route adapted from Walk 4 in 'Walking on the Poldens' (1991) by the Parish Councils of Catcott, Chilton Polden and Edington. Parking permission kindly granted by Chilton Polden playing field committee. Donations for this community project can made at the Post Office counter at Gwilliam Kellands Country Stores. Special thanks to the many local volunteers who have been involved in the surveying of walking routes across the Avalon Marshes.

**Feedback:**

If you would like to comment on this walk route, please contact us at:  
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 T: 01458 860556 E: [info@avalonmarshes.org](mailto:info@avalonmarshes.org)

Specific footpath faults should be reported to Somerset County Council.



# Avalon Marshes Heritage Walks: Romans, Rivers & Railways Chilton Polden to Cossington

**One of a series of circular heritage walking routes in the  
 Avalon Marshes of Somerset**

**This moderate 7 mile (11km) walk takes in the historic villages of  
 Chilton Polden and Cossington along the Polden Ridge, and  
 explores nearby Roman Saltworks, a disused railway and the  
 importance of pumping to the Avalon Marshes.**



**The Walk:** Parking is available at the Chilton Polden Playing Field signposted at the eastern end of the village (Smallways Lane, TA7 9EG). Alternatively the walk could start in Cossington. There are public houses in both villages.

- 1 The walk starts in Smallways Lane. Follow this downhill and turn right when it emerges onto another slightly wider lane, but be aware of the traffic.
- 2 Continue downhill passing Butterwell Farm, and notice how the predominantly elm hedgerows give way to wet fences (ditches).
- 3 After a sharp left hand bend, take the blue-arrwed Public Bridleway on the left, and look out for any evidence of the disused railway.
- 4 Turn right when you reach the area of concrete hardstanding.
- 5 After you cross West Bridge, turn left after about 200m onto the waymarked footpath.
- 6 When you reach the lane, turn left past Gold Corner Pumping Station.
- 7 Follow the lane towards Cossington, and note how the hedgerows are full of blackthorn, hawthorn and old pollarded willows.
- 8 Halfway up the hill, take a right at the small crossroads (carry on uphill for a shorter route into Cossington).
- 9 Just over the bridge, take the footpath on the left over the stile adjacent to the wood.
- 10 At the top of the field, turn left over a stile in the hedge.
- 11 At the top of the hill turn left over the disused railway bridge into a residential area, but first take a moment to look back and enjoy the views over the Avalon Marshes towards the Mendip Ridge.
- 12 At the T-junction, turn right out of Broderin into Station Road, then into Manor Road and immediately take the footpath on the left; take a right and left into Walnut Lane, and left again into Mowground Lane.
- 13 At the end of the lane, you emerge on Middle Road; turn left and take the footpath opposite, but take care crossing this road.
- 14 Follow this footpath back to Chilton Polden, ignoring the paths to the left and right, eventually reaching South Moors Lane.
- 15 At the Y-junction, turn right into Church Lane, left and right into Townsend Lane, and again into Smallways Lane.

#### THE AVALON MARSHES WALKERS' CODE

1. Keep to the right of way to avoid trespass (droves are not rights of way unless shown as such on the map). If the path is obstructed you should seek a reasonable route around the obstruction.
2. Leave gates and property as you find them.
3. Keep dogs under close control at all times, and on a lead around farm animals and wildlife. However, if cattle chase you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead.
4. Where the route takes you onto a road, make sure you can be seen by traffic and be especially careful when approaching blind bends, using the verge wherever possible.
5. The marshes can be very muddy at times, so always make sure you wear appropriate footwear and clothing.
6. Respect the local community and other people enjoying the countryside, and take your litter home.

