

Conham River Park



Welcome to Avon Valley Woodlands

This Local Nature Reserve beside the River Avon is made up of three maturing broadleaved woodlands: **Conham River Park**, **Hencliff Wood** and **Bickley Wood**. Please explore this dramatic and beautiful landscape alongside the variety of wildlife that lives here ▶

A RICH HERITAGE

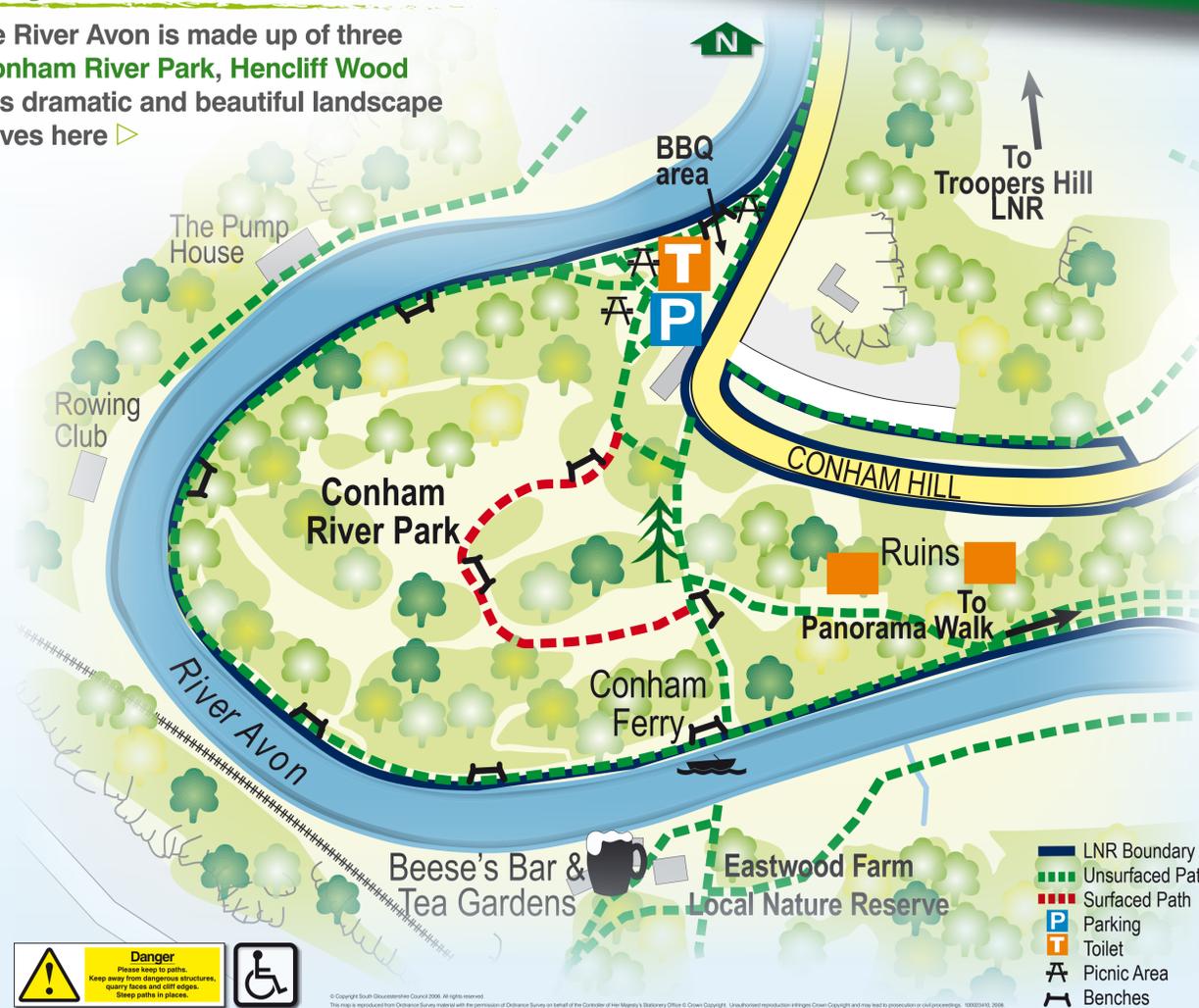
Trees and shrubs now cover up evidence of this site's busy past. Early industries grew up because the river provided a water supply, power and a means of transport. You can still see the ruins of the old copper smelter in the woods, and the black building blocks made from the copper slag. It is said that tallow candles were also made here. These were needed in the nearby coalmines that operated in the area until the 1920s.

There were 12 small quarries between Conham River Park and Hanham Mills. They were extracting Pennant sandstone for the building of Bristol, Bath and the railway.



▶ Quarrymen take a break for the camera. Pennant sandstone is difficult to carve or saw, but splits well into thin slabs. Many old pavements in the wider area came from these quarries.

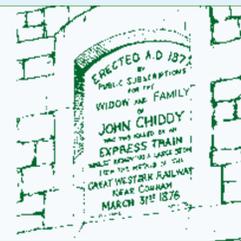
▶ The thick walls of the old copper smelter works near the 100 steps.



ACCIDENTAL HERO



You can see the arches of Brunel's Great Western Railway where, on 31 March 1876, an express train hit and killed quarryman John Chiddy. This incident is remembered in a mounted stone at Memorial Cottage. Pit Road was renamed Memorial Road to mark the tragic accident.



CONHAM FERRY & BEESE'S BAR & TEA GARDENS



Conham Ferry, the oldest on the Avon crosses the river to Beese's Tea Gardens. Mrs Beese, who provided refreshments to the many travellers using the ferry run by Mr Beese, founded the gardens in 1846. For information please visit: www.beeses.co.uk or phone: 0117 977 7412

BIRDS



▶ **TAWNY OWL**
Listen for 'keewick keewick' (male); 'erieee' (female). Both also use 'hooo ho ho hooooo'.

▶ **FEMALE BLACKBIRD**
The male lives up to its name, but the female is mottled brown. A common bird.



▶ **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER**
Woodland bird with distinctive bouncing flight. Clings to tree trunks and branches. Makes loud 'drumming' sound in spring.



BATS & BUTTERFLIES



▶ **COMMON PIPISTRELLE**
The most common and widespread of Britain's bats – can consume 3,000 insects in one night.



▶ **DAUBENTON'S**
The roosting opportunities and riverside location offered by these woodlands make this the perfect environment for this bat.



▶ **NOCTULE**
One of our largest bats that favours a woodland habitat near water. All British bats use echolocation to orientate themselves at night.



▶ **SMALL TORTOISESHELL**
Named after the pattern on the underside of its wings. Its numbers can vary greatly from year to year.



▶ **RED ADMIRAL**
A plentiful, adaptable and very mobile butterfly, its numbers are increasing. The caterpillar feeds on stinging nettles.



▶ **MEADOW BROWN**
The most abundant species in many habitats. Adults fly even in dull weather when most other butterflies are inactive.

Much of the Avon Valley is owned by South Gloucestershire Council and is managed in partnership with the Friends of Hanham Nature Reserve. For information on events and workdays 01454 863592 naturalenvironment@southglos.gov.uk Join in the fun! For information on the Reserve or Walks for Health, use the search at: www.southglos.gov.uk Look out for a sound surprise where you can listen to short stories, memories and tall tales...



An audio guide relating to Conham River Park, its history and the bats you are likely find there is available from local libraries.