

# YOUNG FRIENDS OF TEWKESBURY ABBEY



## Activities for our second virtual rogation

**Rogation Day 2021 will take place on the 9<sup>th</sup> May.**

Beating the bounds is an old custom which started long before the Norman Conquest in 1066. To beat the bounds, old and young people would go around the parish boundary together during the week before Ascension Day.

There were four reasons for this:

- Parishes had to look after their own people in need.
- People had to be baptised and buried in their own home parish too.
- It was also important to make sure that neighbouring parishes didn't try to move the boundary markers to gain more land for themselves.

Small children were given the bumps on the boundary and sometimes they were whipped, so that they would be sure to remember where the parish boundary was. They were given a small coin to stop them crying afterwards. Everyone would carry an osier (a willow stick) to beat the boundary with as they travelled along.

- Beating bounds also gave people a chance to think about all the activities and enterprises that happened within their parish, so that they could pray for their success during the coming year.

As Rogation Day will be before the 17<sup>th</sup> May, Young Friends will not be able to meet together, even outside, and we cannot all walk the boundary together. However, you and the people in your household can meet with one other household to beat the bounds if you wish. **This sheet provides you with some boundary walks that you can do, as well as some other activities that will encourage you to think about rogation and about our parish of St Mary the Virgin, Tewkesbury with Walton Cardiff.**

**Rogation is about asking for God's blessing on our parish, especially the things that grow within it.**

### Why not throw some seed bombs?

First, make your seed bombs. Here is the recipe:

- In a bowl, mix together 1 cup of seeds with 5 cups of compost and 2-3 cups of clay soil (we have lots of this in Tewkesbury)
- Slowly mix in water with your hands until everything sticks together.
- Roll the mixture into firm balls.
- Leave the balls to dry in a sunny spot.
- Now for the fun bit! Plant your seed bombs by throwing them at bare parts of the garden and wait to see what pops up!

Before throwing your seed bombs, here are two prayers to say:

Creating God, you have given seed for the sower. Nourish, protect, and bless the seeds and bulbs which are sown in hope. May they bring forth bountiful fruit and beauty. Amen.

Giver of life, thank you for soil in which nature awakens new life. Thank you for the smell of freshly tilled earth, the beauty of a cleanly cut furrow, and a well-ploughed field. Help us to be good stewards of the land. Amen.



If you don't have enough space in your garden for all your seed bombs perhaps you could give your spare ones to a friend. Please ask permission before throwing seed bombs in places that are not in your garden.

You might like to choose your seeds carefully to encourage pollinators, like bees, into your garden. The best ones to include in your seed bombs are:

- [Bulbous Buttercup](#) - Ranunculus bulbosus
- [Chamomile](#) - Chamaemelum nobile
- Common [Bird's-foot-trefoil](#) - Lotus corniculatus
- Common [Knapweed](#) - Centaurea nigra
- [Common Spotted-orchid](#) - Dactylorhiza fuchsii
- [Lady's bedstraw](#) - Galium verum
- [Red Clover](#) - Trifolium pratense
- [Wild Thyme](#) - Thymus polytrichus

The monks of Tewkesbury Abbey kept bees. Bees are very important because, not only do they pollinate our plants and help them to grow, they also make honey and wax, which are very useful. How many different uses can you think of, for honey and for wax?



## Streets that are named after plants

There are many streets in our parish that are named after plants, such as Bellflower Road, Saffron Road and Vine Way. Do you know where these places are? Can you find any other streets in the parish that are named after things that grow?

(Just over the boundary, in Holy Trinity parish, is an area where the streets are all named after varieties of vegetables. Do you know where, and what kinds of vegetables?)



But it's not just plants that grow in our parish.

People grow too. How many places in our parish can you name, that help young people to grow, in mind, in spirit and in body?

## Rogation walks

Tewkesbury has a very long boundary and beating the whole of it is a real challenge. Last year, it was easier because there was hardly any traffic on the roads but, even then, you would have needed a good boat to do the whole thing because the boundary also runs along the middle of the River Severn. There are five walks described here, focusing on growing things, so you will mostly walk alongside fields, rivers and nature reserves. We are lucky in Tewkesbury because we have so many rights of way that we can use.

To help you find your way around these walks you can access the [Gloucestershire County Council rights of way map](#), which contains all the reference numbers to the footpaths. You will know when you have reached the parish boundary because the letters at the beginning of the reference number will change, from ZTE to something else, like AAS, ADE, AWC or ATW. For each way on this leaflet there is a simple map for you to follow. The blue lines on the maps are for rivers, the brown ones are for roads and the green ones are for off-road footpaths. The red lines are roads you may need to cross but should not need to walk along.

**Keeping safe (this is a long list but it is very important)**

- Take an adult with you.
- Follow the [Countryside Code](#)
- Keep safe by crossing roads carefully and using footpaths whenever they are available. These routes mostly avoid very busy roads, but in some places that isn't possible.
- Make sure you are prepared for the weather, whatever it may be. Have sun cream and a sun hat for hot sunny weather, or a waterproof coat if it's wet, or a warm sweater to keep you warm.
- Take a drink, some hand sanitiser, (for after you have touched gates, etc)
- Don't forget your inhaler if you use one. Antiseptic cream might be useful too.
- Wear strong shoes. Long trousers will protect you from nettle stings.
- A mobile phone, so that you can call someone if you need help.
- If you have one, a smart phone will be very useful, to give you access to the rights of way map.

## Walk number 1 – Around the Severn Ham (about 3.6km)



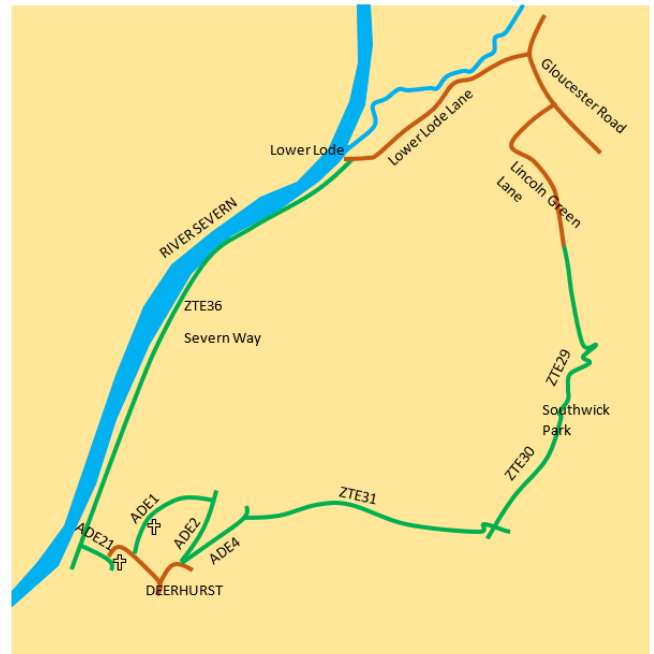
The Severn Ham is a 71 hectare ancient floodplain meadow. It covers about one fifth of the whole area of the parish. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). You can find out more about it from the information signs on site and also via [this link](#). The Abbey used to own 18 hectares close to the Upper Lode, as well as a ferry at the Upper Lode. It is said that monks used the ferry to help Queen Margaret to escape from the battle of Tewkesbury in May 1471.

You can gain access to the Ham from the Back of Avon, where there is parking available, via the blue/green bridge, or from the Abbey Mill. The footpaths are manageable with a wheelchair or pushchair, if you have a radar key to get through the gates. The dotted green line is an unofficial footpath that you can use to walk all the way around the edge of the Ham. Currently there are waterpipe replacement works on the site (great for people who like to see big diggers etc) but diversions around the works are clearly marked. **Very important - Please keep dogs on leads, to protect ground nesting birds.**

At the Upper Lode you will find a weir. See if you can spot any rare twait shad fish crossing the white boards on the notch of the weir. The Severn Rivers Trust is currently monitoring the shad. (See [Unlocking the Severn](#).) Many older people in Tewkesbury say that they used to eat fishcakes made from the shad, but they are protected now.

**Wherever you are on the Ham you can see the Abbey. Why not take a photograph of it from your favourite viewpoint and send it to** [youngfriends@friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk](mailto:youngfriends@friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk)

## Walk number 2 - Lower Lode to Deerhurst (8km)



There is car parking and also a picnic area available at the Lower Lode. This walk will take you from the Lower Lode, south along the Severn Way (ZTE36) and into Deerhurst parish. Centuries ago, pilgrims would have walked this path to visit the hermit Theoc and listen to him preach.

You cannot miss footpath ADE21 into Deerhurst itself. While you're here, you could visit Odda's Chapel and Deerhurst Church, both of which are very interesting. From the church, turn north along ADE1, then turn right onto ADE2, followed by a left turn onto ADE4. Turn right when you reach ZTE31. **As you walk, from time to time you will be able to see the Abbey in the distance. It's amazing how far away you can be, and still see it. Take a photograph and send it to us.**

The fields here used to belong to the Abbey a long time ago and they provided food for the Abbey and the town. Eventually you can turn left onto ZTE30, continuing north on ZTE29, to Lincoln Green Lane. You are now on the battlefield. The fields have always been part of the floodplain and have provided pasture for sheep, cattle and horses.

At the entrance to the golf course, you should turn right and then right again onto Gloucester Road. To your left are the Leisure Centre and the public service centre, which is on the site of Holm Castle, which belonged to Robert Fitzhamon, the founder of our abbey. Lower Lode Lane is at the bottom of the hill, on your left.

### Walk 3 - Walton Cardiff to Tredington

(5.7km)



There is parking available at the main entrance to the [Nature Reserve](#) off Jubilee Way. **There are good views of the Abbey from almost everywhere in the Nature Reserve and also from Jubilee Way. Please send a photograph of your favourite view.**

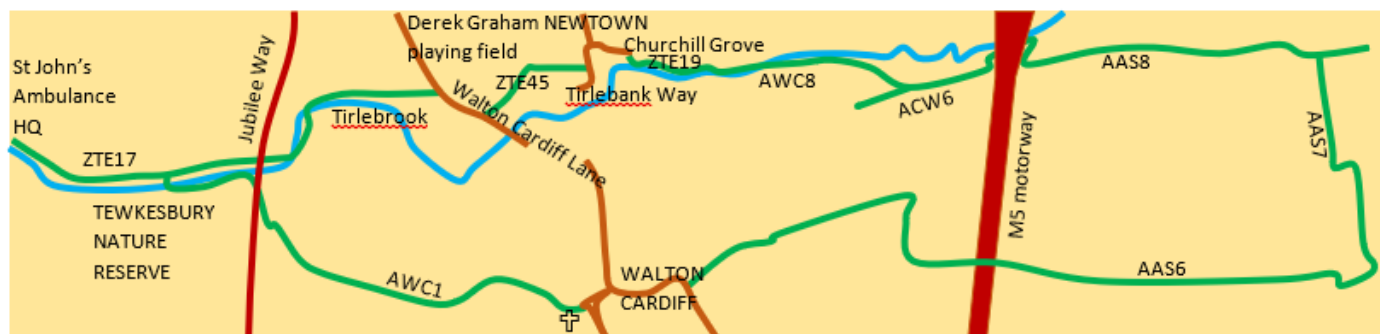
On the site map in the car park, you will see where the bridges over the Swilgate are. You need to cross either bridge no.2 or no.5 and head for the south exit onto Jubilee way, by the Stonehills bus stop. You will see a footpath signpost opposite. Cross over Jubilee Way carefully and take the footpath into the field on the other side. When you get to the stile, follow the

path that goes almost straight ahead, the ZTE28 to Stoke Road, where you turn left. There is no footpath here, so you need to walk carefully. Soon, you will find the left turn onto Rudgeway Lane. There is little traffic here, but you should still take care. When you reach the recreation field, work your way round via Starling Road and Hazel Avenue until you reach the estate footpath that goes around the eastern edge of the estate. To your right are fields that still grow crops. Think of the farmers who work so hard to make sure we have enough to eat. Many farmers are finding it hard to make a living in this way and some have chosen to sell their land for building on. Wheatpieces was a farm, as was Stonehills. You might like to think about that. We need food and we need houses. How do we decide which is more important? The footpath brings you round to Cambrian Road, then Snowdonia Road, which brings you back to Jubilee Way and the Nature Reserve.

### Walk 4 – Along the Tirlbrook (6.3km)

This walk starts at the St John Ambulance Headquarters on Link Road. The nearest car park is at the [Nature Reserve](#), close to the junction of Link Road and Queens Road. The path you need is ZTE17, which you can access through the gate next to the St John Ambulance Headquarters. Follow the footpath east along the Tirl brook, continuing under Jubilee Way, where you join path ZTE16 and keep going east, to Walton Cardiff Lane. Along the lane, a little to your left is the Derek Graham playing field, which is a good place for a picnic, if you have one with you. If you turn right onto Walton Cardiff Lane you will find ZTE45, which will lead you to Tirlbank Way and then Churchill Grove. At the end of Churchill Grove you will find ZTE19, which leads to AWC8. As you walk, keep looking back from time to time. **How far can you go before you can no longer see the Abbey? Please send a photograph of the furthest view.**

When you reach AWC6, turn left and go through the culvert under the M5 then continue along AAS8. A right turn onto AAS7 will lead to another right turn



onto AAS6, which will bring you back, over the motorway bridge, to Walton Cardiff Lane. Turn right along the lane and follow it round to the site of St James Church, which we visited in 2019. From the church, AWC1 will bring you back under Jubilee Way to the Nature Reserve.

The Nature Reserve was created to protect Tewkesbury from flooding. Plants, especially trees, help to protect us from flooding too, by allowing the soil to absorb more water so that it doesn't end up in our river system too quickly. You will see that many of the small streams around here have lots of twists and turns in them. These slow down the flow of water and also help to prevent flooding. This would be a good time to think how, although we can't control the weather, God has given us the knowledge and skills to find ways of using and shaping the land, to protect both it and ourselves from the worst effects of the weather's power.

A prayer:

**Creator God, you send us the wind, the rain, the sunshine and this beautiful land. Help us to be good stewards of all these gifts you give us. Amen**

## Walk 5 – Oldbury Road to the Mythe (7km)



This walk starts at the Spring Gardens car park on Oldbury Road. Cross Oldbury Road and take any alleyway through to the High Street. After crossing the High Street safely, you should head north to the Black Bear pub, which is supposed to be the oldest in Gloucestershire. Take the Mythe Road over the two bridges and then turn left onto ZTE9, which goes around Breaking Stone Meadow and the waterworks. The waterworks are really important because everything needs water, to grow. Do you know that the water that is processed here has already been drunk up to seven times before? Water is relatively easy to recycle and make clean, but we might spare a thought for the many people in the world who don't have access to safe drinking water.

Path ZTE9 joins ZTE2 which continues along the bank of the River Severn. Just after the Mythe Pool, follow the ZTE1, which continues as the ATW40 and then turn right onto ATW41. You might like to walk through the Mythe Railway Nature Reserve, which lies parallel to the footpath and might be less overgrown. At the end of ATW41 you should join ZTE3, which will bring you out further up the Mythe Road, which you must cross with care. Turn right to head back towards Tewkesbury. This is probably the busiest road on any of these five walks, so do use the footpath.

On your way back, just before you reach the A438 turning you will find the ZTE4, which leads up to the Mythe Tute which, long ago, was a castle. The footpath makes you think you are heading into someone's garden, but you're not. The Mythe Tute, or Royal Hill is probably the highest point in Tewkesbury and the views from the top are amazing. **Do you think you can see the whole parish from here? You can certainly see the Abbey. Please take a photo and send it to us.**

## The Young Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey - thinking ahead

It has been more than a year since we last met. After 21st June, hopefully, it will be possible for us to meet again. Details will follow as soon as it is known what we can do. Our first in-person event will probably be a picnic in the Abbey grounds, with an archaeological treasure hunt.

You probably have ideas about what we can do next. If you do, send an email to [youngfriends@friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk](mailto:youngfriends@friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk)

**Happy Rogationtide**