

chocolate box cottages and a wiggle along the river wriggle

A gentle stroll along the course of the meandering River Wriggle with pretty villages and ample opportunity for sampling the local brew and food.

Length: 4.5 miles **Time:** 2.5 hours
Station: Thornford. Trains only stop on request, inform the conductor that you wish to get off at Thornford.
Note: Flag the train down on your return journey.
OS Map: Explorer 129
 Thornford, Bradford Abbas, Clifton Maybank

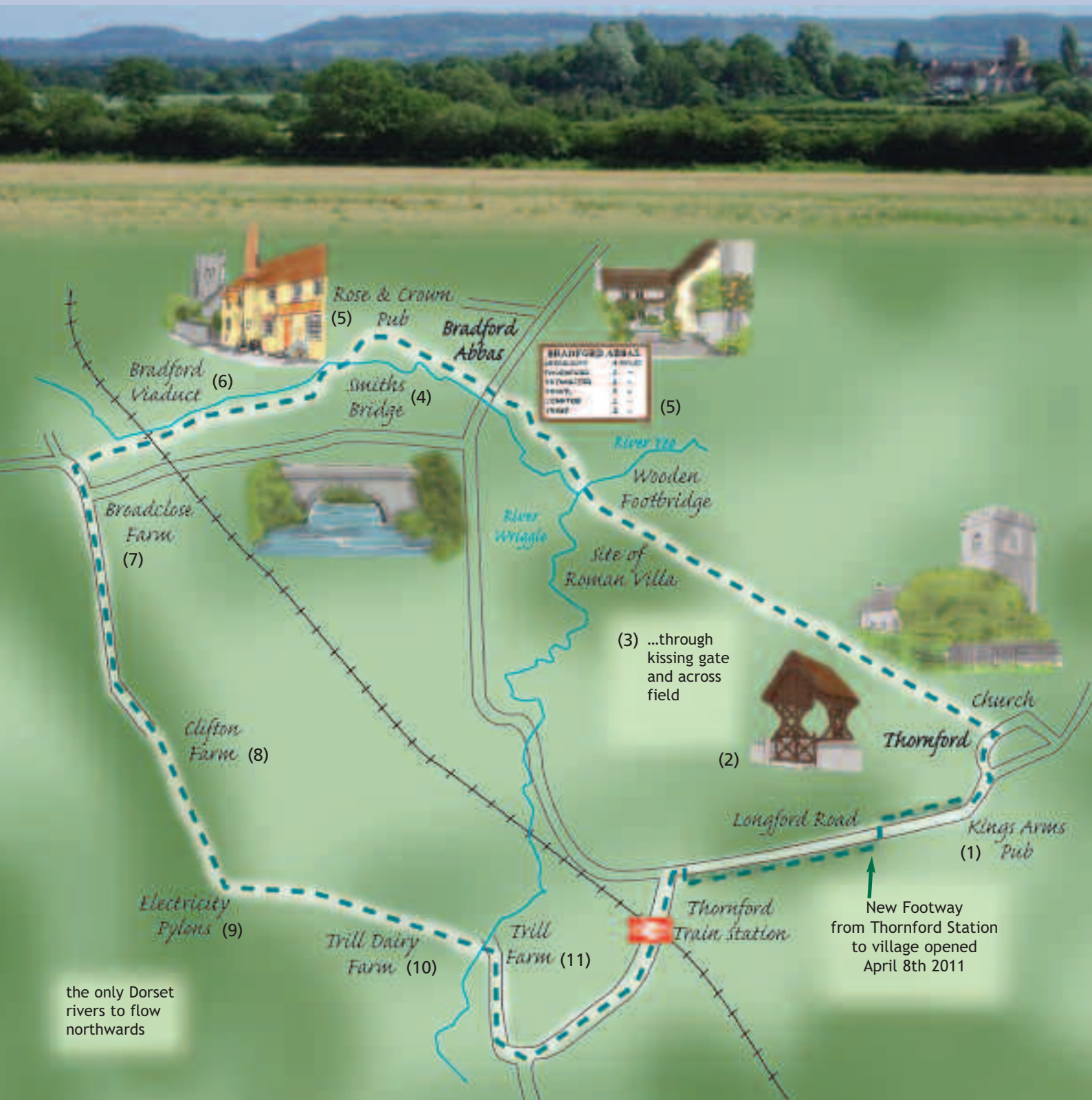


Directions:

- Climb steps from platform. Cross road (with care) to the footpath and go left. At the road junction the footpath turns right, and shortly before a small parking area, diverts to the right again behind the hedge. The footpath will take you to a road crossing, and then turn right taking you into the village.
- Turn left into Church Rd by The Kings Arms pub(1). Follow lane along to church, past pretty 17th, 18th, and 19th Century houses & cottages.
- Approach church and footpath starts immediately to the left. The church tower & chancel are medieval, the rest is a Victorian rebuild but attractive seen through the Lytch Gate(2) with roses round the arched doorway.
- Follow path through kissing gate and across field(3).
- Continue following path across two more fields and through two kissing gates and across wooden footbridge over stream. This is the first crossing of the River Wriggle, joined by the River Yeo. Downstream they flow into the River Parrett and eventually out into the Bristol Channel –the only Dorset rivers to flow northwards.
- Keep following path to kissing gate to the left of house and up drive to road.
- Smiths Bridge(4) – a 16th Century scheduled monument - worth a few steps detour to the left to admire the handsome, honey coloured limestone, much in evidence in the buildings hereabouts.
- Cross road and continue along footpath to Bradford Abbas.
- On reaching road, turn left. Look out for the unusual War Memorial on your right just before The Rose & Crown pub(5) and the plaque on the pub wall(5) showing distances to local towns and villages. A visit inside the pub will not only reward you with welcome refreshment but also give you a chance to find out about the “lads” of the village!

- The church is next to the pub and is very grand for what was once a small village. It is reckoned to be one of the best churches in northern Dorset with a rare survival of exterior statue niches. Inside there are carved angels on the roof corbels and pew ends. There is a display in The Lady Chapel describing the church’s restoration. In the church yard are the remains of a 15th Century preaching cross.
- Turn down lane on left after school, following footpath signs.
- Cross wooden footbridge, another crossing of the River Wriggle, and follow path, keeping river to your right and making for railway viaduct(6).
- Go through wooden kissing gate, under viaduct, through another gate into field beyond. Continue straight across this field to far side and through galvanised field gate onto road.
- Turn left and walk along road to the apex of left hand bend and take footpath on your right. Follow this gravelled farm track past farm buildings (Broadclose Farm(7)), on and up the track (past Clifton Farm(8)) until it reaches open fields.
- At field gate after Clifton Farm, leave farm track and take path straight ahead across field, entering next field where the electricity pylons(9) cross field boundary.
- Take left hand (of the two) paths hugging hedge on your left until about three quarters of way across field, then look for exit close to farm buildings.
- Continue straight on over two more fields towards Trill Dairy Farm(10).
- Keeping farmhouse to your right, pass between farm buildings and across stile towards footbridge. Cross River Wriggle twice and keep following path, to come out through gate to Trill Farm(11). Follow farm track to road.
- Turn left, follow road back to Thornford station. **Don’t forget to signal for the train to stop - it will not do so automatically!**

Local taxis: Dorset Taxis 01935 873742



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