

## THE VILLAGE IN ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

As you walk around the footpaths on the map there are many things to look out for showing how humans have occupied the land since pre-history. Buried underground are evidences of human activity in the Iron Age (800BC-100AD) when the Cherwell valley would have been a route for travel and the presence of water helped to sustain the creation of small settlements on the edge of the floodplain. Rainsborough Camp just outside our boundary on the south side of Charlton is a fine example of an Iron Age hill fort and would be a pleasant destination for a side excursion.

The Romans have not left any visible evidence of their presence in King's Sutton but the discovery of a Roman villa in Croughton (beyond Charlton) dating from the 4th century shows that they were active in the area.

But by the 9th century King's Sutton was already a recognised centre and gave its name to the Hundred – an established grouping of parishes in the shire of Northampton and the bishopric (then) of Lincoln. The church of St Peter & Paul exercised ecclesiastical control over a wider area including three other hamlets in the parish: Astrop survived as a hamlet and has been linked into the main village during the last hundred years. But two of the settlements at Walton in the south and Purston in the north withered away after the upheavals of the Black Death in the 14th century and are described by historians as 'Deserted Medieval Villages' – but there is evidence of the old roads and enclosures can be seen on the ground.

King's Sutton was farmed in the traditional open-fields system up to the end of the 18th century when Astrop and the King's Sutton were enclosed by Acts of Parliament in 1770 and 1805. The parish council has a copy of the endowment map made for King's Sutton.

The period of the Civil War, though active in the Cherwell valley and Banbury, largely passed King's Sutton by, with no reports of skirmishes or disruption. But in the Restoration period a spring attributed to St Rumbold in Astrop Park was found to have therapeutic powers and a spa developed which flourished with a regular season for about a hundred years before other spas such as Leamington became more fashionable.

Most of the houses in the village were thatched and from time to time there were fires, with the largest and best known in 1785. Many houses and other buildings were destroyed and donations were received from other places in the Banbury region. Plaques were erected on rebuilt properties but in almost all cases the soft local stone has crumbled away. The centre of the fire was at the junction of the Square and Whittall Street (formerly High Street).

The Oxford Canal passes King's Sutton about 750 metres from the village, but there is no direct footpath connection. It was constructed between 1769 and 1790 to link Coventry with London. It reached Banbury from Coventry in 1778 but did not get to Oxford until 1790. The towpath now forms part of the 82-mile Oxford Canal Walk.

In the last century there was extensive mining for ironstone in the Cherwell valley. In King's Sutton it took place near Buston Farm, Walton Grounds and near Twyford Mill. If you take the footpath (A59) from the mill uphill you will see that the ground either side of the access road (footpath) is lower than the road itself – this is the result of the mining. The ironstone was taken to a site next to the railway where it was heated in kilns to reduce the volume and then taken to the West Midlands to be converted into steel. The mining also took place across the Cherwell in Adderbury.

## WALKING FOR HEALTH

Health walkers meet at the Millennium Hall every Friday and, depending on your level of fitness, there are two options:-

- The regular walk departs at 9.45am and generally lasts for 1½ hours covering between three and four miles.
- The shorter walk departs at 10.00am – its duration is about 1 hour and is at a slower pace than the regular walk.

We are fortunate to be surrounded by such gorgeous scenery that, even on the bleakest days, our walkers have been uplifted and refreshed – especially on their return to the Hall in time for Coffee Club.



Walkers are encouraged to follow official footpaths and obey The Countryside Code to minimize their impact on the environment.

The publishers accept no responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience sustained by anyone using this leaflet.



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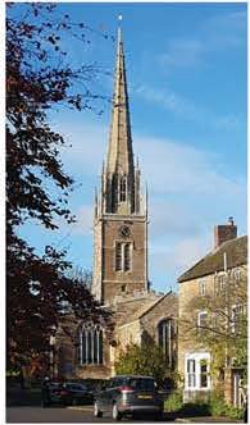
## INTRODUCING KING'S SUTTON AND ITS FOOTPATHS



An historic village nestling in the Cherwell valley, King's Sutton offers easy access to beautiful countryside and well-established footpaths.



## Church of St Peter and St Paul



A place of worship for over 1350 years, this lovely church is known for its 198ft crocketed spire. Pevsner describes it as 'the finest spire in a county of spires'. Its origins are reputed to go back to 662 when tradition has it that St Rumbold was baptised in the Romanesque font, itself found under a mound in the churchyard in 1923. The church we see today has Norman origins but was substantially modified in the 14th century. It was re-pewed in 1842 when the galleries were removed, and later restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1866. One clue to its prominence is that the name of the village suggests that it was King's southern 'tun' or estate, and it may have been a Minster church in late Saxon/Norman times, exercising responsibility over a much wider area than its own parish.

## Manor House

At the time of the Domesday Book (1086) the Manor of King's Sutton was owned by the Crown and continued in the Crown until 1156 when Henry II granted it to Richard Camvill. The village at this time was one of the largest in the county with 31 households and three mills. At the time of the Civil War Richard Kenrick was the lord and a Royalist sympathiser. He is reputed to have hidden King Charles in the Manor House. In 1735 Sir John Willes from Warwickshire, who had served as Attorney General and later as the Chief Justice of Common Pleas, purchased the Manor. The Willes family were also responsible for building the nearby Astrop House.

The present Manor House dates from around 1650 and contains later additions. It is said to have once had an underground escape route to the Church.



## Court House

The Courthouse is situated on the south side of The Square and is unmistakable with its black and white timber construction. Typical of the style of many houses built before 1600, it dates from 1550. It is known to have been a dwelling as well as being the manorial courthouse.



## Lovells

Lovells is an 18th century building named after the successive members of a family who occupied it from 1812 to 1925. It was extensively remodelled in the early 1840s by the then churchwarden, Samuel Lovell, who incorporated columns from the musicians' gallery into an open porch which had been removed from the church in 1842.



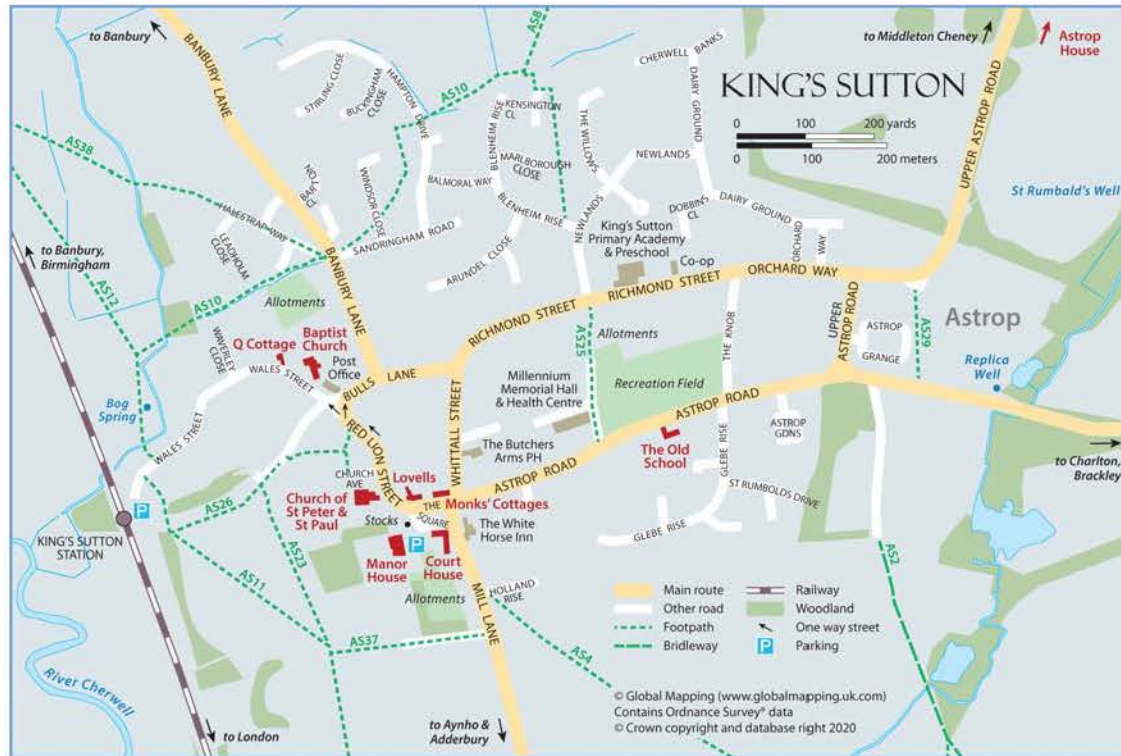
## Monks' Cottages

The 'Monks' Cottages' date from the 17th century, and they may have been rebuilt after the King's Sutton Fire of 1785.



## Q Cottage

Q Cottage dates from 1550 and is one of the oldest surviving domestic dwellings in the village. Although renovated, its character survives in the overhanging east wall and the curious alterations around the chimney stack.



## Baptist Church

The Baptist movement came to King's Sutton in 1781 when worshippers met in members' houses. A barn on the present site of the church was then used until 1867 when the building we see today was erected at a cost of £480. Baptisms were carried out in the River Cherwell near old Twyford Mill. They were witnessed at times by as many as 200 people.



## The Old School

The Old School (architect: Daniel Squirhill of Leamington) was opened in 1847 under the auspices of the National Society for Promoting Religious Education for 'educating the children of labouring, manufacturing and other



poorer classes in the Parish of King's Sutton'. The site was given by William Willes of Astrop House to the Vicar and Churchwardens. It was built at 'tween towns' which was the area, now built-up, between King's Sutton and Astrop. Boys were taught downstairs and the girls upstairs.

Many of the girls skipped school to attend the Lace School in order to learn a trade. The school was closed in 1909 when the new school in Richmond Street was opened. It was then used as a Church Hall, finally closing in 1964 to become a private dwelling.

## Astrop House

Astrop is a place of special character and historic interest. Sir John Willes, of the Manor House, started building himself a new mansion at Astrop, then a hamlet in King's Sutton parish, in about 1740 in the classical style. His successors built lateral wings to designs by Sir John Soane in 1805. These were enlarged later in the 19th century and then demolished in 1961. The stream to the east of the house was dammed to provide an ornamental lake and Capability Brown is known to have advised on the landscaping.



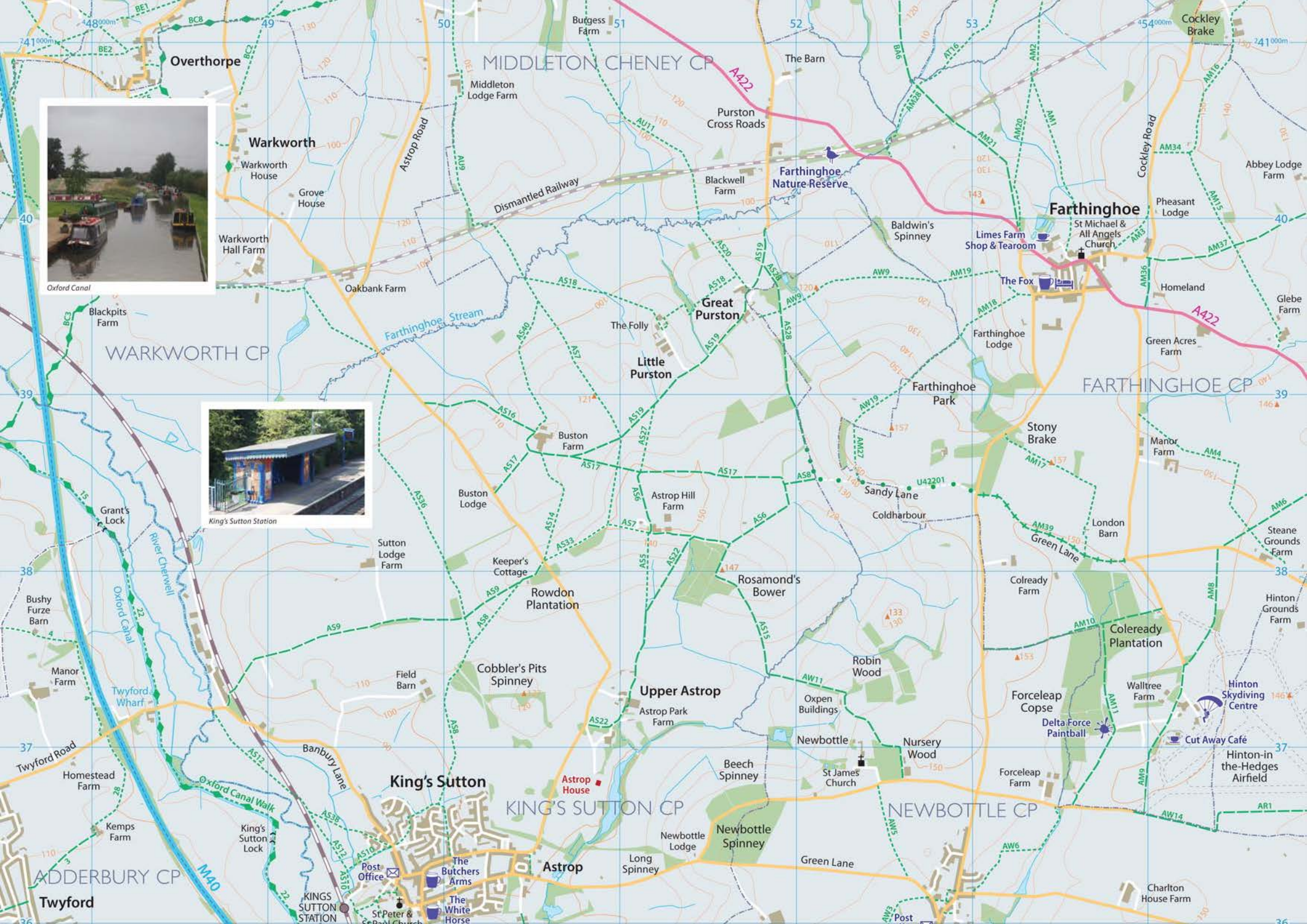




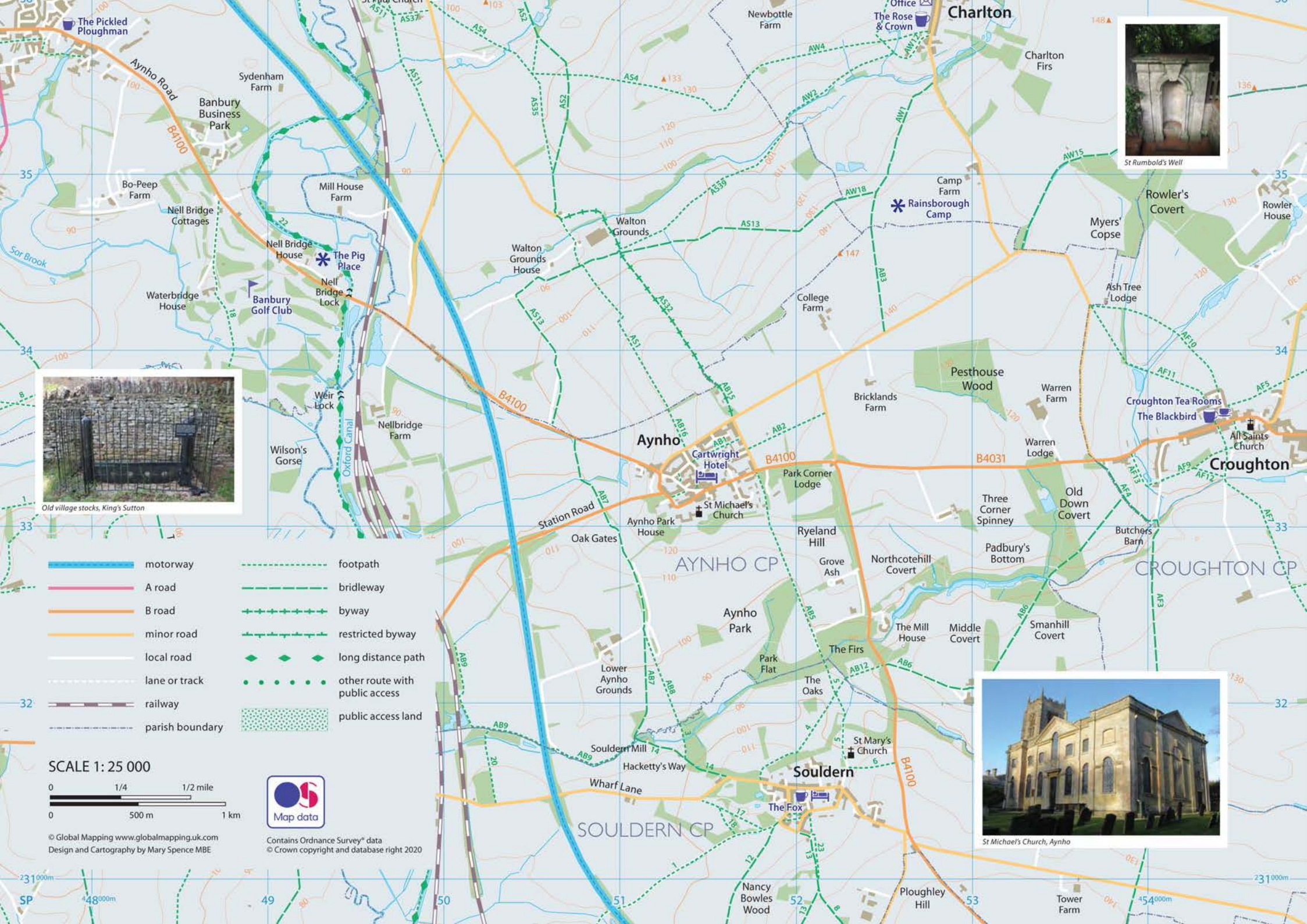
Oxford Canal



King's Sutton Station







St Rumbold's Well



Old village stocks, King's Sutton



St Michael's Church, Aynho

- motorway
- A road
- B road
- minor road
- local road
- lane or track
- railway
- parish boundary
- footpath
- bridleway
- byway
- restricted byway
- long distance path
- other route with public access
- public access land

SCALE 1: 25 000



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