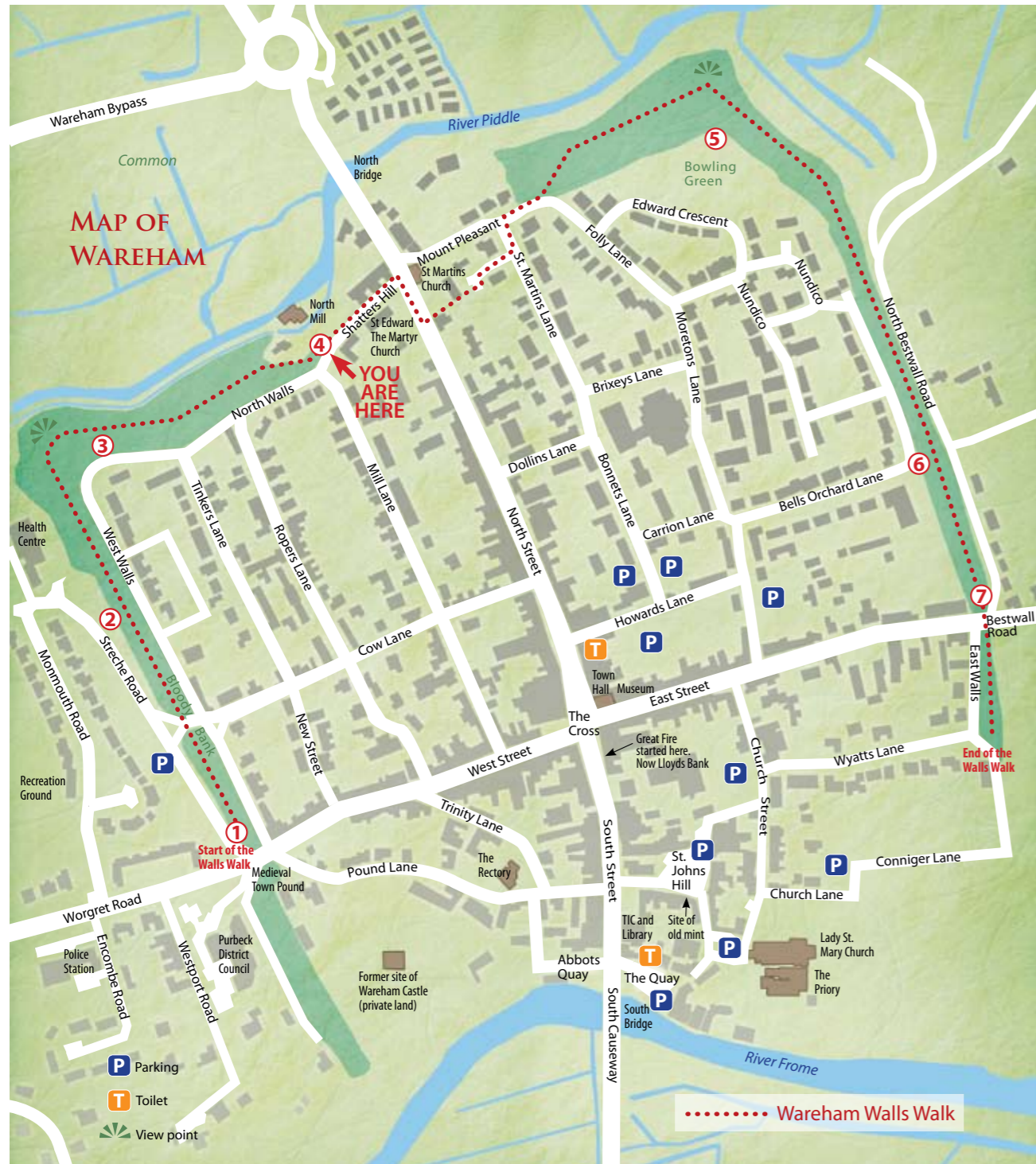


# WAREHAM WALLS WALK ~ POINT 4, NORTH WALLS



## NORTH MILL

The mill was first recorded in 1150 when it belonged to the prior of Wareham who received one tenth of the grain processed there, but its foundation was likely to have been much earlier. At the time of the dissolution of the monasteries in 1544, Henry VIII sold the mill to a wealthy Dorset family, the Mortons, who lived at Millborne St Andrew. It functioned as a working mill until the late 19th century.



North Mill



Henry VIII

## THE RIVER PIDDLE AND NORTH BRIDGE

The original river course meandered across the flat meadows and the bridge was constructed at right angles to this, carrying the roads to Bere Regis and to Poole. Altered over the centuries, the present structure consists of three arches, the pointed, northernmost one is 14th or 15th century and the other two rounded arches date to a rebuilding in 1670.

Around the time of the Norman Conquest, or perhaps even earlier, a large cutting was dug and part of the river was diverted to form a mill leat which provided a powerful head of water to drive the mill wheel.



Warning sign on North Bridge



North Bridge

## NORTHPORT

By 1370, a small settlement had developed outside the north gate (or port) of Wareham. This hamlet was never large, with only a few families living there. By the early 19th century a substantial inn known as 'The Countryman' was built to take advantage of horse-drawn coach passengers travelling on the turnpike road systems to Dorchester, Poole, Blandford and even London. By 1847, the railway had arrived and with it, there was a change of name to the 'Railway Tavern' reflecting this new mode of transport.



The Countryman coaching inn

## ST MARTIN'S CHURCH

The present church is sited near what would have been the north gate of the town, and dates to the early 11th century. It probably replaced an even earlier building. It is the most complete late Saxon church in the county and it has served as a parish church for 1000 years.

There have been few alterations to the building - a north aisle added to the nave in the early 12th century and a porch/tower in 1712. An original small, high window survives in the north wall of the chancel; other windows were enlarged to let in more light. The interior would have been highly decorated and there are a range of wall paintings dating from the 12th to the 19th centuries. After the Great Fire of Wareham in 1762 a number of homeless families lived in the building. A fireplace, used for warmth and cooking, was built in the nave and its chimney can still be seen on the roof. After this, the church was abandoned and was re-dedicated in 1936.



St Martin's Church

## LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

T.E Lawrence (1888-1935), scholar, soldier, airman and diplomat, died after a motor cycle accident at nearby Bovington. His family commissioned sculptor Eric Kennington to design a suitable memorial. The Portland stone effigy, in Arab robes is carved in medieval style and is a fitting monument to this great but enigmatic man.



Effigy of Lawrence of Arabia in St Martin's Church.



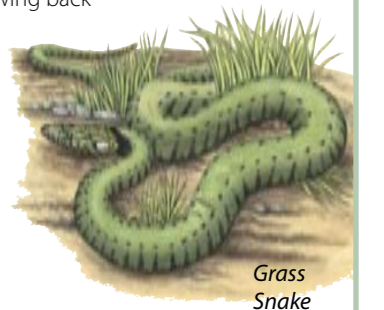
Wareham residents who lost their homes in the 1762 fire sheltered in St Martin's church.

## WAREHAM COMMON AND BEYOND

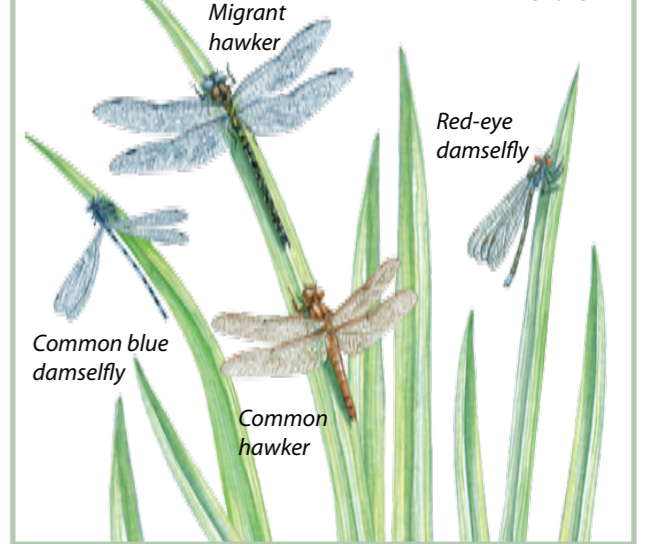
From this spot it is possible to access Wareham Common and join Wareham's Two Rivers Walk and the Frome Valley Trail. If you take the lower route that runs beside the walls you can really appreciate how impressive this monument is.



The north slopes of the Walls here are cut once a year to stop trees and scrub growing back and to encourage the establishment of wildflowers. The river and ditch habitats at the bottom of the northern slopes are rich in dragonflies. Snakes may be found here too.



Grass Snake



Migrant hawkler

Red-eye damselfly

Common blue damselfly

Common hawkler

