

Tales from

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Project Aims/Objectives

This project aims to uncover a wide range of local stories about the Brecks Fen Edge and rivers including oral histories, memories, myths and legends.

It will celebrate how people engaged with the rivers and how they have been used for recreation activities in the past. Young people and adults will be supported to tell their stories, and these will be brought to life through exhibitions, films and story telling.



Ford at Houghton Lane, North Pickenham, about 1934. Thanks to Swaffham Museum

the River

Brecks & Fen Edge



Cock-up bridge, Burwell, possibly 1940s?

Some memories ...

"That brings back so many memories of my childhood, particularly the late 1940s. Groups of us lads would ride our bikes down there, or walk right along the river bank from the village. Many of us learned to swim there, as I did when I was about seven. We had such fun, especially when some of the village girls joined us. The favourite activity for us all was jumping from the highest part of the structure."

"This picture makes me think of my father throwing my brother in the river at 7 to get him to swim. We use to picnic there."

Comments on a Facebook post about the bridge

Project Summary

The project will involve young people and adults in gathering and celebrating stories and folklore about river recreation (especially swimming and other watery activities) in the Brecks' rivers in the past using research, oral history and gathering a variety of media, including photos, films and maps.

This will all be compiled and presented in a variety of ways, including an exhibition, a film and storytelling, online, and archived.



Oxborough Ferry, c1910, postcard

Heritage project in the Brecks & Fen Edge

Tales from the River is one of a wider set of projects, The Brecks Fen Edge and Rivers Landscape Partnership Scheme (BFER, <https://brecks.org/bfer/>), supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/>)

See the BFER website, <https://tinyurl.com/BFERprojTR>, and a detailed outline on project lead's website, <https://tinyurl.com/OSBprojTR>



The river at Thetford in summer, possibly 1970s

Watery activities

Those of interest include outdoor swimming, dipping, jumping, diving, paddling, playing in water, picnicking, boating, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, walking, running, camping, contemplation and art.

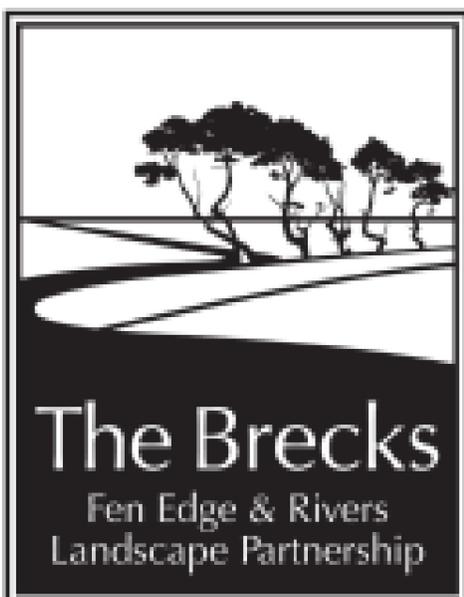


Wenceslaus Hollar, Compleat Angler, Wikimedia

Project area and context

The stories we uncover and collect will be shared with wider audiences to celebrate the heritage and traditions in the distant and recent past, so we can understand and build up a history of these activities in the area and connect the past with the present and future of river recreation.

The area for the project is the rivers of the Brecks area and the edge of the Fens. See the BFER map.



Project updates

As the project develops we will share photos, updates, extracts from interviews and videos, to show the fascinating information we gather. See websites, social media, and newsletters.

