



# Trails

Heritage walks in and around Milton Keynes



## Broughton

### 1. Start

Start in the car park in Shackerstone Close in front of Broughton Fields School.

### 2. Broughton Brook

The brook is an important feature of Broughton. It gives the village its name – the Old English broc-tun means ‘a settlement on a muddy, rain-fed watercourse’ – and is an important feature of the landscape. To the left and right are reed beds (swales) to hold excess rainwater from the built-up area and filter it slowly into the brook. Farther off to the left you can just see the bridge on Milton Road, now rebuilt to carry heavier traffic. The brook was originally the boundary between Broughton and the neighbouring village of Milton Keynes and there were often arguments about bridge repairs. You may notice a post marking the route of the proposed new Milton Keynes – Bedford canal from Willen Lake using the channel of the brook for part of the way. In the opposite direction you can see the new cable-stayed bridge, adopted as a badge by Broughton Fields School.

### 3. The Square

This square has been developed as a local centre with shops and a dentist’s surgery. This is what we now think of as Broughton, but our walk takes us through fields where cows once grazed to Broughton as it was one hundred years ago.

### 4. Atterbury Lakes

Notice the swale, for running off surface water, to the right (alongside Ferry Meadows Close) and another marker post for the canal to the left. You will see rabbits in the grassy area between the ponds. These are flooded former gravel pits which provide a wetland habitat for many species of wildlife including great crested newts, dragonflies, and some wildfowl. Reed mace is plentiful.

### 5. Woods and Meadows

Entering the wooded area you can see on the right an old vent pipe for monitoring methane. This accumulated after gravel extraction ceased and the land was reclaimed. The willow carr to the right is a home for native and migrant birds, and the grass and woodland areas shelter many more - too many to mention here! Alder, field maple and oak trees have been planted to the left of the path, and there are traces of old hedgerow

on the site, which was once farmland, as well as a rare Black Poplar and a badger sett, both well hidden! The enclosed paddock area will probably be grazed, and the field near the gate could be used for allotments. Wild flowers line the path in summer.

### 6. The Old Village

A tiny triangular green is formed by the junction of a track with London Road, once part of the main route from London to Northampton. In the eighteenth century this became a turnpike road administered by a Board which charged a toll to pay for its maintenance. Broughton became quite important and farms on the road doubled as inns with stabling for horses, as many as 60 in one case.

### 7. St Lawrence’s Church

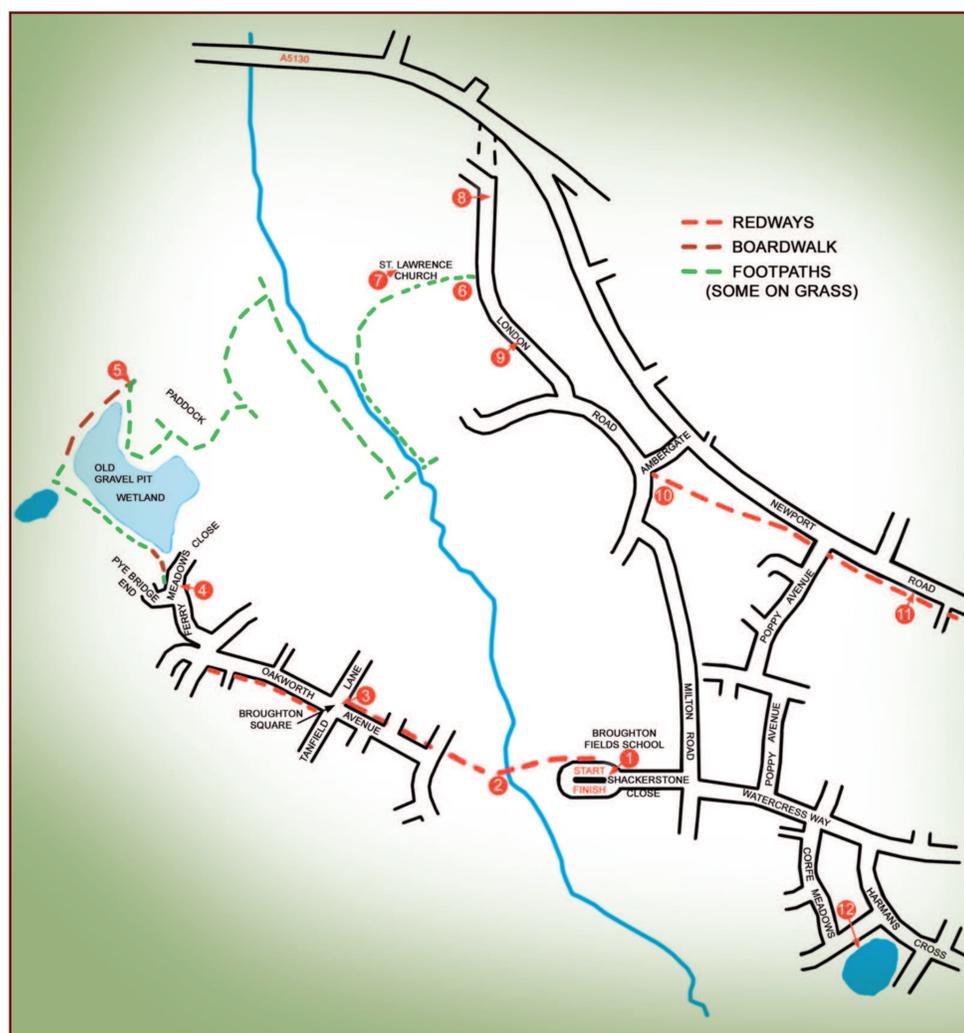
The fourteenth century church has beautiful medieval wall paintings, including St George and the Dragon. It is worth a visit, but you can see the old door with its ancient lock and sanctuary ring through the outer porch door. Just over the churchyard wall at the west (tower) end of the church is the overgrown site of Broughton’s eighteenth century schoolroom, perhaps built at the same time as the Old Rectory next door. Look too for the little tower on the north wall which contains the staircase to the former road loft.

### 8. London Road

Members of the Backwell and Praed families were Lords of the Manor in the nineteenth century and later took their new family name from their big house at Tyringham. Their initials and dates appear on several of the houses on London Road. The biggest is the Manor House on the left (1875-RWGT). The family replaced the old farm cottages with new cottages and villas, all set behind neat brick walls which you will see as you walk back along the road. Look carefully and you will also see traces of repairs where the cat’s eyes of the once busy main road have been removed!

### 9. The Old School

After the phone box you will see the old schoolroom on the right, the successor to the one behind the church, initialled and dated WBT 1864. It closed in 1906 and children had to go to school in Newport Pagnell or nearby villages until Broughton Fields, and then Brooklands Farm School, opened a century or



so later. Farther on, over the playing field, is a view of the new pavilion and the modern bridge. The houses to the left were probably rebuilt when the bigger farms moved to the edge of the village. As you cross Ambergate you can just see Brooklands Farmhouse, now used by a number of businesses, on the opposite side of Newport Road.

### 10. This way to London!

The A3150 has bypassed Broughton for over thirty years and the M1 bypasses it too! The Redway roughly follows the line of the old London Road. Old maps show the tollgate at this point. The toll keeper’s cottage possibly stood in what is today the garden of The Broughton.

### 11. The Milestone

The milestone was erected when the road became a turnpike. Just beyond it is Manor Farmhouse: you can see it through the big gates. Broughton Manor Prep School is to its left, and Brooklands Farm School is on the opposite side of Newport Road, as is Tollgate Cottage, the site of one of the farms which offered stabling for travellers on the turnpike.

### 12. Clay-lined Pond

The clay-lined pond is another part of the surface water drainage system for regulating the release of water into the Broughton Brook, which has always been liable to flood. In 1086 it supported a mill – in 1693 the Rector of Milton Keynes drowned in it on his way home from London!



These panels can be downloaded from the Discover Milton Keynes website: [www.discovermiltonkeynes.co.uk](http://www.discovermiltonkeynes.co.uk) or scan the QR code.



milton keynes council