

Points of Interest:

Coton Village

Coton is a small village and civil parish about two miles west of Cambridge. The parish covers an area of 392 hectares. In the 2011 census it had a population of 910.

Just past the Village Hall (the 1932 WI Hall completely rebuilt in 2012) in Chapel Yard is Rose Cottage and the former Baptist Chapel, and nearby is the Rectory, built in 1840. Opposite the church is Lantern Cottage, built in the 17th century and next to it the 19th century old school house. The new school, built in the 1960s, lies at the point that Whitwell Way turns into High Street. Down the drive to Rectory Farm can be seen the 18th century Pigeon House. Near the start of the walk, you will pass close to St Catharine's farmhouse (originally a 14th century Hall House), located opposite Fairview Cottages (16th century cottages restored in 1966).

Coprolites

(extract from *Coton Through the Ages* by Kathleen Fowle)

Coprolite mining provided the raw material for the world's first chemical fertiliser in the mid 19th century. Coprolites occur as a layer of phosphatic nodules, formed from the shells and casts of molluscs such as ammonites. Coprolite digging was an important local industry in Coton between 1858 and 1875.

Coton Countryside Reserve

In the 1930s, using money from a legacy provided by Professor George M Trevelyan, Cambridge Past Present and Future acquired farmland at Coton. In the late 1990s Cambridge PPF turned its attention back to Coton, gaining planning permission to establish a 300 acre reserve. As part of this, diverse wildlife habitats were created, including woodland and hedgerows, bird boxes, ponds, hay meadows, and an orchard. The Martin Car Park was opened on Grantchester Road in 2008. The reserve, which is part of the Cambridge Green Belt, offers a chance to experience changing seasons and to enjoy great views over the surrounding area.

In 2010 a new farm tenant was appointed. Trumpington Farm Company now works the land in a wildlife-friendly way, adhering to Countryside Stewardship and Entry Level Schemes administered by Natural England. New access points and recreational routes have been introduced for walkers, cyclists, joggers, pram users, disabled people and horse riders, creating a major public green space within easy reach of Cambridge and nearby villages.

The Rifle Range

The walk passes close to an army live firing rifle range behind Red Meadow Hill and follows a route parallel to the range. When in use, red flags are displayed.

The Plough

Contemporary village pub with a preserved historic interior and seasonally themed European dishes.

St Peter's Church, Coton

The church dates back to the 12th century and has several interesting features: 12th century font; 15th century pews; medieval nave roof; monument to Andrew Downes, one of the translators of the King James Bible; William Morris & Co stained glass windows in the chancel.

View over Cambridge from Red Meadow Hill

This viewpoint allows elevated views across much of Cambridge from higher ground. It demonstrates the compactness of the historic core of the city, with landmarks such as King's College and the University Library interrupting the skyline. The green edge of the city is clearly visible, with the West Fields in the middle ground beyond the M11 motorway. Higher ground to the south east and south of the city can be clearly seen in the distance, including the Gog Magog Hills.

The Coton Corridor

A circular walk
over one of the area's
best kept secrets

Part II of the Great
West Walk series



Approximately 3.5 miles, walking time 1½ to 2 hours. Mostly follows paths along edges of fields; these are sometimes muddy after rain. Great views from Red Meadow Hill over Coton and Cambridge. Plenty of wildlife interest, especially in Coton Countryside Reserve.

Getting there: Park opposite Coton Village Hall. Number 8 bus serves the village, while Citi 4 stops at Coton turn on Madingley Road, about half a mile from Coton Village Hall.

Map: Explorer Map 209. GR for CPPF car park TL41385/57882; and TL40957/58905 for Coton Village Hall.

Pubs: The Plough, Coton.

The Walk

Starting from the car parking opposite the Village Hall, walk towards Cambridge, and take the footpath on the right signposted Coton Countryside Res. Follow path across the meadow, past the alpacas, and turning left after the third kissing gate to reach Brook Lane. Cross Brook Lane, over bridge, and take the footpath on right adjacent to Bin Brook as far as the concrete path.

Turn right, and after crossing the brook turn left along a path, initially next to the brook and then right along the field edge. Turn left over a footbridge and continue to Grantchester Road. Cross over into another field and continue along the field edge to a sentry box before the Rifle Range. Turn right, follow line of electric poles, ascending gradually and walk up steps and swing left across field to the crest of Red Meadow Hill. Stop here to admire the views of Cambridge.

From the hilltop, descend to the north, past a seat with a panoramic view of Coton and Madingley Hill. At the field bottom, turn right on a field path back to a gate, and cross Grantchester Road at Wheatcases Barn. Walk past the Martin car park and follow field path parallel to the road to reach a copse. Turn left through gate, cross road, continue along track to water treatment works. Continue ahead through gate, and after 70 yards turn diagonally right to cross Manor Field to a gate in the opposite corner. After gate, cross Beryl's Bridge and go along garden fence on left to a kissing gate into Brookfield Road. Follow this for 100 yards and turn right in St Peter's Road. At the end, turn right and walk along Whitwell Way past the school and St Peter's Church back to the start.



The author accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the map or for any injury or mishap that might befall any person who follows this walk.

