

# Take a walk in Redditch



**REDDITCH** has some hidden gems scattered around the diverse borough and with spring in the air there is no better time to get out and explore. To help inspire us to put on our walking boots, Arrow Valley Countryside Centre has a number of walks designed to help people take in not only the wildlife but the history of the area.

## The Miller's Trail

**Start:** Arrow Valley Countryside Centre  
**Length:** 2 miles, 1 ¼ hours  
**Terrain:** Flat tarmac surfaces and grass fields. Some paths may be muddy and wet after rain particularly in the winter.

Follow the maroon coloured arrows to stay on track.

- 1** Arrow Valley Lake is an excellent place for wildlife, including Swans, Mallards, Moorhens and Coots. Bullrushes also grow near the banks. The Lake is also used for fishing and boating.
- 2** The River Arrow, which runs through the country park, was once used to power a number of mills along its banks.
- 3** The river is also important to wildlife. If you are really quiet and very lucky, you might even see a Kingfisher.
- 4** Along your walk you will see many mill ponds like this one. These were created to store water from the River Arrow to power the mills. This one was used to power Beoley Paper Mill, further downstream. None of these ponds are used today, but they are a haven for wildlife.
- 5** The Cistercian Monks built Beoley Abbey in 1138. They did not eat meat so one of their main sources of food was fish. There are many remnants of fish ponds but only these two have been restored.
- 6** Before leaving the Abbey grounds why not detour to the site of the Abbey ruins. The other humps and bumps are other uncovered Abbey buildings.
- 7** On your left are the holding pools for the Forge Mill.
- 8** From this point, look carefully across the meadows. The triangular earthwork in this field is the remains of the mill pond built by monks. The water was directed from the Arrow to drive trip hammers and bellows to make small metal artefacts such as nails. It is thought to have been the first water powered industrial mill in England.
- 9** Return to the Countryside Centre for some well earned refreshments.

For more walks around the country park simply pick up a leaflet from the countryside centre.

