

SYRESHAM VILLAGE TRAIL

Walks around Syresham



Northamptonshire Village of the Year,
2008—10 and 2013
www.syreshamvillage.com

Interesting facts . . .

- **The Pound** – originally land where Drovers' beasts were brought for overnight grazing en route from Wales to London and the ports of the south-east. In 1950 an estate was built by Brackley Rural District Council that included a variety of houses and bungalows grouped around an open space similar to a village green. The architect subsequently won a prestigious design award for this estate.
- **The Fish Pond** – to the south of the church there was once a very large fish pond used by the monks from Biddlesden Abbey who owned much of the land in Syresham. The pond was drained long ago, but there are still remains in the form of mounds and earthworks.
- Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries the land owned by the Abbey passed to Magdalen College Oxford, but has subsequently been sold off. **College Farmhouse in Magdalen Close** was one of the principal buildings owned by Magdalen College having interesting Inglenook and chimney stacks.
- **The Syresham Martyr**— John Kurde, a shoemaker, lived in a little house on the left hand side of The Hill. He was imprisoned for a year and finally burnt at the stake in Northampton on 20th September 1557 for denying transubstantiation and holding other heretical views. He was the only Protestant Martyr in the County.
- **King's Brewery**, a tall red-bricked building, stood on land to the rear of modern houses in Broad Street. The King family also owned the General Stores in Broad Street. This was known as 'The Department Store of the County' and was created by knocking together a row of cottages.



Forest Walks

Forest Walks can be found at Whistley Woods, on the bend of B4525 close to the entrance to Crowfield hamlet. Limited parking space is off the road at the main gate. Towards Silverstone and Northampton on the A43 is Hazelborough Forest, with marked paths and a small car park on the left as the road filters off into Silverstone village. Between Silverstone village and Wappenham and Abthorpe is Bucknell Woods on the left hand side of the road out of Silverstone, again limited parking is available.

The Ouse Valley Way

The River Great Ouse begins its long journey north-east to The Wash at Kings Lynn, close to Syresham, where it passes through the village. There is a marked footpath on the Biddlesden Road, out of Syresham crossing over the A43 and heading towards Buckingham.

Circular Walk

Leave the village at Wappenham Road opposite The Priory; follow the footpath to the top of the hill, crossing over the stile and following the hedge on the left. Go through the gate and keeping the hedge on your right head towards another gate and keep the hedge now to your left. A stile will take you into the next field and two others, emerging back in the village on the Wappenham Road, and descending a stony farm track to complete the walk, almost opposite the Old Rectory.

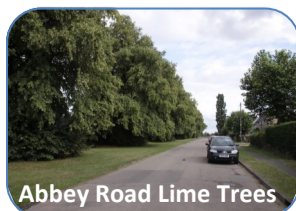
Crowfield and back to Syresham

Heading downhill in Broad Street opposite the school, cross over the bridge where the Great Ouse passes under at the bottom of Broad Street and Bell Lane. Turn left at The Hill, an unadopted road, just opposite the children's playground. Fork left and cross the fields westwards.

The Brewery and Store employed more than 60 people from the village and had a comprehensive delivery service reaching places as far afield as Bedford, Oxford and Northampton.

- **The Ancient Forest** around Syresham were favoured hunting grounds of the kings of England including Richard II. It was also allegedly one of the favourite haunts of highwaymen. Apparently Bow Street Runners sought highwaymen from their headquarters in the Green Man Inn. One night legend has it, they almost caught Dick Turpin, coming across his horse still saddled, but Dick had seemingly escaped into the forest.
- There were once 15 **Shops in Syresham** and many of the cottages still bear names like 'Dairy Cottage', 'The Old Haberdashery', 'Bell Cottage' (named after the Bell Inn) and 'The Old Post Office'. There were two Butcher's shops, now converted into private residences, one at the top of Broad Street and the other in Bell Lane (Dairy Cottage).
- **Sport** has a long tradition in Syresham and Mr Joseph Timms from Abbey House once collected a local cricket team to play an All England Eleven. In 1982 the Sports and Social Club were successful in building their own Club House thanks to the generosity of Mr Philip Bradbury. A hall and changing rooms (funded by the National Lottery) were later added.

One of the main features of Syresham is its **Jubilee Tree** (a Wellingtonia) on the junction of Abbey Road and Main Road planted in 1897 to mark the 60th Year of the reign of Queen Victoria. In 2012 a second tree was planted in Wappenham Road to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. There is also a line of lime trees in Abbey Road planted by Captain Joseph Timms to mark



Crowfield houses will come into view. Walk through the hamlet and at Furlong Farm, head towards the farm buildings and then follow the field edge to the right and at the gap turn to the right downhill and back to the road into Syresham.

Falcutt Track

This is a byway that can be reached leaving the village by car on the Wappenham Road passing Wild House Farm on the left and then taking the left hand fork, signposted to Helmdon and Astwell. This is a narrow road and reaches a sharp turn at the bottom of the hill. To the right is Astwell Mill, a favourite fishing spot. Take the left turn passing Falcutt Manor and park up at the top of the hill. Extensive views over the Tove Valley can be seen. In winter the area is often the home to flocks of fieldfare – a variety of thrush, a winter visitor to Britain.

Bluebell walks to Hazelborough

Taking the footpath east from Malt Lane, pass College Farm to the right and Kingshill Farm some little distance downhill to the left, pass Primrose Hill Farm on the right to meet the byway on the southeast edge of the woods. Turn left with King Richard's Copse to your right. The woods here are popular for exceptional displays of Bluebells during late April and early May.

Village facilities

Food and refreshments are available at the Kings Head during opening hours, at the Village Hall Coffee Morning 10.30 to 12.30 on Thursdays, and the village store and Post Office at the corner of Bell Lane also sells food and drinks.

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the return of his sons who served in the Great War.

Prior to the Great War there were British army manoeuvres in Graves Ground located at the end of Malt Lane. Officers used College Farm and King George V and Queen Mary came to Syresham to visit the troops.



The village was for many years dominated by **thatched cottages**, now in the 21st century, there remains only one at the corner of High Street and Abbey Road.

High Street at the corner of Abbey Road is the last remaining thatched house, at one time a Smithy.

Vine Cottage in Broad Street, was often the temporary overnight residence for Drovers staying in the village on their journey to the south.

In High Street opposite the School is **Drover's Cottage (No 15)**, the lodging place for Drovers on their way through Syresham. It was originally a single storey dwelling with thatched roof.



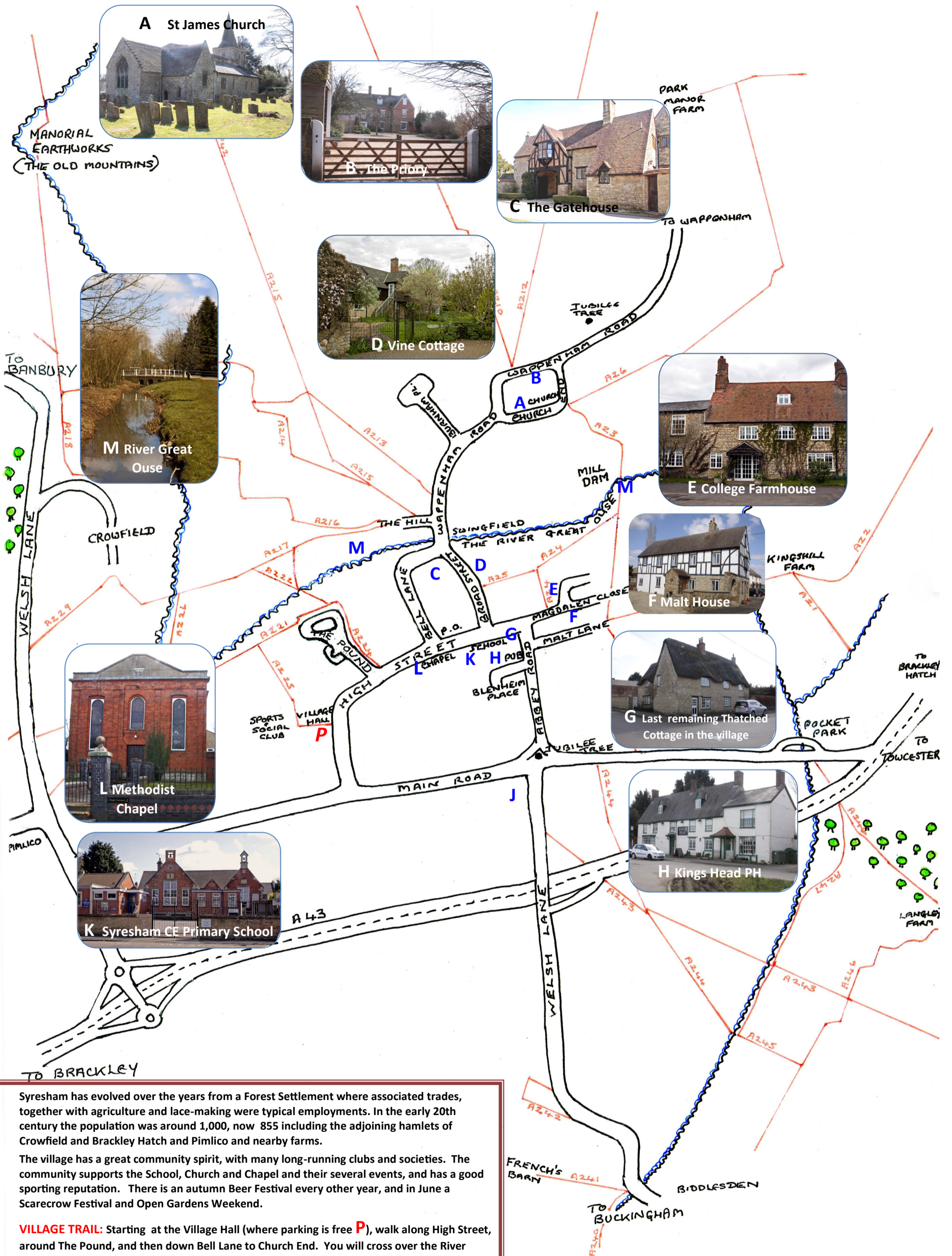
Off Main Road and at the corner of the Biddlesden Road is **Abbey House Farm**, a prominent Georgian building, close to which is believed to be



King Richard's Stone, where Richard II would mount his horse—this was very popular Royal hunting territory.

Syresham Pocket Park is situated a short walk out of the village towards Silverstone at Kingshill Farm layby on the old main road. It has recently been supported by **Froglife** who have guided in the development of a pond. The Park is open to visitors.

Along the old Main Road towards Brackley stand two very impressive Victorian buildings, **Syresham House** and **The Grove**. In fact at one time a single large house, part of which is reputed to have been the home of Sir Adrian Boult, the famous conductor.



Syresham has evolved over the years from a Forest Settlement where associated trades, together with agriculture and lace-making were typical employments. In the early 20th century the population was around 1,000, now 855 including the adjoining hamlets of Crowfield and Brackley Hatch and Pimlico and nearby farms.

The village has a great community spirit, with many long-running clubs and societies. The community supports the School, Church and Chapel and their several events, and has a good sporting reputation. There is an autumn Beer Festival every other year, and in June a Scarecrow Festival and Open Gardens Weekend.

VILLAGE TRAIL: Starting at the Village Hall (where parking is free **P**), walk along High Street, around The Pond, and then down Bell Lane to Church End. You will cross over the River Great Ouse. Visit the 2012 new Jubilee Tree out on Wappenham Road returning behind the Church to rejoin Wappenham Road and via Broad Street and into High Street to walk up Abbey Road to the old Jubilee Tree. From here you can make your way to our Pocket Park and then retrace your steps along the old main road and return to the Village Hall car park.

Please respect the quiet rural nature of our village.

Follow the Country Code when walking the footpaths.