

## Teas, buns, pints and pies:

**Moor Mill :** Family restaurant and bar.

**Park Street:** The Falcon and The Overdraught Public Houses plus café.

**Bricket Wood:** The Gate Public House (Station Road)

## How to get there:

**By road:** Moor Mill restaurant and bar is in Bricket Wood, just 3 miles south of St Albans. Leave Junction 21a of the M25/Junction 6 of the M1 and take the 3rd exit towards Watford. Turn left at the first traffic lights towards M1/Bricket Wood. Take 2nd turning into Mount Pleasant Lane, turn right at The Gate Public House, into Smug Oak Lane. There is parking further round Walk 8 on Hyde Lane.

**By public transport:** Bricket Wood is served by transport links from Watford/St Albans. The Abbey Flyer train runs between Watford Junction and St Albans Abbey stations. Visit [www.abbeyline.org.uk](http://www.abbeyline.org.uk) for service details. For details of train, coach and bus services contact Intalink Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit [www.intalink.org.uk](http://www.intalink.org.uk)

 Parts of this walk can be muddy or wet underfoot in some seasons.



This is one of a series of 8 circular walks on the River Ver and part of the 17 mile long linear, River Ver Trail. You can also use the OS Explorer Map 182 to find your way around the Valley. For lots more photos, memories, information and copies of the other walks go to [www.riverver.co.uk](http://www.riverver.co.uk)

The Countryside Management Service works with communities in Hertfordshire to help them care for and enjoy the environment. For information on further opportunities to enjoy Hertfordshire countryside, including Health Walks, visit [www.hertslink.org/cms](http://www.hertslink.org/cms)

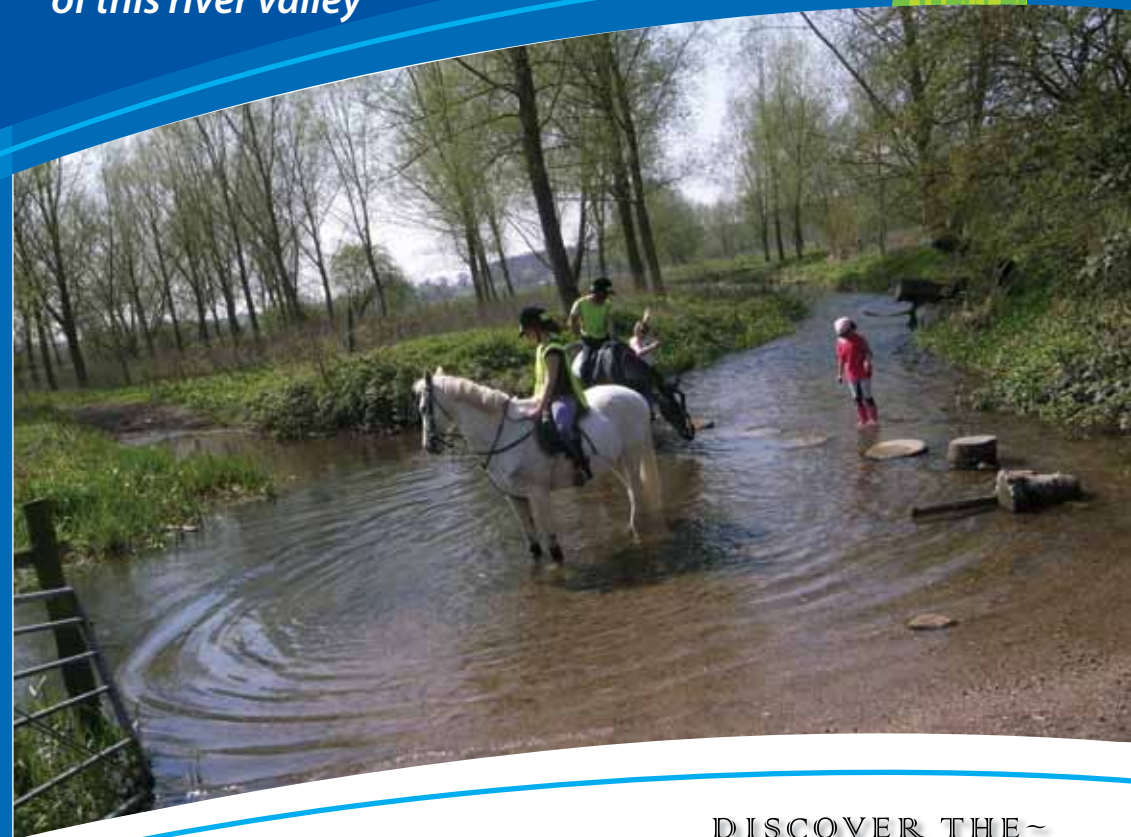
If you would like this leaflet produced in large print, please contact the Countryside Management Service on southwest. [cms@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:cms@hertscc.gov.uk) Tel: 01462 459395

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Photos: Countryside Management Service, Ver Valley Society, Park Street and Frogmore Society.  
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# VER VALLEY WALK 8

## The Confluence Walk

*Explore the beautiful rolling countryside of this river valley*



Start and finish: Moor Mill,  
Smug Oak Lane, Bricket Wood  
Full walk: 3.7 miles (6 km) -  
About 2 hours

DISCOVER THE ~  
**RIVER  
VER**

[www.riverver.co.uk](http://www.riverver.co.uk)



Ver Valley  
Society



**PARK STREET AND BRICKET WOOD**

# Discover the River Ver

The River Ver is special; it is a **chalk stream**, one of only about 200 on the planet and its pure alkaline water supports a very particular mix of **flora** and **fauna**. For 450,000 years, since the Anglian Ice Age, it has flowed (almost) uninterrupted along its valley, south from its source at Kensworth Lynch in the Chiltern Hills, through Markyate, Flamstead, Redbourn, St Albans and Park Street to where it joins with the River Colne near Bricket Wood – ultimately to empty into the River Thames near Windsor.

Man has used the river for navigation, for milling, for mineral extraction and for food production – these processes mean the river is much changed from its ‘natural’ state. Today we utilise the Ver in two other ways. Firstly, deep boreholes into the chalk strata (or aquifer) abstract over half of all the water that falls as rain

in the area. Secondly, we use the river and its attractive surroundings for simple leisure and pleasure, by walking through its valley or along its banks, as you might do today by following this route.

Like a good book, the River Ver has a beginning, middle and end, and associated with its twists and turns many characters come and go; through these walks you will follow the story in eight chapters, from source to confluence. We aim to set the Ver in its local landscape and cultural context. For further information about the Ver and the people who lived near it, past and present, visit our website: [www.riverver.co.uk](http://www.riverver.co.uk)

The River Ver links us to the past, present and future. It is...

## liquid history

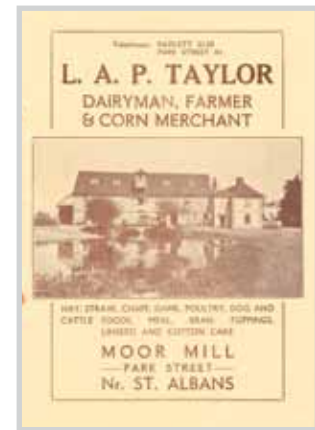
*The sand and gravel bands in Hertfordshire lie in the ‘Vale of St Albans’. This was the course of the proto-Thames which flowed approximately 2 million years ago out into the North Sea further north than the Thames does today. The bands of aggregate which overlay the chalk aquifer were deposited in vast quantities by the action of this river washed down from the Midlands. The last Ice Age diverted the Thames and Ver to their present courses. From Roman times this aggregate began to be utilised for building purposes: Sand and gravel for mortar, cement, ballast etc and flint for walls. In the 19th century, due to the Industrial Revolution and population*

*increase, demand increased greatly. By the 20th century modern machinery meant that mineral resources could be extracted on an industrial scale, this often resulted in the route and nature of the river being permanently altered, such as at Drop Lane.*



### 1 Moor Mill

Moor Mill is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Before the Dissolution, *Moremyll* was a St Albans Abbey possession. From about 1400 the Miller was asked to pay rent in the form of eels, caught in the waters around the mill, for the Abbey’s refectory.



### 2 Park Street Bridge and ford

A ford through the River Ver has existed here for at least 2,000 years. Nowadays the modern Watling Street/A5183 crosses on a sturdy bridge. The old Roman ford or ‘watersplash’ can still be seen on its downstream side.



### 5 Hanstead House

The Yule family purchased the house and estate in 1902. It was they who insisted that the nearby Colne Valley groundwater pumping stations were built in a rustic style.



### 7 Confluence of the Ver with the Colne

Oxford English Dictionary: ‘Confluence’ – a flowing together; the junction and union of two or more streams or moving fluids. The place where two or more rivers, etc. unite.



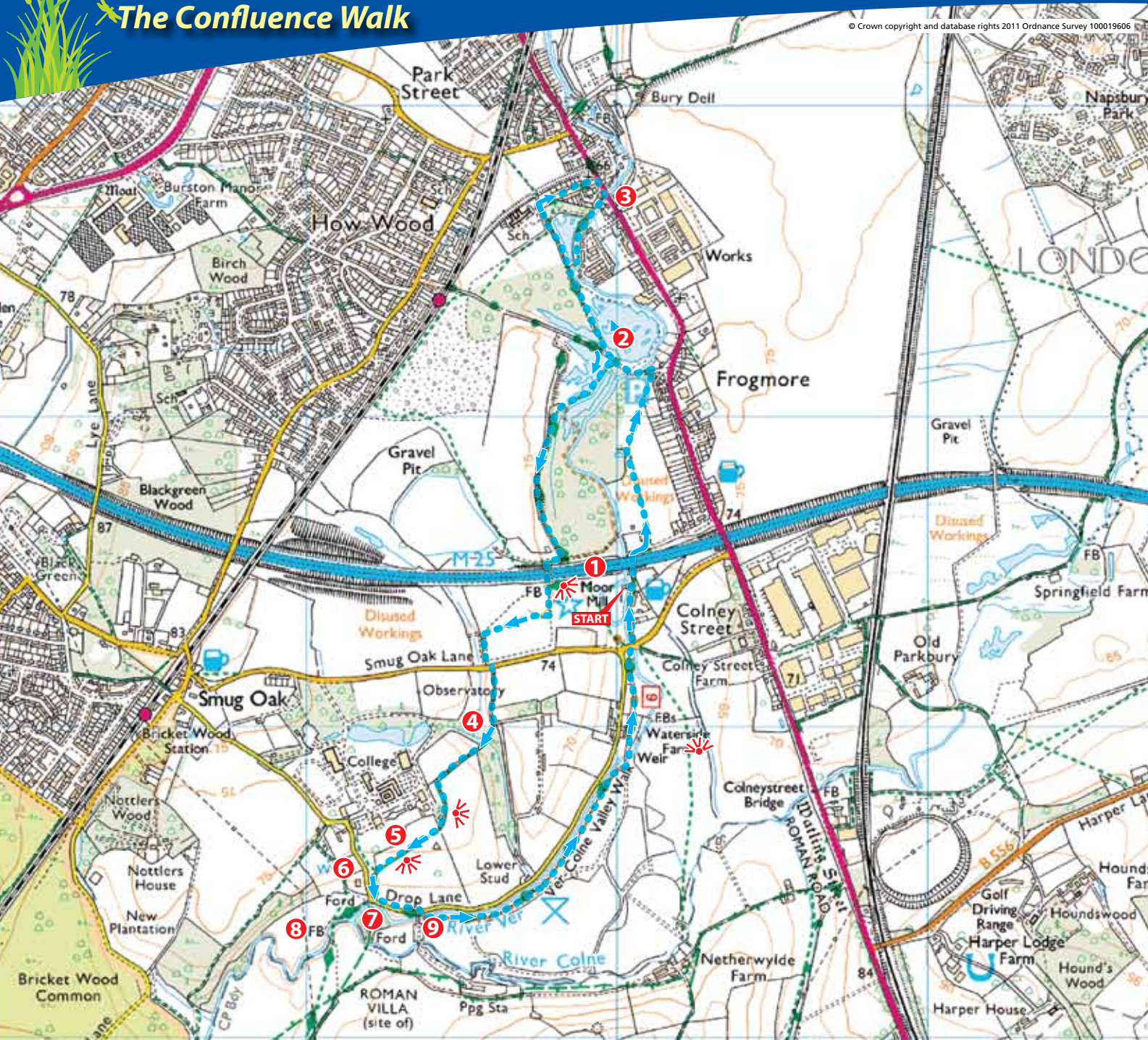
### 9 Riverside Way

20th century gravel extraction and subsequent ‘restoration’ has greatly altered the Ver’s last mile. The river beside Drop Lane has been canalised and is a great place to see and catch Signal Crayfish.

# VER VALLEY WALK 8

## The Confluence Walk


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## PARK STREET AND BRICKET WOOD

At Moor Mill **1** follow the footpath behind to pass under the M25. At the corner of the yard by Moor Mill Lane turn left, to follow the clear path through the former sand and gravel washing plant area to Hyde Lane, turn left.

Cross the footbridge over the River Ver into Frogmore and Park Street pits **2**. Walk ahead to Branch Road, then right to Watling Street. At the river **3** turn right and, just before the bridge, turn right again onto the riverside path.

Retrace the path through the pits.  Look out for dragonflies and Great Crested Grebe. About 50 yards before the footbridge bear right onto a path up to the infill ridge and the site of Park Street Roman Villa. Turn left. Note how much higher the 'restored' land is in comparison with the river below.


Cross the M25 via the footbridge; on the south side walk ahead through a kissing gate, then right and left through another area of infill to Smug Oak Lane. Cross the road to the bridleway opposite, and follow the gentle slope down to the Hanstead Ditch **4**.

Follow the path left, around the perimeter of the Training College campus, past Hanstead House **5**.


Follow the bridleway to Drop Lane, then turn left to see Drop Lane Pumping Station **6**. Note the gentle hum of the electric pumps.

For a short detour, at the ford take the footpath, right, to see the River Ver meet the River Colne at their confluence **7**.

The attractive countryside, down the Colne Valley between the confluence with the River Ver and Wall Hall/Otterspool is well worth exploring **8**. For an optional extra loop to this walk, continue beyond the confluence and cross the footbridge over the River Colne and return to Smug Oak Lane and Moor Mill on the Rights of Way via Netherwyld Farm.

To return to Moor Mill from the ford walk a short distance along Drop Lane, then turn right across a footbridge to follow Riverside Way **9**, a popular permissive bridleway running alongside the river.  On the drive back to Moor Mill watch out for Brown Trout and other wildlife feeding on titbits from customers.

### KEY

 **Ver Valley Walk 8** uses rights of way to link to the River Ver Trail to enable you to explore the river valley in bite size sections.



**Waymarking**  
Follow these waymarks on your way around the route.



**Ver Valley View**

 **Public Footpath**

 **Public Bridleway**



**Take care when crossing main roads**



**Nature notes**

