

The Fen Edge Trail route

Our Trail takes a meandering route around the edge of what we have called the Fen 'Basin' i.e. the land that lies near, and sometimes below, sea level. We are guided by the 'line' (contour) **where the land reaches 5 metres above sea level**, representing (very approximately) the limit of the historic wetland. The hillshade map shows how flat the fenland area is and gives an idea of the extent of the low-lying land, a region of sometimes dramatic changes including freshwater flooding, inundation by the sea, emergence and disappearance of islands, and formation and destruction of water channels. By following the Trail you will take a journey to discover the past as well as explore the present.

Starting at the Lincolnshire border north of **Peterborough**, the Trail passes through the heart of the city to travel along the western edge of the Fens through Stanground, Farcet, Yaxley, Holme and Conington to Sawtry. It then goes on to Wood Walton, Upwood, **Ramsey**, Bury, Wistow, Broughton and Warboys. Further south the route passes through Pidley, Somersham, Colne, Earith, Bluntisham, Needingworth, Holywell, **St Ives**, Fenstanton, Fen Drayton, Swavesey, Over, Willingham, Rampton, Cottenham, Landbeach, Waterbeach, Horningsea, Milton, and further on to **Cambridge**, another city with the fenland at its heart. The eastern route passes through Fen Ditton, Stow cum Quy, Lode, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior, Reach, Burwell, Upware, Wicken, Soham and Fordham before reaching Isleham and the Suffolk border.



Within the fenland there are several 'islands' the largest of which is the Isle of **Ely**, including Witcham, Sutton, Haddenham, Aldreth, Wilburton, Stretham, Little Thetford, Chettisham, Little Downham and Coveney. There are also Trail walks around the islands of **Littleport**, **Thorney**, **Whittlesey**, **Chatteris** and **March** (including Doddington and Wimblington) and one at Wisbech. Each walk on the Trail has a **Walk Guide** to describe the route options and places of interest along the way that explore the geology, wildlife, history and culture as you go. Tea shops are not forgotten!

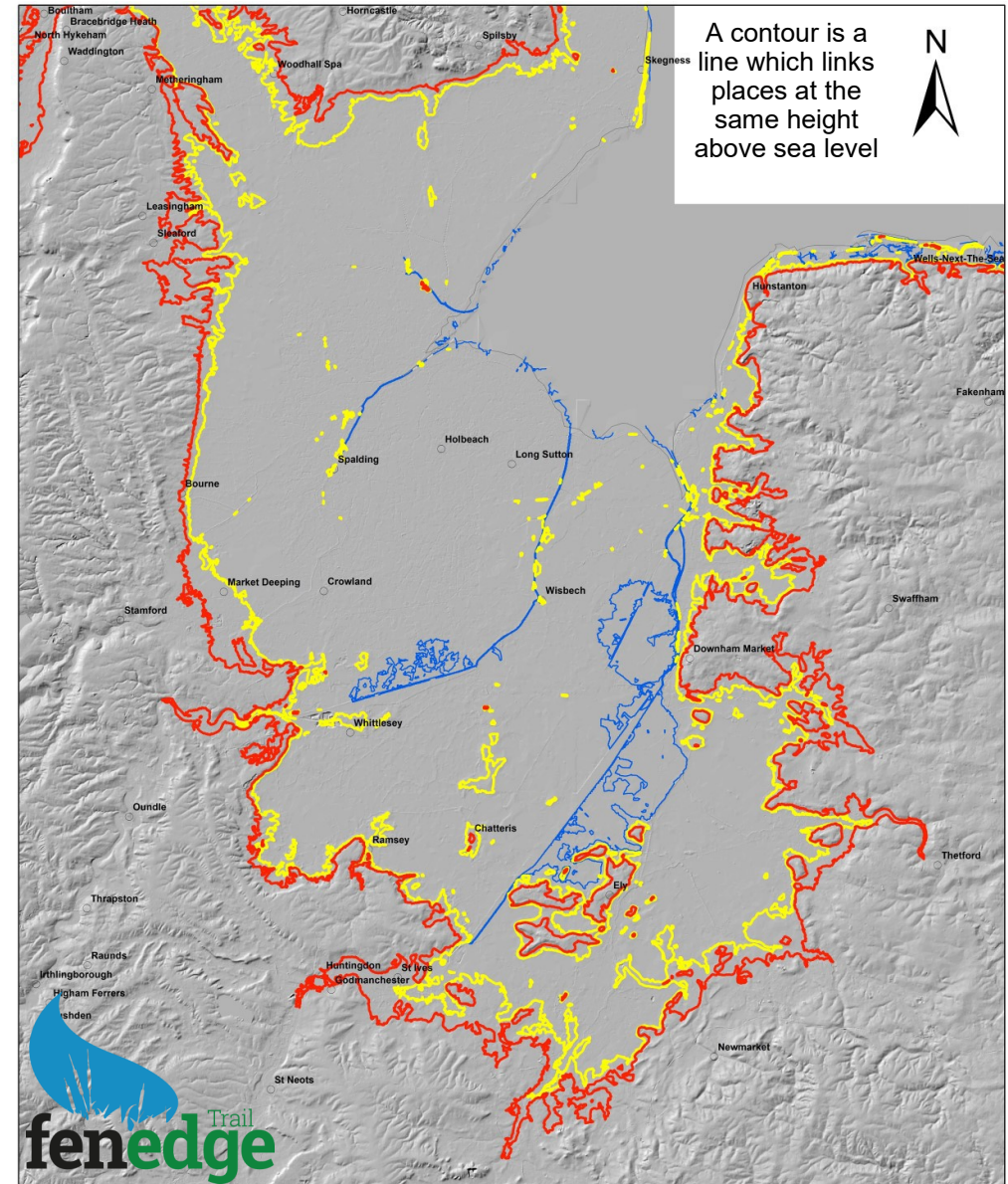
Our partners

A number of organisations have contributed information for various walks or supported the project in other ways; these include **Warboys Archaeology Group**, **Great Fen Heritage Group**, **Thorney Museum and Society**, **Fenland Trust**, Fenlandia, Wildlife Trust Huntingdon Local Group, GeoPeterborough, Chatteris Museum, Visit Ramsey, Fen Edge Archaeology Group, Isleham Society, March Society, Huntingdonshire Ramblers, Hunts Fauna and Flora and the Word Garden.

Although the fenland is now drained, you can still see, in many places, evidence of the vast wetland that once covered the Fen Basin, not least in the accumulations of peats, lake marls, tidal silts and marine clays under the soils.



Map of the Fens with the hills shaded and the 5 m (yellow) and 10 m (red) contours



A contour is a line which links places at the same height above sea level



Legend

Fen_Contour_mOD	UK_Hillshade
Contour	Value
— 0	High : 254
— 5	Low : 0
— 10	

The blue line shows some of the water levels that are at sea level. The land below sea level is not marked. The current limit of the sea (the coastline of the Wash) is in the north east.