

The River Great Ouse in Hemingford Abbots

Introduction

Our stretch of this River runs from the west end of Hemingford Grey Quay to the East side of what is known as the Four Gates Sluice at the North West end of Hemingford Meadow. It includes the Backwater which makes Hemingford Meadow effectively an Island accessible from the bridge over the lock at Houghton Mill or the Black Bridge at the end of Meadow Lane in Hemingford Abbots

There is also an inaccessible Island opposite the Caravan Park in Hemingford Abbots

Hemingford Meadow is privately owned and farmed for Hay and then used for grazing Sheep and Cattle. There is a hard surface footpath and Bridleway from the Black Bridge to Houghton Lock and Houghton Mill and also a footpath along the South Bank of the main River (not the Backwater)

When the River floods it is not advisable to use the footpaths as water levels mean they are impassable in places

Navigation

Both the Main River and Backwater are navigable and controlled by the Environment Agency (www.environment-agency.gov.uk) with whom all craft using the River must be registered (this includes rowing boats, canoes and kayaks etc)

The River frequently runs fast and floods. Current River conditions can be found at www.riverlevels.uk under River Great Ouse at Houghton which is our nearest monitoring station.

When the River is closed to Navigation we post notices on our Parish Notice Boards and there will also be a red light showing at Houghton Lock.

There are many eddies created by variations in the River Bed and this results in sudden changes in depths so anyone venturing into the River should be a competent swimmer and wear a life jacket if on any craft

Fishing

Licences are required

Blue Algae

In Summer Months when River flows are negligible and it is hot Blue Algae can form. This is toxic and often fatal to dogs so they should be kept from going in the water. Any information we have will be put on Parish notice Boards

Hemingford Abbots River Warden