The Roman town of Combretovium is not visible, but is marked to provide a greater understanding of the area and its importance in the past.

The map is representative and although set at a scale, you will need to use an Ordnance Survey map for detail, including built-up areas. The map that covers this area is 1:10,560 Explorer Map, Bury St Edmunds & Stowmarket.

Times and distances
The trail is approximately 7km, or just under 4.5 miles long. Allow around 2 hours to walk the whole route. If you want to walk a shorter section, the following times should give you an idea...

Needham Lake to Gallows Hill 30mins
Gallows Hill to Sharmford 45mins
Sharmford to Barham Pits 30mins
Barham Pits to Picnic Site 5 mins

Baylham Mill is roughly half way.

† The Roman town of Combretovium is not visible, but is marked to provide a greater understanding of the area and its importance in the past.

This board can be found just off the main path, on the adjoining footpath.

Stick to marked footpaths. Take care if you cross the railway line. Look out for lorries and other traffic. The river path may be flooded or slippery during periods of high rainfall. Always let someone know where you are going. Don’t forget the Countryside Code!
Welcome

Welcome to the Aggregates Trail, a walking trail of discovery through the Gipping Valley between Needham Market and Barham. We hope you enjoy exploring this fascinating area.

What are aggregates?

Aggregates is a word used to describe collections of rock that have been broken down by natural force or by humans. In the Gipping Valley we are talking mainly about sands and gravel, brought to Suffolk during cold phases of the Ice Age. Aggregates have been quarried, or extracted, in the Gipping valley for many years. It is even thought that the Romans built their roads in the valley with gravel extracted from small pits. Chalk, clay and flint are also found locally.

To find out about local public transport please contact Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or visit http://www.travelineeastanglia.co.uk/. Bicycle racks are available at Needham Lake and Barham Picnic Site.

The Trail

The terrain is fairly flat but there can be narrower and bumpy parts, particularly during wet periods, when the river can also flood. There are stiles and gates along the route.

There are many sources of information about aggregates and the local area, past and present. This is a small selection:

- Quarry Products Association - The trade association for the aggregates and quarry products industry www.qpa.org
- Ipswich Museum - www.ipswich.gov.uk
- Suffolk Wildlife Trust - www.suffolkwildlife.org.uk
- Suffolk County Council - For information about Rights of Way, Mineral Planning, Archaeology and more www.suffolkcc.gov.uk/environment
- Ipswich Museum Service for access to documents in their care
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The Discovery Project is an environmental education project working with local schools and communities to encourage interest in, enjoyment and an understanding of the local natural and built heritage. The Aggregates Trail has been developed by the Discovery Project. Numerous individuals and organisations have contributed to this trail and our thanks go to all of you.

Gravel Unravelled

A walking trail through the Gipping Valley

The Aggregates Trail is a section of the Gipping River Path approximately 4.5 miles or 7 km long. You can begin at either end of the trail or join part way through, it’s up to you. The river path follows the old navigation from Stowmarket to Ipswich, which is 17 miles long in total.

The Aggregates Trail reveals a story that began millions of years ago. The landscape is ever changing and today provides evidence of use through many periods of history. Aggregate extraction has revealed a lot about the past, has created new landscapes and provides materials for the future.

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If you would like this document in another language or format, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact 0845 606 6067.

Contact us

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