

Basildon Parish Council

West Berkshire

# Footpath [FP] and Byways of Basildon

Always wear appropriate footwear and take care when walking in the countryside, or town. No responsibility is accepted by the authors of this leaflet for the state or condition from time to time of the paths described.

Consider other people

Keep dogs under close control

litter home

Protect plants and animals and take your

Leave gates and property as you find them

Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs

FOLLOW THE COUNTRY CODE

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Production: West Berkshire Council, 2006

## Basildon

The ancient Manor of Basildon comprised the present day parishes of Basildon and Ashampstead and is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. It was an important royal manor at the time of the Norman Conquest with a lady Lord of the manor.

The parish has been inhabited since at least neolithic times and stone axes have been found dating back to 450,000BC. It was invaded by the romans, saxons, vikings and normans, partly on account of the fact that the Thames used to be the frontier between rival tribes and kingdoms.

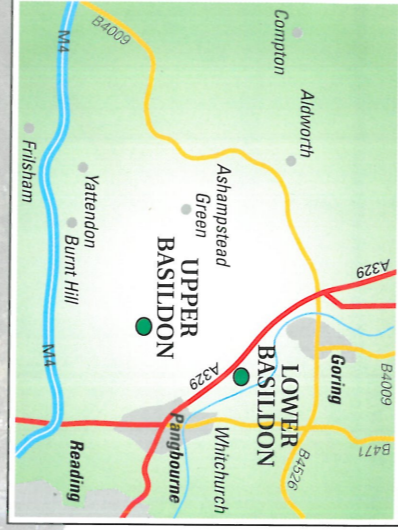
Famous individuals connected with Basildon comprise Jethro Tull, the agriculturalist, (1674-1741), born and buried here; Lady Mary Fane (1710-1785), who constructed a famous grotto; Sir Francis Sykes Bt (1730-1804), who made a fortune with the East India Company and built Basildon Park and James, Charles and Major James Archibald Morrison, who owned the Basildon estate from 1838-1929. Major Morrison used Sir Edwin Lutyens to modernize some of the Basildon estate, recognizable by plaques bearing JAM and dates for 1913 or 1914 and is believed to have come up with the name Basildon Bond for the well-known writing paper.

### Refreshments, Parking and Toilets

There are three good pubs in the Parish. In Upper Basildon you can find the *Red Lion*, Darby Lane, just off the Triangle and the *Beehive*, next to the Village Green. In Lower Basildon is the *Crown* along the Reading Road (A329). All three pubs have good parking and in addition there is parking at *St Stephen's Church*, close to the Village Green in Upper Basildon. In Lower Basildon it is possible to park along Church Lane by *St Bartholomew's Church*.

Basildon has a local bus service, and there are railway stations at Pangbourne and Goring-on-Thames.

There are no public toilets in Basildon but St Stephen's Church is normally open and visitors are welcome to use its toilets.



#### 1 FOOTPATH

Runs through beech woods at the back of Teneplas and Old Stocks Court to emerge at Whitemoor Lane, near the entrance to Clayhanger Farm. The start is easily missed – walking from the centre of Upper Basildon, look out for the signpost on the left approx 200 yards beyond entrance to Teneplas Drive. On walking through woods you will see to your left two steep water-filled pits. This is where some of the clay was dug for the Basildon brick industry. The clay was exhausted by the start of the 2nd World War. The brickworks were then taken over by Teneplas, who had been bombed out in Fulham and were making spiffire parts, and they continued making extruded plastics here until the 1980's. Later the site was redeveloped for housing.

At Whitemoor Lane you can either pick up **FP1** on the other side of the lane and continue down the hill towards Ashampstead or go down Whitemoor Lane to Quirk's Green.

#### 2 FOOTPATH

This is a continuation of a Bridleway from Quirk's Green. It takes you through beech woods, with fine views towards Ashampstead, to Kiln Ride, which, until it was redeveloped in the 1960's, used to be a camp for Polish refugees.

#### 3 FOOTPATH

Starts on a wide grass verge in front of the old property known as Walcroft and runs by the side of a field to the Aldworth Road. Chippers Copse lies diagonally left at this point, and was the scene of a Meteor jet crash in 1954, which killed the pilot and narrowly missed the school.

#### 4 FOOTPATH

Starts at the right hand side of the recreation ground by the junction of Blandy's Lane and Bethesda Street and then runs down through the beech trees of Harley Hill Wood to Hook End Lane. Very pleasant views over the valley and across to Hook End Farm.

#### 5/6 FOOTPATHS

Starts at the top of Beckfords and runs through the school playground to Emery field, where there are good views of Blandy's Farm, Basildon Park, and beyond. The footpath forks in the middle of the field and you can then either stay on **FP5** to Bethesda Street or take **FP6** to Blandy's Lane.

#### 7 RESTRICTED BYWAY

Go straight on at the junction of Ashampstead Road with Whitemoor Lane and pass Drift Farm on the left. The footpath then runs along the parish boundary to connect with a number of other paths in the neighbouring parish.

#### 8 FOOTPATH

Start at Hook End Lane and climb up the hill by the side of Howe Grove Wood. It then runs through beech woods at the back of Tomb Farm, owned now by *The Royal Berkshire Shooting School*, before descending and then climbing again to emerge at Southridge on an unnamed road. Turn left and walk a few hundred yards to meet the Aldworth road, which will take you back to Upper Basildon.

#### 9 FOOTPATH

Starts at the side of the Beehive PH. After 200 yards it passes through the site of former Skeyr's farm and runs across the field (*locals regularly use the permitted path around the edge of the field instead*) to emerge on Mead Lane at Wood Green Farm (possibly the birthplace of Jethro Tull).

#### 10 BRIDLEWAY

Starts at Park Wall Lane by the side of Harley House and runs down through the beech woods at the rear of Harley House deer park and past Hillfields Farm to eventually emerge onto the A329. Just beyond the junction with **FP11** are the remains of the estate Lime Kiln on the left.

Across the A329 you can look across an historical field where, in 2001, Channel 4's *'Time Team'* discovered neolithic remains. In 1838, when the GWR was being built a roman villa was uncovered, but then destroyed. The railway bridge was built by Brunel and is believed to have been the model for the bridge shown in Turner's painting *'Rain, Speed and Steam'*.

## Public Rights of Way in West Berkshire

West Berkshire possesses over 700 miles of public footpaths, bridleways and byways shared over 63 parishes, including Basildon. These "public rights of way" are all signposted from roads and waymarked. It is West Berkshire Council's responsibility to maintain and sign the rights of way. They own the surfaces of rights of way for maintenance purposes, but the sub-soil will be privately owned. The owner of the subsoil may grant permission for the right of way to be used privately.

**Public Footpaths (FP):** may be used by people on foot. There is no public right to push a bicycle or lead a horse, but a pushchair may be used.

**Public Bridleways (BR):** may be used for walking, riding, leading horses or pedal cycling. Cyclists must give way to pedestrians and horse riders. There is no public right to use a horse-drawn vehicle.

**Byways open to all traffic (BW):** may be used by vehicular and all other types of traffic, but are used mainly for walking or riding horses or cycles. Vehicles should give way to other users, and comply with all driving regulations as for ordinary traffic. They must be taxed, insured, roadworthy and properly silenced.

**Restricted Byways (RB):** other rights of way that may be used for walking, cycling and horse-riding. There is a right to use a horse drawn vehicle but not a motor vehicle.

Maps of the rights of way can be found on the West Berkshire Council web site ([www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk)) and the rights of way are also clearly shown on Ordnance Survey Explorer map No 159.





### 11 FOOTPATH

This is the link from **BR10** to Hook End Lane, and offers beautiful views over Hook End Valley.

### 12 BRIDLEWAY

Known locally as Frying Pan Lane, it used to be called Church Lane and was the main route by which Upper Basildonians walked to St Bartholomew's Church in Lower Basildon. It runs from Sarum House in Mead Lane to Godwin's Lodge in Park Wall Lane, at the rear entrance to Basildon Park.

There used to be some old cottages along the lane, which have long since gone. The story is that a Basildonian returned unexpectedly from the Crimea War to find his wife cooking breakfast for someone she maintained was her long-lost Uncle Joe. The soldier didn't believe her, and the breakfast, including the frying pan in which it was being cooked, were hurled into the lane and became part of Basildonian folk-lore.

### 13 BYWAY

Adders Lane is now used almost exclusively as a footpath, but used to be the main route from Upper Basildon to Ashampstead Common, where it joins up with a number of other paths.

### 14 FOOTPATH

From Hook End Lane walk up the entrance road to *The Royal Berkshire Shooting School* for 300 yards until you reach a signpost on the left. Go over the stile and then there is a steep climb up a field leading to Hare Green, the only surviving cottage of what was once a small hamlet of 5 cottages. On reaching the Aldworth Road turn right and walk 200 yards until you pick up **FP14** again on your left, and continue through the pine wood known as Broom Wood.

Just before leaving the wood you will pass through the remains of Grim's Ditch, a half mile stretch of earthworks probably dating back to the Bronze Age. Another half mile length is at Holes Shaw near the Grotto on the A329 and others appear all over the Chilterns and Berkshire Downs. Grim was the Saxon word for the Devil and the Saxons thought they were so large that the Devil must have constructed them.

### 15 BYWAY

Runs from the bottom of Wakeman's to the Yattendon road.

### 16 FOOTPATH

A short length of footpath through the woods at Emery Down.

### 17 FOOTPATH

This footpath connects Whitemoor Lane/Ashampstead Road to the Aldworth Road at Rushdown Farm.

### 18 20 FOOTPATHS

**FP18** runs from the A329 at *Sot's Hole* along part of the Thames Path and past Beale Park to meet up with **FP20**, which emerges onto Church Lane by St Bartholomew's Church.

*St. Bartholomew's Church* is now under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust but is still used for occasional services. Parts of the Church date back to the 13thC. For security it is kept locked, but opens one Sunday a month in the summer and other times by arrangement (01491 671714).

### 22 FOOTPATH

This short path starts at The Triangle, initially along a driveway, and leads to the Aldworth Road.

### 23 FOOTPATH

This footpath runs from Gardener's Lane, south of Adders Lane, to meet the Yattendon Road. It connects with paths on the other side of the road at Buckhold.

### 25 FOOTPATH

Runs from Gardner's Lane across fields to Yattendon Road and links up with another path running up to Heron's Farm.

### 10 FOOTPATH 10 (Pangbourne)

This is frequently used by walkers to get from Upper Basildon to Lower Basildon, in order to walk by the river. The start of the footpath is 200 yards before the entrance to Lower Bowden Farm. Cross several fields before descending down a wooded valley to emerge at *Sot's Hole*. Go under the railway and cross the A329 to join **FP18** alongside the Thames.

### BASILDON PARK

Basildon Park is owned by the National Trust. There are several permitted and waymarked footpaths which can be used April – September at no cost by NT members and residents of Basildon Parish. The Trust charge an entrance fee for everyone else.

### BEALE PARK

There are several permitted footpaths on Beale Park land: Basildon Corner (behind the curtain shop) and Tookie Wood around the railway line, which is a designated community woodland, part funded by a grant from the Forestry Commission.

*NOTE: Footpaths 19, 21 and 24 are extremely short and/or become paths in adjacent parishes, or come into Basildon parish midway along their length and then go into another parish.*

## Suggested Circular Walks

### 2 miles

From Beehive PH take **FP9** to Mead lane; left at Mead Lane to Blandly's Lane; right along Blandly's Lane to **FP6**; left where **FP6** meets **FP5** and then left down Beckfords on leaving school. Proceed straight on to arrive back at the Beehive PH.

### 4 miles

From Village Green, proceed down Gardener's Lane to **BW13** (Adder's Lane) on the right. After a mile reach Ashampstead Common and take the footpath across the road on the right. This joins with **FP2** and brings you to Kiln Ride. Walk up hill by road to crossroads. Just beyond crossroads on the right is start of **FP3**. On reaching Yattendon Rd cross over into Bethesda Street and proceed straight on until you reach **FP5** on right. Walk along **FP5** to school and on leaving the school turn left into Beckfords and then straight on to Village Green.

### 6 miles

Take **FP9** at Beehive PH to Mead Lane; turn left and at Sarum House take **BR12** to rear entrance to Basildon Park. Turn left and walk up road to Harley House, where you take **BR10** through the woods until it meets **FP11**. Take **FP11** down to Hook End Lane. Walk up Hook End Lane to entrance to *The Royal Berkshire Shooting School* and walk up **FP14** to Hare Green. On leaving Hare Green turn right at Yattendon Road and after 200 yards continue left on **FP14** through Broom Wood to join up with **RB7**. Turn left and walk on past Drift Farm, and then Tenepas, to the crossroads. Continue straight ahead down Ashampstead Road and at the end cross over to Maple Lane, and then Beckfords. Keep straight on to the Village Green.

### 8 miles

From the Village Green walk towards Pangbourne down Pangbourne Road for 2/3rds of a mile to **FP10** (*Pangbourne*). Cross the fields and descend through an atmospheric wooded valley, believed to have housed a celtic shrine, to *Sot's Hole*. Go under the railway and cross the A329 to join **FP18**. Follow the path past *Beale Park* to St Bartholomew's Church and **FP20**. Walk up Church Lane to the A329. There is a permitted path at the side of the road that avoids the traffic. At the A329 turn right and walk along the pavement past the Crown PH until you meet **BR10** on your left, at the entrance to Hillfields Farm. Walk up **BR10** through the woods to Harley House and then turn left along Park Wall Lane for 200 yards and right onto **BR12** at the rear entrance to Basildon Park. At Mead Lane, turn left and then right to take **FP9** across the fields to arrive back at the Village Green and the Beehive PH.

