

# Jurassic Way

A Northamptonshire County Path

## NORTHERN SECTION THE HERMITAGE to STAMFORD



Clapper Bridge, Stoke Albany

### 'Forest and Flow'



Northamptonshire  
County Council

## The Jurassic Way

The Jurassic Way is a long distance, recreational walking route which travels the length of Northamptonshire, and more. The termini are Banbury in Oxfordshire and Stamford in Lincolnshire, two historic market towns separated by beautiful undulating countryside lying over rocks from the Jurassic age (c. 140-195 million years old). The whole route is 88 miles in length, described by a set of three guides.

### Finding your Way

The Jurassic Way guides illustrate the route in map form and describe, within the text, your passage through the villages en route (from south to north). This is supported on the ground by fingerposts, waymarkers, stiles and gates which bear distinctive Jurassic Way logo discs. These discs have a directional arrow and within it the form of *Kallirhynchia sharpi*.

### *Kallirhynchia sharpi*

This brachiopod was first named in 1938 in honour of one Samuel Sharp (1814-1882). He was an inspirational figure; archaeologist, numismatist as well as a geologist. "His wide and varied stores of knowledge were always placed at the service of those who sought his aid... many a young collector and student of science was indebted to him for useful and friendly advice". From 1857 Samuel Sharp lived at Dallington Hall, Northampton. He was an enthusiastic collector of fossils across the county. He discovered the very limited time range of this fossil and, its abundance in rock beds in the middle of the Jurassic system. These attributes make *Kallirhynchia sharpi* extremely important as it can be used to date rocks very accurately. *Kallirhynchia sharpi* is normally 15mm long, 18mm wide and 11mm thick. Its pointed 'umbo' carried the pedicle which acted as its anchor to the shallow seas which covered Northamptonshire 165 million years ago.



Samuel Sharp in 1868



## The Hermitage to Stamford - 33 1/2 miles

The northern section of the Jurassic Way passes through the Rockingham Forest along its north-west boundary, following closely the course of the River Welland.

This area was the location for a wild, prehistoric woodland - a mix of ash, elm, small-leaved lime and oak. The forest has been altered and encroached upon by peoples through the ages. The first large scale inroads were in the late-iron age. The ancient Britons

continued the process, clearing the natural woodland to convert the land

During the Dark Ages the forest fought back, regenerating over abandoned fields and farmsteads. Much of the remnant ancient woodland has its roots between the 5th and 9th Centuries AD. Forest clearance returned following the Anglo-Saxon invasions; their open field agricultural system gradually ate away at the woodland around the nucleated villages.

The Rockingham Forest came into being with the Norman Conquest, taking its name from the Royal Castle which commanded the Welland Valley. It was governed by Forest Law, controlling lands from Northampton to Stamford between the Welland and the Nene.

The medieval forest was an important Royal hunting ground, home to large private estates, a woodland reserve of fuel and raw materials, agricultural land and, home of a rural peasant economy. Today's settlement pattern is little changed from these times; nucleated villages separated by woodland tract, estates, park and isolated forest lodges.

Royal patronage declined towards the end of the Middle Ages but there was an attempt to revive Forest Law by Charles I in the 17th Century. he re-introduced 'swanimote' courts in the forest 'balliwicks' (or districts) to regulate and raise monies for the Crown. In the 18th and 19th Centuries, Acts of Parliament provided for the widescale disafforestation and enclosure which was to dramatically alter the appearance of the landscape.

**Jurassic Way  
(88 miles)  
Northern  
Section  
(33 1/2 miles)**



**FOLLOW THE COUNTRY CODE:**

- Keep to the line of the path
- Shut gates behind you
- Keep dogs under close control
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments are protected by law, respect them and all archeological sites
- Respect and care for the countryside so that everyone will be welcome to enjoy it

Northamptonshire County Council are interested in your views on this route and leaflet. Any comments should be sent to:  
Northamptonshire County Council  
Countryside Services  
PO Box 221  
John Dryden House  
Bedford Road  
Northampton NN4 7DE

The contributions received towards the development of the Jurassic Way from: Dennis Boyce, Cormac Higgs, Kirsten Bennett, Dr Hugh Torrens (Keele University), local communities and individuals, landowners, neighbouring local authorities, Northamptonshire Heritage and Countryside Services' colleagues, are gratefully acknowledged. Leaflet written and project managed by Andy Johnson.

Illustrations by Colin Tidbury  
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Artwork by Ambassador Print  
Marketing, Northampton



**Stoke Albany**

Descend the embankment to the A427 with care. Turn right and follow the slip-road to the village. Turn left on Desborough Road then straight over the crossroads down Ashley Road. At the green turn right along Lower Road towards Wilbarston.

The village was mentioned in the Domesday Book. Much of the present shape of the village and its features stem from the manorial complex of William d'Aubigny in the 13th Century. At the top of Ashby Road a 15th to 17th Century Manor House stands over the fishponds of the 13th Century. William's ponds were stocked with fish from Rothwell, where such grants were controlled in the Middle Ages. The site can be reached via the public footpath which runs from the stone-slab stile down to the stream.

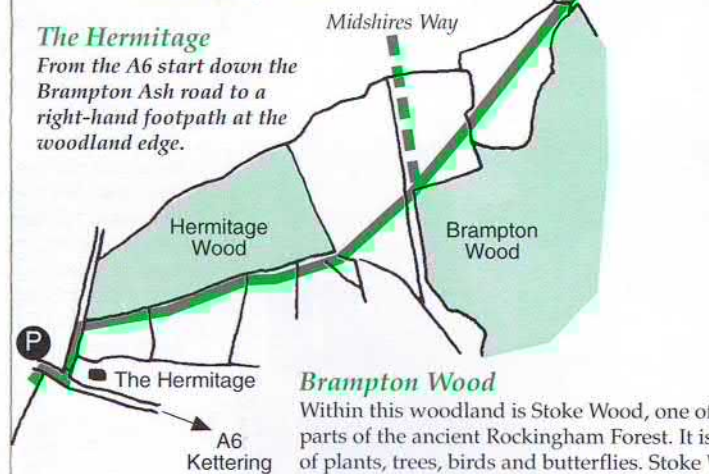
The Church of St Botolph sits by the village green. Dedicated to a monk and patron saint of travellers; a wooden tablet over the porch requests men to scrape their shoes and, women to remove their pattens - strapped wooden soles for raising shoes above the mud. The church roofed with Collyweston Slate, is one of its most southerly locations on our route.



Stoke Albany Stone Stile

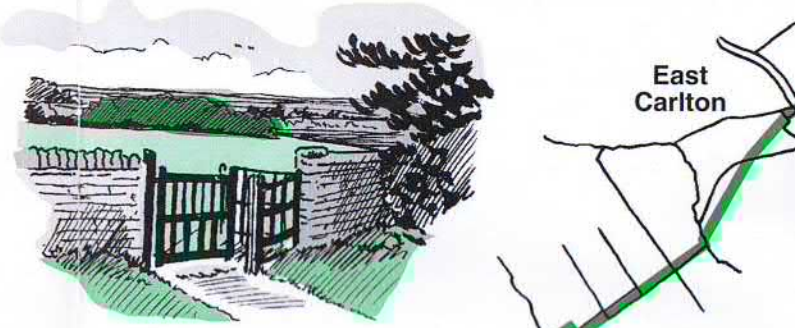
**The Hermitage**

From the A6 start down the Brampton Ash road to a right-hand footpath at the woodland edge.



**Brampton Wood**

Within this woodland is Stoke Wood, one of the few remaining parts of the ancient Rockingham Forest. It is rich in a wide variety of plants, trees, birds and butterflies. Stoke Wood is owned and managed by the Woodland Trust. Access is from the B669, between Stoke Albany and Desborough.



Wilbarston Church Gate



Wilbarston

**Wilbarston**

Arrive in the village through the churchyard. Turn right to the crossroads then, left to pass the Village Hall for a left-hand path through the playing field.

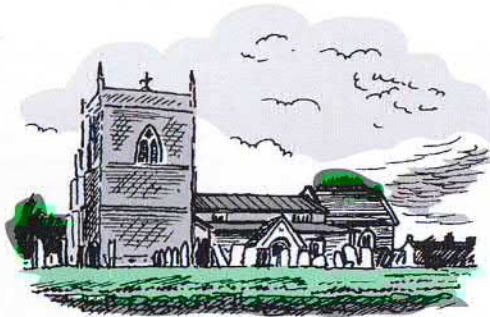
Approaching Wilbarston, from Lower Road, you cross to the site of Stoke Albany watermill. The earthwork remains of which can be seen as you reach the clapper bridge.

The 12th Century Church of All Saints is on the hill above. It contains unusual painted timbers in the nave roof which rest on comical stone heads. There is also a beautifully carved oak screen.

Wilbarston's most recent national 'fame' came in an article which appeared in 'Punch'. It was reported that to commemorate the construction of the impressive new village hall a 'Name the village hall' competition was run; the winning entry was 'The Village Hall'!



The Dale Pocket Park



Bringhurst Church

**Bringhurst**

Follow the single street to the road junction and turn right for 200m to a left-hand footpath.

Perched on an isolated hill 300 feet above the Welland's flood plain is one of the earliest Saxon settlements on this side of the river. Dating from the 6th Century, 'Bryni's' original settlement was probably where the churchyard now stands.

Originating from the 12th Century, the Church of St Nicholas once controlled the neighbouring parishes of Great Easton and Drayton. It was rebuilt in the 18th Century; around its sturdy west tower flies a beautiful golden weathercock.

**Great Easton**

At the road turn right along Barnsdale merging into Cross Bank. At the junction by the pub, turn right out of the village on Caldecott Road. After a short while turn right onto the Bridle Road to Rockingham.

Unlike many surrounding settlements, Great Easton has not often come under the ownership of the traditional Lord of the Manor. In 700 AD, Ethelred, King of Mercia, presented the village to the Abbot of Peterborough.

Its buildings maintain a charming mix of vernacular styles with Collyweston stone slates, ironstone walls and long straw thatch. One of the oldest residential buildings is Furleigh Cottage, passed along Barnsdale; in its thatch an owl looks down - animal forms were often the trademark of the craftsmen who built these roofs.

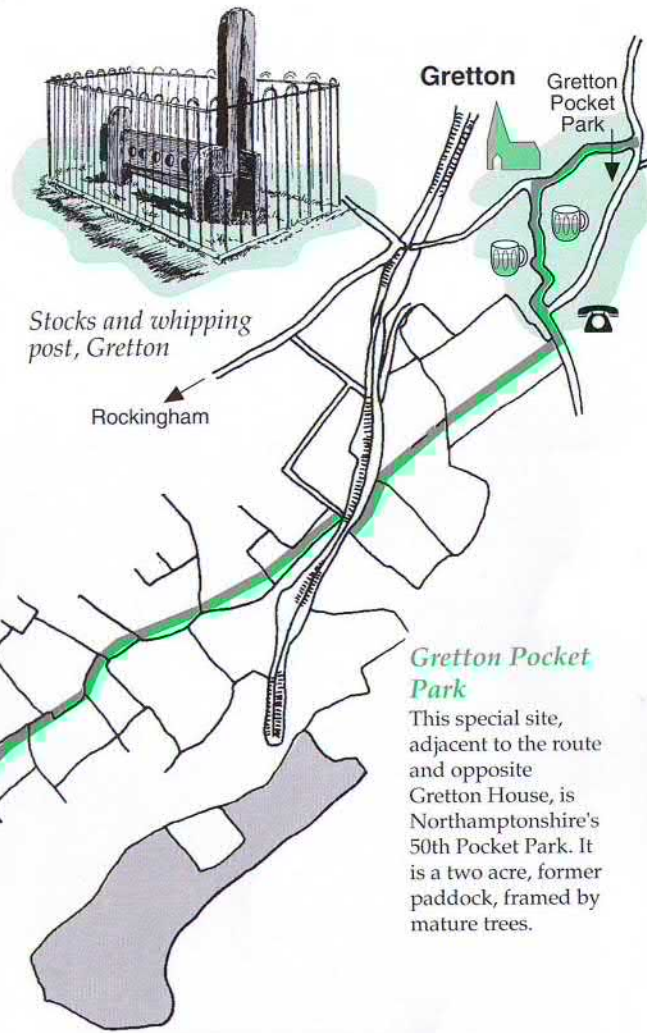
**Gretton**

Having climbed up to the village, turn left into High Street and follow this through the heart of Gretton, passing to the right of the stocks and, on to Gretton House. Turn right here into Kirby Road by the corner of the pocket park. Take the bridleway down the farm track left, after a few metres.

Gretton clings to the escarpment overlooking the River Welland. The Church of St James the Great dates from early in the 12th Century; its imposing west tower can be seen for miles along the valley. Perhaps equally imposing to some villagers of the past, were the stocks and whipping post which remain on the village green.

The size of this village and the fine quality of its stone houses illustrates Gretton's former prosperity, which was enhanced by the arrival of the L.M.S. railway.

The countryside to the east has much changed in the last century as much was excavated for the iron-ore in the rocks below.

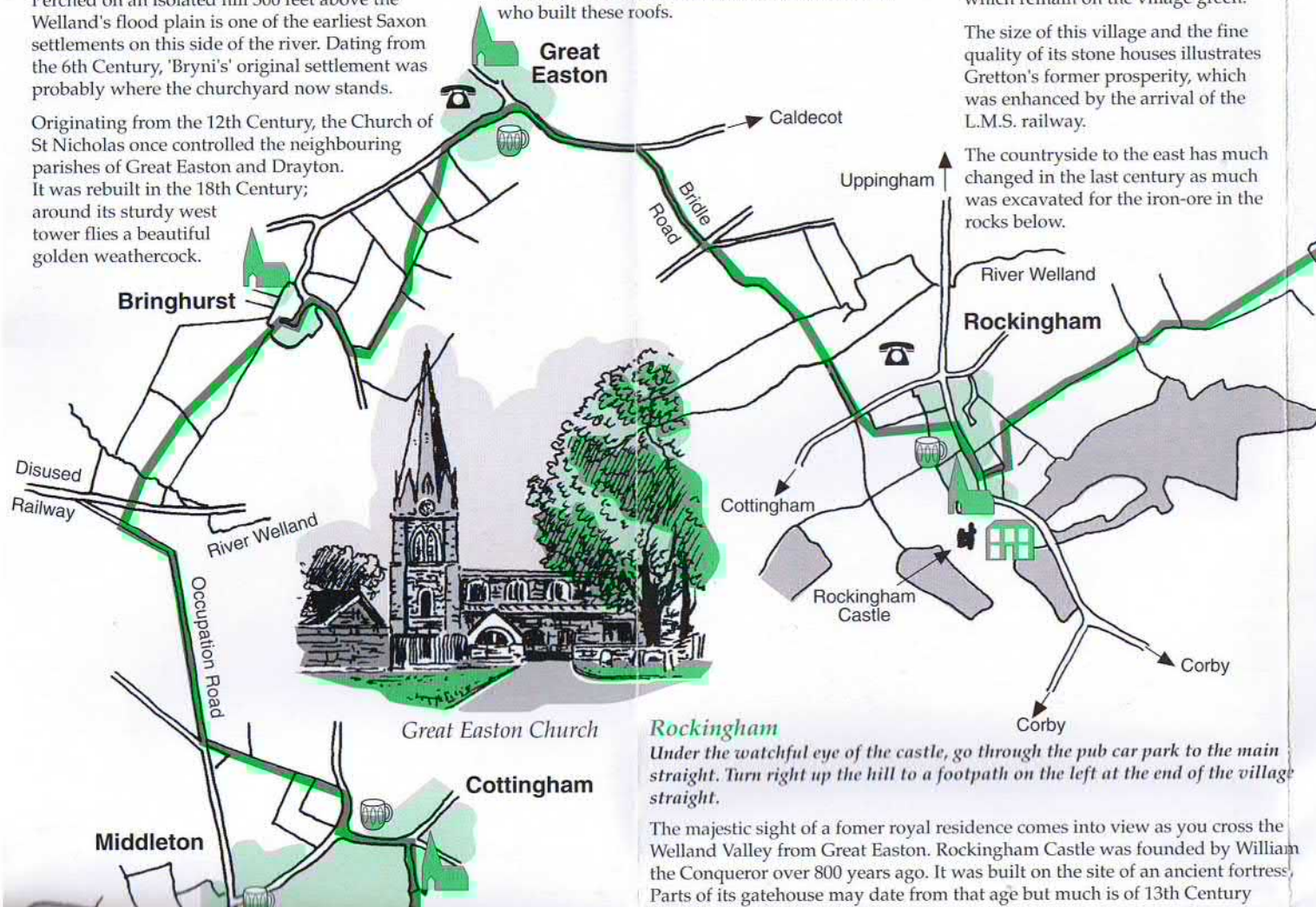


Stocks and whipping post, Gretton

Rockingham

**Gretton Pocket Park**

This special site, adjacent to the route and opposite Gretton House, is Northamptonshire's 50th Pocket Park. It is a two acre, former paddock, framed by mature trees.



Great Easton Church

**Rockingham**

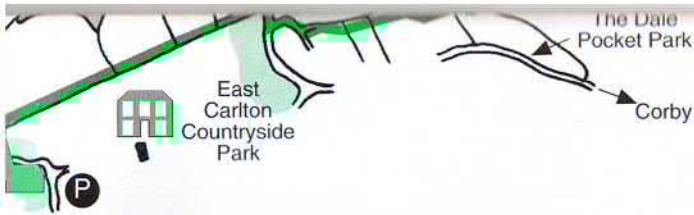
Under the watchful eye of the castle, go through the pub car park to the main straight. Turn right up the hill to a footpath on the left at the end of the village straight.

The majestic sight of a former royal residence comes into view as you cross the Welland Valley from Great Easton. Rockingham Castle was founded by William the Conqueror over 800 years ago. It was built on the site of an ancient fortress. Parts of its gatehouse may date from that age but much is of 13th Century

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SCALE  
1/2 MILE

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### Middleton- Cottingham

Arrive opposite the pub, turn right up The Hill then, first left up the steep School Hill. Approaching the top turn left along Camsdale Walk through to Cottingham Church. Beyond the church take Church Street to its end then, turn left down High Street. At the next junction turn right on the Bringhurst road for a left-hand path through the school field at the village edge.

The villages of Cottingham and Middleton are decorated with the physical remains of their early water supply. Even in the middle of the 20th Century this primitive, but efficient, system carried the spring waters, which flow from the Welland scarp, through the village in iron pipes. Around the streets are the locations of water pumps and drinking fountains now no longer needed. The system had a shrouded management, with ancient rites in the control of local 'copyholders'.

The Church of St Mary Magdalene looks down over its congregation and out across the Welland Valley to where Bringhurst caps a valley knoll. The church holds one of only four 'Watford Chests' which remain intact; this being perhaps the best example. It is a fine 16th Century store, the wood is decorated with elaborate carving.



East Carlton Countryside Park

### The Dale Pocket Park, Cottingham

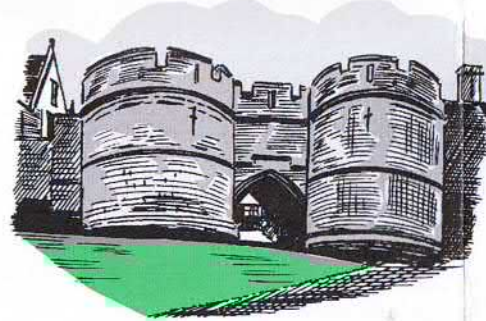
Close to the church along the route is the small but dramatic Dale. It provides a most unusual and beautiful setting for valuable limestone flora and magnificent mature beeches. Cattle graze the site through the spring and summer. You could hardly choose a better spot to take a well-earned rest and enjoy your surroundings.

construction. It was used largely as a turning base for excursions into the great Royal Forest of Rockingham. Over the centuries it had innumerable historic patrons; Henry I created a vineyard here, Richard Coeur de Lion came to the castle, King John was a frequent visitor and, Edward the First stayed in the year his Queen, Eleanor, died. As the castle developed so did the village, being designated a Borough in the 12th Century and, by Royal Charter of Elizabeth I a town. By 1530 the Norman castle was in need of much repair and local landowner Sir Edward Watson gained a lease from Henry VIII to restore the remains and create a Tudor Mansion. His grandson, Lewis continued the task and in 1619 purchased the freehold from James I.

Today's castle stems from their work and the family occupies this seat to this day. Their only absence was during the Civil War when they sided with the Crown and Rockingham was held by the Roundheads. The Tudor village was largely destroyed during this period and from the late 17th Century it was rebuilt below the castle as it stands today. Rockingham Castle is opened to the public during the summer.



Water Pump, Middleton



Rockingham Castle

### East Carlton Countryside Park

One hundred acres of parkland overlooking the Welland Valley; there are nature trails, heritage centre, craft workshops and a cafeteria. This park can be entered from the Jurassic Way simply by stepping in from the narrow tarmac path which bounds its northern edge. Within the grounds is East Carlton Hall built in 1870 for the Palmer family. Its grand style mirrors the architecture of the French Chateaux, constructed with two and three storeys with attics between.

#### DISTANCES

The Hermitage (A6) to Stoke Albany	2 1/2
Stoke Albany to East Carlton	2
East Carlton to Cottingham	1 1/4
Cottingham to Great Easton	2 3/4
Great Easton To Rockingham	1 1/2
Rockingham to Gretton	3

#### TOTAL

#### MILES

13 miles

#### KEY

Jurassic Way



Other routes



Church



Public House



Historic House



Telephone Box



Woodland



Water



Parking



## The Other Jurassic Way ?

In the 1930's and 40's archaeologists believed they had found evidence of a prehistoric trackway which stretched across Middle England between the Humber and Severn estuaries. It was thought to follow the great watershed created by Jurassic limestone escarpments, and so, the 'Jurassic Way' came into being.

The theory was that the well drained limestone could only have supported light woodland, not the dense coverage which was thought to have existed over much of prehistoric England. Their suggested alignment linked many known prehistoric sites, particularly those from the Iron Age.

Two possible routes were suggested for a trackway across Northamptonshire; one following the Banbury Lane to Northampton then north to where the Welland rises, the second north and west of Daventry to reach the Welland. From there the consensus was that it took a course along the south-east slopes of the Welland Valley to Stamford.

However, since the 1940's numerous additional prehistoric sites have been discovered. Iron Age England is now known to have been more densely populated than previously thought, with much of the land already cleared of trees.

While it is no longer possible to argue for a single trackway from Bristol to the Humber, the imagery is still appealing. The Jurassic Way long distance path follows most closely the second of their suggested routes.

### Further Information

A *Jurassic Way* Factsheet will be available from Spring 1995. This will be a regularly updated directory of facilities along the route; pubs, shops, accommodation, camping, public transport links and information on any changes to the route. Please send a stamped S.A.E. with your request to:

The Countryside Centre  
9 Guildhall Road  
Northampton NN1 1DP  
Telephone: (0604) 237220

The *Jurassic Way* is an integral part of Northamptonshire's recreation route network with many links to other walking routes; Nene Way, Knightley Way, Midshires Way, Grand Union Canal Walk and connections with neighbouring counties via the Oxford Canal and the Hereward Way. There are also many village based walks leaflets which share parts of the Jurassic Way. For more details contact the Countryside Centre for a publications price list.

*Pocket Parks* are small areas of countryside which are 'owned', managed and cherished by a local community for its own enjoyment and for the protection of wildlife. Guidance and financial help is available to those who might like to establish a pocket park in their own neighbourhood. For more information contact the Pocket Parks Officer - Telephone: (0604) 237222.

*Countryside Stewardship.* This Countryside Commission management scheme gives farmers and land managers incentives to enhance and conserve important features of the English landscape. In Northamptonshire the scheme targets waterside, limestone grassland and historic landscapes through ten year management agreements. Additional payments are made where sites give open access to the public for quiet, informal recreation.



SCALE  
1/2 MILE



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### DISTANCES

### MILES

Gretton to Harringworth	4 1/2
Harringworth to Barrowden	2 3/4
Barrowden to Wakerley Woods	1 1/2
Wakerley Woods to Duddington	5 1/4
Duddington to Ketton	2 1/2
Ketton to Easton-on-the-Hill	1 3/4
Easton-on-the-Hill to Stamford	2 1/4

### TOTAL

20 1/2

### Collyweston Slate

The stone slates of Collyweston can be found across the country but naturally there is a great concentration of their use in the area surrounding the village of their origin. The stone is Lincolnshire Limestone lying over Northampton Sand deposits. The beds range from 3 feet to just a few inches in thickness.

At one time every local farmer had a stone pit from which they produced the slate, particularly in times when farm work was slack. The quarries are entered by 'foxholes' and the stone was recovered with a 'foxing pick'. Activity usually occurred in December and January. The material was brought to the surface to be laid on the ground and soaked with water. When the frosts came the stones would freeze and spit along natural cleavage lines.

Later in the year slaters would become roofers. The slates were traditionally hung by wooden pegs on riven laths and bedded with a lime mortar.

Collyweston Slate has been used through the centuries; it has been found at a number of Roman sites in Northamptonshire, during the Reign of Edward III it was used at Rockingham Castle and, in the 17th Century it was used across Stamford to lessen the spread of fire.

The industry was in decline by the early 20th Century due to economic factors and a number of mild winters which greatly lessened supply. However, the skill is not only preserved but it is still practised today by a few craftsmen.

### Motte and Bailey Castles

These medieval fortifications were introduced to Britain by the Normans. The 'motte' was a large conical mound of earth and rubble on top of which a stone or timber tower was built. With most of these castles an embanked enclosure, the 'bailey' adjoined the motte.

These castles acted as garrisons, strongholds and aristocratic residences. They were often centres for local or Royal administration. Built in towns, villages and open countryside, they occupied strategic positions dominating the surrounding landscape. Many were occupied for only short periods, as was necessary. They continued to be built through the 13th Century, after this time they were superseded by later castle design.

### KEY

Jurassic Way



Other routes



Church



Public House



Historic House



Telephone Box



Woodland



Water



Parking



Stamford Meadows

### Barrowden

Reaching the road turn right to the crossroad right down Main Street and on through the complex. Bear right at the Tannery and again Lane. The Jurassic Way will continue down to cross the Welland for Wakerley but, at the temporary diversion follows an alternative to the left.

The central of the three loops which the Jurassic Way makes across the River Welland, brings you charming and picturesque village of Barrowden. Through the centre of the village is a glorious green area with archetypal duck pond, it is by a fine church, manor and welcoming inn.



Barrowden Pond



## Harringworth

Walk down the lane and by the old, brick chapel turn left onto a tarmac path and follow on into Harringworth. When the church becomes visible at Limes Farm, take the footpath opposite on the right.

The short spur off the route and along the main street to the heart of the village provides a scene worthy of those few extra steps. At the hub is the 14th Century Market Cross; William la Zouche was granted an annual fair and Tuesday market at Harringworth in 1387.

Just round the corner is the White Swan Inn, elements of this date from the 16th Century, notably six reused windows fronting the street with moulded surrounds and leaded lights. Inside the pub is a very interesting collection of woodworking tools, not to mention other liquid pleasures.

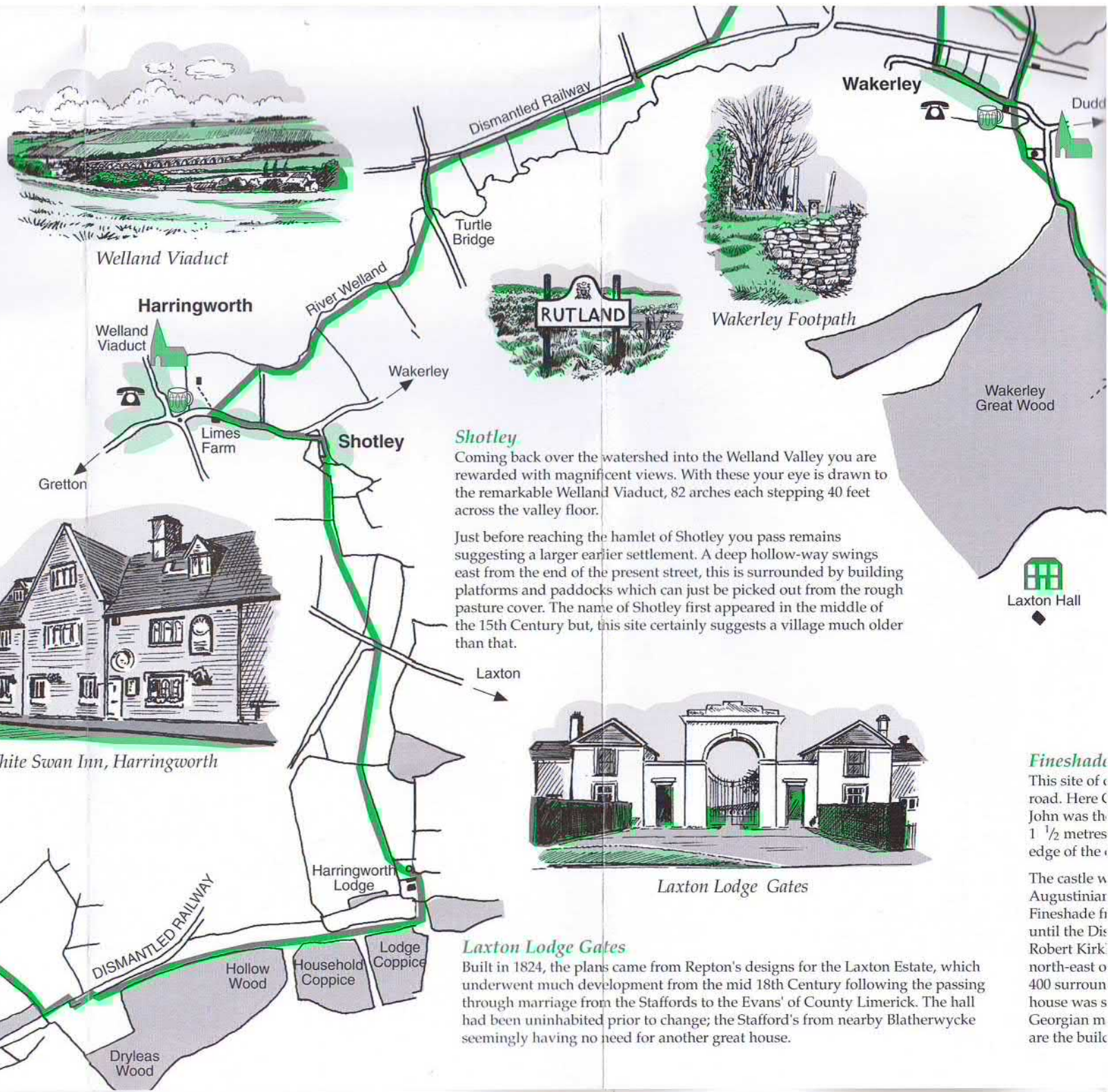
The 13th Century Church of St John the Baptist is a little further along the same street. Housed in the church is a sanctus bell which was rung daily when Joan of Arc was driving the English back out of France.

## Harringworth Deer Park

The path between Gretton and the Harringworth road passes through the area of a 13th Century Deer Park, created by William de Cantelupe when he was given licence to enclose part of Harringworth Wood. The land was still known as Harringworth Park on maps of 1732. The west, south and eastern park boundaries are matched today by the parish boundaries of Gretton, Bulwick and Laxton. The area contains signs of ancient (including Roman) iron workings.



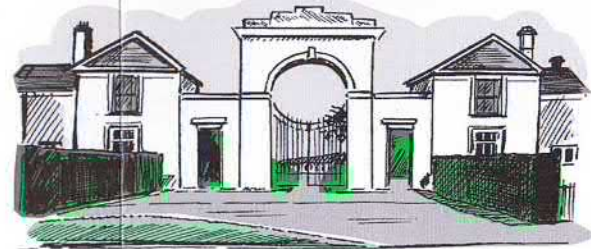
White Swan Inn, Harringworth



## Shotley

Coming back over the watershed into the Welland Valley you are rewarded with magnificent views. With these your eye is drawn to the remarkable Welland Viaduct, 82 arches each stepping 40 feet across the valley floor.

Just before reaching the hamlet of Shotley you pass remains suggesting a larger earlier settlement. A deep hollow-way swings east from the end of the present street, this is surrounded by building platforms and paddocks which can just be picked out from the rough pasture cover. The name of Shotley first appeared in the middle of the 15th Century but, this site certainly suggests a village much older than that.



Laxton Lodge Gates

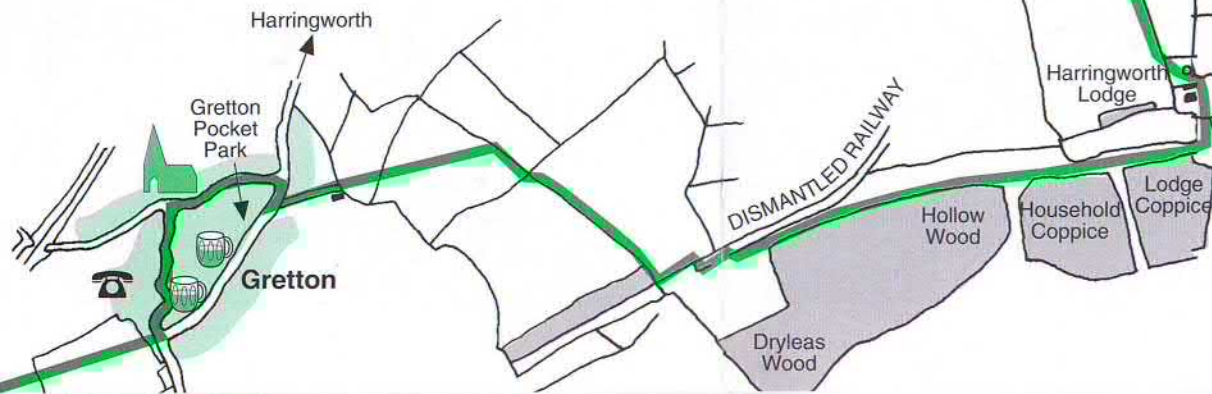
## Laxton Lodge Gates

Built in 1824, the plans came from Repton's designs for the Laxton Estate, which underwent much development from the mid 18th Century following the passing through marriage from the Staffords to the Evans' of County Limerick. The hall had been uninhabited prior to change; the Staffords' from nearby Blatherwycke seemingly having no need for another great house.

## Fineshade

This site of a road. Here (John was the 1 1/2 metres edge of the

The castle was Augustinian Fineshade until the Dis Robert Kirk north-east of 400 surrounding house was Georgian are the build



## Stamford

The northern end of the Jurassic Way enters Stamford over the meadows at Bath Row.

The market town of Stamford was sited on a stony ford on the River Welland, nearby is the course of Ermine Street a great Roman Road. The early administration of Stamford was an unusual one in that some time after the creation of the Danish borough, King Edward ordered a second borough to be built on the south side of the river in 922 AD. It is known as St Martin's Stamford Baron.

Stamford has a wealth of historic buildings, with a particularly impressive concentration of Georgian architecture. Much of its buildings heritage came to the nation's eyes recently with the BBC's dramatisation of George Eliot's 'Middlemarch', filmed in the town and surrounding countryside. There are many fine churches, a wonderful medieval hospital and town museum. Stamford was the first designated 'conservation town' in England.

Lying a few miles to the east of the town is the great Burghley House, seat of the Cecil family. The house was built by William Cecil, 1st Lord Burghley, it was the largest and grandest residence of the Elizabethan age. William was Elizabeth I's favourite and entertained the Queen at Burghley on many occasions.

Another famous local resident was Daniel Lambert born in 1770. It is reported that he was a great walker which seems remarkable considering his fame as the biggest man in the world. Aged 23, he weighed 32 stones, sadly he was regarded as a curiosity for most of his life, dying at the Waggon and Horses Inn in 1809 when he weighed 53 stones. His coffin contained 112 square feet of elm.

John Clare was born in nearby Helpston (then in Northamptonshire) in 1793. He was encouraged in his writing by Edward Drury, a Stamford bookseller. Drury promoted his work to a cousin and London publisher John Taylor and so the writings of the Peasant Poet came into print. Clare's lyrical poetry spoke of his love of the countryside in this part of Northamptonshire. He was outspoken about the effects of land enclosure and was a great chronicler of rural English life. John Clare's was a tragic story with the second half of his life being spent in institutions. He died in 1864 when a patient in the General Lunatic Asylum at Northampton. A hostelry he frequented, 'The Hole in the Wall', is still in business today in the town.

## Ketton

At Ketton turn right along the road (sharing the Hereward Way from here to Stamford) and follow over the Collyweston Bridge to a left-hand footpath.

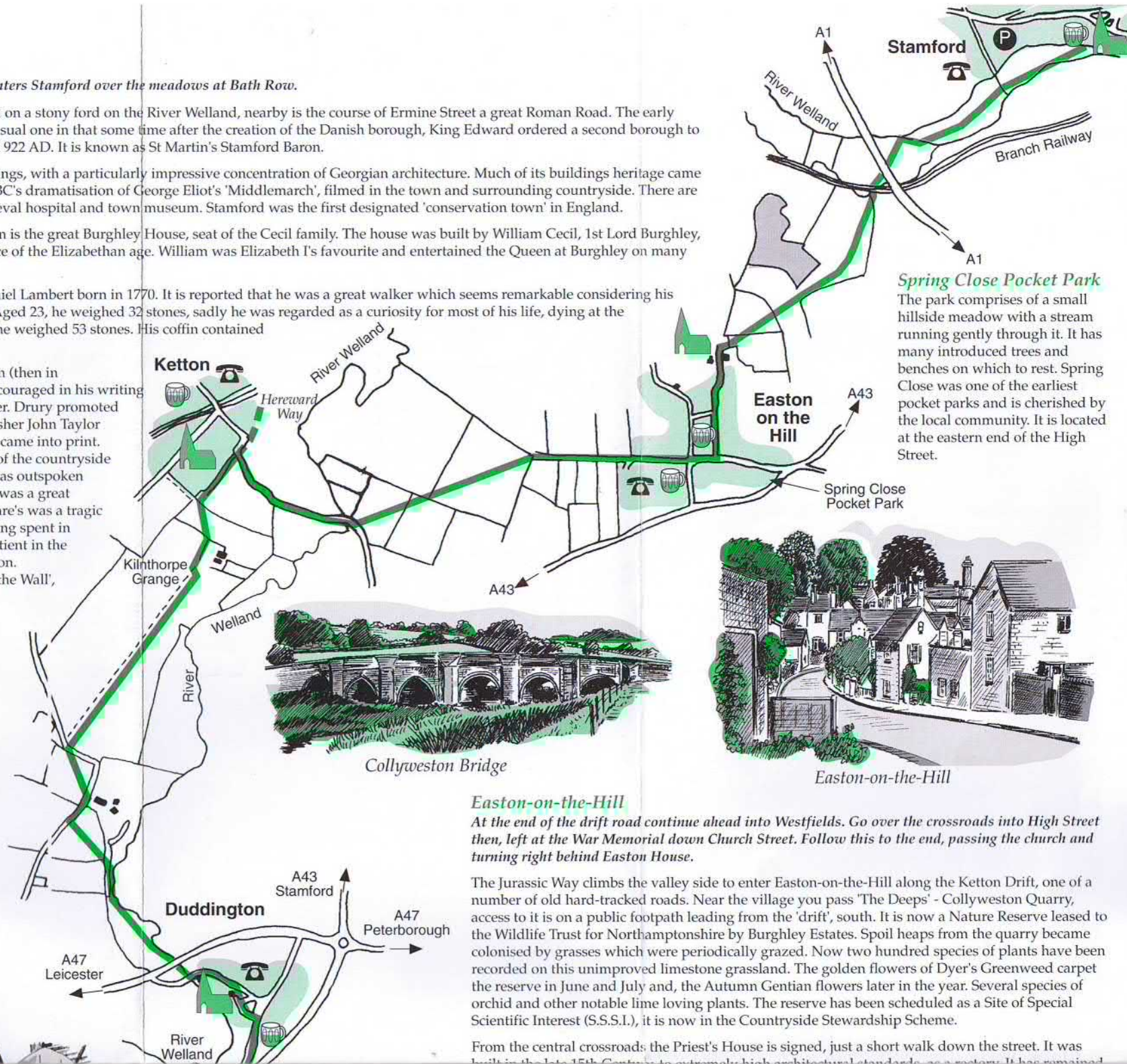
## Collyweston Bridge

This bridge of medieval origin spans the Welland from Northamptonshire to Rutland. It was repaired after 1576 following a bequest from Christopher Metcalf of Collyweston. There are six arches, three each in the parishes of Collyweston and Ketton.

## Wakerley

From the main street turn right through the small pub car park.

The contrast between the village pattern of Wakerley and Barrowden could hardly be sharper. The church, now redundant, stands



## Spring Close Pocket Park

The park comprises of a small hillside meadow with a stream running gently through it. It has many introduced trees and benches on which to rest. Spring Close was one of the earliest pocket parks and is cherished by the local community. It is located at the eastern end of the High Street.



Collyweston Bridge



Easton-on-the-Hill

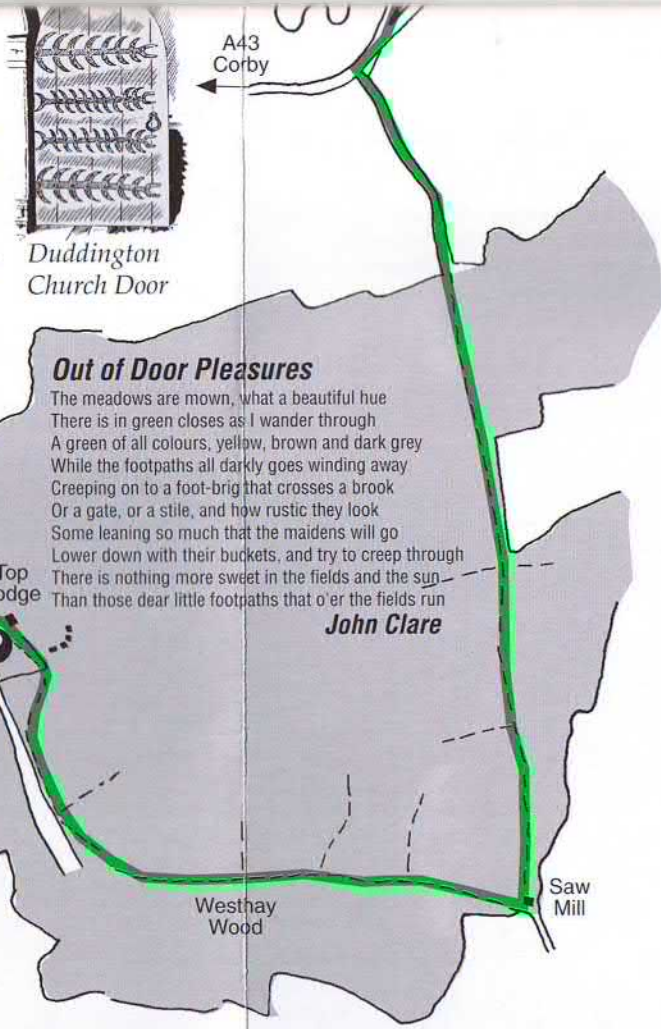
## Easton-on-the-Hill

At the end of the drift road continue ahead into Westfields. Go over the crossroads into High Street then, left at the War Memorial down Church Street. Follow this to the end, passing the church and turning right behind Easton House.

The Jurassic Way climbs the valley side to enter Easton-on-the-Hill along the Ketton Drift, one of a number of old hard-tracked roads. Near the village you pass 'The Deepes' - Collyweston Quarry, access to it is on a public footpath leading from the 'drift', south. It is now a Nature Reserve leased to the Wildlife Trust for Northamptonshire by Burghley Estates. Spoil heaps from the quarry became colonised by grasses which were periodically grazed. Now two hundred species of plants have been recorded on this unimproved limestone grassland. The golden flowers of Dyer's Greenweed carpet the reserve in June and July and, the Autumn Gentian flowers later in the year. Several species of orchid and other notable lime loving plants. The reserve has been scheduled as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (S.S.S.I.), it is now in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

From the central crossroads the Priest's House is signed, just a short walk down the street. It was built in the late 15th Century to extremely high architectural standards, as a rectory. It has remained

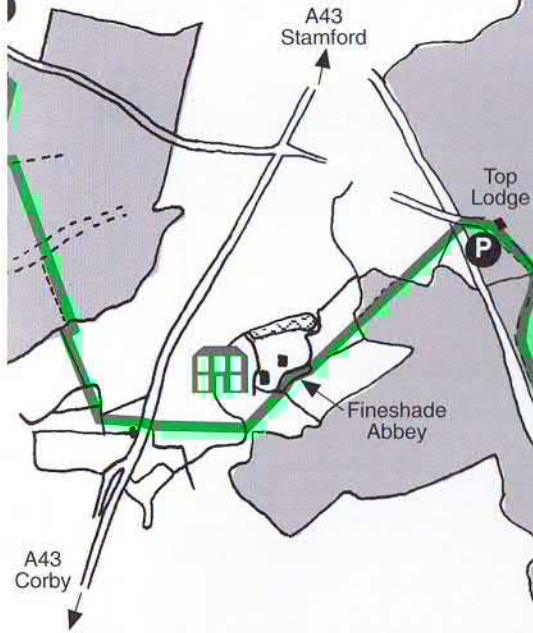
almost separate from the present village but, it is certain that this end, east of the pub, was the original centre. Wakerley lay just outside the Rockingham Forest, a fair charter was granted in 1263 but it was short lived. In 1618 Sir Richard Cecil, son of the 1st Earl of Exeter, bought the manor. He died here in 1633 but after laying out the manorial gardens whose structural remains are still visible over the stone wall opposite the pub. The manor house has long disappeared but the manor itself remains with the Cecils. Their best known residence is the magnificent Burghley House near Stamford.



### Out of Door Pleasures

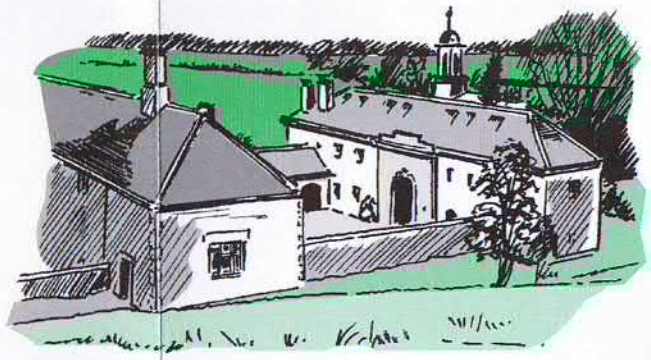
The meadows are mown, what a beautiful hue  
There is in green closes as I wander through  
A green of all colours, yellow, brown and dark grey  
While the footpaths all darkly goes winding away  
Creeping on to a foot-brid that crosses a brook  
Or a gate, or a stile, and how rustic they look  
Some leaning so much that the maidens will go  
Lower down with their buckets, and try to creep through  
There is nothing more sweet in the fields and the sun  
Than those dear little footpaths that o'er the fields run

John Clare



plex history is approached down a slope from the main le Hymel, a Norman castle built in the time of King me of the Engayne family. A long curving bank up to h can be seen above the stream, this marks the outer le's 'bailey' or enclosure.

demolished c. 1200 when Richard Engayne founded an iory on the site. The Canons subsequently secured the Parish of Laxton. The Priory of St Mary remained ution in 1536. Ten years later it was bought by Sir 1 whose family was based in Warmington in the e county. He converted the buildings into a house and g acres were enclosed as a park. 200 years later this and then demolished, to be replaced by a large ion. The remains of this house and its converted stables gs here today.



'Fineshade Abbey'

built in the late 15th Century, to extremely high architectural standards, as a rectory. It has remained at its original site and must have been cramped accommodation for a priest and his family. In later years it actually ended up as a stable but, was extensively restored in 1867 and is now a small museum owned by the National Trust.

Just beyond the Priest's House is the fine Glebe House, once the home of Capt. Lancelot Skinner who was lost in the wreck of La Lutine off the Dutch coast in 1799. The Lutine Bell which was recovered from the wreck is famed as the bell rung by Lloyds in London to herald important announcements i.e. the loss of a vessel.

Easton-on-the-Hill is a wonderful example of a stone built village; limestone walls and Collyweston Slate give a distinctive look, perhaps the finest roof-line view in Northamptonshire is that found along Church Street.

### Duddington

By the cemetery at the A43, cross the main road with care and follow the pavement right into the village. In Duddington take the first left, a steep slope, pass the old workhouse and head onwards to go through the churchyard. At the memorial turn left down the street and over the bridge by the mill. The footpath is on your right.



'Duddington Workhouse'

Duddington is one of the most delightful villages of the area with its unusual church, stylish mill, ancient bridge and canopy of Collyweston Slates.

The Church of St Mary dates from the 12th Century, particularly in the Nave where there are traces of medieval wall painting. The unusual position of its tower with broach spire is probably due to the ground to the south-west falling steeply to the River Welland. The door is of massive solid construction; five oak panels with pegged rails and, four iron bands of fish-bone and branch design. There are many monuments to the Jackson family of Stamford who bought the estate, later building the Manor House. Nicholas Jackson, a baker, had begun buying properties in the village in 1603; by 1668 his son William was calling himself 'gentleman' and by 1697 the family were the major landowners of Duddington.

Approaching the church the route passes just one of the properties with a story to tell. Originally built as two cottages in the 17th Century, these were converted into the parish workhouse after 1775. It remained in use until the Poor Law Reform Act of 1834.

### Wakerley Great Wood and Fineshade

Wakerley Great Wood is one of the largest remnants of the ancient Rockingham Forest. In past centuries it was the hunting playground of kings and noblemen. Since 1927 it has been a working forest; managed by Forest Enterprise, most of it is now a mix of coniferous woodland with Norway and Sitka Spruce, Corsican and Scots Pine and European Larch. It contains a large picnic area, car-parking, toilets and a number of forest trails.

Trails, including a mountain bike route, can also be found in Fineshade Woods where Forest Enterprise has its local base at Top Lodge (Telephone: 0780 83 394).



Wakerley Woods