

Welcome to Walsworth Common

Walsworth Common is part of a chain of greenspaces running through Hitchin along the rivers Purwell and Hiz.

The site offers a great opportunity to discover nature close to the town centre. Close to the river's source is Purwell Meadows, and downstream are Cadwell Lane Playing Field and Burymead Springs.

Running along the edge of the Common is the river Purwell. It is a chalk river, a priority habitat and one of just two hundred in the world. The water comes from an underground chalk aquifer, giving a cool and constant flow over clean gravel beds. This provides perfect spawning conditions for fish, and supports a rich diversity of plants and wildlife.

To restore natural curves in the river, logs and stakes have been installed, to create distinct areas of fast and slow moving water. The river banks are cut to control woody growth, maintaining favourable habitat for many species including water voles.

A pond is tucked away in a quiet corner of the site, well worth seeking out. Elsewhere, areas of grassland are left uncut through the summer to benefit wildflowers, insects and birds.

