



Rowberry Street



... 'Furrs and Ferns'...

# EXPLORE BROMYARD!

**Walk Length:** 1¼ miles

**Grade:** Easy. On town pavements and roadside verges. Suitable for the mobility impaired and young children.

**Start:** By the Heritage Centre, 1 Rowberry Street, HR7 4DU

**Grid Reference:** 52 deg 11'24.67" N, 2 deg 30' 25.78" W

**Public transport:** First or DRM Bus number 420 from Worcester or number 672 from Ledbury.

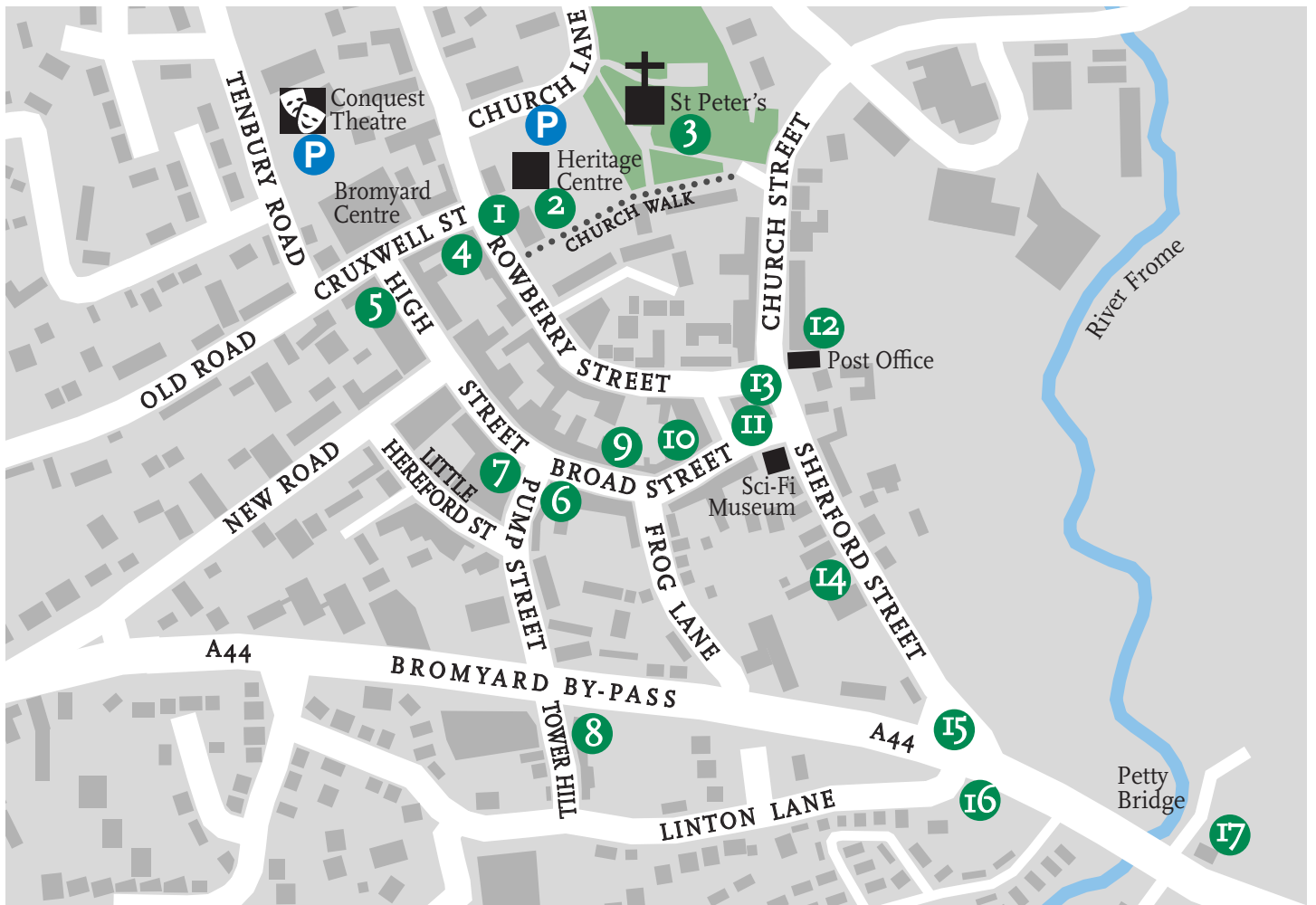
**Parking:** in the carpark by The Conquest Theatre on Tenbury Road, HR7 4LL (A 4214) or in the Church Lane carpark off Rowberry Street, HR7 4DU. Both are inexpensive pay-and-display. There are public toilets at the Conquest carpark. Allow at least an hour for the walk.

**NB** Bromyard has a one-way system: Broad Street and High Street run north-west, Rowberry Street runs south-east. Do remember to take care as you explore Bromyard: you are responsible for your safety – crossing a road safely is more important than taking a photo. Please respect the privacy and property of others, especially when viewing residential buildings.

**Description** Mentioned in the Domesday Book, the name Bromyard derives from the Old English, 'an enclosure covered or fenced with Broom or Gorse'. And when, in the reign of Charles II, John Ogilby set about producing the first road atlas, the 'Britannia', on the highway between

Oxford and 'Aberistwith', he observed that Bromyard Downs were a mass of 'Furrs and Ferns'. The layout has changed little since Ogilby's day. Follow our Town Trail to view fine black and white half-timbered buildings, Georgian and Victorian facades, the Norman

church and a toll-house, then perhaps drop into the History Centre to discover your roots, visit arts and craft galleries, the Sci-Fi exhibition, and indulge in some retail therapy – relax in an inn, a café or a pub...

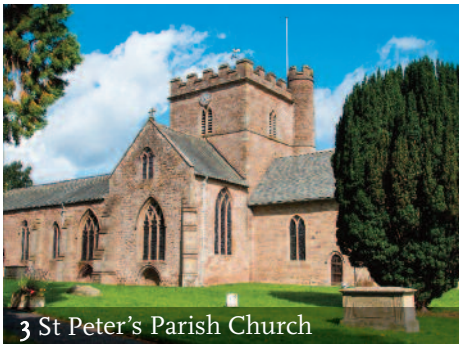




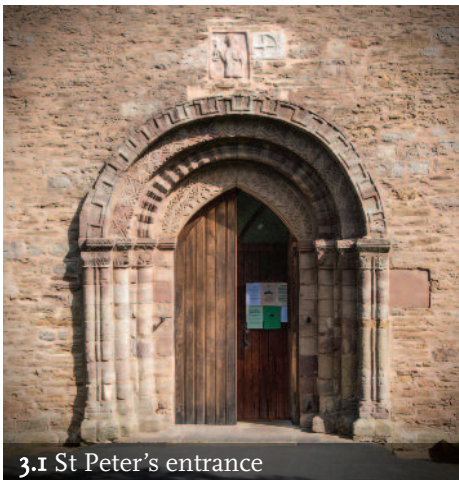
1 Start of walk



2 Sheep sculpture



3 St Peter's Parish Church



3.1 St Peter's entrance



3.2 St Peter's Font

## Route Instructions

Make your way from the car-park to the Heritage Centre complex at ① Rowberry Street, beside the Tourist Information Centre which is staffed by volunteers. Through the big wrought iron gates, notice the sculpture of ② a sheep, a reminder of the town's agricultural economy. Walk round the grass of the Korean War Memorial Garden, with its Korean Cherry trees; through the small gate turn left into Church Walk and left again to ③ the parish church of St Peter. The Church with its massive tower and unusual turret was started around 1160 on the site of an earlier Saxon church; note the 3.1 Norman door arches and 3.2 the Norman font. Tucked away inside the north-west corner of the church is 3.3 the Bromyard Bushel, a four-footed bowl of bell-metal cast in the late 1600s by John Martin of Worcester which was used for measuring grain and salt for sale. There is also also the fine carved grave slab of a medieval knight, from Avenbury.

Retrace your steps out of the churchyard. Immediately in front of you is Schallenge House, formerly the Cottage Hospital. 'Schallenge' is Hereford dialect for Lych Gate, where coffins rested on their way to a funeral service. In the 13th Century, there was a Toll Shop here and a medieval court of 'Pie Powder' (from piers a poudre, French pedlar) where market tolls were paid and summary jurisdiction was dealt out.

Around the town, watch out for the blue plaques on many of the buildings, explaining their former roles.

Continue along Church Walk. Now cross Rowberry Street and turn left along Cruxwell Street noticing ④ the Alms Houses on your left, which were built in 1656 under a former vicar's will for ④.1 'Poor Women of Good Character'.

From Cruxwell Street, turn left into **High Street**, looking down Ogilby's road through the town.



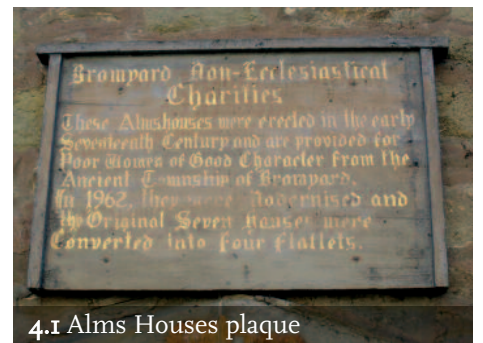
3.3 Bushel in St Peter's



Church Walk



4 Alms Houses



4.1 Alms Houses plaque



On the High Street



5 Hall house dating from 1400s



6 The Falcon



7 Number 1 High Street



8 Tower Hill House



Tower Hill House

On the opposite corner of High Street (numbers 55 to 59 white-painted brick) is the oldest secular building in the town, ⑤ a hall house dating from 1400s, which was originally open from the ground floor to the roof.

A wide variety of building periods are represented in the town; the half timbered inns, the 16th century Queens Arms, Kings Arms and ⑥ The Falcon were the heart of the carrier and coach system, with mail-coaches to Kington, Presteigne and Worcester and several wagons a day starting from their yards. Georgian and Victorian frontages also contribute to the lively, scenic view.

As you walk down High Street, cross over and take a short diversion along Pump Street passing ⑦ Number 1 High Street with its impressive red sandstone portals was latterly a Midland/HSBC bank. If you pause level with the far end of the Falcon Mews (formerly stabling), you can see the impressive ⑧ black and white Tower Hill House on the far side of the Bromyard Bypass. King Charles 1st is reputed to have stayed there in 1645 on his way to Hereford; Prince Rupert had sacked the town in the spring of that year, appropriating all the clothing and provisions.

Retrace your steps to the Falcon and turn right. Here the High Street becomes **Broad Street**, with its multitude of independent shops and hospitality. It was formerly used as an open market place, with chickens being sold on the pavement in front of The Falcon.

⑨ Lloyds Bank (built 1836) has fossil-rich pillars of white Portland stone and number 8 Broad Street has panels of a blue-black Norwegian rock called Larvikite, set below its windows in an Art Deco-style shopfront.

Notice ⑩ the Tinton alleyway between number 35 and 39; here was the joiner's shop where the first Morgan car-bodies were made. The present family-run woodworking business has been in existence since 1984.

The Square is overlooked by the ⑪ 1760s Grade II listed Hop Pole Hotel, a reminder that hops are a major crop from the hop-yards of the locality.



Broad Street



9 Lloyd's Bank



10 Tinton Alley



11 Hop Pole



Old Market House, demolished in 1844

A market was held here from 1200s; the old Market House was pulled down in 1844.

Cross the Square to the far corner and walk through to **Church Street**.

The splendid early 20th century **12** Post Office building faces you and **13** the mid-1600s timber-framed Bible House (from the Bible Brook that runs beneath) is on your right.



Corner of Square

Cross the zebra crossing carefully and turn right down **Sherford Street**. Immediately on your left you will pass the Bromyard & District Local History Society's Centre with its topical window display. Continue down **Sherford Street** and note the Chapel Gallery on your left built in 1701; it was originally the Congregational Church, serving the dissenters who were very active locally. Next door was formerly the town jail of 1845, with walls 20 inches thick. Opposite is **14** Sherford House, a fine red-brick Georgian property.



Looking down Sherford Street



Church Street



14 Sherford House



12 Post Office

As the 1974 Bypass joins Ogilby's original route, note the **15** old hand-operated cider press on the adjacent traffic island, another nod to the town and county's agricultural economy. On the other side of the bypass is **16** Bridge House, of the late 16th century, which still has a jettied front, the upper storey protruding outwards.



15 Sherford cider press



13 Bible House

Continue along the verge to Petty Bridge over the River Frome; **17** this tollhouse has been extended, but the toll-keeper took travellers' money from 1750s to the 1870s.



16 Bridge House

The highways had been in a disastrous state, being maintained unwillingly by local statute labour, so from 1700s, Turnpike Trusts were set up, by government decree, to maintain and later to improve the highways.



17 Petty Bridge Toll House



Bible House plaque

To all travellers except pedestrians, they charged tolls for this, which was very unpopular. The Bromyard Trust was enacted in 1751, covering all the town's radial routes, with a toll-house built on each. Most of the traffic through Bromyard was private citizens riding to meet friends or on business and farmers attending market.



Petty Bridge Toll Gate in the 1860s



The Linton Milestone

From 1767, the Turnpike Trustees were also responsible for erecting milestones at one mile intervals along their routes, to indicate direction and distance, to aid the charging for hire of horses at the coaching inns and to calculate the distance a letter had travelled as a fee was charged on delivery before Rowland Hill introduced the uniform postal rate in 1840. A milestone remains at Linton on the A44 towards Worcester, with the legend 'To Bromyard 1 mile' and there is a replacement on Clater Bank showing 2 miles.



Lower Brockhampton



Up Sherford Street

The coming of the railways meant that long distance traffic no longer used the roads and the Trusts went bankrupt or were wound up; the Bromyard Trust was wound up in 1875 and the new County Councils took over responsibility for the highways from 1880. Bromyard had been late in connecting to the railway system; from 1870s, the railway ran Hop-pickers' Specials for people from the Black Country, and also brought many spectators to the Racecourse on Bromyard Downs. The line was closed in 1964 as part of the Beeching rationalisation.



Herefordshire views

This Heritage Trail has been devised by Jan Scrine of The Milestone Society with input from Charles Gordon Clark of the Bromyard and District Local History Society. Photography is by Geoff Hicks under a Creative Commons licence.



Tea shops...

Now retrace your steps (and Ogilby's) back up **Sherford Street**; at the top, cross carefully back to **the Square** and walk up **Broad Street** and **High Street**, enjoying the wide range of facilities the town has to offer. Bromyard is a traditional market town and many shops close early on Tuesdays as well as on Sundays! Do check opening times for events and attractions, too.

While every effort has been made to ensure that the details given in this walk are accurate, no liability can be accepted by The Milestone Society or the Bromyard and District Local History Society for any inaccuracies or omissions.



The Sci-Fi Museum

Afterwards, maybe visit the National Trust's Lower Brockhampton and drive up to the Downs to catch a glimpse of buzzards riding the thermals or to fly your kite. Or visit one of the spectacular gardens at Moores Meadow or Ralph Court – and don't forget to make a return visit for one of our many festivals...

**Details of more walks** are on sale in the Tourist Information Office; the Bromyard & District Local History Society publishes a number of interesting booklets about the town, including 'A Guided Walk in Historic Bromyard' (revised 2014) which takes in Rowberry Street and Church Road and 'Bromyard's interesting streets', available on Amazon.

The two historic photographs are taken from 'Bromyard, Minster, Manor and Town' by Phyllis Williams (1987).

