



Chalk Stream Challenge

Sweatfords Water, Fordingbridge

Additional Information for Group Leaders

- The challenge route is approximately 1 mile, it can be shortened by not including the stretch along Puddleslosh Lane.
- You should be able to cover these parts of the challenge on this walk:

Section 1: 1	Section 2: 2 and 3
Section 3: 8, 9, 10 and 11	Section 4: 12
Section 5: 16, 18, 19 and 20	
- OS Explorer Map OL22 New Forest covers the walk area.
- The start is about a 20-minute walk from Fordingbridge town centre, and you could incorporate Sweatfords Water Meadows (w3w:///swells.wiggling.consumed) and more of the stream if coming this way.
- The closest on street parking for families or small groups is on Augustus Avenue (w3w:///shredder.motels.starring)
- We suggest larger groups ask parents to drop off and pick up along Parsonage Park Drive (w3w:///rejoined.plod.mincing) using the green space (w3w:///encroach.enjoy.reach) near Sweatford Stream Play Area to gather everyone before walking to the start.
- The closest public toilets are in Fordingbridge town centre, open 7am until 6pm (w3w:///inserted.webcams.surely)
- There is a café and toilets at the Forde Inn, open daily from 9.30am (w3w:///socialite.nicknames.lawyer)



This route has been created with funding from the Fordingbridge Rotary Club

- Paths are a mixture of gravel, boardwalk, grass and bare ground. The walk sticks mainly to the boardwalk and gravel paths which are accessible for pushchairs and wheelchairs.
- Whitsbury Green play park is on the route.
- Dogs are permitted but must be kept on a lead on the boardwalk. No dogs are allowed in the children's play areas.
- The safest location for children to access the river for a supervised paddle is not on the route itself, but close to the Sweatfords Stream Play Area (W3W:///superbly.dispatcher.relishing)
- If you carry out any activities by or in the river, remember to remind your group to wash their hands before eating or drinking - running water and soap is best.
- Please be aware that Hemlock water dropwort grows in this area, and in particular along the boardwalk stretches of the route, as it favours the damp grasslands and the banks of the river. If contact is made with the plant sap, it can cause a rash and blistering.
- For more river resources, including our guide on How to Safely River Dip, visit: <https://www.wessexrt.org.uk/education.html>
- To arrange a riverbank session for your group, or for advice about risk assessments, email education@wessexrt.org.uk

Useful websites:

- [Merlin app](#) for identifying bird song
- [Forde Inn](#) (local café)
- [Wessex Rivers Trust](#)
- [Fordingbridge Rotary Club](#)
- [Fordingbridge Town Council](#)
- [Fordingbridge Museum](#)
- [The Green Gram](#) (Community refill shop offering river friendly household products)

Acknowledgement:

The Chalk Stream Challenge was created by two volunteers as part of the National Lottery Heritage Funded [Watercress and Winterbournes](#) Landscape Partnership Scheme, which seeks to protect, enhance and celebrate the seven chalk streams that make up the headwaters of the Rivers Test and Itchen.

You can learn more about the scheme at www.hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes

By creating routes in other areas, we hope to engage more children and youth groups with some of the wonders of their local chalk stream.

