

Local Snippets

The name Braunston is derived from Brandeston, i.e. Brant or Brand's 'ton' (or village). Brant or Brand being the name of the Anglo-Saxon lord responsible to the king. The name first occurs in a Royal Charter 956 A.D. when the land was granted to a nobleman.

Braunston was always an important village on the Midlands waterways system. In 1788 it was a stopping place on the Oxford Canal and later, in 1800, it was intersected by the Grand Junction Canal built to join the countries north and south cruising circuits. From this union new sources of employment sprang up and carpenters, blacksmiths, saddlers and ropemakers opened up shops in the village which now boasted as many as 12 Inns catering for the burgeoning work force.

The decline of canal traffic came with the building of the railways. The Great Central Line opened in 1899 with a station at Braunston. Goods, particularly perishable items were now transported by rail resulting in a loss of canal tolls and ultimately a loss of jobs.

Braunston's rectory was built by the Rev. A.B. Clough in a grand style to 'accommodate his bride in the manner to which she had become accustomed!' Indeed, the new Mrs. Clough was the daughter of Mr. R. Howson Lamb, owner of nearby Bragborough Hall, and her new home imitated its 'Grecian' lines. The house is now 'Berryfields' and best seen from the canal towpath.

A Walkers' Code



1. Always keep to the path to avoid trespass. If the path is obstructed you are allowed to seek a reasonable way round the obstruction, taking care to avoid causing damage. Please report the obstruction to the highway authority.
2. Remember to close gates behind you. Straying stock can cause damage or spread disease and carelessness may lead to tragedy.
3. To avoid harm or distress to farm animals and wildlife it is best to leave dogs at home. If you have to bring them they should be kept on a leash.
4. If your route takes you onto a road keep to the right, facing oncoming traffic and use the verge if one exists.
5. Always wear suitable clothing and footwear for the season and remember to allow plenty of time to complete your chosen walk.
6. Remember that every piece of land in the country belongs to someone, so please treat it with respect so that other walkers will be made welcome.
7. Remember that Scheduled Ancient Monuments are protected by law in order to ensure their survival. Please respect them and other archaeological sites.
8. Take extra care near locks and don't be tempted to assist boat crews unless you are certain of what to do. Remember, because boats cannot stop immediately if someone falls into the water, the risk of injury is great.

If you experience any difficulty on your walk such as barbed wire, locked gates or damaged stiles and footbridges, please report them to the Principal Rights of Way Officer, West Office, Arnex House, London Road, Daventry. Tel. Daventry 706081.

For information and matters relating to the Canal and Towpath: The Waterway Manager, The Stop House, Braunston, Northants. Tel. Braunston 0788 890666.

Drawn and compiled by Sue Payne. 1991.

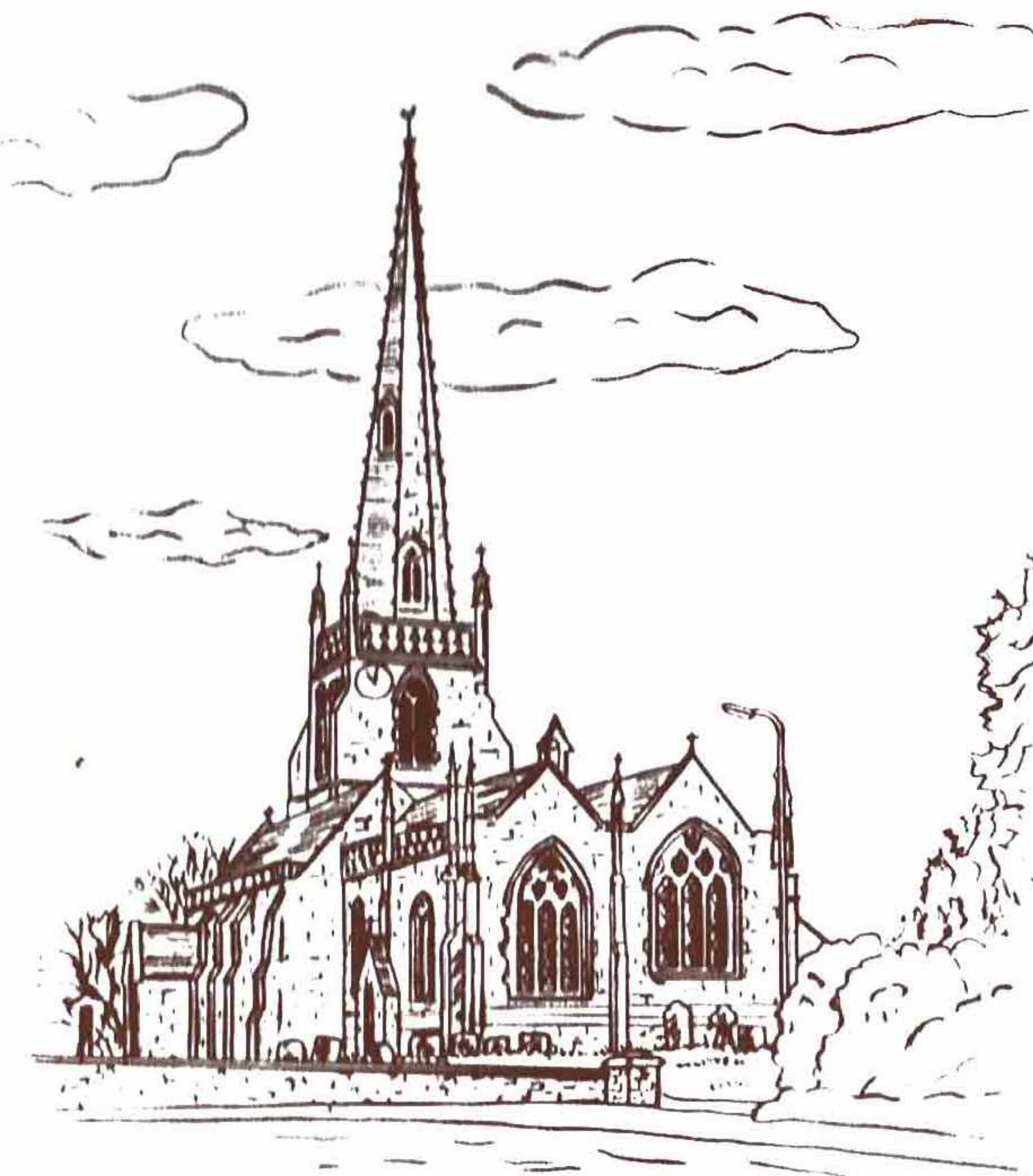
Countryside Walks Leaflet No. 11.

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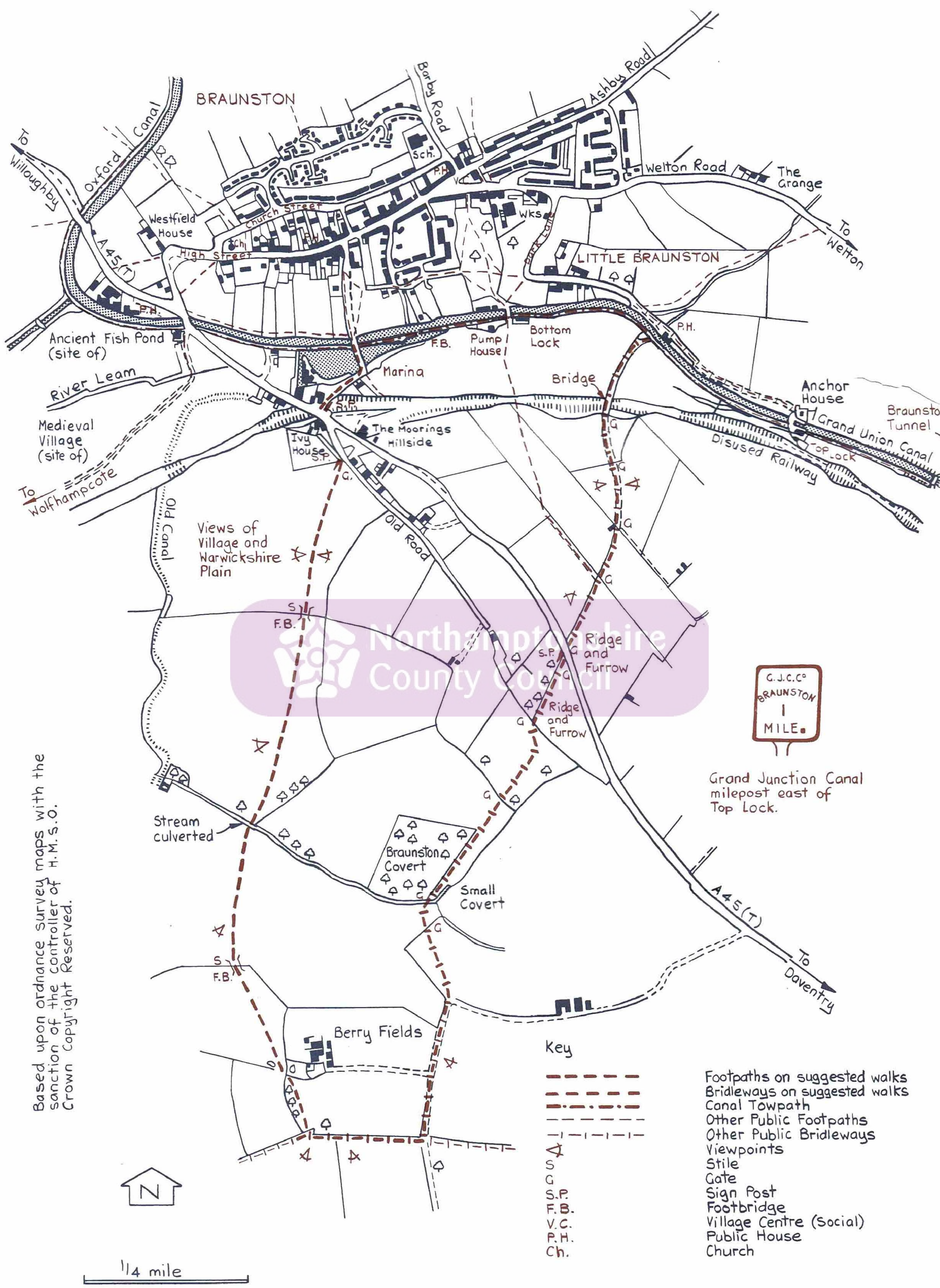
Countryside and Canal Walks

Braunston




British Waterways


Northamptonshire
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Northamptonshire
County Council

G.J.C.C.
BRAUNSTON
1
MILE

Grand Junction Canal
milepost east of
Top Lock.

Key

- Footpaths on suggested walks
- Bridleways on suggested walks
- Canal Towpath
- Other Public Footpaths
- Other Public Bridleways
- - - - - Viewpoints
- ▲ Stile
- S Gate
- G Sign Post
- S.P. Footbridge
- F.B. Village Centre (Social)
- V.C. Public House
- P.H. Church
- Ch.



1/4 mile

All Saints Church was built in 1849, the third on the site since Norman times. It was rebuilt in the original deep red sandstone with the addition of some grey Weldon and brown Duston stone. The tower is 150 feet tall, a prominent landmark for many miles around.

Close to the Church is an early 19th Century sail-less brick tower-mill. Made from local bricks the mill has been converted into a private residence.

In 1929 the Grand Junction Canal combined with the Birmingham Warwick and Warwick and Napton Canals. These were bought by the Regents Canal Company and became the Grand Union Canal which then ran from London to Birmingham.

The triangular junction of the Oxford and Grand Union Canal is crossed by delightful twin iron bridges which were cast at Horseley Iron Works in the Black Country.

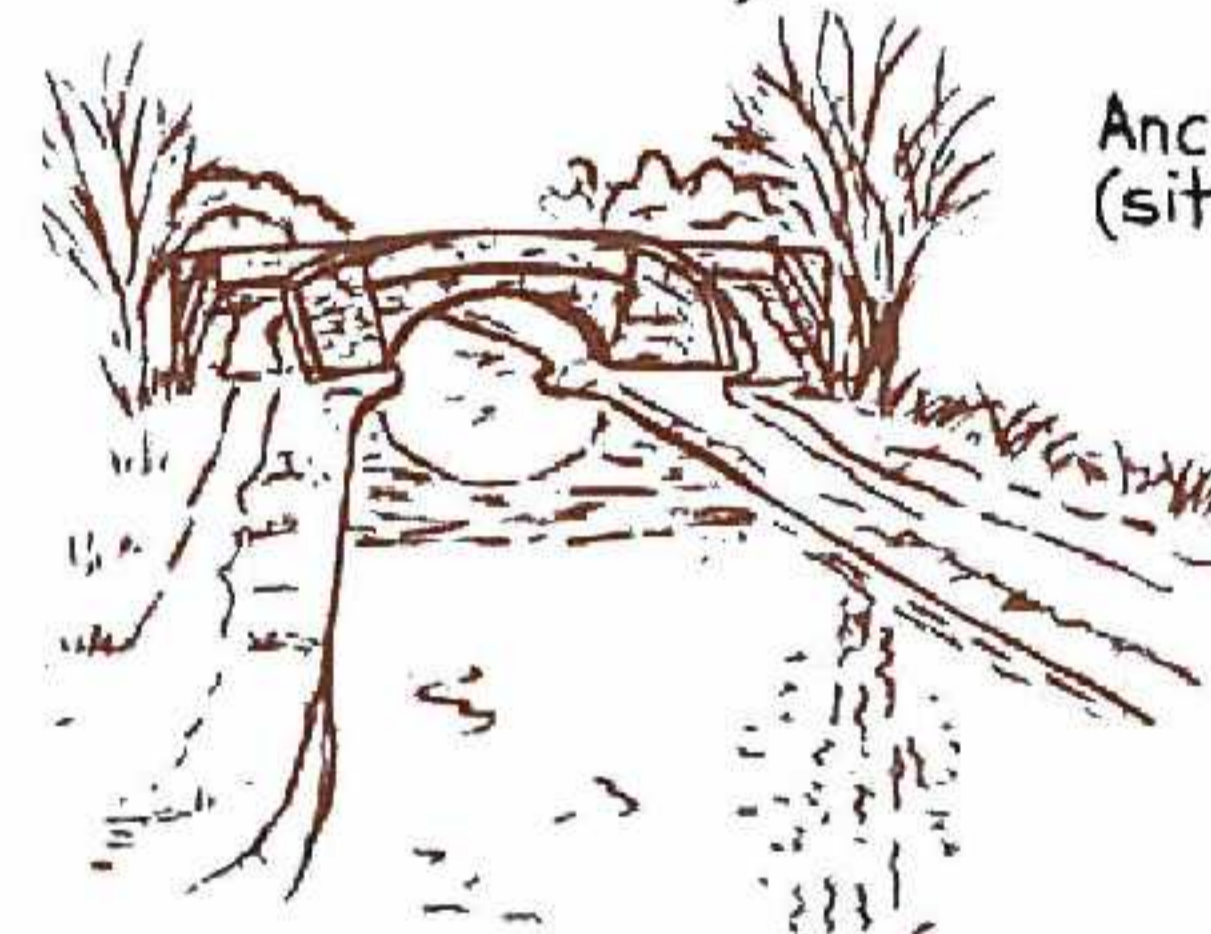
Bottom Lock.
Until the late 1950's the workshops and drydock at Bottom Lock were used by craftsmen for the repair of Commercial Narrow Boats that plied their trade on this waterway. Today those same skills and facilities are busily engaged in maintaining the craft of the pleasure boating fraternity.

Ideally situated at the bottom of the flight of six locks is The Boat Shop well stocked with provisions, painted ware, brass ware and old lace plates.

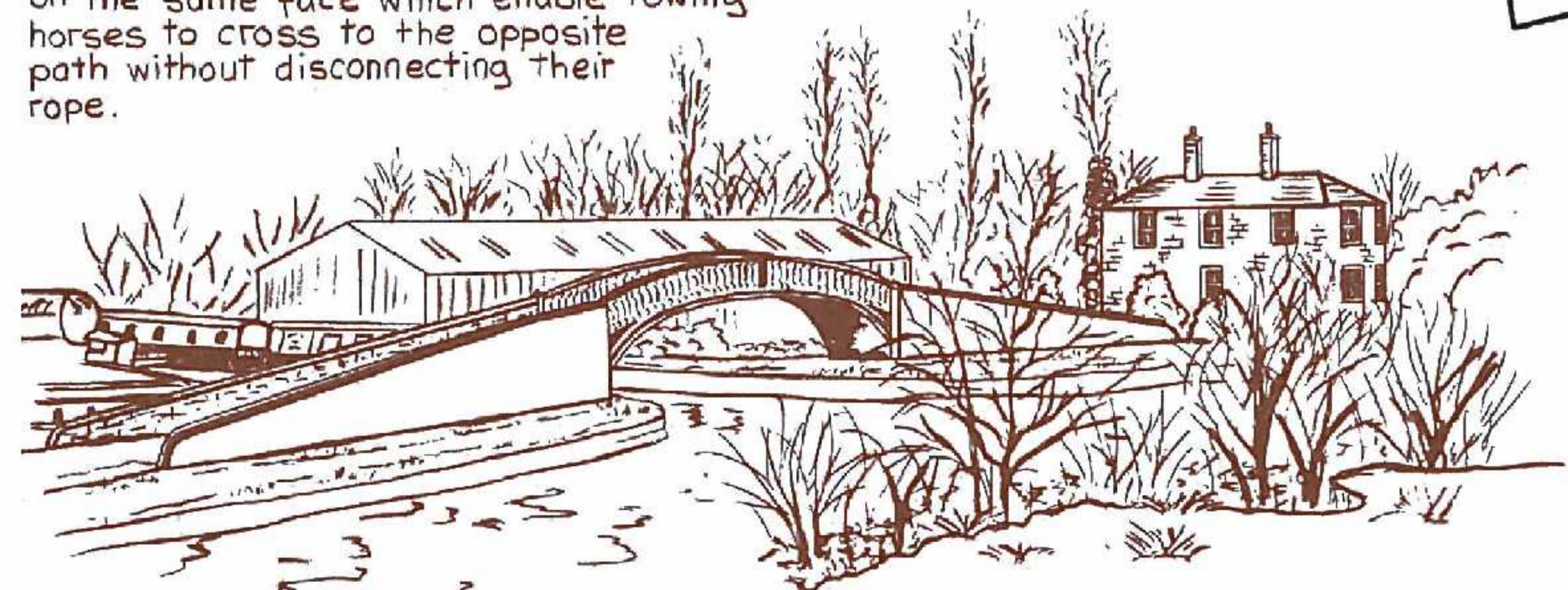
Braunston Tunnel.

Braunston tunnel which was opened in 1796, is 2,042 yards long and 16 1/2 feet wide. For the time it represented a considerable engineering achievement especially bearing in mind the local quicksands and the underdeveloped art of surveying which led to the two ends not quite meeting. The resultant 'kink' caused traffic jams and frustration in the waterways commercial era.

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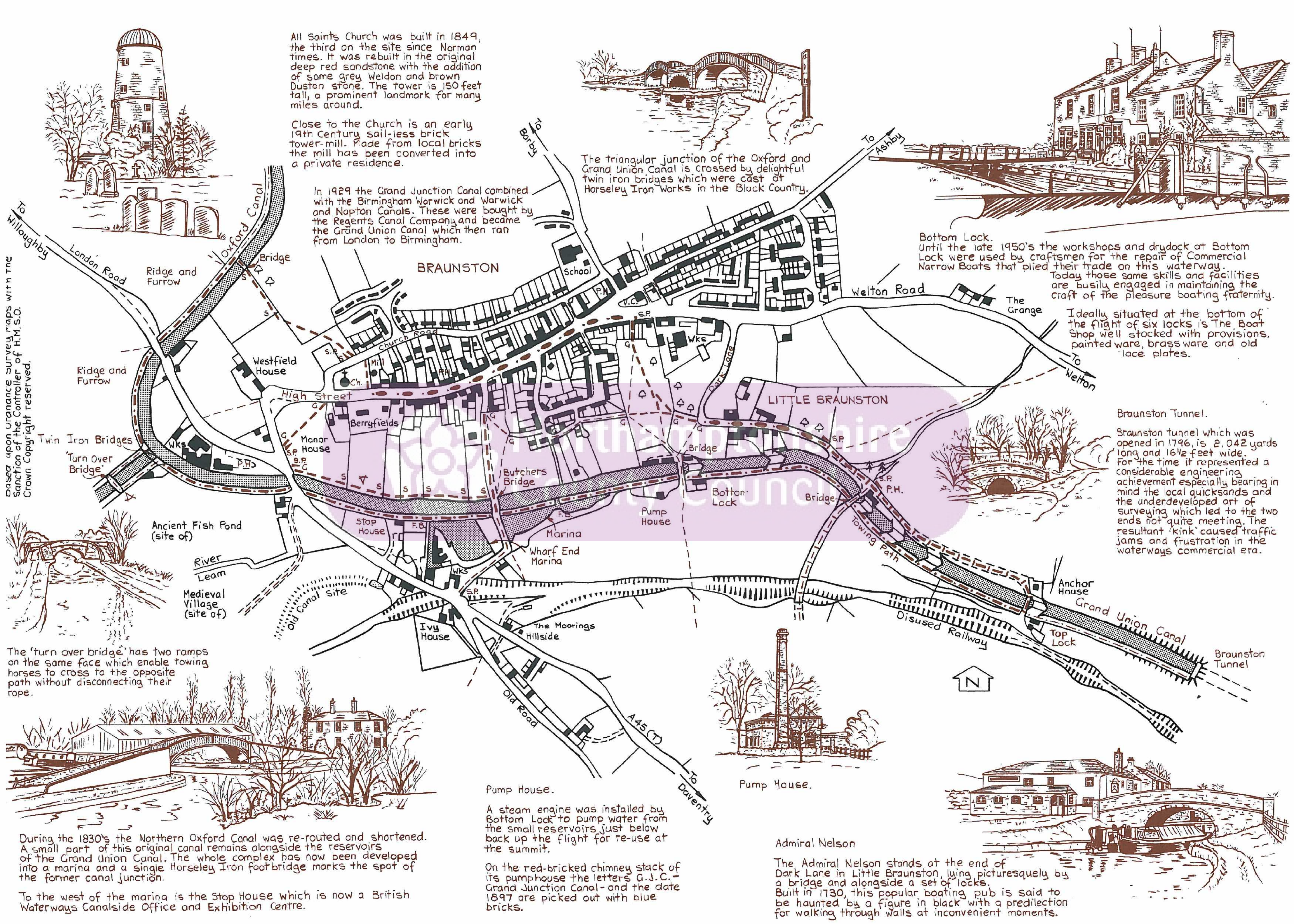


The 'turn over bridge' has two ramps on the same face which enable towing horses to cross to the opposite path without disconnecting their rope.



During the 1830's the Northern Oxford Canal was re-routed and shortened. A small part of this original canal remains alongside the reservoirs of the Grand Union Canal. The whole complex has now been developed into a marina and a single Horseley Iron footbridge marks the spot of the former canal junction.

To the west of the marina is the Stop House which is now a British Waterways Canalside Office and Exhibition Centre.



Pump House.

A steam engine was installed by Bottom Lock to pump water from the small reservoirs just below back up the flight for re-use at the summit.

On the red-bricked chimney stack of its pumphouse the letters G.J.C. - Grand Junction Canal - and the date 1897 are picked out with blue bricks.

Pump House.

Admiral Nelson

The Admiral Nelson stands at the end of Dark Lane in Little Braunston, lying picturesquely by a bridge and alongside a set of locks. Built in 1730, this popular boating pub is said to be haunted by a figure in black with a predilection for walking through walls at inconvenient moments.