

### Ancient meadow

The triangular meadow between Kelmarsh tunnels and Great Oxendon is part of an ancient meadow which became isolated when the railway cut through the original landscape.

It contains some old meadow species including saw-wort and adder's tongue fern and is managed in a traditional way to promote wildflowers and butterflies. It is grazed in the autumn and spring and mown for hay in late summer after the flowers have set seed.

### National Cycle Route

The Brampton Valley Way is part of Route 6 of the National Cycle Route and provides a direct cycling link between Market Harborough and Northampton. It has been constructed by the County Council, the engineering charity Sustrans and other partners with support from National Lottery funding. From the Brampton Valley Way the cycle route continues south into Northampton itself. Close to Boughton Crossing a sculptured milepost has been erected to commemorate the Millennium with further sculptures proposed by the year 2000.

### Acknowledgements

The illustration on the interior of this leaflet is based on an original drawing of the Brampton Valley Way by Beverly Curl which is on exhibition at the David Mackintosh Centre at Brixworth Country Park.

The front cover and some of the interior illustrations were drawn by Colin Tidbury.



### Woodlands, spinneys and shady areas

Wooded areas are home to small mammals and birds year round – the greater spotted woodpecker confines itself to woodland for its entire livelihood but the lesser spotted woodpecker may be seen exploring the hedgerows and smaller trees.

The caterpillar of the grizzled skipper butterfly feeds on the low growing herbs of wild strawberry and tormentil plants which thrive in the shady habitats – also a favoured haunt of the speckled wood butterfly.

### Hedgerows

Hedges are a familiar sight along many stretches of the 'Way' and together with areas of scrub and trees, are havens for wildlife. They are particularly valuable for birds providing them with food and nesting sites, but insects and small mammals also thrive among them.

Hedgerow species include field maple, ash, dogwood, Midland (woodland) hawthorn and purging buckthorn.

The traditional skill of hedgelaying which creates an attractive and thick linear habitat may be seen in progress over the winter months. Much of the hedgelaying is done by volunteers who have attended one of the hedgelaying courses which are run throughout the season by trained staff.