

Walk 2 Eye Kettleby Lock to Kirby Bellars 1 mile

1. From Eye Kettleby Lock, turn left to cross the Eye Kettleby canal bridge
2. Follow the way markers across the railway and through the grounds of Mill House to the junction with the A607
3. Follow the footpath sign over a stile and across a marshy field.
4. Cross a stream taking care down and up the steep banks,
5. Head towards the railway to a way marker on a track behind the factory
6. At the far end of the track follow the way markers across the fields to reach buildings.
7. Turn left to reach the A607, or right across the railway to St. Peter's Church and the footpath to Frisby on the Wreake.
8. A detour to the right just before the Church leads across the river to the remains of the old lock



St Peter's Kirby Bellars

The quiet peaceful village of Kirby Bellars derives its name from the Beler family, The monument to Sir Roger Beler, a mediaeval lord of the manor, can be seen in the south aisle of St. Peter's Church. To your right, you can see the earthworks of the moated Kirby Priory, founded as a chantry in 1316, becoming an Augustinian Priory in 1359, and dissolved in 1534. A detour down Washdyke Lane and across the river reaches the remains of the old lock, and the line of the canal which has been filled in at this point. Beyond Kirby Bellars nursery the Priory Wildlife and Water Park is a small nature reserve on former gravel workings, supporting abundant birdlife.



Walk 3 Kirby Bellars to Frisby on the Wreake 1.5 miles

1. At St. Peter's Church bear left on right on entering the nursery and follow the path with the hedge on the right.
2. At the stile, cross the field, bearing left towards the lifebuoy on the water's edge at the beginning of the causeway.
3. On leaving the causeway cross a track, go over a stile and head for the posts by the river.
4. Keep the river and old canal on your right until you reach Station Lane.
5. Cross the road and follow the footpath with the river on your right.
6. Past the lake, go over a stile and bear left away from the river towards Frisby Church spire.
7. Go under overhead power lines, turn Lane then to Main Street.
8. Cross the railway at a gated crossing. Follow a track past Mill House into Mill Lane.
9. Opposite the church turn right into Hollow Lane then to Main Street.
10. Turn right to reach the public house (the Bell Inn) with the village cross and the footpath to Hoby opposite.
11. Turn right to reach the public house (the Bell Inn) with the village cross and the footpath to Hoby opposite.

### Walk 4 Frisby on the Wreake to Hoby 2 miles



1. Take the Hoby footpath alongside "The Limes" opposite the Bell Inn.
2. Follow the sign to Hoby (1 mile). If the path is not distinct, aim for Hoby Church spire, until the railway crossing is seen.
3. After two more scientific interest
4. Lane until a bridge way is reached
5. Bear left towards
6. Where the river is crossed by a footbridge near to the old mill.
7. Cross a field to the foot of a bank to where the path climbs up to Hoby and the Blue Bell Inn

All Saint's Church Hoby was built around 1216 probably on the site of an older church. Roof Tree Cottage, at the junction of Brooksby and Hoby roads, is a mediaeval house, probably 16th century although some of the timbers in this cruck-framed building appear to have been felled in the 1400s (tree ring dating). Refreshments are available at the Blue Bell Inn



Church of All Saints Hoby

### St Thomas of Canterbury



In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the Rector of St. Thomas of Canterbury Frisby, reputed to be an married couples with little supporting evidence. Frisby for a short time, was in danger of becoming the Green of North Leicestershire. Frisby was a busy stop on the coaching route between Melton

and Leicester, and had three public houses. Star Cottage opposite the village cross, was one, while The Coach House, a large three storied building further up the High Street, was once the main coaching inn. Refreshments are available at the remaining one, the Bell Inn.

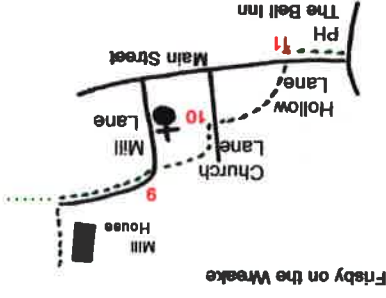
The village cross, in front of 'The Limes' is reputed to be an old preaching cross, dating from the 13thC

may have been used by the Cistercians or the Black Friars of Launde Abbey. Along the Rotherby Road, Zion House is now a farmhouse. It was once an academy for young gentlemen, run by a George Davenport.

Frisby Mill was mentioned in the Domesday Book and was once operated by steam power.

A detour past Mill House and across the railway will take you to Frisby Lock, one of the best preserved locks of the old Melton Mowbray Navigation.

9. Where the Mill Lane swings left, carry on between houses to the end of Church Lane.



Frisby on the Wreake



Frisby Lock - one of the best preserved on the Navigation



## Thrussington to Ratcliffe on the Wreake 2 miles

1. Leave Thrussington on the Ratcliffe Road.
2. After three quarters of a mile take a footpath to the left towards Rearsby Mill.
3. At Rearsby Mill, just before the river bridge, follow the footpath to the right towards Ratcliffe on the Wreake.

4. Turn left along the road, rejoining the footpath to the left, **5.** just past Ratcliffe Church towards Ratcliffe Mill. Bear right across a field towards the end of a row of houses **6.** then turn right past Priory Farm to the road. **7.**

Between the houses and Priory Farm the Old Boathouse may be seen across fields to the left. **This is not a right of way.**

Turn left along the road and then cross **8.** before the bridge into the wood towards Cossington Lane.

### POINTS OF INTEREST ALONG THE WAY

Thrussington has a number of interesting buildings. The Star Inn dates from 1744. 'Bridgeland' at the junction of Church Lane and Hoby Road is the oldest, dating from the 15th Century.

Holy Trinity Church is 700 years old. 'Little Thatch' on the Green was formerly 'Glebe Cottage' and was built to house the servants of the Rectory.

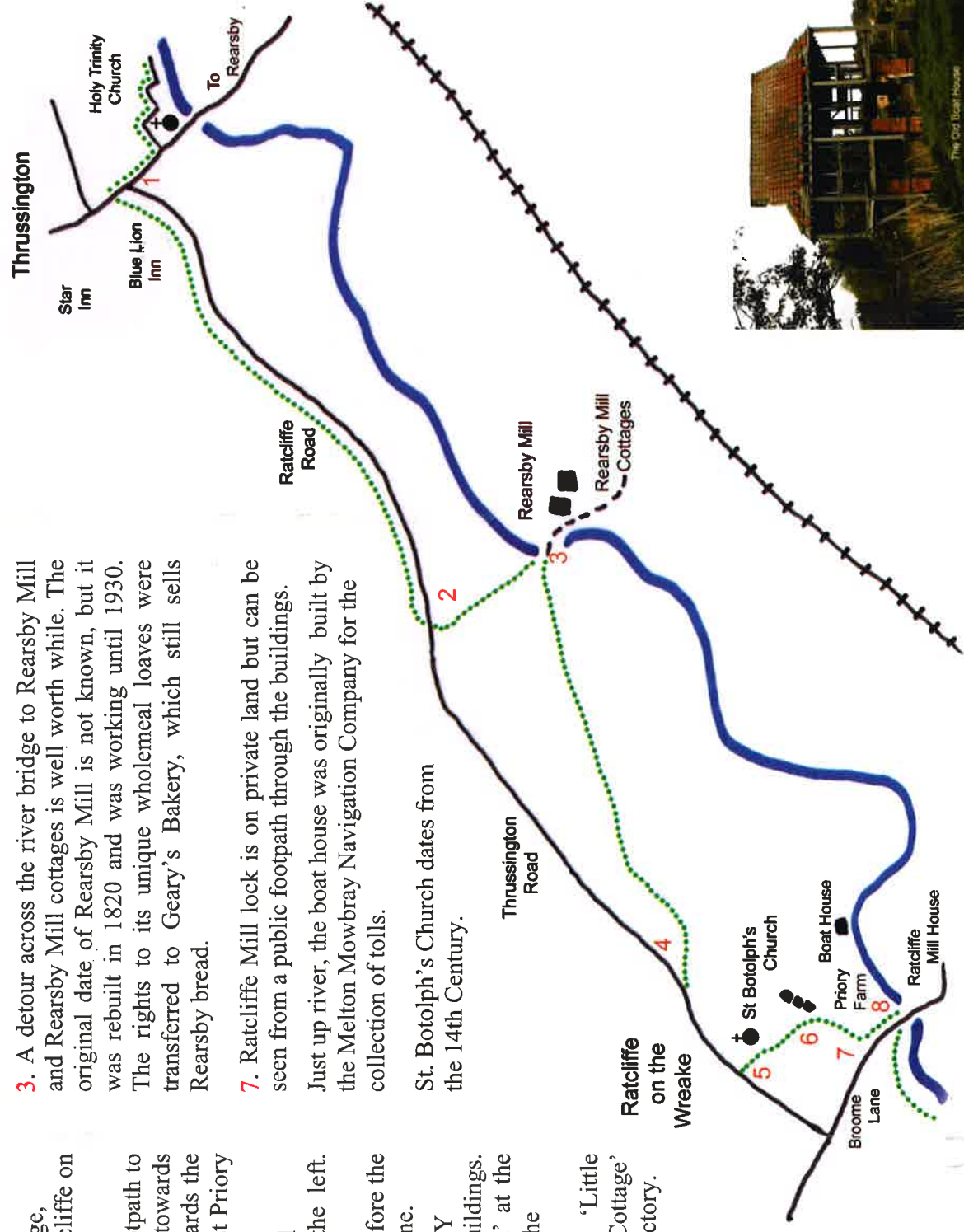


Thrussington's best known son was the artist John Femeley, who is buried in Holy Trinity Churchyard. (His gravestone can be seen from Back Lane)

**3.** A detour across the river bridge to Rearsby Mill and Rearsby Mill cottages is well worth while. The original date of Rearsby Mill is not known, but it was rebuilt in 1820 and was working until 1930. The rights to its unique wholemeal loaves were transferred to Geary's Bakery, which still sells Rearsby bread.

**7.** Ratcliffe Mill lock is on private land but can be seen from a public footpath through the buildings. Just up river, the boat house was originally built by the Melton Mowbray Navigation Company for the collection of tolls.

St. Botolph's Church dates from the 14th Century.



## Ratcliffe on the Wreake to the River Soar 2.5 miles

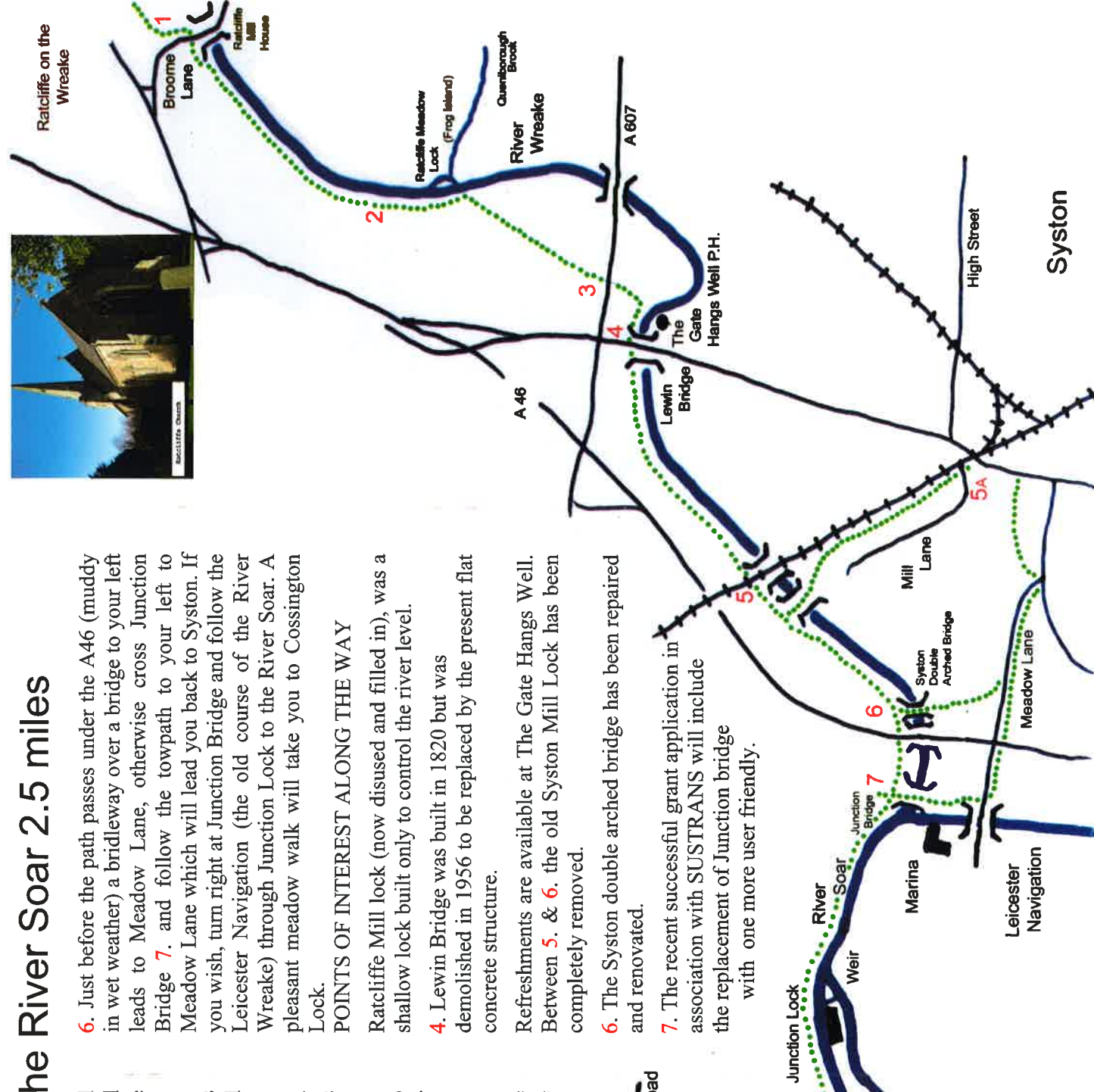
**1.** Follow Broome Lane towards Ratcliffe Mill House, taking a path to the right signposted "Cossington Lane 3 miles". Follow the path along the wooded river bank to reach open fields.

**2.** Follow the path along the river bank until it turns diagonally right towards and then under the elevated A607.

**3.** Ignore the larger arches under the road to find further to the right, five smaller arches. The path goes through the right hand one.

**4.** Head towards "The Gate Hangs Well". Climb up to the road for access to the pub, or cross the road for the path to the Leicester Navigation.

**5.** Just after going under the railway bridge, a footbridge leads to a path which soon follows the railway embankment to a stile at Mill Lane bridge **5A,** almost opposite to High Street leading to Syston.



**6.** Just before the path passes under the A46 (muddy in wet weather) a brideway over a bridge to your left leads to Meadow Lane, otherwise cross Junction Bridge **7.** and follow the towpath to your left to Meadow Lane which will lead you back to Syston. If you wish, turn right at Junction Bridge and follow the Leicester Navigation (the old course of the River Wreake) through Junction Lock to the River Soar. A pleasant meadow walk will take you to Cossington Lock.

### POINTS OF INTEREST ALONG THE WAY

Ratcliffe Mill lock (now disused and filled in), was a shallow lock built only to control the river level.

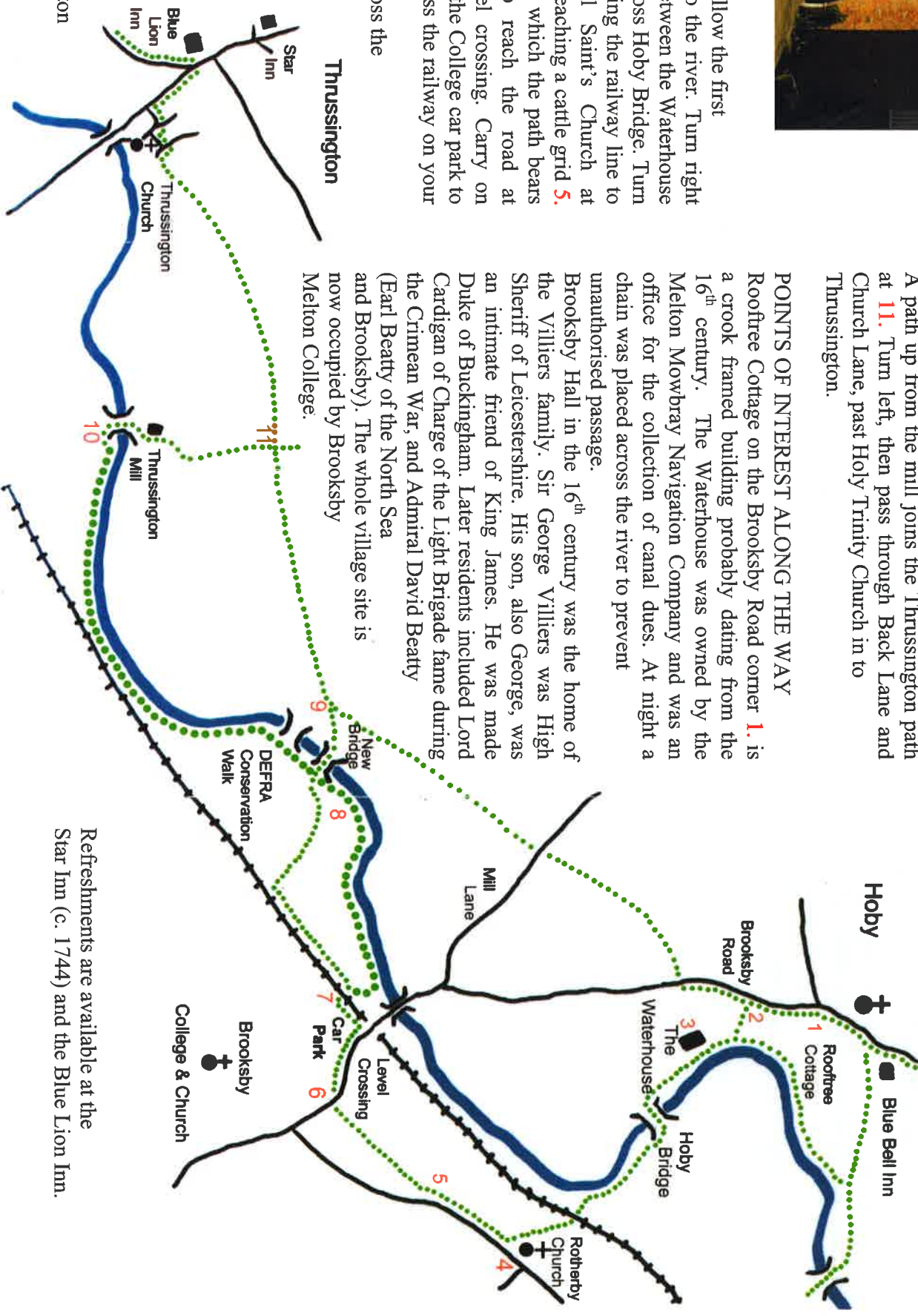
**4.** Lewin Bridge was built in 1820 but was demolished in 1956 to be replaced by the present flat concrete structure.

Refreshments are available at The Gate Hangs Well. Between **5.** & **6.** the old Syston Mill Lock has been completely removed.

**6.** The Syston double arched bridge has been repaired and renovated.

**7.** The recent successful grant application in association with SUSTRANS will include the replacement of Junction bridge with one more user friendly.





Take the Brooksby road and follow the first footpath to the left **2.** down to the river. Turn right along the river bank passing between the Waterhouse and the river **3.** to reach and cross Hobby Bridge. Turn right along the footpath, crossing the railway line to join the road alongside All Saint's Church at Rotherby. **4.** Turn right here, reaching a cattle grid **5.** at the end of the village after which the path bears right, and then downhill to reach the road at Brooksby **6.** near to the level crossing. Carry on down and across the road into the College car park to find a pedestrian crossing across the railway on your right. **7.**

Follow a way marked path across the field to a new river bridge **8.** Continue, then turn left **9.** and follow the path to Thrusssington.

To follow the DEFRA conservation walk, go directly across to the river from the crossing **7.** then turn left along the river bank, keeping as close to the river as possible until reaching a footbridge across to Thrusssington Mill at **10.**



**N.B. DEFRA accepts no responsibility for your safety on the Conservation Walk. It is entirely at your own risk.**

A path up from the mill joins the Thrusssington path at **11.** Turn left, then pass through Back Lane and Church Lane, past Holy Trinity Church in to Thrusssington.

**POINTS OF INTEREST ALONG THE WAY**

Roottree Cottage on the Brooksby Road corner **1.** is a crook framed building probably dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Waterhouse was owned by the Melton Mowbray Navigation Company and was an office for the collection of canal dues. At night a chain was placed across the river to prevent unauthorised passage.

Brooksby Hall in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was the home of the Villiers family. Sir George Villiers was High Sheriff of Leicestershire. His son, also George, was an intimate friend of King James. He was made Duke of Buckingham. Later residents included Lord Cardigan of Charge of the Light Brigade fame during the Crimean War, and Admiral David Beatty (Earl Beatty of the North Sea and Brooksby). The whole village site is now occupied by Brooksby Melton College.

## Hoby to Thrusssington 2.5 miles

The Melton Mowbray Navigation, using the improved Rivers Wreake and Eye ran from the Leicester Navigation at Syston near Leicester to Melton Mowbray and was completed in 1797. It was nearly 15 miles long with 12 locks, finishing in a basin (now filled in) near the Boat Inn in Melton Mowbray. It was finally closed to navigation in 1877. An extension to Oakham was opened in 1893, but did not survive competition from the Melton to Oakham railway, and was closed in 1848.

The Melton and Oakham Waterways Society (MOWS) was formed in 1997 to develop and draw attention to the recreational opportunities of this attractive waterway, and to investigate the possibility of re-opening some or all of the Melton Mowbray Navigation.

MOWS' activities since 1997 have included:-  
 Continuing improvements to the river banks and the adjacent parks in Melton Mowbray. The construction of a slipway, used by the scouts and others for the launching of canoes and the Society's trip boat 'Sysonby Water Rat' (or 'Ratty') and also the work boat 'Mole'. Footpath improvements, in support of the work of the Leicestershire County Council, along the length of the river. Working with SUSTRANS in a successful application for funds for footpath improvements, to enable the old bridge at the junction with the Leicester Navigation to be replaced with a new and more user friendly one. Obtaining funds for a small bank protection scheme near the Waterfield Leisure Pools known as 'spilling' to prevent erosion and improve river flow.

MOWS organises regular working parties caring for the river banks and the footpaths. If you would like to join us, contact our Secretary, Richard Booth, Sysonby Knoll, Asfordby Road, Melton Mowbray, LE13 0HP, Tel: 01664 503330

Copies of this, and of Leaflet One (Melton Mowbray to Hoby) are available from the Treasurer and also from Melton Mowbray Library.

The area of the leaflet is covered by 0/S Explorer Map number 246

### Local Bus Services

There are regular bus services from Leicester (St. Margaret's Bus Station), via Syston and the Wreake Valley villages of Ratcliffe, Thrusssington, Hoby, Frisby and Kirby Bellars to Melton Mowbray (Windsor Street).

A regular bus service also runs from Leicester and Syston along the main road A607 to Kirby Bellars, and then to Melton Mowbray via Station Lane, Asfordby. All bus information can be obtained from:-

**Traveline Tel: 0871 200 22 33**

Melton & Oakham Waterways Society (MOWS)

was formed in 1997 to improve access to the corridor of the Rivers Eye and Wreake, and to work for the re-opening of the Melton Mowbray Navigation between Melton Mowbray & the River Soar

### Come and Join Us!

Membership Single £5, joint £8 per annum  
 Contact Hon. Treasurer, Hugh Butler, 10, Main Street, Frisby on the Wreake, LE14 2NJ  
 Telephone 01664 434549

Visit our website by putting 'Melton & Oakham Waterways Society' into Google

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## THE WREAKE VALLEY WAY

Following as far as possible, the route of the Melton Mowbray Navigation from Melton Mowbray to the River Soar

### Leaflet Two

### HOBY TO THE RIVER SOAR

Hoby to Thrusssington

Thrusssington to Ratcliffe on the Wreake

Ratcliffe on the Wreake to the River Soar

