

Ufford Heritage Trail

6. Hawkeswade Bridge

You are standing on the Hawkeswade Bridge over the River Deben. The bridge's name comes from the Old English 'Hakerswade', meaning an acre swathe, which was used to describe the area in the 13th century.

The Deben used to be navigable all the way to Wickham Market but has since silted up. There has been a bridge or river crossing here for centuries, the current bridge being built around 1750. The photograph was taken around 1910.



Downstream from the bridge is a deep water pool, popular in the summer months for swimming and paddling.

There are several stories about how the pool was formed. Some say that it was caused by a bomb that missed hitting the East Suffolk railway line, but there is no record of this. It is better explained using hydrology: if you look closely at the flow of water in the pool and over the spillway, you will see a whirlpool effect. This effect created the pool and continues to gouge out and renew it, particularly in winter floods when the current here is very strong.