

## Directions

Starting from Old St Mary's Church, which is made mostly of locally quarried Woburn Sands sandstone, and turning left out of the churchyard, walk down Old Church Path until you reach the High Street, turn right and cross the road.

Return to the High Street via the footpath, turn left and continue until you reach The Causeway. At the corner of this single-track road is Clophill Old Mill.

Walk along The Causeway and passing over the leat before heading to the middle of the valley, where you can see the wide clay valley stretching East-West perpendicular to The Causeway. Farther along you will once again cross the wider River Flit.

Return to the High Street and continue along to the A6. Whilst walking along there are some interesting old buildings made from locally made bricks and special glazed bricks that, when new, would have been a deep green in colour.

At this point, you can return to the church through the village, following the High Street.

Cross the A6 and turn into Clophill Road. Continue along this road turning right onto the Public Bridleway at the junction of Clophill Road and Maulden. Follow the bridleway to the foot of Maulden Woods, turn left and track the tree line, noting as you pass the surface erosion exposing tree roots. At the junction of three paths, there is a steeply incised dry valley down which flows a seasonal stream cutting down through the overlying Oadby Till, a glacial deposit covering the Woburn Sands.

Walk up this dry valley following the marked route. At a crossroads with several footpaths and bridleways continue

on, keeping the stream to your right hand side. A short way further, the stream enters a culvert and goes under the path emerging on the left. At the next crossroads of paths, turn right, walk up the ridge to its highest point.

Continue straight up the rising ridge and join the main Woodland Centre path turn left and walk until you reach Forest Lodge (keepers cottage) and the main intersection with the Greensand Ridge Walk (GRW).

Turn right, following the markers for GRW and head towards the A6.

Cross the A6 and continue to follow the GRW markers. You will reach a retaining wall with wonderful local stonework.

At the end of the retaining wall, turn left up a very steep part of the ridge and continue to follow the GRW markers.

Resume following the GRW markers towards Back Street. To your right, note the Victorian quarry from which many of the local building stones were extracted, including those for the Stone Jug public house. At the end of the path turn left and The Stone Jug will be 200m further on. This is a fine example of local building stone construction and traditional real ale!

Continue along Back Street and bear right, then left, following the signs for the Village Hall. Immediately on your left is a small cul-de-sac marked Nos. 1, 3 and 5.

Continue up Kiln Lane, bear right and upon reaching the Great Lane junction turn right. About 100m on the left is the GRW footpath that leads back to the Eco Lodges, which are nestled in an old gault and marl pit that could have been used for brick building or other useful resources, until you return to Old St Mary's Church.



## Bedfordshire Geology Group

The Bedfordshire Geology Group was formed in 2004 by a group of enthusiastic amateur and professional geologists. We aim to encourage an understanding of the rocks and landforms of the county for the benefit of all. One of the main ways of doing this is by identifying and popularising Local Geological Sites, which are of scientific and educational importance.

Members enjoy field trips, clearing overgrown sites, lectures, workshops and social events – all aimed at getting familiar with local rocks and fossils. We also arrange guided walks in order to share our interest in the varied scenery of Bedfordshire.

We work closely with local companies, museums and country parks. Recently we have collaborated with The Wildlife Trust, The Greensand Trust, Natural England and English Heritage on different projects around the county.

Educational support for schools is arranged by request. This often involves classroom-based sessions that introduce pupils to exciting geological topics such as dinosaurs and volcanoes. Alternatively, we can organise outdoor visits to help students learn more about their natural environment.

Old St Mary's and Clophill Lodge are managed by Clophill Heritage Trust.

[www.clophill-lodge.com](http://www.clophill-lodge.com)

For more information, contact us through our website  
or by email to  
[secretary@bedfordshiregeologygroup.org.uk](mailto:secretary@bedfordshiregeologygroup.org.uk)

This leaflet has been funded by Clophill Heritage Trust

## Clophill

# GEOTRAILS IN BEDFORDSHIRE



This leaflet has been developed by Bedfordshire Geology Group in partnership with Clophill Heritage Trust. Working together to bring our landscape and history alive.



BEDFORDSHIRE  
GEOLOGY GROUP

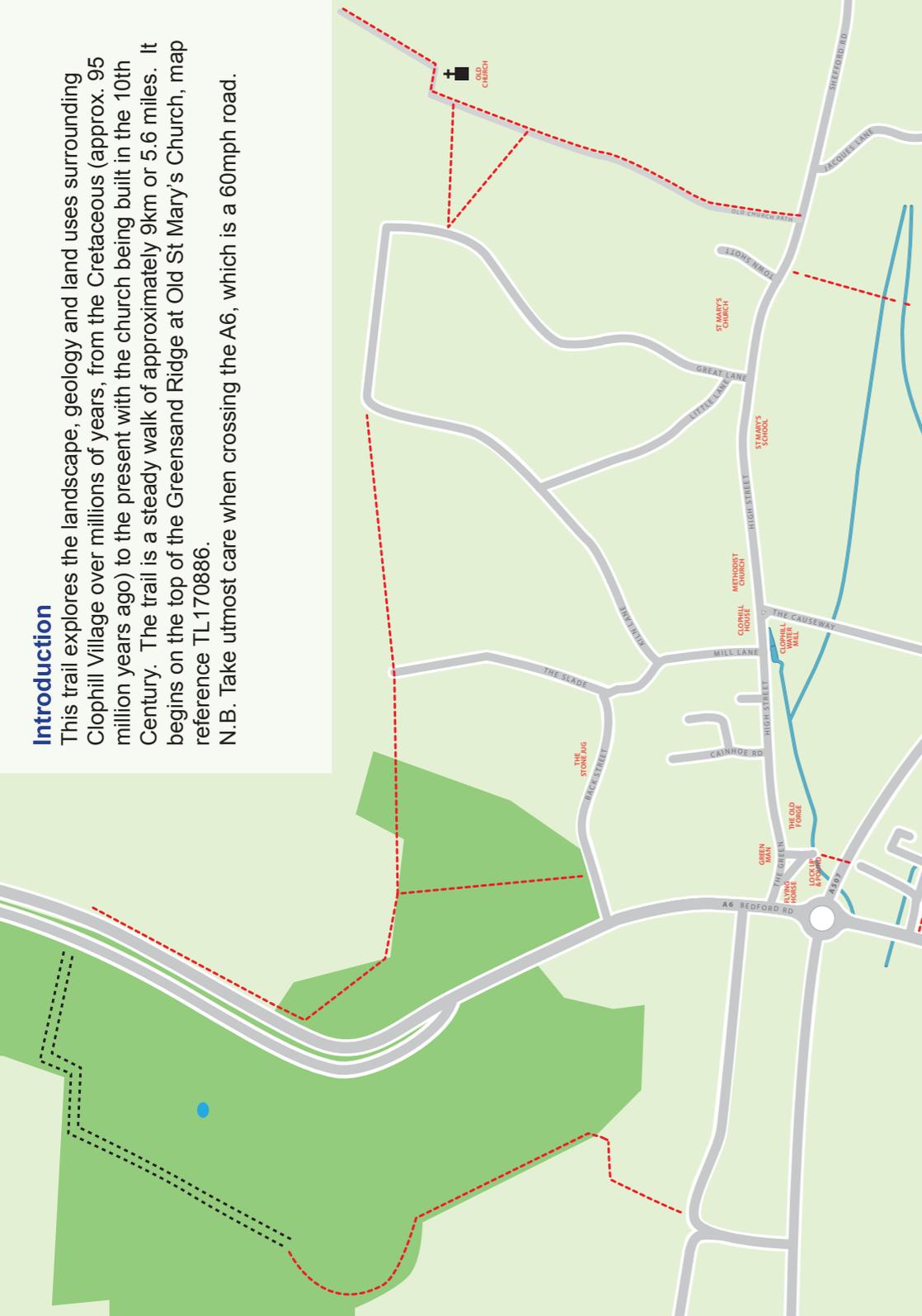


bringing  
landscape to life

## Introduction

This trail explores the landscape, geology and land uses surrounding Clophill Village over millions of years, from the Cretaceous (approx. 95 million years ago) to the present with the church being built in the 10th Century. The trail is a steady walk of approximately 9km or 5.6 miles. It begins on the top of the Greensand Ridge at Old St Mary's Church, map reference TL170886.

N.B. Take utmost care when crossing the A6, which is a 60mph road.



In The northwest facing bank of the River Flit can be seen smooth ironstone exposed through water erosion.

The lakes at the end of the footpath are the flooded Fullers' Earth workings that were one of the major industries in Clophill during the 20th Century. The extraction works closed down in 2000.

You can hear the leat tumbling beneath the mill where the undershot wheel would have turned millstones to grind wheat. Also, on the corner of the mill building is an old OS marker stone.



The River Flit is a misfit stream, which means it is much smaller than the river that eroded the valley in which it sits today. During periglacial conditions, the River Flit would have been a much larger braided system of streams eroding the landscape.



This path leads you past small ponds on top of the Woburn Sands created by hollows in the Woburn Sands Formation probably lined by the impermeable Oadby Till. The ponds are recognisable by the change in vegetation and the tall reed-sweet grasses on its edges. The ponds are

either remnant bomb craters from the Second World War, dew ponds or possibly historical pits dug for clay extraction to make bricks locally.

Near Forest Lodge is a massive felled tree, evidence of how big some of the trees can grow on the nutrient-poor sandy soil.

## Detour 1:

Take the Public Footpath on the left, almost opposite Townshott. Along this path, you will cross two branches of the River Flit. The first one you cross is the diverted leat, which you will see later in the walk, and the second is the river itself: a great place to play Pooh-sticks!

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Look out for the engraved stone depicting the inscription "Deadman's Hill" and a skull-and-crossbones, a local waymarker stone.

In addition, you can see, in many of the stones, geological features including cross-bedding, grain differentiation (1), mud drapes (2) and iron-rich ripples.



As you walk across the fields note the change in soil type and vegetation related to clay cover to the north (Oadby Till) and the lack of clay to the south (erosion of the Oadby Till to reveal the Woburn Sands bedrock).

On the right-hand side of this cul-de-sac is an impressive, large and beautiful exposure of Woburn Sands Formation showing a distinct unconformity, bedding, erosion and other geological features. This exposure is due again to quarrying, probably for sand extraction and local building stones.



## Guided Detour 2:

A guided tour can be arranged through the Trust into the semi-worked quarry on the A6.

