



Dorset County Council working in partnership  
Access - Conservation - Information - Recreation - Tourism

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This leaflet has been produced with sponsorship from the following organisations:



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dd02820



## Frome Valley Trail

### Stage 1

The Frome Valley Trail is a long distance route which will eventually extend to Poole Harbour. Its final length will be 43½ miles (70 km) from its source at Evershot to its mouth.

Over the first 2 years the project has focused on identifying the route along existing rights of way as close to the River Frome as possible. The trail explores a unique habitat, the Frome chalk stream and downlands, which is home to a diverse range of river corridor species. The trail ensures that visitors have an opportunity to seek refreshments at local villages and visit other attractions along the way. Interpretation has attempted to involve local knowledge and ideas. The Frome Valley arrowhead waymarker has been designed as a result of archaeological findings within the river valley and therefore reflects its Bronze Age history. Roman remains have also been found near to Southover and it is thought that the Roman Army built the aqueduct from Frampton to Dorchester, supplying water to Durnovaria (Roman Dorchester).

As you walk along the Frome Valley Trail, imagine the land-use over centuries. The general pattern of farming stems from medieval times with arable land on the valley sides and parts of the higher ground. At that time settlements were established on the valley floor. During the Second World War, land girls worked as agricultural labourers helping local farmers. Today, agriculture demands less labourers as a result of modern, efficient machinery. Whatever the land use, man has shaped our landscape to what it is today and some of our wildlife have had to adapt to survive.

# FROME VALLEY TRAIL

## Stage 1

### Evershot – Dorchester



J Penney

# WILDLIFE OF THE FROME VALLEY

## Kingfisher

A brilliant iridescent blue flash and that's the passing kingfisher flying low over the water. At only 6½" long (16.5 cms) it catches its prey by hovering and then diving straight into the water. Its food consists of minnow, bullhead, stickleback, caddisfly and dragonfly larvae, small molluscs and crustaceans, all of which are found in the River Frome. Kingfishers excavate tunnels in eroded sandy cliffs along the river bank, as do sandmartins. Young are reared up to twice a year between March and July. Kingfisher holes are spotted at a number of sites along the river.



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## Marsh marigold

Also known as Kingcup, this rich yellow flower is found amongst the tall grasses of the water meadows at Maiden Newton.

A variety of insects are attracted to the bright colour and subsequent pollination occurs as the insects feed off the flower nectar.



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## Water crowfoot

This plant is typically found in chalk streams. Look out for it particularly at Maiden Newton. Its white flowerhead sticks above the water as the current drags the leaves. Clean water is essential for the water crowfoot, as it is sensitive to pollution. The brown trout is particularly partial to this plant.



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## Brown trout

The gravel beds are particularly suitable spawning beds for the brown trout. Water crowfoot, water cress and water starwort all provide cover and a plentiful supply of food. The water temperature is ideal too, cool in summer and warmer in spring and autumn to allow early hatching and subsequent spawning.

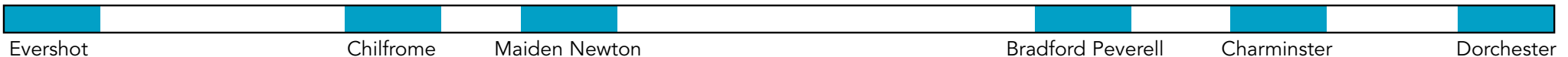


## Demoiselle

The larvae for damselfly spend up to 2 years living at the bottom of the stream feeding off small aquatic invertebrae. The nymph sheds a few layers of skin as it grows in size, until at last it surfaces from the water, climbs up a handy reed, and splits its skin to emerge as a damselfly. Both the beautiful demoiselle and the banded demoiselle are found in the water meadows at Maiden Newton. They are also frequently spotted along the River Frome.



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Frome Valley Trail 16.1 miles (25.9 km)  
Frome Valley Cycle Trail 14.3 miles (23 km)