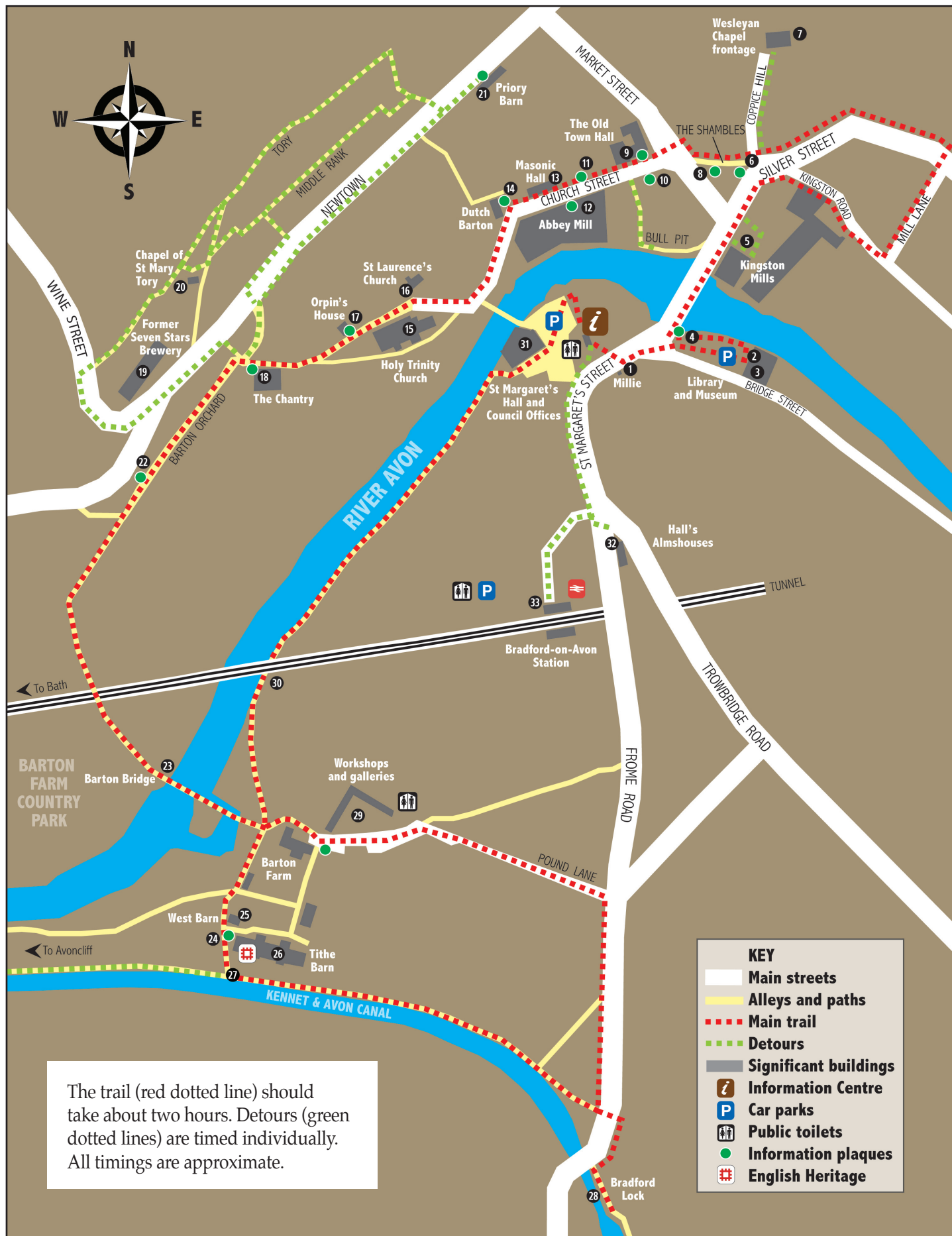


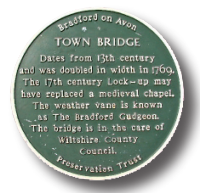
# Bradford on Avon Town Trail



*'All the town of Bradford standith by clothmaking'* John Leland 1540

**B**radford on Avon was an important cloth-making town in the Middle Ages and prospered again – from the same industry – in the 18th century. Former mill buildings bracket its centre and rich clothiers' houses from the latter period, often fronting medieval buildings, can be found on many streets.

This **town trail** follows plaques erected by Bradford on Avon Preservation Trust. These are indicated ● in the text and on the map. If you look up as you walk around, you may see interesting roof details, decoration and unexpected views.



*From the Information Centre, cross the road at the pedestrian lights*

### Statue of 'Millie' ①

Erected for the Millennium in 2000, symbolising Bradford's history – the stone industry and woollen cloth trade.

*Turn left towards the river.*

Look at the frontages in Bridge Street.

**The Library ②**, with Museum on first floor, is at the end of the nearby car park

**Museum ③** (opening times outside library)

Opened in 1990 – includes the contents of one of the town's old chemist shops.

There are good views of the bridge, river and Kingston Mills from the front of the library.

*Return along the path next to the car park to*

### ● Town Bridge ④

On the far side (west) of the bridge (until about 1900) was the original ford. The name Bradford came from 'broad ford'. The arches on the west side date from the doubling of the width of the bridge in 1769. The 18th century lock-up was built on the foundations of a medieval chapel. The weather vane is known as the Bradford Gudgeon.

*Walk over the bridge. Continue into Silver Street. To the right of the mini-roundabout is the site of*

### New Mill ⑤ and Lamb Yard

Originally built for woollen cloth production, but used as part of the rubber company founded by Stephen Moulton at Kingston Mill in 1848. The square building next to the bridge was added in 1917. Rubber production continued under the Avon Company until 1994.

### *Detour 1 Turn right into Lamb Yard*

**10 min**

Factory now converted to residential and commercial use. Explore further for river views.

*Continue up Silver Street. Turn right to Kingston Road*

See imposing buildings formerly headquarters of Avon Rubber Company.

*Turn left uphill into Mill Lane*

The decorative stepped wall belongs to The Hall, an important early 17th century house. Look right at top of Mill Lane to see impressive clothiers' houses.

*Turn left into Silver Street. Cross road with care!*

*Walk downhill to the end wall of The Shambles*

### ● Site of Market Leet and original Town Hall ⑥

The old Town Hall, where the Court Leet was held, adjoined this site. At ground level there were open colonnades for the market; here also stood stocks, pillory and whipping post. The building collapsed in 1826. It was here that Thomas Tropenell was burnt at the stake in 1532 for his religious beliefs.

### *Detour 2 Turn right up Coppice Hill*

**5 min**

See attractive cottages and at top the preserved frontage of Wesleyan Chapel ⑦ (opened 1818).

*Walk along the pedestrian-only Shambles. On wall by Post Office on left is*

### ● The Shambles ⑧

Part of the medieval meat market. The Post Office has the rare monogram of Edward VIII 1936.

*Turn right into Market Street*

Look at the 'ghost' advertising sign on the side wall of the Swan.

*Cross at zebra crossing and walk down to Church Street. On the corner is*

### ● Old Town Hall ⑨

The site of the Market Tavern of about 1636. The Town Hall, erected in 1855, was designed by Thomas Fuller of Bath. It was used as a public hall for civic and social events and a very early police station. Now the Catholic Church of St Thomas More.

*On the wall opposite is*

### ● The Old Bank House ⑩

Dating back to the 15th century, by the 18th century known as the Red Lion Inn, with adjoining Bull Pit. In 1820 home of Joseph Rawling preacher and printer. Later a branch of Wilts and Dorset Bank.

### *Detour 3 Turn left into a narrow alley*

**5 min**

*and walk down to the river and the Bull Pit*

*Trail continues along Church Street until you reach, on the right*

### ● Church House ⑪

Restored circa 1730 for Attorney at Law, Christopher Brewer on land leased from the Methuen family. Later occupied by lawyer Daniel Clutterbuck (d.1769); from 1821 the Hobhouse, Philpott and Lowder Bank, which failed in 1842, bought by Thomas Wheeler and leased to the North Wilts Bank until 1861.

*Opposite at entrance*

### ● Abbey Mill ⑫

The present building was erected in 1874 as a cloth mill by Richard Gane for Harper, Taylor and Co. It closed in 1898 and was later used for various purposes particularly the rubber industry of Spencer Moulton and later Avon Rubber. The factory closed in 1995 and was converted into retirement apartments.

*Opposite Abbey Mill entrance is the*

### Masonic Hall ⑬

Built by Thomas Horton, a clothier, in the early 1500s for church activities. Guttering has Horton's trade mark.

*Just beyond, walk up slope on right to see, on wall*

#### ● Dutch Barton 14

Flemish weavers of fine cloth from Spanish fine wool were brought to this area by clothier Paul Methuen in 1659, and to this site by William Brewer in 1674. Improved techniques re-established the wool trade.

*Return to road and continue on (past Abbey House) to*

#### Holy Trinity Church 15

Of Norman origin, but has been altered over time.

Opening times are on the notice board.

*Follow road to right of church to the*

#### Saxon Church of St. Laurence 16

Early 11th century. Used as a school and house until 'rediscovered' in 1856. Remains of Saxon cross above altar and angel carvings above chancel arch.

*Continue up the road, past the cottages, to the detached house on the right*

#### ● Orpin's House 17

17th century, formerly a glebe cottage. Home of Edward Orpin, clerk of the market. A portrait of him as the Parish Clerk is in the Tate Gallery. Buried opposite in 1781.

*Continue up road and then path (Church Lane) to see, by house entrance on your left*

#### ● The Chantry 18

A building on this site may have housed chantry priests of Holy Trinity. In the 17th and 18th centuries it was a clothier's house for the Taunton, Houlton and Thresher families.

*Turn left (signpost to Barton Farm) along Barton Orchard*

#### ● Barton Orchard 22

Ancient packhorse way from Barton Grange Farm to Winsley and Bath. Numbers 10 to 14 were weavers' dwellings with top floor workshops. Between numbers 7 and 9, stood a communal washhouse fed by Ladywell Spring. Number 3 is an 18th century maltster's house.

*Follow the partially walled path down to the railway level crossing, into the Barton Farm Country Park and over the river*

#### Barton Bridge 23

Medieval – allowed farm carts and animals access to the farm. Notice the boathouse and WW2 pillbox to right.

*Turn right and walk along to the buildings. Take second entrance on left, through the arch, into*

#### ● Barton Grange Farm 24

On the left is the **West Barn 25** and on the right the 14th century stone **Tithe Barn 25**, with impressive timber roof. Straight ahead is a medieval granary, now a shop. Barton Grange (meaning outlying farm) was built by the nuns of Shaftesbury Abbey on land given to them in 1001 by King Ethelred and was owned by them until the 1530s. It then passed into private ownership and was a working farm until 1971. In 2000 the Preservation Trust bought and then restored the yard and the four smaller buildings.

*Return to the arch, turn left and up steps to the west of the Tithe Barn which will take you to*

#### The Kennet and Avon Canal 27

In operation by 1801 but fell into disuse. Restored from the 1960s onwards and reopened by the Queen in 1990.

#### *Detour 4 (with steep paths and steps)*

**30 min**

*Take steps ahead. At top, turn left and then fork right, passing*

The former **Seven Stars brewery 19**, built in 1841 and extended east as a maltings in 1856.

*Continue up Wine Street and take signposted path 75 metres on right leading up to*

The **Chapel of St Mary Tory 20** with views and a modern stained glass window. Originally founded as a hermitage, it was used as a cloth factory, fell into ruins and was rebuilt in 1871.

*Continue along Tory*

See weavers' and artisans' cottages and the view across town to the Salisbury Plain.

*Descend via steps and alleys to Middle Rank and*

*Newtown. Turn left along Newtown to ●*

**Priory Barn 21** Priory Barn was built at the end of the 15th century as an outbuilding of Rogers Manor (subsequently renamed The Priory and largely demolished in the 1930s). The Barn was acquired as a wreck by Elizabeth Stephenson, a founder member, and given to the Preservation Trust for its first restoration project.

*Return to Barton Orchard*

#### *Detour 5 Turn right and walk along*

**90 min**

*the canal towpath to Avoncliff and the Aqueduct, that carries the canal over the river. You can walk back through the Country Park by the river.*

*Turn left and walk along the canal towpath. Cross the road with care, turn right and walk to the bridge, Lock 28 and canal buildings.*

*Retrace your steps. Re-cross the road, turn right and walk along Frome Road for about two hundred metres. Turn left into Pound Lane. Continue straight for three hundred metres.*

To your right are **craft shops and galleries 29** and to the left another entrance to ● **Barton Grange Farm** and the farmhouse, which is private.

*Follow the path through a gate and return to Barton Bridge. Turn right and follow the riverside path under the iron railway bridge. Take the left fork to town, following the river path 30.*

You will have views of The Chantry, the former Vicarage (and its boathouse) on the other bank, as well as Holy Trinity Church. Then to your right, the far more recent swimming pool.

*At the end of the path, keep the large building (St Margaret's Hall) on your left.*



**St Margaret's Hall** 31 was built in the late 18th century as a dye house for the cloth trade. It is now used as a public hall and houses the town council offices.

*Cross the car park, heading towards the river. Go through the archway in the wall*

On your left is a plaque showing the 1882 flood level. Views of the river and bridge.

*Turn right, to return to the Information Centre.*

**Detour 6** Continue to the pedestrian lights again. Do not cross, but turn right and walk along St Margaret's Street until you reach the mini roundabout. To your left are

**10 min**

**Hall's Almshouses** 32

Founded in 1700.

*Turn right and follow the road down to*

**Bradford-on-Avon station** 33

Built in 1848 to a design by Isambard Kingdom Brunel. The line was not completed until 1857.

## Notes

- You may download and print copies for private use, but this material may not be used commercially.
- The basic trail (excluding detours) should take up to two hours.
- All timings are approximate.
- Please be aware that the trail includes steps and steep, sometimes uneven, paths.
- Since the plaques were erected, new historical research has led us to revise the details that appear on some of the plaques.
- Refreshments available in cafés, pubs and restaurants in the town and near the lock.

## Some Bradford on Avon websites

- Town Council  
[www.bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk)
- Tourist Information  
[www.bradfordonavon.co.uk](http://www.bradfordonavon.co.uk)
- Museum  
[www.bradfordonavonmuseum.co.uk](http://www.bradfordonavonmuseum.co.uk)
- Preservation Trust  
[www.bradfordheritage.co.uk](http://www.bradfordheritage.co.uk)
- History and photographs  
[www.freshford.com/bradford\\_home.htm](http://www.freshford.com/bradford_home.htm)

## Thanks

BoA Community Area Network  
BoA Museum  
BoA Preservation Trust  
BoA Tourist Information Office  
Margaret Dobson  
Ivor Slocombe

Text © Bradford on Avon Preservation Trust, Bradford on Avon Museum and Bradford on Avon Tourist Information Centre, 2012

Graphic design by Mike Shearing, 2012