

# 🌸 Weaverham Petal Walks

## Bottom Pitch Meadow & Owley Wood

A 2 mile circular walk exploring the village of Weaverham including Owley Wood.

Start at St Mary's Church at the end of Church Street.

1. Turn left onto Church Lane and follow the road past St Bede's Church.
2. Turn left into Nicholas Road. Cross over the road and turn right into Morris Drive.
3. Turn right into Clitheroe Road. Turn left into Barrymore Road. Cross over Owley Wood Road past the bowling greens and turn left into Ainsworth Road. Walk to the end of the road.
4. The wooden gate opposite the end of the road leads to Bottom Pitch Meadow and Owley Wood.
5. After a short distance a path to the right leads to Bottom Pitch Meadow. The main path leads to Owley Wood and the riverside path.
6. Straight ahead takes you to the viewing area. Beyond this the path forks. The path to the left continues within the wood. The path to the right joins Owley Wood Road by the Baden Powell Scout Hall. Turn left onto the road.



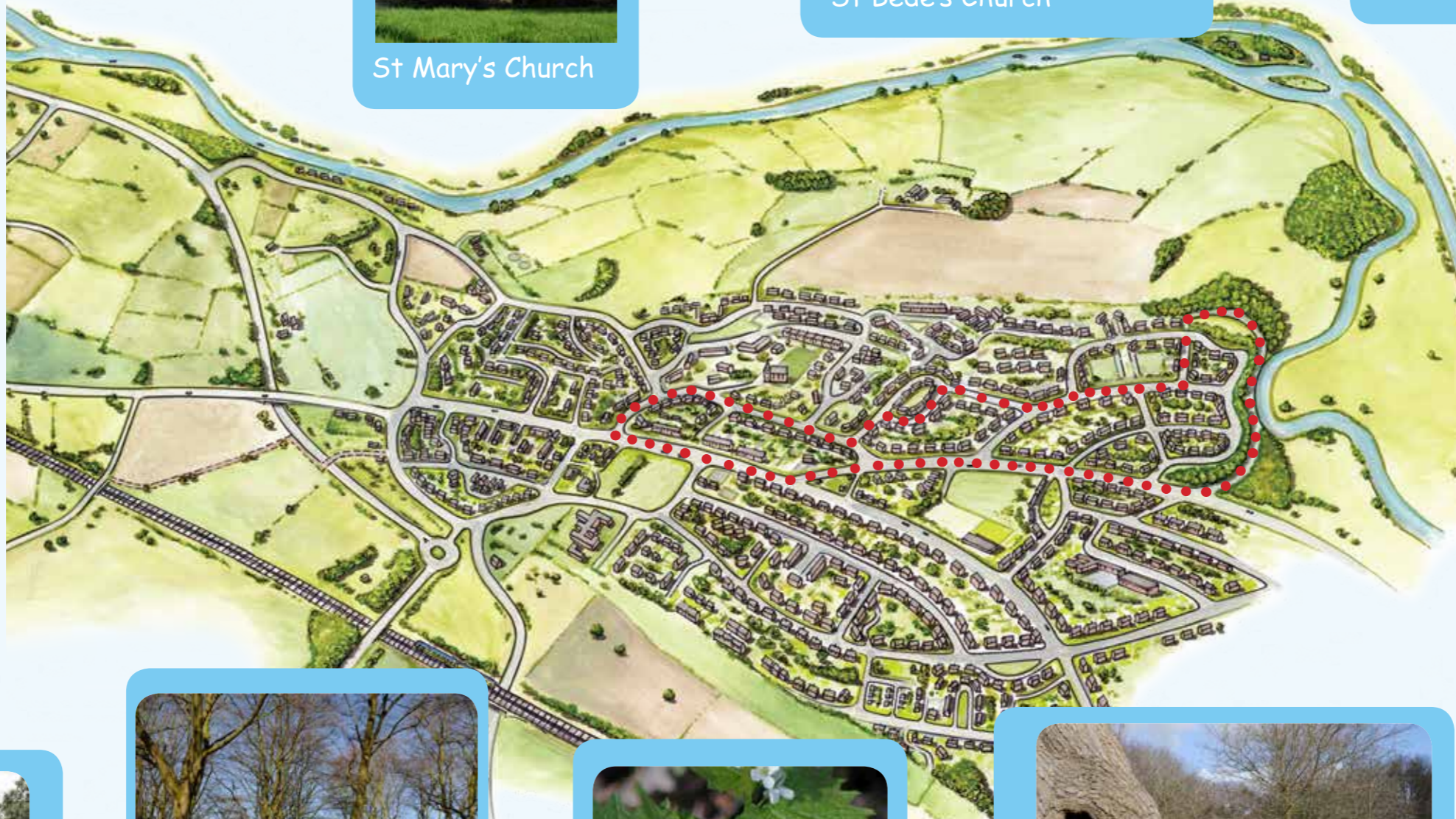
St Mary's Church



St Bede's Church



Recreation Club



7. All three routes converge at Wallerscote Road. Turn right and continue to the Ring O'Bells pub.
8. Turn right onto the main road and continue past the shops.
9. Turn right at the garage into Church Street and follow it back to the church.



Owley Wood



Cricket Club



The Plantation



Garlic mustard



Bottom Pitch Meadow



Lesser spotted woodpecker





Over one hundred native trees have been planted and habitat piles created to provide food and shelter for wildlife.



 Search for 'Friends of Owley Wood' on Facebook.



ICI provided tennis courts, bowling greens and a hall and bar for social events that are still appreciated and well used by residents today.

The aim is to improve the area for wildlife and attract visitors of all ages. Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Groundwork and Saltscape have organised workdays and training including laying the hedge along Owley Wood Road.

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The area was sold to a local developer. Fortunately in 2012 The Weaverham Trust was able to secure a loan and purchased the land for just over £16,000. The area was renamed 'Bottom Pitch Meadow' and a small team from the Trust have worked tirelessly to restore the area to how you see it today.

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### Bottom Pitch Meadow

Bottom Pitch was set aside by ICI for recreational use by its workers and their families when they built Owley Wood housing estate. Many residents recall playing on "Bottom Pitch" where there were seesaws, a shelter and seats.

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### Welcome to Weaverham

Weaverham was an important Saxon hamlet on the banks of the River Weaver. The walk starts at St Mary's Church, a beautiful building dating back to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and then continues through the village to Owley Wood Housing Estate, a 1920's model housing estate built for ICI employees.

Owley Wood is a haven for wildlife on the steep banks of the River Weaver where you can meander through the woodland or stop and watch the river go by.



### Saltscape - a unique landscape

Salt was first discovered in Cheshire during the Iron Age and by 1700 the salt towns of Northwich, Middlewich and Winsford had grown around the thriving salt industry. The River Weaver was the key transport corridor that continued to serve the chemical industry that followed.

Although much of the industry has gone there is a legacy of unique habitats, post-industrial landscapes, rivers and canals. Salt marsh vegetation normally found on the coast thrives around brine springs while the flashes caused by salt subsidence and lime-beds created from industrial waste are rich in wildlife.



### Owley Wood

Owley Wood, originally called Howley Wood, is named after the noisy tawny owls who live in this ancient, semi-natural woodland on the bank of the River Weaver.

The natural steep banks running down to the River Weaver are too steep for agriculture or development and so the woodland has remained intact, providing a valuable home for wildlife and a wonderful place to visit.

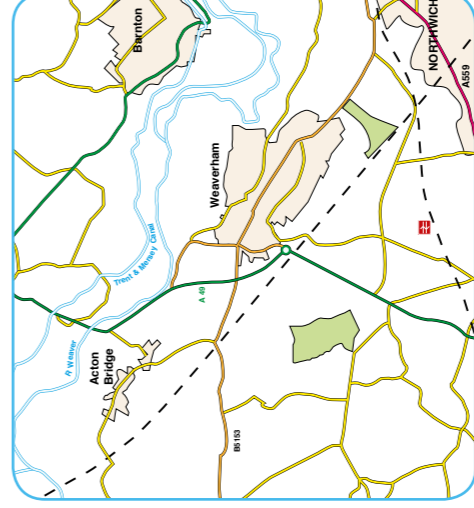
Oak, ash, hazel and hawthorn provide food and shelter for a wide variety of birds and small mammals.

Today it is owned by Cheshire Wildlife Trust but looked after on a day to day basis by a dedicated Friends Group who organise practical tasks and events throughout the year.

 Search for 'Friends of Owley Wood' on Facebook.



## Weaverham Petal Walks Bottom Pitch & Owley Wood



A 2 mile circular walk exploring the village of Weaverham, Bottom Pitch Meadow and Owley Wood.

Weaverham Petal Walks have been devised by Weaverham Trust and funded through Saltscape Landscape Partnership.

[www.weaverhamtrust.co.uk](http://www.weaverhamtrust.co.uk)  
Saltscape - Follow the story at [www.saltscape.co.uk](http://www.saltscape.co.uk)

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### Owley Wood Housing Estate

Weaverham was a quiet, rural village until the 1920s when ICI needed more housing for their workers as demand grew for new chemical products such as dyestuffs, plastics and paint.

Owley Wood Housing Estate was almost a separate village and was revolutionary in design, heavily influenced by the 'Garden Cities' movement started by Ebenezer Howard.

The challenge set by ICI for William Tarr of Warrington was to build 365 houses within 365 days. The development was well planned with tree-lined roads and homes grouped around allotment areas. Houses were solidly constructed with a steel frame clad in pebbledash and cement type brick. Floors were concrete and roofs tiled.

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