Easy Access Trails

PART TWO

10 more circular trails
designed for easier walking within ten parishes of South Gloucestershire

Alveston

Charfield

Downend & Bromley Heath

Marshfield

Pilning & Severn Beach

Siston

Stoke Gifford

Thornbury

Wick & Abson

Wickwar

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Introduction

The Parish Access Trails have been brought about by a publicly funded project through which 20 Parish Councils were given the opportunity to create an easily accessible circular walk in their parish that reflects the character and heritage of the area. The main focus of the trails is to remove physical barriers such as stiles and replace them with kissing gates and hand gates to allow a larger user group to enjoy the countryside.

Each of the trails have been selected by their local Parish Council and as such are locally distinctive and have different benefits to offer. Reflecting this difference in the routes and their surrounding areas, the descriptions have been written by members of the respective parishes. Look for the Easy Access symbol, in conjunction with the descriptions and maps to help guide you along the walk.

In order to preserve the countryside there has been minimal physical work to alter the routes. This means that while some of the trails are suitable for all year round enjoyment, others might be less usable in winter or after heavy rain. If you are unsure read the brief introduction at the start of each trail. Here you will find a handy description of how long the route is, how difficult the route is, the likelihood of walking through fields with livestock and whether it is likely to be accessible in poor weather.

● ● ● ● ● **Route**
● ● ● ● ● **Alternative Route**

Remember this is still the countryside so read The Countryside Code, expect a bit of mud, pack a waterproof and enjoy yourself.

Map showing Parishes

For areas shaded green see Easy Access Trails - Part 1

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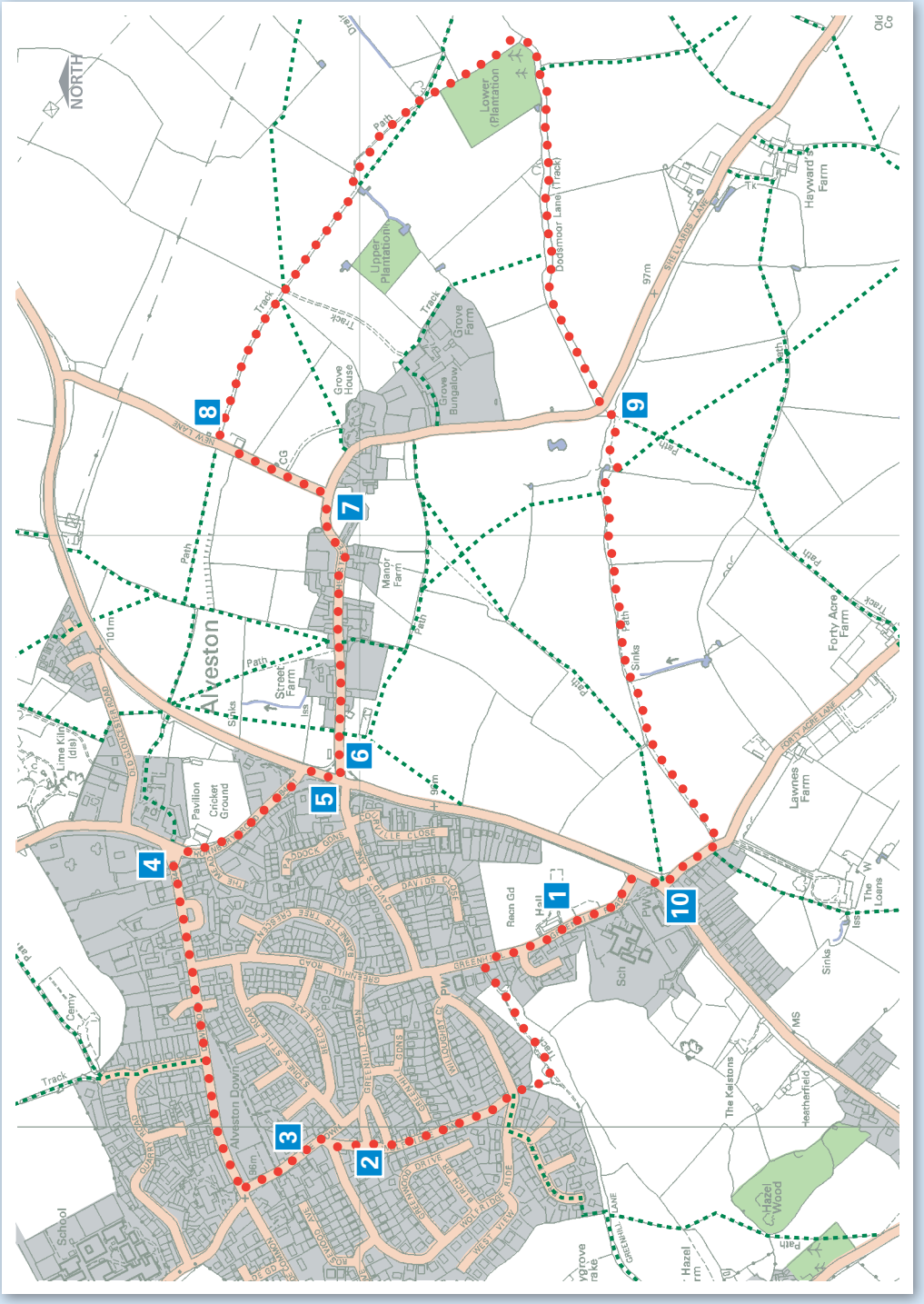
The walk covers mainly flat ground across surfaced and un-surfaced footpaths. There is a possibility you may encounter some livestock, and the un-surfaced paths may get muddy following a spell of wet weather. The overall distance of the walk is 5Km (3 miles).

Alveston

Alveston stands on a ridge of high ground 325 feet above sea level, with magnificent views over the Severn Valley. It has been inhabited as far back as the Stone Age, as indicated by relics of the past such as the tumulus near Vattingstone Lane.

The name may derive from 'Alwihs Stone', associated with megalithic stones which once stood on Oldown.



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Directions

1. The walk starts from the Jubilee Hall which Edward Bush gave to the village with four acres of land for a recreation ground in the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. The 'Limekiln Field' was added in 1938 by Edward's nephew and heir Graham Bush. Walk up Greenhill road and turn into a bridleway on your left. Halfway across the field turn right and descend down a track to Wolfridge Ride, cross the road and continue up Wolfridge Lane into the Square. Wolfridge Lane was mentioned in a Saxon Charter as a boundary between the parishes of Alveston and Olveston.

2. On the left of the lane is the 'White Cottage' originally a dressmaker's workroom for the lady who lived in the cottage on the opposite side and was converted in the late 1930/1940s to a house. The next two cottages on the left are the oldest in the Square and belonged to the Manor of Olveston built in the 1700s. Before passing them turn right and notice on your right the join in the stone wall where another workroom has been added. The house on the left which has just undergone renovation was the home of the last Chambers family shoemakers in the village.

On Greenhill Down turn left again passing two Greenhill Villas built in the 1930s on the drying ground of the laundry, the single storey building on your right, as you now turn left back into the Square. This was also the village undertakers. You now come to one of the old village pumps which, until 1929, was an open well. The pump was not welcomed at first as it stirred up the residue at the bottom. Turn right again back on Wolfridge Lane, passing Ivy Cottage with its two storey extension for shoe making, built by one of the three generations of the Chambers family who made shoes in the village.

3. From Wolfridge Lane cross the new Wolfridge Ride entrance and note on the right 'The Old Smithy', one of five originally in the village, and continue along The Down. This former blacksmith's shop was the home and workshop of the Clark family, now a private house.

On the left hand side is a house dated 1870, which was once the

village bakery and general stores, until 1996 when it became a private house. Before the English family took over the business, it was owned by Charles Higgins who built the new front in 1870. He was a butcher and general store keeper, and also a preacher. He was one of the men who built the chapel next door in the 1860's (now a family home). This replaced a small iron-roofed primitive chapel on the opposite side of the road, where there is now a small graveyard. Charles Higgins, his two wives and two of his children are buried here.

The English family bought the bakery from Charles Higgins' widow and ran it for nearly 100 years. Their delivery service of homemade bread, cakes and groceries covered a large part of the Severn Vale, starting out with a horse and cart.

Ahead of you is the Cross Hands, note the old public house at the rear. Cross the road into the children's play area, this was an open quarry until the 1950s, with a house in the middle called '21 Steps'. There were two quarries here until 1955; the village quarry and one owned by the Turnpike Trust used for mending the roads. Alveston also had a number of large quarries, one behind the Cross Hands and another on Greenhill; all now are built over.

4. Follow the path to join Down Road until you reach The Ship at the T junction with the Old Gloucester/Thornbury road.

The Ship was a coaching inn. Dating back to the 16th century, it stands on the cross roads of the Bristol to Gloucester roads and the road from the Severn. A meeting place for people over the years, Edward Jenner and his friends called their club the Convivio-Medical Society. Sir Christopher Willoughby and his tenants discussed enclosing the open fields, and how to prosecute those persons who had already planted hedges etc.The field next door to The Ship was first rolled out as a cricket pitch by Edward Mills Grace (brother of W.G) Thornbury doctor & coroner in 1860. Still used by Thornbury Cricket Club today.

5. Turn right towards the A38 noting on your right Alveston House Hotel, built by a banker in the late 1700s, which was a boys boarding school for many years. Cross the A38 at the traffic lights or at the traffic bollards. Take care as the lights for traffic flow cannot be seen from this position. Once across the road turn into The Street.

6. Note the pillar-box on the left of the hedge. It is all that remains of Alveston's first post office, demolished in 1930 when the road was altered, and traffic to Gloucester no longer had to turn the corner via The Ship and Old Gloucester Road.

On the left hand side is one of the oldest Alveston houses with a date stone. William Edwards and his wife are believed to have built part of the house. It is mentioned in an early survey after the Civil War and in a later one of 1803 which says that the 'thatch on the

rear is in bad condition'. Continue along the street noting Lilac Cottage on your right hand side, another early blacksmith's shop, now a private house.

7. Walk along the road and stop before turning left into New Lane. Across the field to the right there is a large house called The Grove. This was the Bush family home, inherited by William Bush from his Whittington ancestors. He married in Alveston in 1813. His nephew Edward lived here from 1840 until he died in 1908 and was succeeded by his nephew Graham Bush who died in 1940. Edward was one of 15 children; he had an older brother Thomas who lived at The Loans, Alveston. Thomas was involved with other partnerships notably building the engines for Brunel's dredger commemorated by a brass plaque on the deck of The SS Great Britain. As T & E Bush they built the pumping engines for the collieries at Coalpit Heath. The house has also been the home of two other Bristol shipbuilders.

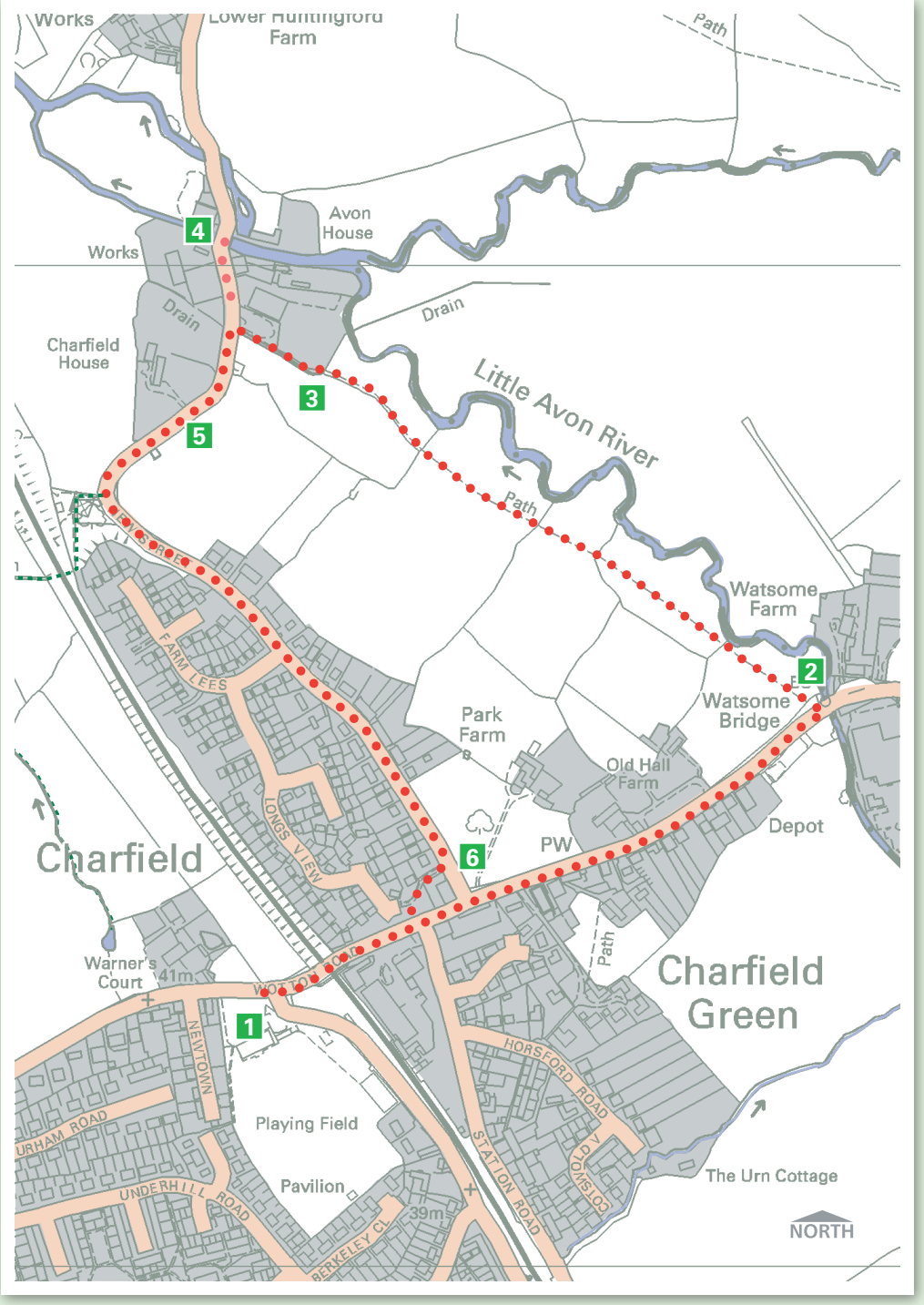
Opposite The Grove, where The Street becomes Shellards Lane, is Alveston Old House. Owned by Henry King and his family of Bristol merchants from 1763. The house was rented in 1813 by John Leonard Knapp, who lived here until his death in 1845. He wrote a series of articles about Alveston and its natural history, published as 'Journal of a Naturalist', describing the views of the Severn and life in the area.

8. Retrace your steps to New Lane where a footpath crosses the road, turn right onto a track with a hedge on your right and walk through the countryside. Ignore all side tracks, go through several gates and head for the corner of the wood. Go through the kissing gate that takes you through the wood. Continue alongside the hedge where over to the left Tytherington quarry works can be seen. Through another gate and turn right into Dodsmoor Lane, an ancient track.

9. At the end of Dodsmoor Lane go through the gate, cross the road and turn left up the track to the field. Turn right and walk alongside the hedge on your right. Go through three kissing gates to the end of the 4th field and turn right through an old kissing gate to exit into Forty Acre Lane.

10. At the junction with the A38 cross over just opposite new St. Helen's Church, built in 1885 to replace the Old Church at Rudgeway.

Mr Edward Bush and his brother Thomas paid two-thirds of its cost.
A new primary school was also built on church land to replace the original at Rudgeway and opened in 1965. Proceed through the churchyard out into Greenhill Road and back to the Jubilee Hall.



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Charfield is on the Wooton Road between Wotton-under-Edge and Iron Acton (The B4058), and just off of the M5 at junction 14. The walk covers flat ground across livestock free surfaced and un-surfaced footpaths, but could get muddy following a wet spell. The route is 2.4Km (1.5 miles) long.

Charfield

Charfield has undergone a number of dramatic changes since it was a village on the ridge. Activity has transferred into the valley because of the 18th century mills along the Little Avon, the coming of the railway in the mid 19th century, and the residential estates built from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s. This walk passes a number of the listed buildings and goes through pastures along the river.

Directions

1. From Charfield Memorial Hall, Wotton Road, (map ref ST723922), walk eastwards and cross Little Bristol Lane. To the right you can see the listed buildings of the old Charfield Station, including the platform, booking office and water tank. Continue along Wotton Road, crossing the footbridge over the railway. Cross Station Road and walk in front of (or into!) the Railway Tavern. On the far corner of the junction of New Street with Wotton Road, note the large horse chestnut trees along the drive to Park Farm, another listed building. Continue down Wotton Road for a further 400m to the lowest point of the road just before Watsome Bridge over the Little Avon River. Position yourself where there is good visibility in both directions and cross Wotton Road to a steel kissing gate alongside a field gate.

2. Go through the kissing gate and continue in a north westerly direction through five fields, the right hand boundary of which is the Little Avon.

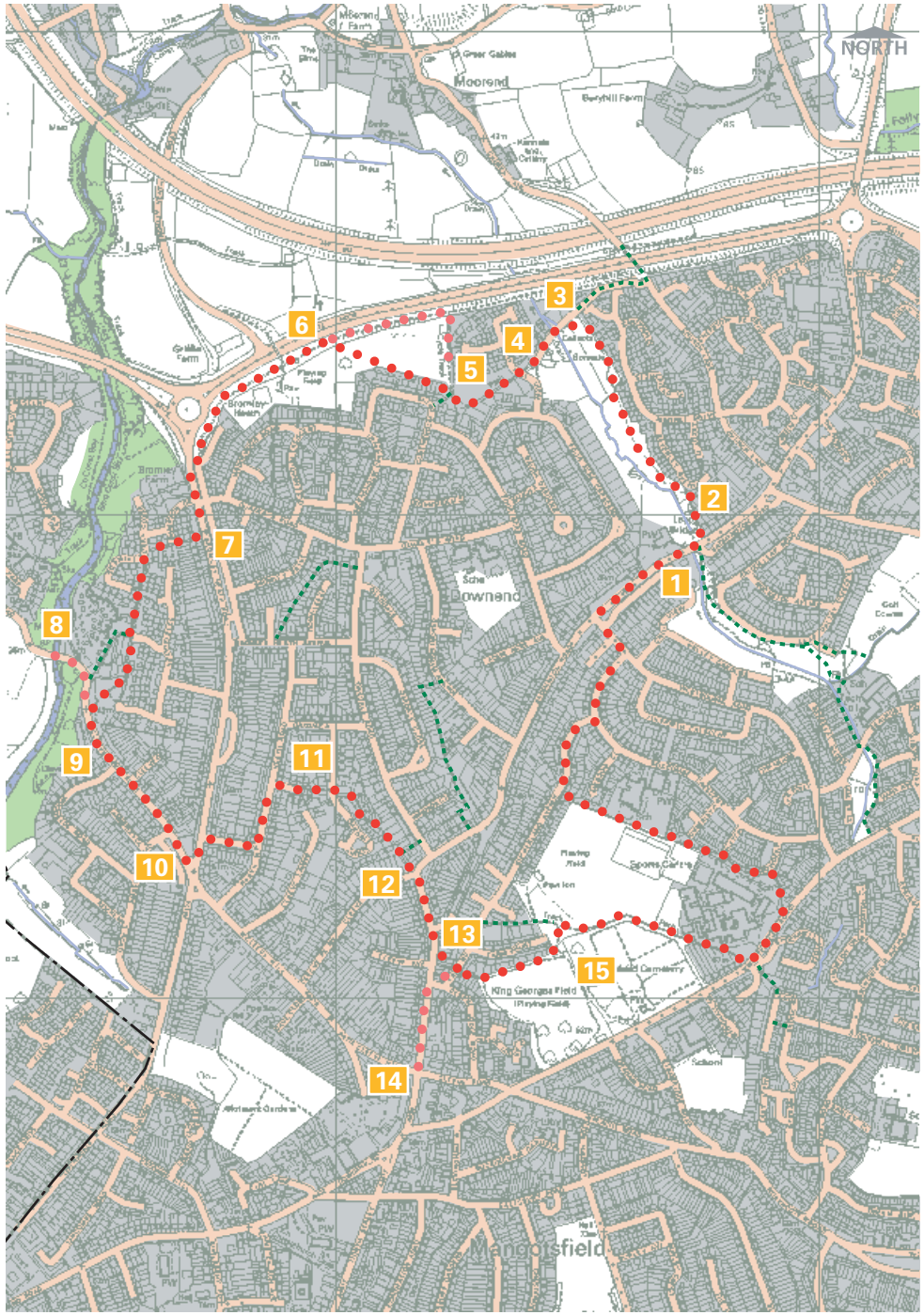
3. At the end of the fields, cross the only stile on the route and proceed forward on to a path passing between a ditch on the left and unused or industrial land to the right. Emerge on to the road at the long established Charfield Mill area with its mixture of listed mills, other industrial buildings and some dwellings.

4. Turn right and walk about 50m to the river bridge. You are now standing near the corner of the listed Bone Mill.

Turn back along the road, walk back a few steps and on your right is the other listed building, Pin Mill. Cross to the right hand side of the road and continue southwards along the road, passing the end of the footpath from which you came.

5. The road bends to the right, with Charfield House on your right. This is the listed house that belonged to the mill owner. The road then bends sharply to the left. There is no separate footway, so stay on the right hand side of the road facing the oncoming traffic. On the edge of the village a footway begins. Continue south east along this road (New Street).

6. At the far end of the terrace of cottages on the left, Park Farm comes into view ahead and to the left. There is a view across the Little Avon valley to the Cotswold Edge and the Tyndale Monument at North Nibley. On the right, between the last house and the petrol station on the corner of Wotton Road, take the cycle and pedestrian way with the wall of the petrol station yard on your left. Passing a small recreation area, turn left up the ramp to Wotton Road. Cross the Road and turn right to retrace your steps over the railway to the Memorial Hall.



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The trail starts at The Methodist Church, on the Badminton Road (The A432) but can be joined from Downend village and at other places along the way. The route is mainly across livestock free flat surfaced paths, and is easy to walk in all weather conditions. The total length is 5.4Km (3.4 miles)

Downend & Bromley Heath

Downend and Bromley Heath is a new parish formed in 2003. First recorded in 1573, Downend grew into a scattered settlement in the ecclesiastical parish of Mangotsfield. Christchurch became a separate parish in 1874. Historically Bromley Heath was part of Moorend.

By the mid 19th century, the Cave family, Bristol bankers, had become the principle landowners. The break-up, by auction, of their Cleeve Hill Estate in 1920 was the catalyst for housing development in Downend, pre-World War 2, and in Bromley Heath from the 1950s onwards.

Directions

1. From the church car park, or nearby, turn left, first looking to the right to see the house at 255 Badminton Road, the former lodge to Baugh Farm. After 100m take the footpath on the left into Leap Valley.

Cleeve Hill House published in 'Delineations of Gloucestershire' by James and Henry Sargon Stoner (1825)

2. The Friends of Leap Valley look after this open space for the benefit of wildlife and the local residents. Their regular bird survey reports over 50 species each year. In the spring the wetland looks lovely with marsh marigolds and the woodland is full of bluebells. On a sunny summer day the valley is alive with butterflies.

Take your time walking through here; listen to the birds singing and enjoy the woodland, stream, pond and wetland hidden away in this lovely urban open space.

3. When you reach the gate turn left onto the old bridleway to pass Baugh Farm on your right with the converted barn on your left.

Baugh Farm formerly called Bath Farm, was never part of the Cleeve Hill Estate. Originally a late 16th century longhouse, it was enlarged in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its last 65 acres were sold off to property developers in 1944. The farmhouse became the birthplace of Badminton Road Methodist Church in the 1950s.

4. Bear right and follow the path across the road past the new houses at Bury Hill View. As you meet a tarmac path turn right and immediately left through the horse barrier gate into Bromley Heath Playing Fields. (An easier alternative is to follow the tarmac path and then turn left onto the cycle track).

5. Enjoy this open space that has play and sports facilities, including a Skate Park. Head for the opening in the hedge to the right of the pavilion and climb the steep steps onto the cycle track.

6. Turn left along the cycle track and cross Bromley Heath Road by the traffic lights at Bromley Farm. Formerly Bromley Heath Farm, in the 1650s it ran to 60 acres with 2 houses, one of which was 'ruinous'. Owned by Joseph Beck and his descendants from 1788-1833 and by the Cave family from 1833-1920. In 1944 the Scudamore brothers moved in and ran a market garden there for over 50 years.

7. Walk 100m left along the main road and enter a footpath to the right. At the end of the path take the narrow path to the left and pick up the tarmac path on your left and turn right. Follow the path past a children's play area on your left through to Cleeve Wood Road. Turn right down the hill past Cleeve Wood Lodge to Cleeve Wood Bridge, Cleeve Mill and the River Frome. The river marks the western boundary of the parish.

8. Cleeve Wood Bridge was built about 1800 above a lower level bridge still visible below. Note the iron post, marked 'Turnpike Trust 1823'. John Wallis, who died in 1867, manned the turnpike here for many years. Cleeve Mill, now hidden behind the trees, operated as a mill from at least 1300, originally as a corn mill and then making iron agricultural implements. It ceased operating in 1885 and became a tea garden with boating on the river.

Retrace your steps back up Cleeve Wood Road passing Cleeve Wood House and Clevedale.

9. Cleeve Wood House once had eight acres of woodland skirting the River Frome. Opened to the public in the 1920s, here they could walk, play tennis and visit the refreshment house. Cleeve Wood Lodge became the gardener's cottage. Cleve Dale Court flats further up the road on the left are built on the site of an old house, Clevedale, formerly known as Foyster's Court, which dates back to the 16th Century.

10. Walk in front of the shops, turn left and cross carefully at the traffic lights to turn left onto Bromley Heath Road. Turn right into Heath Walk, left into Heath Road and then right into Heath Court. Follow the narrow path between the walls at the end of the cul de sac, casting a glance back to see Frenchay church spire.

11. At the end of the path walk a few metres to the right to look at the garden wall and roof of the Orangery, remaining from the large mansion called Cleeve Hill, which stood in this area.

Cleve Hill was a mansion house standing between Cleeve Lawns and Cleeve Park Road, with over 40 acres of land attached. Owned by the Player family and their descendants, the Bragges, from 1618-1790. It belonged to the Caves from 1804-1920 and was demolished circa 1930.

Continue straight across the yard of Cleeve Hill Farm and follow the towering boundary wall of Cleeve Hill House until you reach Badminton Road.

From 1731 for over 100 years Cleeve Hill Farm was glebe land for the vicars of Marshfield. The Bridgman family were the Caves' tenants here and bought the farm, with 107 acres, in 1920. Reduced to 75 acres by 1954, a further 56 acres were sold off for development.

12. Turn right until No 75, cross the road and take the pathway in front of Cave Cottages. Cave Cottages were designed by Walter Cave and built in 1875 as tied cottages for Cleeve Hill Estate workers.

13. At the end of Cave Cottages turn right and then immediately left taking the path into George V Playing Fields.

14. Alternatively, you may wish to take an excursion into Downend Village. W G Grace was born here in 1848 and is celebrated in a 'mosaic' on the wall of the Willow Shopping Centre, near the roundabout.

15. Once in the playing fields look right to see Cleeve Lodge, a large three-storey house. Cleeve Lodge was home to Rev Alfred Peache, Downend's first vicar, when its sixteen acres skirted the Westerleigh Road towards the cemetery.

Follow the path left, left again then sharp right to the back of the Cemetery, opened in the 1880s. This path takes you to Westerleigh Road with Downend School, formerly known as Stockwell School, on your left. (Stockwell means 'a spring marked by a stake'.)

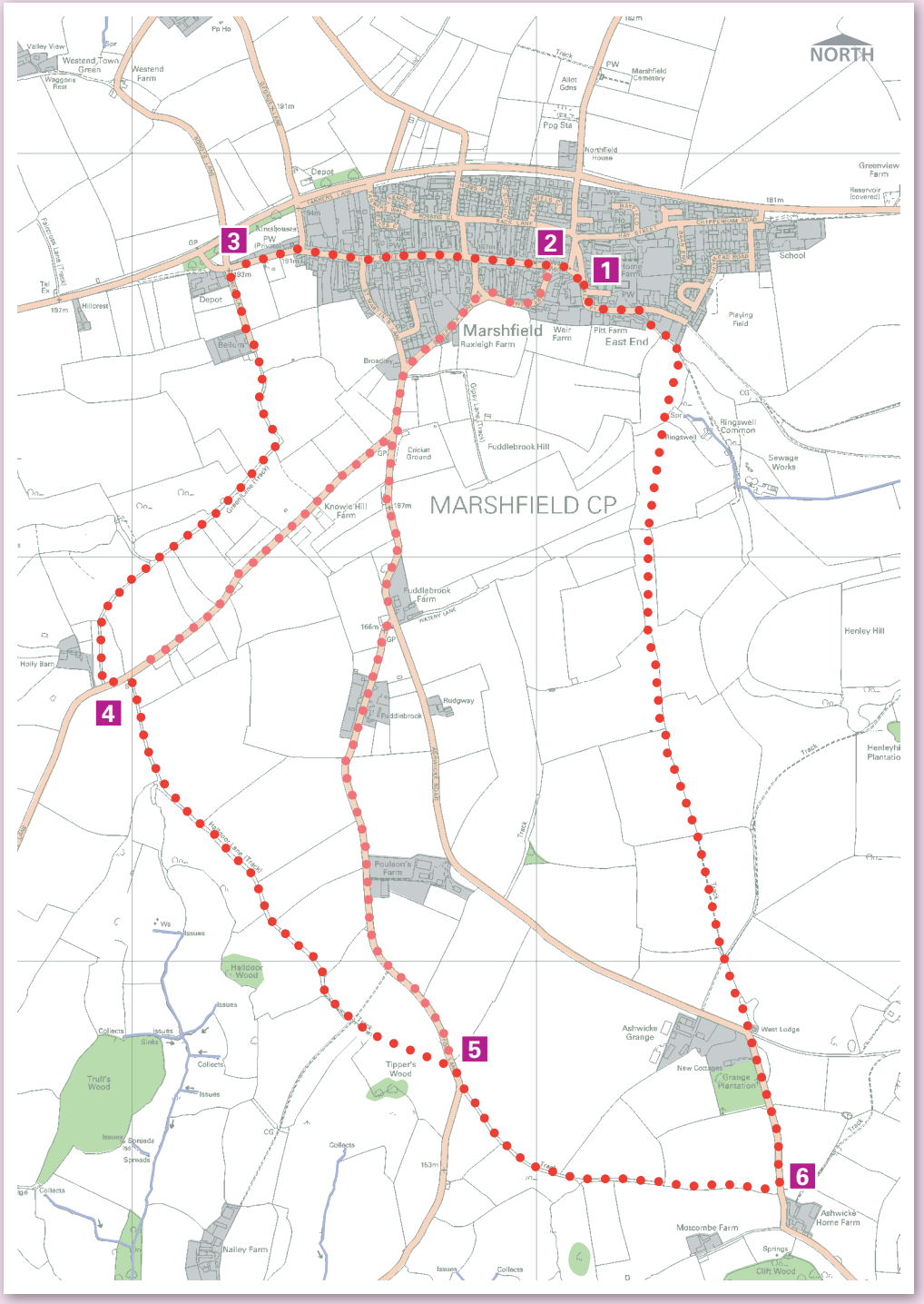
16. Turn left past the school, glancing over to the right to see the spire of Mangotsfield church, whose history dates back to the 13th Century, and then take the path to the left which follows the boundary of the school field and playing field through to Sutherland Avenue. Turn right then left into Boscombe Crescent, then left into Westbourne Road, cross over Badminton Road and follow to the right to take you back to the Methodist Church.

Marshfield is by the side of the main road between Bristol and Chippenham on the A420. The start of the walk is situated in the market place, at the eastern end of the High Street. The walk gets quite steep in places and the terrain will get muddy following a spell of wet weather (remember to wear suitable footwear and waterproofs). You may encounter livestock in some of the fields the paths cross. There are three walks to choose from varying in lengths of 4km(2.5 miles), 5.6Km(3.5 miles) and 7.2Km(4.5 miles).

Marshfield

Marshfield is a small medieval market town, occupying an exposed position on the southern Cotswolds.

The name comes from Meresfelde meaning boundary field, originally the boundary between Wessex and Mercia in Anglo-Saxon times, now the boundary between Wiltshire, Somerset and Gloucestershire. It is located within an agricultural area and is surrounded by attractive open countryside.



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Directions

1. Starting from the Market Place head towards the church, St Mary The Virgin. The church was built in 1242 and rebuilt in the 1470s. It was formally dedicated to St Nicholas. There is a fine brass chandelier of 1725, a Jacobean pulpit and interesting kneelers made by members of the village.

Walk down the path away from the church and go through the kissing gate, and into Little End. The verger and sexton once inhabited the cottages on the left. Turn right past Pitt Farm, a working farm and one of the oldest buildings in the village. Return to the Market Place. The Old Vicarage had a Dame School in the building on the right. The Old Inn was previously the Codrington Arms and then The King's.

2. Go west along the High Street, The Old School, was built as a National School in 1861 under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Bristol and New College Oxford. Closed in July 2001. A new school has been built on the East side of the village.

Pass the public houses, The Crown another coaching inn dating from the 17th Century, and The Lord Nelson, third of the remaining pubs in the village. Note the inscription of Horlock's School over a garage in the street behind. Carry on past the shops, and beyond the main housing, past the Almshouses on the right.

3. At the end of the village, turn left into Green Lane, passing the row of houses at Bellum. Then follow this bridle-way down the valley and up (1 mile point) to Beek's Lane.

4. Turn left and, after about 100 yards, right into another bridle-way called Halldoor Lane (Alternatively; continue up Beek's Lane and return to Marshfield for a total walk of about 2½ miles).

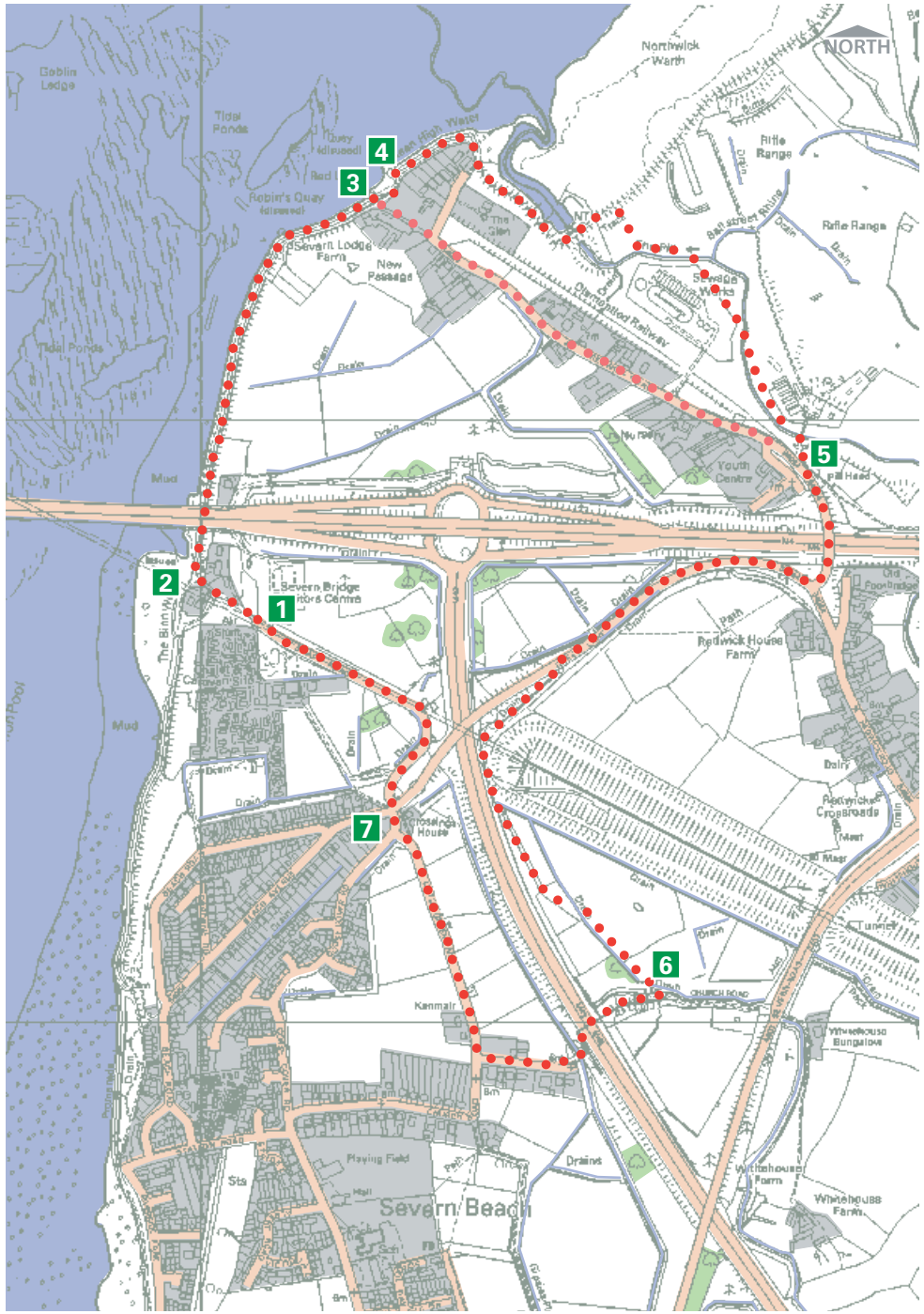
5. On reaching Ayford Lane (2 mile point) turn right and then, after about 150 yards, branch left (Alternatively, turn left up Ayford Lane and return to Marshfield for a walk of about 3½miles).

6. On reaching the Ashwicke Road, turn left, and when the road turns sharp left (3 mile point), carry straight on through a kissing gate and follow the footpath northwards. On reaching the road, turn left, and in a few yards bear right up a path through St. Mary's churchyard, and hence back to the Market Place (total distance just under 4½miles).

The walk covers mainly flat ground across surfaced and un-surfaced footpaths. There is a possibility you may encounter some livestock, and the un-surfaced paths may get muddy following a spell of wet weather. The route is 4.8Km (3 miles) long.

Pilning & Severn Beach

The growth of Pilning and Severn Beach has been characterised by the location next to the great River Severn, so it is appropriate that the route chosen here follows the river bank and takes the walker past features that exist because of the location. The path laces under and over the motorways, that are here to cross the river, similarly the railways, here to access the quay at New Passage and the subsequent tunnel.



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Directions

1. Starting point: Severn Bridges Visitors Centre on Shaft Road (car park, toilets and café)

2. Directions: turn right out of the gateway onto Shaft Road towards the River Severn. Go up the slight incline to the gateway at the riverbank. Turn right along the top of the seawall. This is the Severn Way (don't use the lower pathway as this may be obstructed by tidal debris).

Pass under the Second Severn Bridge and walk towards the First Severn Bridge in the distance. You will pass three public seats before reaching the three-storey building with lots of chimneys that you can see ahead of you. This house is called Severn Lodge Farm and is a Grade II listed building.

3. From this point you can choose to take a shorter easier route. If you want to do this turn right and then follow Redwick Road.

4. Continue on the seawall. The notice on the small stone pier explains its significance. As you continue, the old stonewall in the gardens on your right was the boundary wall of the New Passage Hotel. The hotel, which used to stand where the large houses are now, was built to accommodate passengers who arrived by train for the ferry. As you come to the end of the Sea Wall you will see a gate ahead of you.

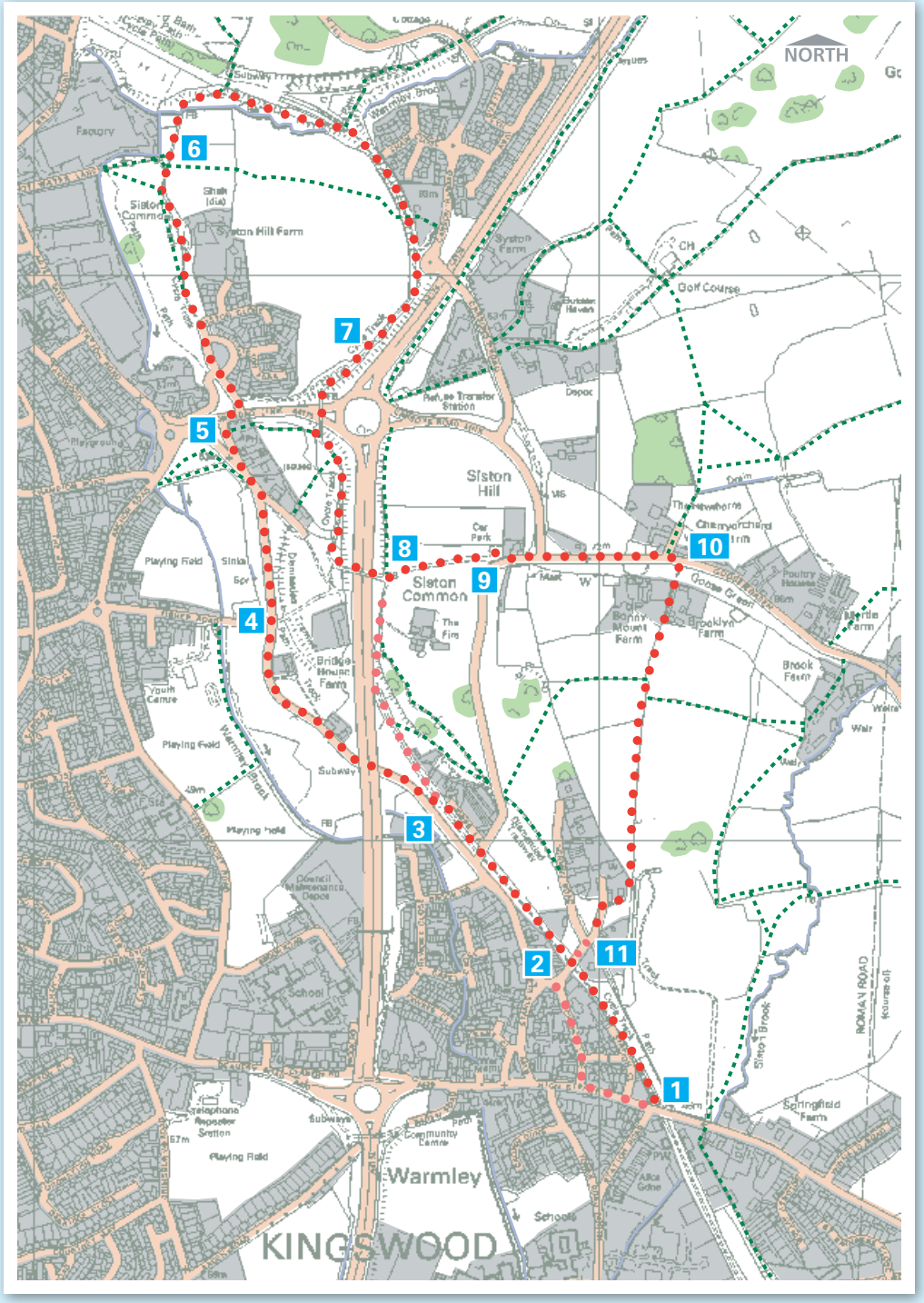
Go through this gate onto the gravel path. Continue on this gravel path and go through the kissing gate. After the kissing gate turn 45 degrees to your right. Cross this small pasture then cross the bridge. Turn to your left and follow the fence line to find a second bridge. Over the bridge, turn to your right. You are on the edge of the former rifle range and will pass the disused barracks buildings on your left. Please keep to the path. Ahead you will arrive at a metal gate, where you turn right across a stone and concrete bridge.

5. At New Passage Road turn left, over the M4 to the mini-roundabout, turn right. Follow Green Lane a short way and take the old lane that forks off to the left, just before the road starts to rise.

Follow this lane to the end, and then to the left where you are close to the side of the M49, but the path quickly reverts to a path between hedges and away from the busy road. The path passes through unused pasture and recently planted woodland.

6. This path joins a tarmac path where you can turn left to go to Pilning, or turn right and continue on the route over the motorway footbridge to Church Road. At the T-junction take the tarmac lane to the right, this is Little Green Lane. The first bungalow was named after a tea plantation in Sri Lanka where the first owner had spent his working life, the second bungalow is named after the first owners.

7. At the top of the lane is the former level crossing where the railway ran from Severn Beach through to Pilning Low Level. The crossing keeper's cottage is now a house. Go straight ahead and follow Shaft Road to return to the Visitors centre.



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This is an easy route, with reasonable gradients, mostly over hard surfaces and passable most of the year. The short walk is 4.6km (2.8 miles) long, and the longer route is 6km(3.7 miles) long. There are horses in some of the fields on the longer route.

Siston

Siston Parish is situated at the heart of the ancient 'Kingswood Forest' straddling the old 'London Way', now the A420. The common itself is a large area of rough grassland situated within the Parish of Siston.

In Siston Parish we have many walks via the 'Waymarked' footpaths, just obtain a copy of the ordnance survey explorer map 155, pull on your boots and enjoy yourselves.

Directions

1. Make your way onto the old railway track now known as the 'Bristol to Bath Railway Path' and head north straight through the Old Station. Take note of the 'Passengers' on the platform awaiting the next train. The last one left in 1966. This was once the route of the renowned LMS 'Pines Express' which connected the Midlands with the South Coast at Bournemouth.

Warmley was a busy passenger and goods station, warranting a resident Station Master with a house right next to the platform. There was an iron footbridge across the lines and the road gates were operated from the signal box opposite.

2. As you approach the first bridge over the line note the impressive red brick building on your left, once a flourmill with direct access onto the sidings. After passing under the bridge spot the large mound on your right, this is the remains of a colliery slag/spoil heap. The mineshaft is located just behind in the corner of Siston Common; it is now capped off with concrete.

As you continue, views will open up on both sides of the 'track', to your right across the Common and up to Siston Hill; on the left across the valley to Kingswood, spot the tower of Holy Trinity Parish Church. Further along the skyline is the Dome of the Handel Cossham Memorial Hospital, said to stand on the highest point in the Bristol area.

3. After a cattle grid the path slopes away to the left, follow down onto the lower part of Siston Common now cut in two by the Avon Ring Road. Continue on through the underpass, following the sign for Soundwell. For your safety please use the Footpath/Cycleway part of the carriageway.

4. You cannot fail to spot 'Rock Cottage' standing prominently on your right and Fisher Road to your left. Near here a Mr Meredith of Mangotsfield constructed a dam across the Warmley Brook to make fishponds, hence the name 'Fisher Road' originally 'Fisher Lane'.

As you walk on you will notice the 'Dramway', the old coal haulage road built up on your right and the incline dropping down to a mineshaft, now capped, on the very corner of the common. The remains of the 'winding house' stand on the bank above. This is another example of the numerous small mines that were dotted across the area and a reminder of the economic importance of the coal trade in the 18-19th Centuries.

5. We arrive at the Horseshoe Inn, very convenient for light refreshments. Near the site of the roundabout opposite, old maps record a 'Westgate', probably the West Gate to Siston Common.

Go straight through the underpass and across the next piece of common towards Rodway Hill dominating the landscape ahead.

6. On the left, note the track leading to the unusually named Hot Water Lane. Footpath/Cycleway now bears to the right, continue turning to the right until you arrive at the Carson's Road Roundabout, very near the original site of the once highly reputed Carson's Chocolate Factory. You should now be moving to the South.

7. Continue straight on overlooking the 'Avon Ring Road' on your left. Take a left hand fork leading across a modern steel footbridge, you should now see the back of the 'Horseshoe Inn' below on your right, continue along the higher path bearing left toward 'Bridge Farm' and then left over another modern footbridge crossing the 'Avon Ring Road'.

8. You should now be on the upper part of Siston Common walking East towards a car park and 'Boarding Kennels' on your left at the Siston Hill-Carson's Road junction.

This is said to be the highest point of the common, once called 'Five Winds'; locals suffering from chest complaints were brought here to benefit from the claimed healing properties of the air.

Note the panoramic views towards the Cotswold Escarpment in the East and South across the Avon Valley to the distant Mendip Hills. This area is rich in wildlife; you could catch sight of a kestrel 'quartering' the common for prey or perhaps a buzzard soaring high above.

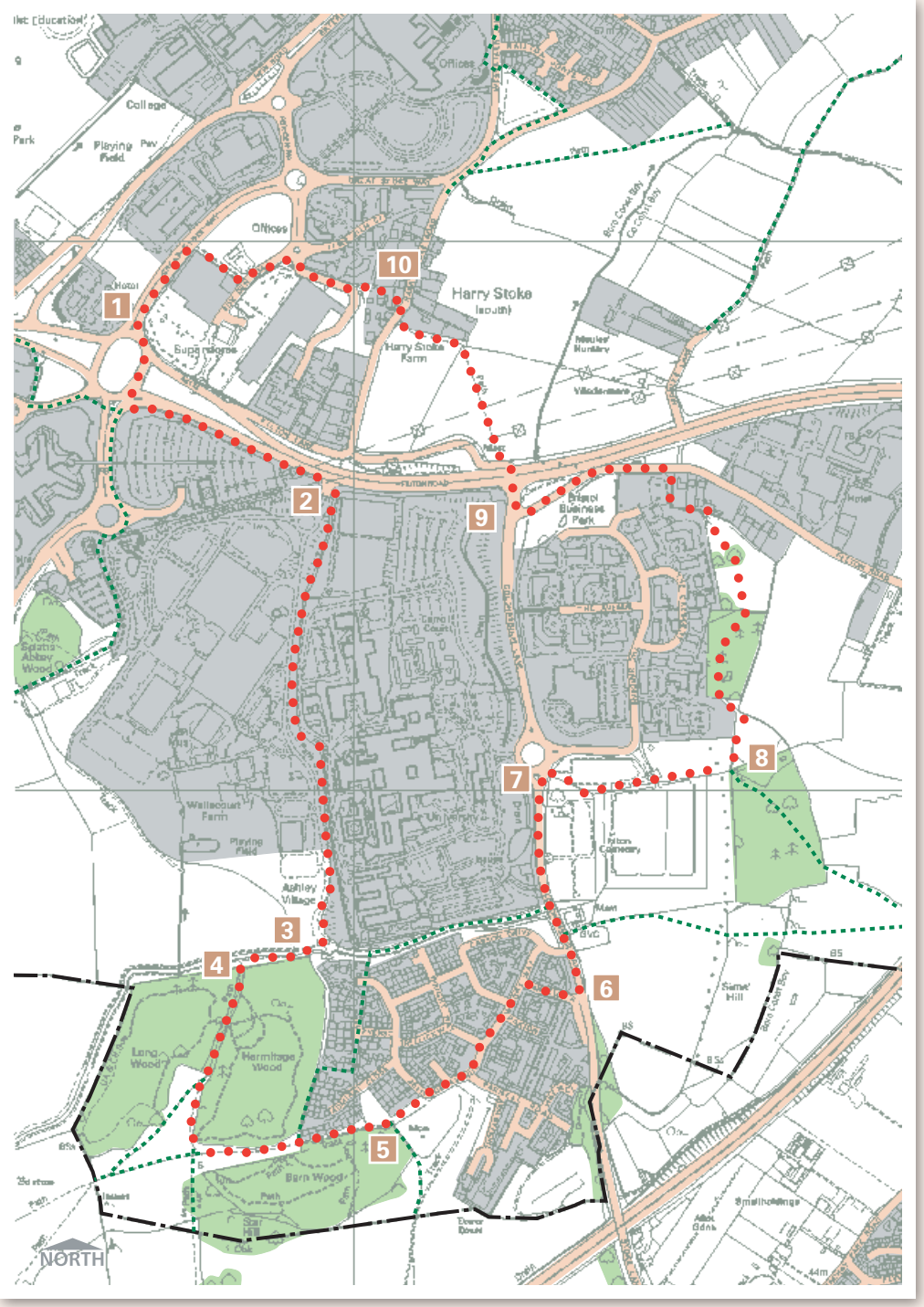
(At this point wheelchair users and anyone wishing to avoid rougher terrain are advised to retrace their track back over the footbridge and straight down to meet the Footpath/Cycleway at the Fisher Road junction. Turn left, follow the route in reverse back up the incline on your left onto the Old Railway Track and back to your starting point at Warmley Station.)

9. Cross the road to the right of the gate opposite, and follow the bridle path along the hedge opposite the 'Kennels', after 200mtrs the bridle path reduces to a footpath over rough ground.

10. Turn right and follow the footpath sign to Norman Road.

11. Turn right at the end of the hedge and continue on, follow the footpath, this will lead you down to Norman Road with houses on your left and open common opposite. Continue along the footpath that will eventually lead you back over the old railway bridge that we passed under earlier. Turn immediately left into Chapel Lane with the redbrick mill to the left and further on the Congregational Chapel opposite. At the junction with the A420, turn left to your starting point just 200 metres away.

We trust you have enjoyed your walk around Siston.



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Stoke Gifford is situated near the M32 and the A4174 is just off junction one. The walk covers flat ground across livestock free surfaced and un-surfaced footpaths, but could get muddy following a wet spell. The route is 5.45 km long (3.39 miles).

Stoke Gifford

This route starts in the hamlet of Harry Stoke, which is now part of the Stoke Gifford Parish.

Archaeological investigation of the earthworks on the west side of Harry Stoke road almost certainly marks the site of a medieval manor house or farm, which included a dovecot.

Directions

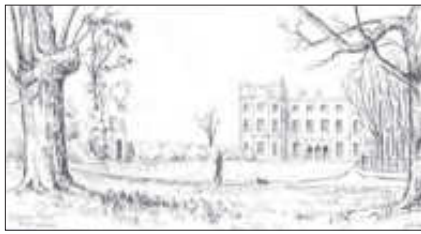
1. Starting at the Sainsbury's car park situated at the end of Fox Den Road, cross the Filton Road (A4174) and turn left and proceed east until you reach the entrance to Hewlett Packard.

2. Next to the A4174 was the Harry Stoke Colliery, a pair of drifts, which passed through the coal beds at a gradient of 1 in 3. The conditions in the seams lowered productivity to a level where the colliery became uneconomic and the National Coal Board closed the mine in June 1963.

Follow the footpath between Hewlett Packard and UWE, to the other access to Hewlett Packard, and follow the footpath on the right that follows the Hewlett Packard Boundary.

3. On the left is Walls Court Farm. Originally an area of considerable woodland known as 'le Walls'. The farm was mostly so poor that it earned the name of 'Starve all Farm'. In the 19th century Thomas Proctor transformed Walls Court Farm into a model estate. He left in 1861; and almost 100 years later, Hewlett Packard an American computer company bought the land. They have restored the farmhouse and have incorporated many of the original architectural features into new buildings on site.

4. After 200 yards turn left into Longs Wood, you will eventually emerge on open land. Carry on along the edge of the wood and turn left. Head East between Long Wood and Barn Wood onto a stone track, and you will eventually emerge in Stoke Park.



5. Ahead is the Dower house. Stoke House was built in 1563 by Sir Richard Berkeley. The house was largely remodelled in the mid 18th century by the architect and gardener Thomas Wright, who also landscaped the Park. In 1907 the Reverend Burden bought Stoke Park to establish a colony for the treatment of the mentally handicapped and the house was converted into a hospital. The site has now been converted to residential property.

Walk along Jellicoe Avenue, turn left on to Wright Way, then take your second right onto Lancelot Road, leading out through a gate onto Coldharbour Lane.

6. The name Coldharbour is often associated with Roman roads. There was a farm at this location that was demolished when the university was built.

7. When you get to the roundabout cross the road onto the path that goes through the U.W.E car park. Head east for one hundred yards go through the kissing gate and carry on in the same direction.

The footpath route now follows along the edge of a ridge known as Simms Hill. Thomas Wright extended the Stoke Park gardens outside the formal areas to take advantage of the slopes overlooking Stoke Lane. He built a bridge to connect the gardens with Simms Hill.

8. Take care going down the bank to the kissing gate, and go left once you have gone through the gate. Carry on through the woods following the waymarks and you will eventually emerge on Filton Road.

9. At the junction of Coldharbour Lane and Filton Road there used to be an army camp, now the site of the Crest Hotel. It had lots of wooden huts, which were taken over by residents after the war in 1945.

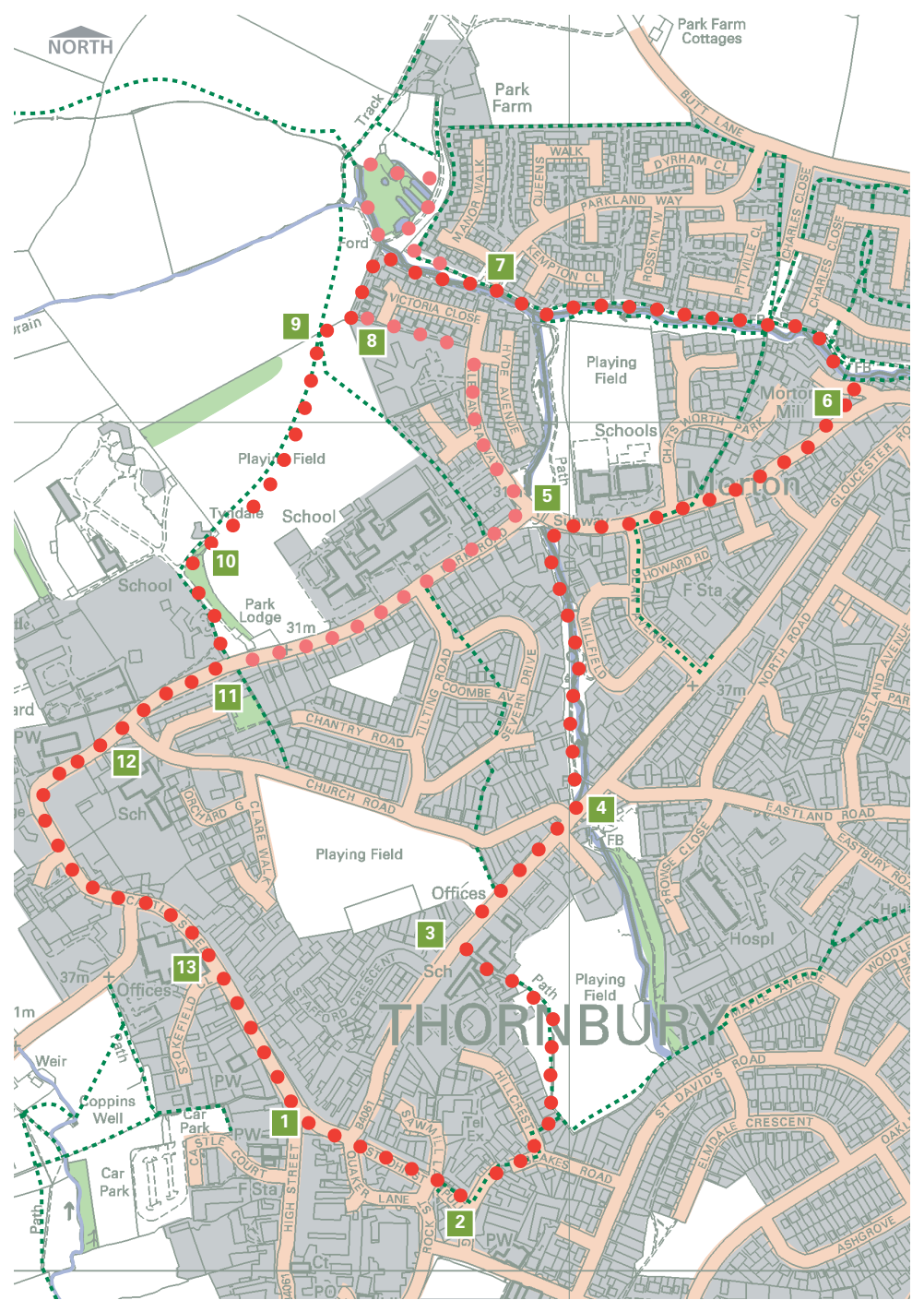
Take care crossing the road, and follow the path to the pelican crossing's. Here you will have to go through three sets of lights before reaching the other side of the A4174. Go through the kissing gate and walk north westerly to the far corner of the field.

10. Go through the kissing gate and cross Harry Stoke Road, follow the footpath through the houses and onto the road behind B & Q. Head for the roundabout and turn left, after one hundred yards turn right onto a footpath that leads you to Great Stoke Way. Turn left here and carry on back to the car park and the finish. We hope you have enjoyed walking around the parish of Stoke Gifford.

The trail starts at The Plain facing the Town Pump. Park in Castle Court car park, or take a bus to Thornbury High Street. The walk is livestock free and mainly on surfaced paths. The route is 3.7km (2.3 miles) long.

Thornbury

Thornbury is an ancient, prosperous market town. It is the commercial centre for the rural communities of the Severn Vale, close enough to Bristol to be convenient, vibrant and sought after for its quality of life. Founded in the 9th Century the town has a rich history. Many of the medieval walls are still easily identified and the ancient Closes can be seen in the pattern of land use. Thornbury was dominated by events around its castle from the time of Henry VIII.



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Directions

1. Start at the bottom of the High Street outside the Nat West Bank, near the town pump. Installed in 1984 it is a replica of one that served the Cattle Market, which was held here. Note Savery's opposite (their forge at the rear made the Savery plough which was particularly successful in Australia), the tall gables of No2 The Plain (formerly Dorothy Gubbins sweet shop) and also the townscape of Castle Street and High Street with pavement frontages and irregular rooflines.

Crossing High Street at the pedestrian crossing, turn towards Castle Street and right at Owens. Note Royal George sign, (a ship, not a monarch) and cross via zebra crossing.

Pass Gulwells on your right and go into St. John Street, noting 18th and 19th century cottages, Quaker Court (on the site of a 17th century Quaker Meeting House), and a portion of the Medieval Town Wall at Sawmill Lane.

2. Carry straight on past the 19th century terraces in Pullins Green and turn left into Crispin Lane. Continue into Blakes Road, go left into Hillcrest, follow the Footpath sign between the houses into the playing field (once one of the historic closes). Turn left and follow path towards the school buildings. Note small boundary marker for the Old Closes on right. Continue past buildings to reach Gloucester Road.

3. Turn right past previous Grammar School buildings (1880, 1906, 1909), on right a terrace of Victorian houses, on the left, and the Old Union Workhouse (now Beechacres flats) on the right.

4. Cross Gloucester Road at pedestrian refuge and enter Streamside Walk. Just past a wooden bridge is the circular pond, the remains of a former sewage works. The rocky bank on the right is planted with natural woodland flowers. At Park Road, the car park at Sinclair Hall Scout Hut is where Thornbury's gas works stood.

5. Crossing via the underpass, turn right past Manorbrook School. Continue along Park Road passing Westover on left built in the 1890s for the Mill owner. At The Anchor pub garden turn left for 20 yards. New houses are on the site of the millpond for Morton Mill, believed to be one of three corn mills mentioned in the Doomsday book of 1086.

6. Turn right over stream, then left and follow the asphalt path to see the Millstream tumbling over the weir. A small plaque on the stone wall beyond the first footbridge summarises the history of the former mills.

Following the path downstream, note Sandstone and Thornbury Rock (of world renowned hardness) in the low cliffs opposite.

Ignore the next footbridge on left at confluence of 2 streams, and continue to the third footbridge.

7. *(Those who are prepared to walk on uneven surfaces should continue on the right bank of the stream for 120 yards and pass through a wooden kissing gate to display boards of Medieval Fishponds now managed by Avon Wildlife Trust. Over 750 years ago this was a fish farm! View fishponds then return to the entrance and retrace route to the footbridge.)*

Cross this bridge (now on your right), turn right down the left bank of the stream, bear left at the last house. Here view the former Thornbury Deer Park (700 acres) created around 1510, with the Welsh hills and The Forest of Dean behind.

8. At the bend by kissing gate, those needing asphalt surfaces should turn left then turn right at the road. Continue to the entrance of the residential home then cross to other side of Alexandra Way, continue on pavement, then go down slope to go through the underpass. Turn right past car park and walk past Castle School and rejoin the route opposite the entrance to the Sheiling School (Point11)

9. The main route turns right through a kissing gate and left through another kissing gate to Castle School sports field. Walk between the fence and the belt of trees of many native species.

10. At far corner, turn left, walk alongside a grassy bund, and turn right at the end of the bund through wooden gate into Sheiling School. Previously this was Thornbury Park and Thornbury Castle Orchards before that. Turn left. (**NB Keep to the asphalt paths as directed.**) On the right is a specimen of the primitive Ginkgo Biloba tree and many magnificent mature trees. On reaching the main drive turn left to Park Road.

11. Cross carefully and turn right behind a stand of Holm Oaks. At junction with Church Road, see fine views of Church, and Castle's oriel windows and ornate chimneys. Follow signs to Castle Street - the small walled paddock on the right is The Pound used for impounding stray animals.

12. St Mary's Church and Churchyard are well worth a visit. Note fine Cedar of Lebanon, many good mature Lime trees, and by the Glebe Field opposite the church, a magnificent Sweet Chestnut Tree past the Glebe Field - hopefully drastic pruning will assist its recovery from disease. Follow road curving left at The Old Vicarage.

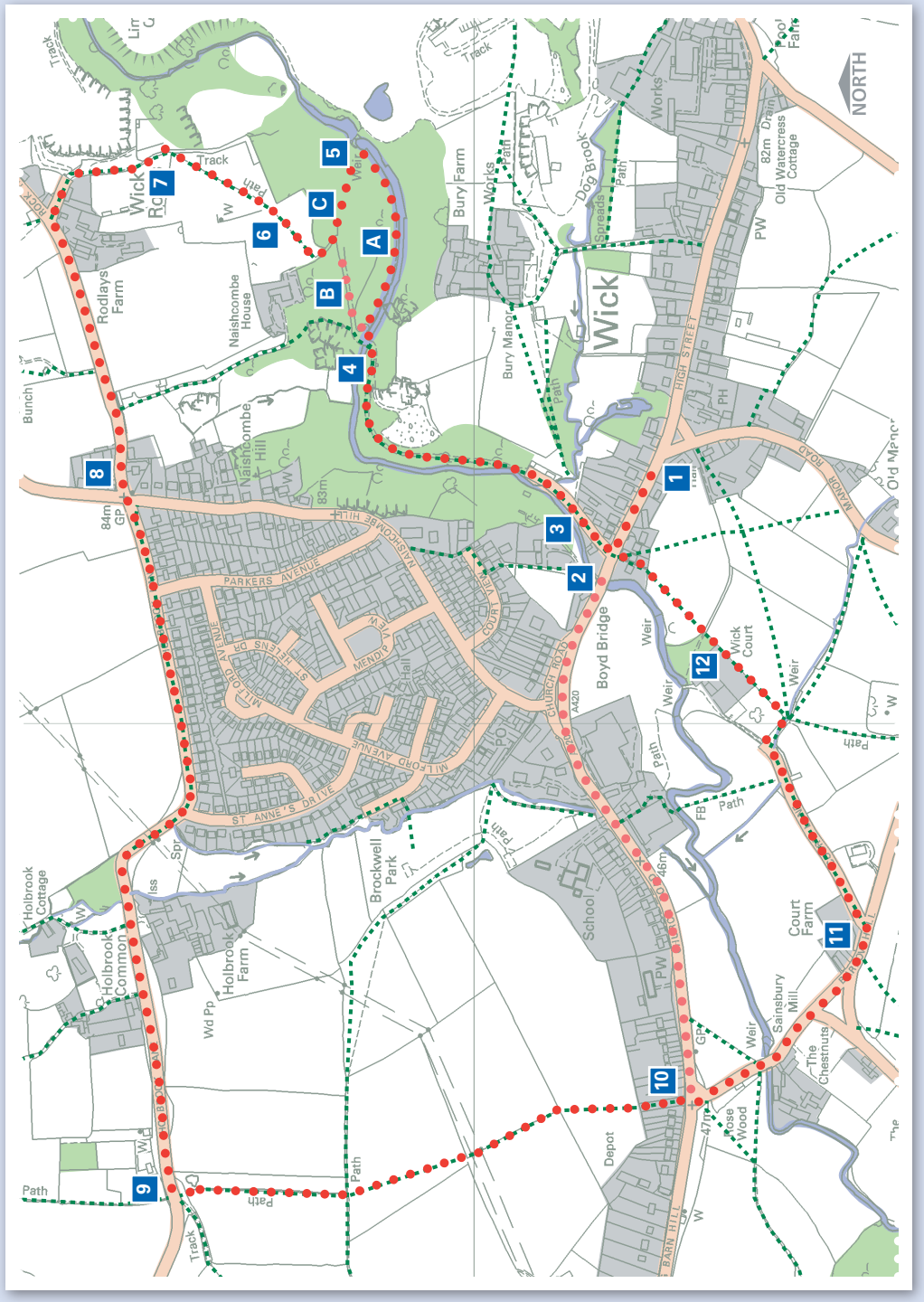
13. Castle Street's ancient historic buildings include the old Free Grammar School 1648-1879, The Chantry (now Community Association), narrow cottages with long burgage plots at the rear, The Priory (no. 17), Porch House (next to Christ the King Church), Epworth House (no.12) visited by John Wesley, and Lion House (No. 9).

The McLean Memorial Drinking Fountain on the west side of Castle Street, near The Pump marks the end of the Access Trail.

The walk gets quite steep in places and the terrain will get muddy following a spell of wet weather (remember to wear suitable footwear and waterproofs). You may encounter livestock in some of the fields the paths cross. There are three stiles on this route that can be avoided by following the alternative route along Church Road. Not accounting for the trails within the Golden Valley Nature Reserve, the main route is 4.4Km (2.7 miles) long.

Wick & Abson

The village of Wick stands in the valley of the River Boyd, a tributary of the River Avon. There is archaeological evidence of continuous settlement from Mesolithic times. The word 'wick' is usually accepted as meaning a hamlet or homestead dependant on a place of greater importance and, in earlier times, Wick was part of Pucklechurch Hundred. The church at Abson (a dependant chapel of Pucklechurch) served Wick until the building of its own parish church in 1846.



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Directions

1. The Wick and Abson Parish Trail is a circular walk, passing through the Wick Golden Valley Nature Reserve following the River Boyd through woodland to the site of the old ochre works and then up the valley slopes to Ravens Rock before joining Rock Road for the rest of the walk on lanes and over fields back to the starting point. There is a short walk, which keeps to the valley floor for people with disabilities.

The two nearby pubs, The Carpenters Arms and The Rose and Crown, may provide welcome refreshment at the beginning or end of your walk

From the car park at Wick Village Hall, cross the main road, turn left and walk down the hill to Golden Valley Road, which is the first turning on your right just before the bridge over the River Boyd.

2. Although the walk starts at Wick Village Hall, there are two marked spaces provided by the Carpenters Arms for people with disabilities. From the pub, stay on the same side of the A420, cross the bridge over the river and turn left into Golden Valley Road. Walk down the lane to the entrance gate to the nature reserve.

3. Continue down the lane through mature woodland with the River Boyd on your left. Trees in the reserve include sessile oak, ash and small numbers of wych elm. Look out for dippers and kingfishers along the river. Listen for blackbirds, wrens, woodpigeons, chiffchaffs, green woodpeckers and many other birds in the woods. The river acts as a corridor for birds and bats. Seven species of bat have been recorded within the reserve. The river also supports otters and a wide variety of aquatic life.

4. You will come to a bridge over the river, which is where the trails start.

The Red Ochre Trail is fully accessible to wheelchairs. The Ravens Rock Trail includes some steep slopes.

At the bridge take the path alongside the river on your right. You will notice the concrete floor of the old ochre works.

Burgess & Co first processed ochre in 1895. This became The Golden Valley Ochre & Oxide Co. Ltd in 1900. You will see deposits of red ochre, which still coat some of the derelict structures of the old ochre works. At its peak the company employed 200 people. In a complex of factories, workshops and laboratories, ochre was processed and used in the manufacture of fine colours, paints and varnishes.

On your left, an area has been colonized by young trees and a mosaic of grasses and wild flowers.

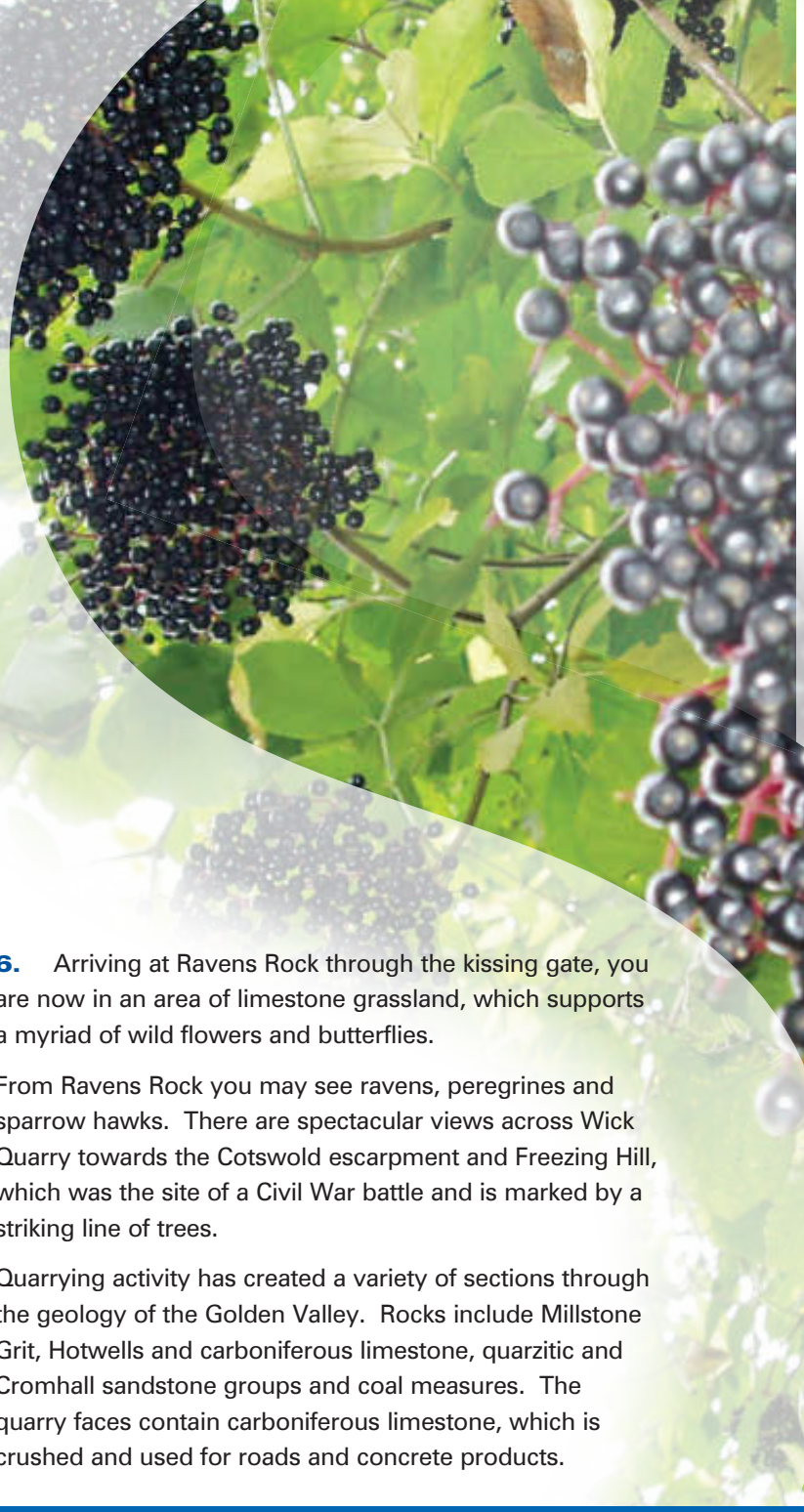
You will arrive at a weir, which was built to provide power for an iron rolling mill in the 18th century, creating a lake behind the weir. It was adapted in 1892 to provide power for the processing of red ochre. Later, a steam power supply was installed and the water from the weir was used in converting the raw materials into colours. In 1968, after severe flooding, the weir was lowered, thus draining the weir pond. Production ceased in 1970 and the works were demolished.

5. At this point next to the weir there are three alterative walks:

A. **Red Ochre Trail.** You may return to the entrance on the marked Red Ochre Trail, which keeps to the valley floor.

B. For easier access to Ravens Rock, return to the bridge on the Red Ochre Trail, take the public footpath up to the fields and follow the path to Ravens Rock. You will pass the remains of the old winding shed on your right as you climb up the field from the kissing gate. The ochre was first taken from shallow trenches and later from mines at Rock Road. It was then conveyed to the winding shed above the works in drams drawn along by ponies, before being fed into the works by gravity. The mines were in operation until the 1950s when it became more economical to import supplies from abroad.

C. **Ravens Rock Trail.** Ascend to Ravens Rock by the steps beside the weir and a very steep marked path up the valley slopes through woodland. You will pass the old summerhouse – once thatched and now with some seating for weary walkers! This was in the gardens of the now demolished Rock House. Notice how the plants and flowers have been influenced by the gardens. They include bluebells and daffodils.



6. Arriving at Ravens Rock through the kissing gate, you are now in an area of limestone grassland, which supports a myriad of wild flowers and butterflies.

From Ravens Rock you may see ravens, peregrines and sparrow hawks. There are spectacular views across Wick Quarry towards the Cotswold escarpment and Freezing Hill, which was the site of a Civil War battle and is marked by a striking line of trees.

Quarrying activity has created a variety of sections through the geology of the Golden Valley. Rocks include Millstone Grit, Hotwells and carboniferous limestone, quarzitic and Cromhall sandstone groups and coal measures. The quarry faces contain carboniferous limestone, which is crushed and used for roads and concrete products.

7. Follow the path through the trees, past the folly arch and arrive at the north entrance gate. Continue on the path to Rock Road and turn left.

8. At the bottom of Rock Road, go straight across the crossroads and continue down Holbrook Lane.

9. After a mile turn left on to the marked footpath. Follow the path up over the fields and then as you descend you will see Wick Church below you.

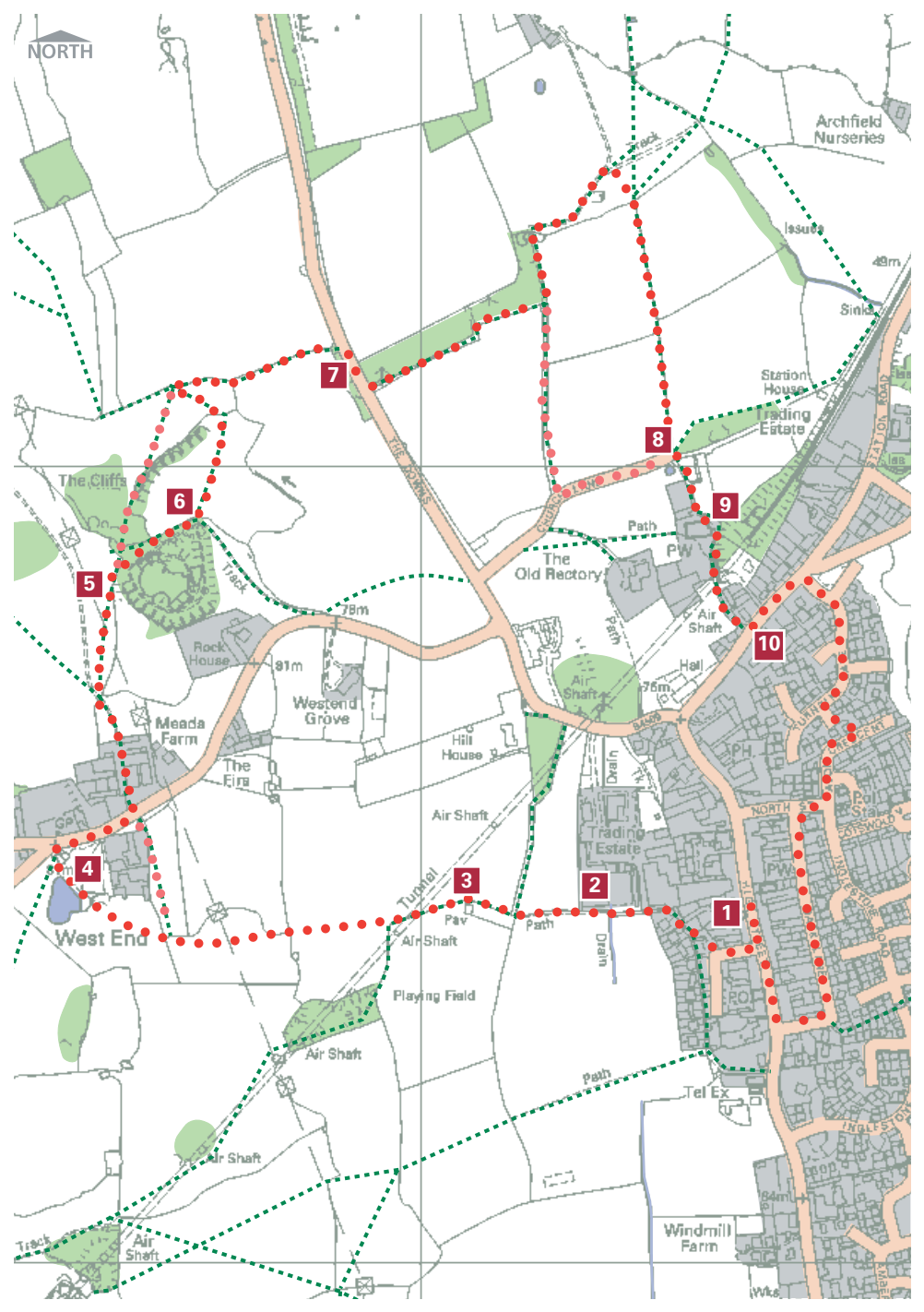
William Butterfield designed Wick Church. It was built in 1846 and consecrated in 1850.

10. If you wish to avoid some stiles and tricky terrain you should turn left along Church Road, and finish back at the Village Hall. However if you are feeling confident, cross the main road and follow the lane down to the weir. This was the site of a flourmill called New Mill that stood to the right of the weir. It was built in the late 1880s and used water power, later to be replaced by steam power. It was taken over in 1945 and in 1977 was converted into dwellings.

11. Follow the lane and take the first left, Court Lane, and then the first footpath on your right. Almost immediately, climb the stile on your left to take the footpath behind Wick Court.

12. Wick Court was built c 1615 in a setting of formal and walled gardens and parkland. Little of the gardens remain and the house is now approached from a lane leading to the original back door. The exterior is of interest because of its survival in an almost unaltered state; apart from the added late 17th century 'sun room' built on pillars over the old front door, which you can see from the footpath.

Continue along the path until you reach the main road. Turn right to take you back to the Village Hall and the end of the walk.



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The walk covers mainly flat ground across unsurfaced footpaths. You should expect to walk through fields that contain livestock and the paths will be muddy following wet weather. The full route is 4.1km (2.5 miles) long. There are two stone stiles on this route that can be avoided by following the alternative routes shown on the map..

Wickwar

Wickwar is situated on the edge of the Cotswold Escarpment, at one time a prosperous clothing town. Its earliest name was Wichen, from Wic; the change to Wickwarre came about with the entry of the De La Warre family, (1280) who were for several generations lord of the manor.

It is known in 1638 Wickwar boasted a Mayor and 12 Aldermen. In 1710 a Mayoral mace was presented to the Corporation and was used in all public occasions.

Directions

1. Start at Wickwar Town Hall in the middle of High Street. It is the only building in the high street with a clock tower. The clock is claimed to be the oldest working clock in a public building in England.

With your back to the town hall turn right along the western side of the High Street.

Take the first right, which is sign-posted 'To The Buthay'. Follow the road until the end and turn left along a lane between houses and garages until you get to the footpath and immediately afterwards, on the right, a pedestrian gate.

2. Use the pedestrian gate and follow the footpath across the field to the gate in the opposite hedgerow.

Just before you get to the hedgerow there is a small brick building next to the footpath - thought to have been used as a lookout in the war. Use the gate and head towards the pavilion. Follow the line of the hedgerow, which takes you into the Wickwar Playing Fields. If you have a dog with you, please keep it on a lead in the playing fields.

In the playing fields, head for the stone built ventilation shaft by the play equipment. This was originally used to discharge smoke and steam from the railway line that passes beneath.

3. There is a kissing gate behind the ventilation shaft that you take to leave the playing fields. Once in the field, you will see another kissing gate straight ahead that you should aim for. Looking back to your right you will see another ventilation shaft. Leave this field via the kissing gate and head towards the next gate (alternatively, when you reach the next gate you can use the kissing gate on your right, and go straight to Westend Road where the route continues on the path opposite). Once through the kissing gate, continue to a large pond with a stone footbridge.

4. Stay on the concrete path and then go over the stile that brings you to the Wickwar to Cromhall Road. Cross the road and turn right in the direction of Wickwar. After passing Evanwood House on your right, turn left on to the footpath, which leads through the farmyard. Go straight ahead and down the track to where there are two footpath signs on a gatepost going in two different directions.

5. Take the right hand path following the hedgerow and go through the kissing gate into a copse of trees (alternatively follow the hedge line to the next footpath and continue around the cliffs to the right).

To your right there is a natural water hole, now used for private fishing, known by locals as the 'swimmers'.

In days gone by it was a popular recreational spot for youngsters from the village.

6. Turn left as you leave the copse, descending into the field, and then head almost straight ahead up across the field to where you can see another kissing gate in the centre of the hedgerow. Go through the kissing gate and bear right, heading for the kissing gate in the top left hand corner of the field.

Go through the gate, ahead of you to the right you will see the spire of Holy Trinity Church. Go straight ahead through the field and you will come out on the main Tortworth to Wickwar Road. Take care on this road – it is often quite busy.

7. Once on the road, turn right and you will see a footpath sign pointing left ahead of you. Cross the road and take the footpath, which is a shady path through trees adjacent to the quarry border. At the end of the footpath you come out on a farm track, turn left and follow the track until you come to a gate on the right hand side. (If you wish to avoid the second stone stile, turn right when you emerge on the farm track and turn left when you reach Church Lane). Pause and enjoy the views over the Cotswold ridge.

8. Go into the field and turn right in the direction of the church, which can be seen in the distance. Go through the kissing gate, still heading for the church. As you walk through the second field, look through the hedging for a view of the old cider brewery, next to the Bristol to Birmingham main railway line. At the end of the field go over the stile into the lane and then walk through the cemetery.

9. Pass around the left side of the church (it may be open for you to have a look inside) and go down the tarmac pathway (known as the Stank) to Station Road. You will see another ventilation shaft to your right while you are walking down the Stank.

10. At Station Road turn left. Cross the road when you come to the footpath on the other side of the road and then turn right into Turnpike Gate. Follow the road around and then turn left into the cul-de-sac at house number 17. Keep to the left and go along the alley that runs past house number 21. At the end of the alley turn right and follow the road around to the left. Take the next road on the right with the post box on its opposite corner. Then turn left into Back Lane, which used to be the main village road. Walk down Back Lane following it when it bears right. It will bring you out at the main road. Looking to your right you can see your start point, the Town Hall.

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Neil Pirrie
Adrian Kerton

Thornbury Parish Council
Sandra Richardson

Wick & Abson Parish Council
Sue Jones
Molly Ward

Wickwar Parish Council
Pat Trull

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Countryside Code

Always Follow the Country Code

Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs.
Even when going out locally, it's best to get the latest information about where you can go; for example, your rights to go onto some areas of open land may be restricted while work is carried out, for safety reasons or during breeding seasons. Follow advice and local signs, and be prepared for the unexpected.

Leave gates and property as you find them.
Please respect the working life of the countryside, as our actions can affect people's livelihoods, our heritage, and the safety and welfare of animals and ourselves.

Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home.
We have a responsibility to protect our countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you don't harm animals, birds, plants, or trees.

Keep dogs under close control.
The countryside is a great place to exercise dogs, but it's every owner's duty to make sure their dog is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, wildlife or other people.

Consider other people.
Showing consideration and respect for other people makes the countryside a pleasant environment for everyone – at home, at work and at leisure.

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Forest of Avon

South Gloucestershire Council