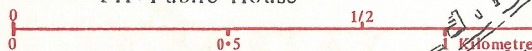


# KEY

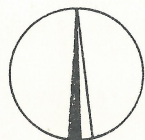
CP: Car Park

FB: Foot Bridge

PH: Public House



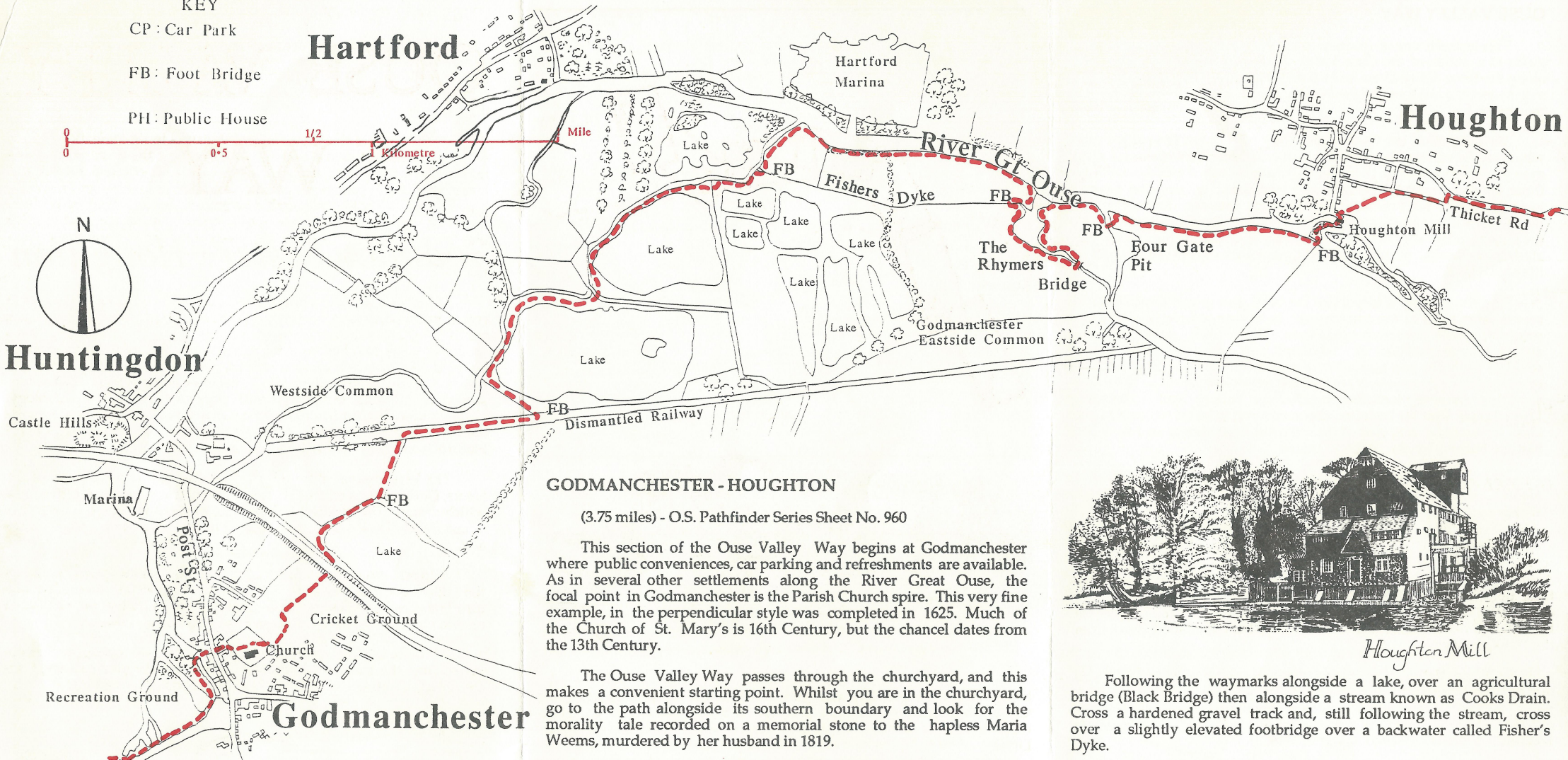
N



Huntingdon

Hartford

Houghton



## GODMANCHESTER - HOUGHTON

(3.75 miles) - O.S. Pathfinder Series Sheet No. 960

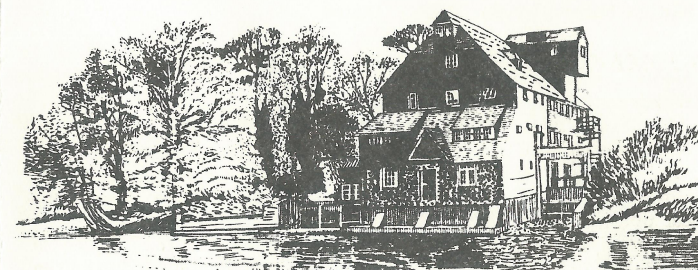
This section of the Ouse Valley Way begins at Godmanchester where public conveniences, car parking and refreshments are available. As in several other settlements along the River Great Ouse, the focal point in Godmanchester is the Parish Church spire. This very fine example, in the perpendicular style was completed in 1625. Much of the Church of St. Mary's is 16th Century, but the chancel dates from the 13th Century.

The Ouse Valley Way passes through the churchyard, and this makes a convenient starting point. Whilst you are in the churchyard, go to the path alongside its southern boundary and look for the morality tale recorded on a memorial stone to the hapless Maria Weems, murdered by her husband in 1819.

From the churchyard, follow the path alongside the cricket pitch, towards the bridge passing under the elevated Huntingdon Bypass Road. Once under the road, follow the track around the lake, which was excavated to provide material to build the new road nearby.

This track leads to a small footbridge into Westside Common, (approximately 168 acres). One of the large areas of common land in the river valley controlled by the Stewards of the Godmanchester Commons, following a traditional land management regime.

Walk alongside the boundary fence to the route of the old railway line ahead, then turn right for a short distance, then left over a bridge into an area of new and older gravel workings. These gravel pits, with their disturbed ground, absence of agricultural chemicals, and very wide variety of potential wildlife habitats, can be developed into valuable havens for very many varieties of flora and fauna. One of the pits on this complex is receiving special management to encourage its value as a site for dragonflies and other water-based insects, some of which are important in the wildlife food chain. Other pits are managed specifically for still-water coarse angling purposes.



Houghton Mill

Following the waymarks alongside a lake, over an agricultural bridge (Black Bridge) then alongside a stream known as Cooks Drain. Cross a hardened gravel track and, still following the stream, cross over a slightly elevated footbridge over a backwater called Fisher's Dyke.

Continue along the bank of Cooks Drain until you meet the main river.

Follow the riverbank until you reach another backwater called The Rhymers.

Walk along the bank of the backwater, crossing another bridge back over Fisher's Dyke. You are in Eastside Common (176 acres), another meadow farmed along traditional lines.

You will see a large elevated agricultural bridge over The Rhymers, which you cross. Return back to the river alongside the backwater, then walk along to the next footbridge over a sluice into Four Gate Pit. From here, you have a picturesque view of Houghton Mill ahead.

The Ouse Valley Way continues along the riverbank and over the bridge at the locks to give access to this 17th Century Watermill, owned, by the National Trust. It contains much of its old mill machinery, and is open to visitors during the summer months. Car parking and refreshments are available in the village of Houghton.

