





-  Wooded areas
-  Pasturelands
-  Chalk-banks
-  Urbanised areas

D Starting Point
Le Quesne Church

Protect the natural environment
To help with the conservation of the rich natural habitats of this fragile site, please:

- . Always use the marked trails
- . Keep gates and stiles closed
- . Respect the fauna and flora
- . Take your litter away with you
- . Always keep dogs on leads

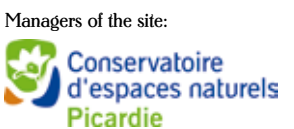
This trail is maintained by the Communauté de Communes du Sud Ouest Amiénois



For more information:

- Tourist Offices:
Poix de Picardie : 03 22 41 06 05
Airaines : 03 22 29 34 07
- Somme Tourist Board:
www.somme-tourisme.com
www.somme-nature.com

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La Somme

The Chalk-banks of Le Quesne and the Mont d'Arguël

Le Quesne, 9km from Hornoy-le-Bourg, 34km from Abbeville, 40km from Amiens

A walk in the wooded countryside, around an old hill fort watched over, from the shadows, by the Virgin Mary.



-  **Starting at:** Le Quesne Cemetery
-  **Time:** 30 mins
-  **Distance:** 1,5km
-  **Route:** moderate

-  Spring
-  Summer
-  Autumn
-  Winter

Exploring the natural sites

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The Chalk-banks of Le Quesne and the Mont d'Arguël

The River Liger, flowing at the bottom of the wooded valley towards the River Bresle, is dominated on the right bank by a steep slope. One of these hillsides, overlooking the village of Le Quesne, culminates at the top in an old hill fort: the Mont d'Arguël, protecting its village perched on the hillsides. This is a walk offering splendid panoramic views over the valley.



Michel Doinel,
Mayor of Le Quesne
"Even though they were very important during the time of motte and bailey castles, and

under the reign of Louis XIV, the chalk-banks and viewpoint from the Mont d'Arguël were for a long time abandoned and disappeared under the trees and undergrowth. Through management of the hillsides the site now attracts many visitors, cyclists and locals for its panoramic views over the Liger Valley, between Normandy and Picardie."

About the site

- > **Proprietor:** Municipalities of Le Quesne and Arguël
- > **Size:** 2,6ha
- > **Maintenance partners:** Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Picardie
- > **Financial partners:** Europe, Regional Council, County Council

A walk in the Liger Valley

After a short climb of a rather airy nature, the chalk-banks of Le Quesne offer remarkable views over the village of Le Quesne and the Liger Valley.

Guided tour

To reach the site, turn right along the path climbing up alongside the cemetery; you will then arrive at the information panel presenting the site. Take the steps; as you do you will see the pasturelands along the riverside. Be careful, the passage along the slope is quite narrow and the fences are electrified. At the summit of the trail you will find an array of wild orchids, such as the Lizard Orchid: the scientific name, *Himantoglossum hircinum* derives, in part, from the Latin for 'goat-like' referring to the fact that this whitish coloured plant gives off a rather

strong and unpleasant smell. You might also recognise Carline Thistle, or the rare and delicate Dark Red Helleborine: this wild orchid flowers in May-June; later in the season you might see the violet flowers of the Chiltern Gentian. Continue the climb to the right and follow the hairpin bend of the trail which will take you into a copse.



Berger's Clouded Yellow: This butterfly is fond of sunny, fallow land, open habitats or stony, dry land high in altitude. On the underside, the male is coloured a fluorescent green while the female is white; the apex of the forewing is black and rounded in shape, speckled with lighter markings and one black dot. The upperside of both the male and female is yellow, with the female having lighter forewings.



© D. Frimil / Conservatoire d'espaces naturels de Picardie

Bats: Through winter the cavity at Le Quesne hosts a colony of bats essentially composed of the Greater Mouse-eared Bat: a species which is in decline in Europe. The Greater Mouse-eared Bat is the only European bat to hunt its prey on ground-level (ground beetles, dung beetles, crickets, earwigs and spiders, etc.) It hunts in open areas, above cut grasslands and pasturelands surrounded by hedges. The Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Picardie and the municipality are working together for the preservation of the bats. 26 individuals were counted in 2011.

Twenty metres later, you will find steps on the left that will take you up to the hill fort of the Mont d'Arguël, where a Calvary was erected in 1861. Here, you can gaze over the Liger Valley. If you look carefully as you walk you may see the Bee Orchid. Walking around the hill fort continue to the left, following alongside the gardens of Arguël. Once you have returned to the first plateau, take the path to the right through the woods until the end of the trail. Turn right to return to the village of Arguël and climb the mount's impasse to reach a porch on your right taking you back to the site. You will also

find an information panel telling the history of the chalk-banks and village. Continue along the trail to the left to return to the hill fort and continue for about twenty metres until you come to steps on the left. Follow the edge of the woods and admire on your left, amidst the grasslands, two levels of earth marking the emplacement of the ramparts of the ancient fortress extending down from the hill fort. A cavity where bats hibernate can be found about ten metres downhill from the trail.

A little further down, the cleared space at the exit of the woods opens onto great views over the village of Le Quesne. Continue following the crest of the hillside until the stile. The descent to the tight bend on the right is quite steep; it will bring you to the foot of the hillside. Follow alongside the gardens of Le Quesne to reach - just after the sanctuary dedicated to the Virgin Mary on the right - the end of the walk.

Preservation of the site

In order to restore and reinforce the authenticity and the natural richness of such a site, the Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Picardie and the municipality of Le Quesne initiated a project to re-conquer the chalk-banks. After extensive clearance work to return the area to grasslands, grazing was then reintroduced to the site in 1994 in partnership with a local farmer.



© S. Rémou

A little bit of history

This headland, perched on the summit of a steep hillside of nearly 165 metres, made the site a strategic position. Used as an encampment by Caesar's legions, the site became a fortified village from the 10th century. In 1402, during the Hundred Year War, the French destroyed the fort, which was dominated by the English at that time. A leper colony was established in the north-west of the village until the beginning of the 18th century. In June 1940, the hillside became - once more - a theatre of terrible battle; soldiers of the 19th Chasseurs à Pied Battalion lost their lives here.