

Ringstead

Ringstead means 'circular place' and the shape of the parish suggests it was once part of Raunds parish.

Gravel extraction at Kinewell Lake revealed an iron age hut circle some 10 metres in diameter. The remains of a Roman Villa were also found and excavations uncovered a tessellated floor as well as many Roman and Iron Age artefacts.

The deserted medieval hamlet of Mill Cotton lies in the west of the parish. (Cotton being a medieval word meaning cottages.) Little is known of the population or period of desertion and due to disturbance by the railway, gravel digging and modern ploughing the village remains - are all but non-existent.

Medieval open field agriculture was practised here until 1843, two years before the Northampton to Peterborough railway line crossed the parish.

Industry seen in the parish over the years has included stone quarrying, shoemaking, lace-making and the assembly of soft toys as a modern 'cottage industry'.

Kinewell Lake, covering some 80 acres, was leased to the village by the gravel extraction company who had worked the site for 20 years. It is now a Pocket Park where insect life is particularly abundant and is a haven for migrating birds and waterfowl.

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 countryside belongs to someone, so please treat it with respect and other walkers will be made welcome.

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, Area 1 office, 73 London Road, Kettering. Tel. 524100.

Your general comments on this leaflet and the routes will be welcomed by the Director of Planning and Transportation, Northampton House, Northampton. NN1 2HZ.

Drawn and compiled by Sue Payne

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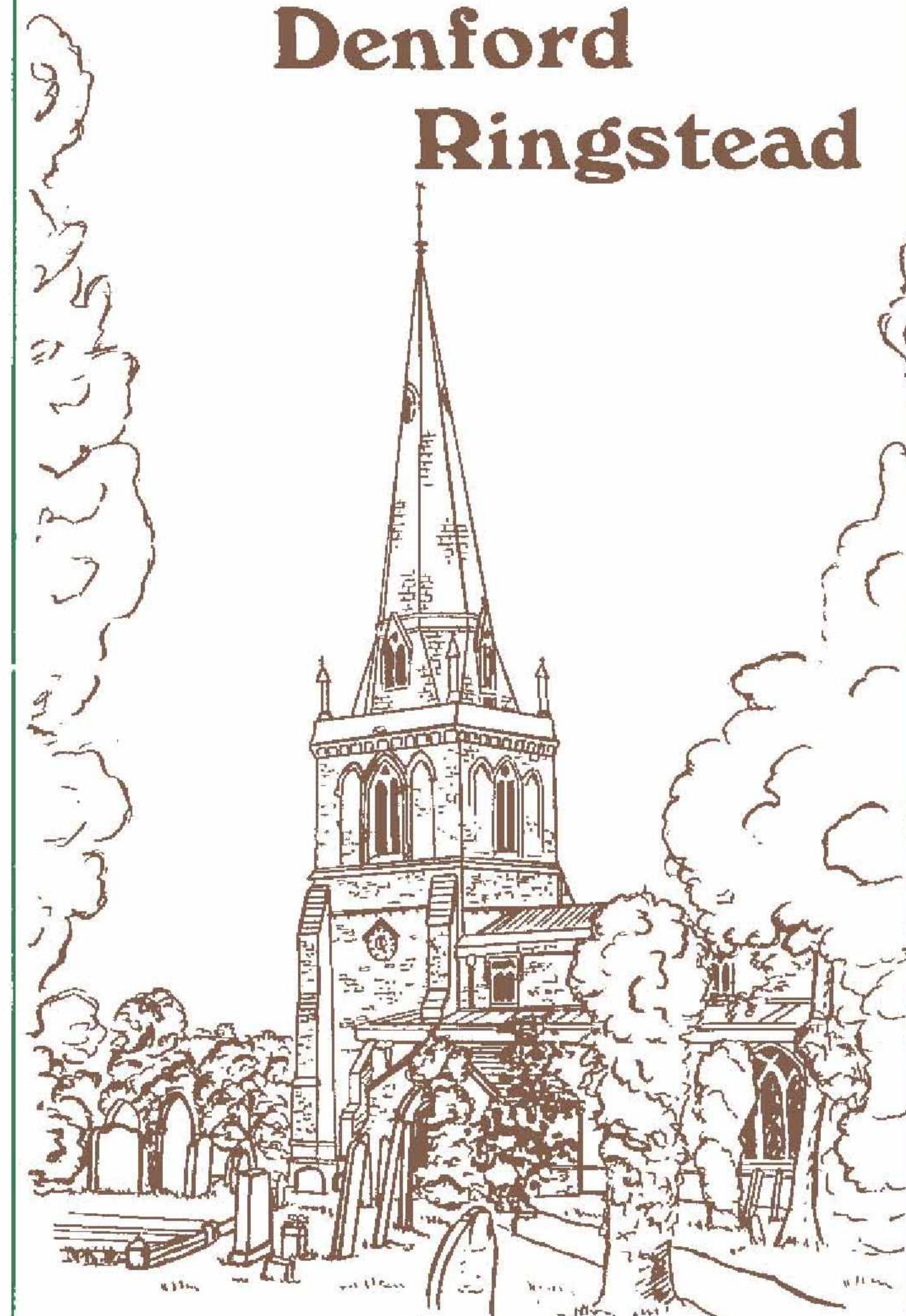
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Countryside Walks

Woodford

Denford

Ringstead



Holy Trinity - Denford



Denford

Denford was recorded in the Domesday Book (1086 A.D.) as Deneford meaning 'ford in a valley.'

This picturesque village is now a mixture of stone and brick built houses but most of the thatched roofs of yesteryear have been replaced by slates and tiles.

Ridge and furrow, and its former headlands can be traced over most of the parish dating back to the common fields which were enclosed in 1765. A mound of unknown date situated to the south of the village is all that remains of a former windmill.

A number of streams flow across the flood meadows into the river. There is a siphonic weir which as implied in its name, siphons water from a high level to the lower level. This siphonic action increases the flow of water ten times above that of a broad crested weir keeping the river high in the navigation channels. The siphons were installed at Denford because they required less land than a weir.

Holy Trinity Church, which towers above the banks of the River Nene, dates mainly from the late 13th century but combines features from earlier times. The chancel is built of grey stone with an ironstone band every fourth course. In the 19th century the buttresses and lower part of the tower were refaced and its broached spire restored.

Denford Churchyard leads to an impenetrable wilderness of scrubland covered with stinging nettles, which are the food plant of the caterpillars of the small tortoiseshell and peacock butterfly. Ash, willow and hawthorn covered with ivy are also present. Leading down to the river bank the ground is wet and has a wide variety of wildflowers and birdlife is also plentiful. This area is managed as a Nature Reserve by the Northants Wildlife Trust.

The gravestones have a particularly rich variety of lichens and mosses.



Denford Church from River Nene.

Josiah Eaton, born in Woodford in the 18th Century, was a famous pedestrian who was only 5'-2" tall and several times walked over 1,000 miles. He walked the 51 miles from London to Colchester in one day and returned the next day repeating this marathon for 20 successive days.

Woodford

Woodford was known in 1086 as Wodeford meaning 'ford by a wood'.

General Charles George Arbuthnot, when living at Woodford House, started the 'Woodford Iron Ore Company' in the late 1850's, mining from an adit in the grounds of his house. His enterprise was further helped when the Kettering to Cambridge railway line was opened, in 1865, and passed close to his land. Experienced labour was imported into Woodford and these workers were housed in newly built homes in New Town. Under a new owner, Charles Henry Plevins, the company prospered and the prospect of work attracted men countrywide, making the village economy dependant on ironstone.

The Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin combines the styles of many centuries from Norman times onwards. In all probability there was originally a Saxon building on the site.

During major restoration work in 1866-7 a box containing a human heart wrapped in a cloth was discovered in one of the pillars. Today it can be viewed in a glass case where it was found and is thought to be the heart of Roger de Kirketon who died in Norfolk in 1280.

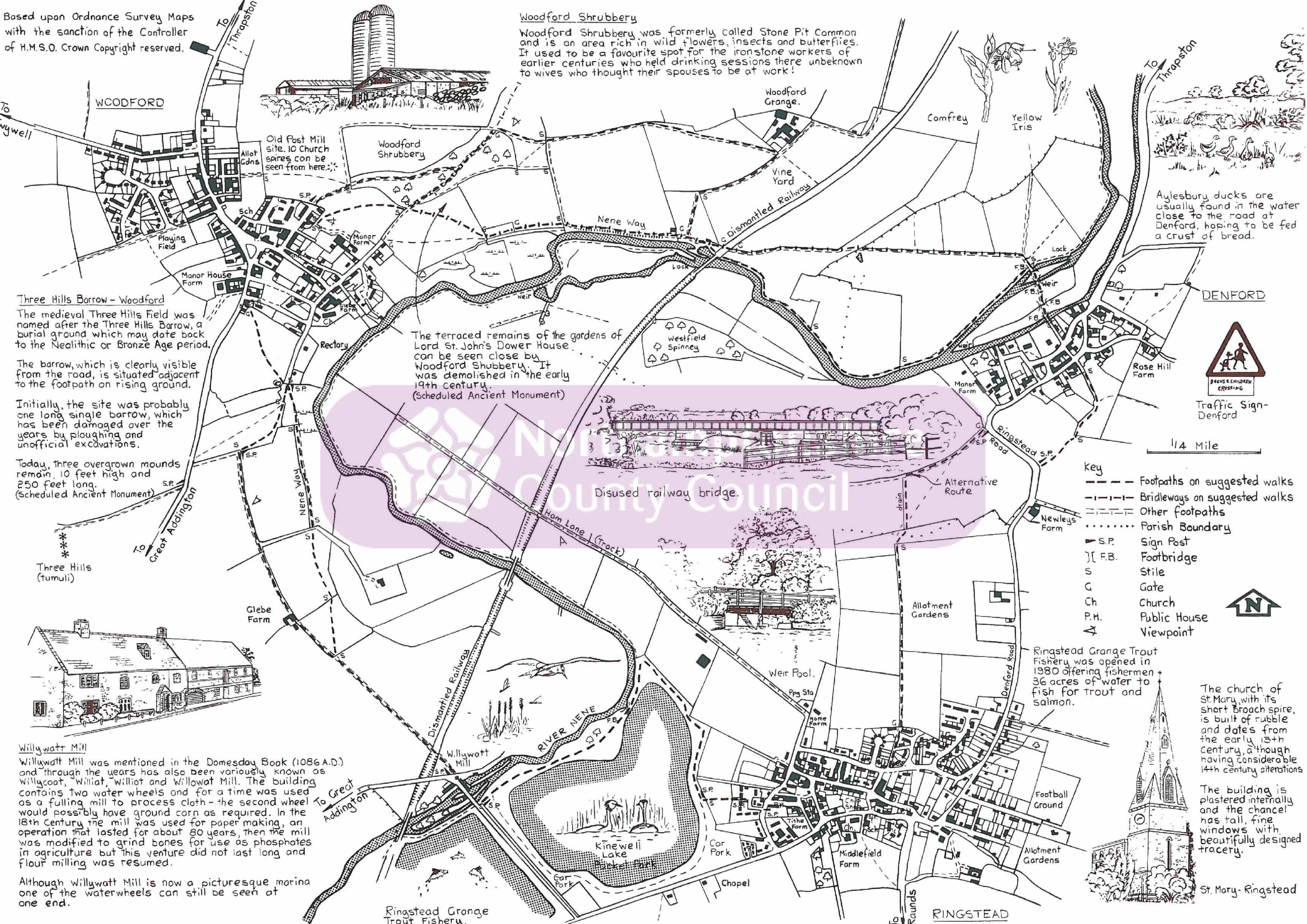
Unusual oak effigies of Sir Walter Tralli and his wife Eleanor date from the 14th century. Originally they would have been brightly painted but few traces of colour now remain.

In 1964 the photograph of a ghostly figure of a knight kneeling at the altar was taken. Although tests have been carried out to establish its authenticity it has never been proved to be a forgery.

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Woodford Shrubbery

Woodford Shrubbery was formerly called Stone Pit Common and is an area rich in wild flowers, insects and butterflies. It used to be a favourite spot for the ironstone workers of earlier centuries who held drinking sessions there unbeknown to wives who thought their spouses to be at work!



Three Hills Barrow - Woodford
 The medieval Three Hills Field was named after the Three Hills Barrow, a burial ground which may date back to the Neolithic or Bronze Age period.
 The barrow, which is clearly visible from the road, is situated adjacent to the footpath on rising ground.
 Initially, the site was probably one long single barrow, which has been damaged over the years by ploughing and unofficial excavations.

Today, three overgrown mounds remain, 10 feet high and 250 feet long. (Scheduled Ancient Monument)



Willywatt Mill
 Willywatt Mill was mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086 A.D.) and through the years has also been variously known as Willycoat, Williat, Williot and Willowat Mill. The building contains two water wheels and for a time was used as a felling mill to process cloth - the second wheel would possibly have ground corn as required. In the 18th Century the mill was used for paper making, an operation that lasted for about 80 years, then the mill was modified to grind bones for use as phosphates in agriculture but this venture did not last long and flour milling was resumed.

Although Willywatt Mill is now a picturesque marina one of the waterwheels can still be seen at one end.

The terraced remains of the gardens of Lord St. John's Dower House can be seen close by Woodford Shrubbery. It was demolished in the early 19th century. (Scheduled Ancient Monument)



Disused railway bridge.

Aylesbury ducks are usually found in the water close to the road at Denford, hoping to be fed a crust of bread.



Traffic Sign - Denford

- Key**
- Footpaths on suggested walks
 - - - Bridleways on suggested walks
 - - - - Other footpaths
 - Parish Boundary
 - ▲ S.P. Sign Post
 -] [F.B. Footbridge
 - S Stile
 - C Gate
 - Ch Church
 - P.H. Public House
 - ▲ Viewpoint

Ringstead Grange Trout Fishery was opened in 1980 offering fishermen 36 acres of water to fish for trout and salmon.

The church of St. Mary, with its short Broach spire, is built of rubble and dates from the early 13th Century, although having considerable 14th century alterations

The building is plastered internally and the chancel has tall, fine windows with beautifully designed tracery.



St. Mary - Ringstead

1/4 Mile

