

The Young Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey



Rogation 2020 – a virtual beating of the bounds



Two years ago, the Young Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey revived the custom of beating the bounds during Rogationtide. This custom dates back to before the Norman Conquest in 1066 and it involves touring round the parish boundary during the week before Ascension Day. There were two main reasons for this; to make sure everyone knew where the parish boundaries were and to pray for all the activities taking place within that parish.

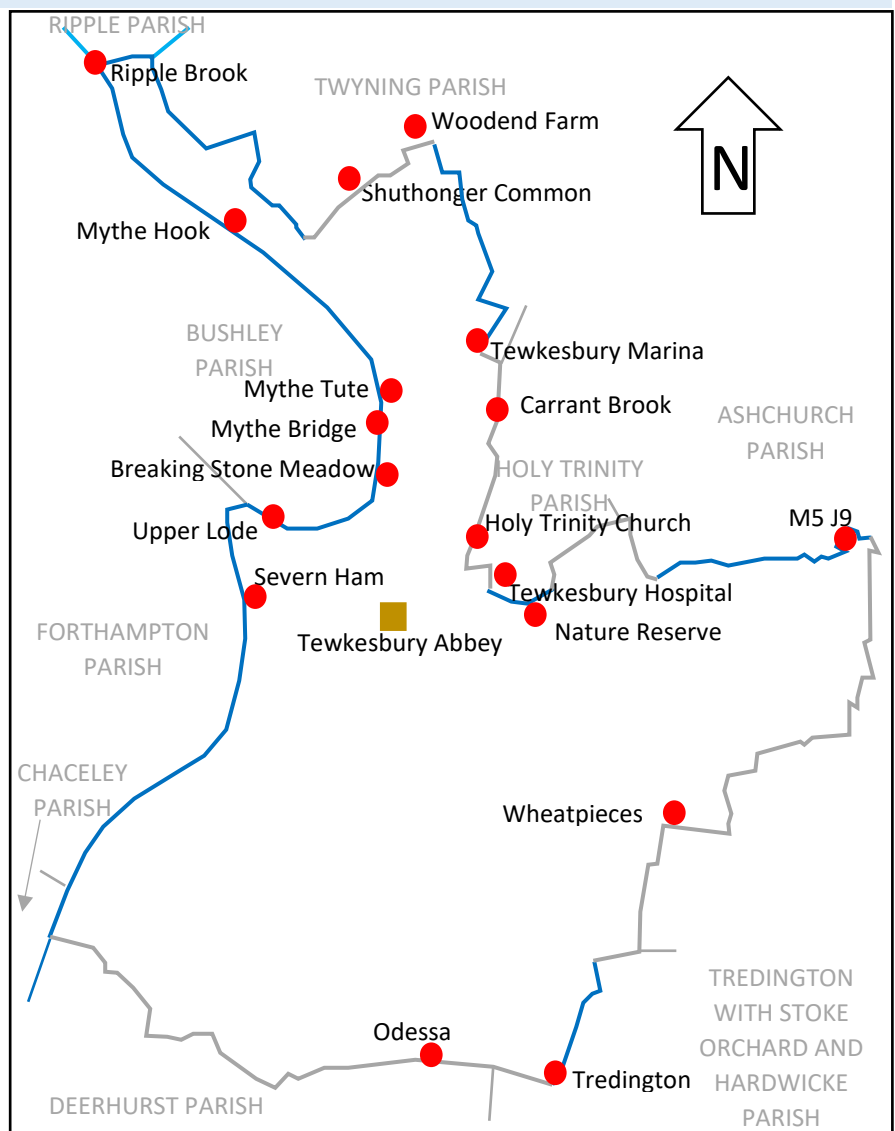
Now that we have maps and GPS and the rules about where people can marry are less strict, it's not so important for people to know exactly where the boundaries are. That's probably a good thing because the boundaries used to be seared into the memories of small children by given them the bumps, or by whipping them, so that the painful memory was hard to erase. Afterwards, they would be given a small coin to stop them crying. Another custom was to beat the boundary with an osier (willow) stick, while travelling along it.

However, we still need to pray for our parish, especially now, when we are forced to stay apart from one another by the coronavirus pandemic.

We will use our computers and mobile phones to tour the boundary this year. Along the way, there will be interesting facts and maps to explore, questions to answer, a prayer and a picture quiz about places inside our parish boundary.

The map, right, shows our parish boundary, with landmarks indicated along the route. You can start your journey around the parish beside any landmark. To help you to understand where you are, [Know your place](#) has loads of maps and can be found by following the hyperlink. Zoom out and scroll around the map until you find Tewkesbury or activate the location setting on your device.

You will see green flags on the maps in the Know Your Place website. If you click on them you will find photographs and further information. Enjoy!



We would normally beat the bounds with a willow wand, but perhaps not this year, as you don't want to damage the screen of your device. Below is a rogation prayer. You might wish to pray it at each place or use the prayer once at the end of your virtual journey.

A prayer for Rogation 2020

Dear Lord, we remember your mercy and loving-kindness towards us.
Bless our land and rivers, and make them fruitful.
Bless our labour, and give us all things needed for our daily lives.
Bless the homes of our parish and all who live within them.
Bless our common life and our care for our neighbour.
Bless all those parishes beyond our boundaries, on whom we depend so much.
Hear us, good Lord. Amen.

Meeting the boundary on your daily exercise.

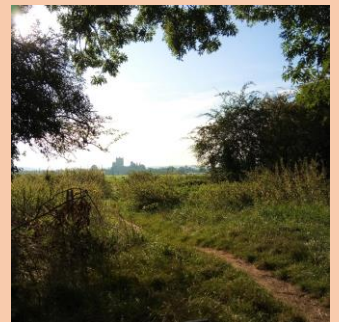
If you can visit a part of the boundary during your daily exercise please take the prayer with you. It would be good if the whole boundary can be prayed over.

Landmarks on our parish boundary

The **Severn Ham** is one of only 3% of ancient water meadows left in Britain and is therefore a very special place. It is home to two rare species of plants; the narrow leaved water dropwort and the great dodder, which makes it a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The great dodder is a parasitic plant and it reminds us that we all depend on each other for support. In addition, the Ham is a home for endangered ground-nesting birds, such as the curlew, the skylark and the corn bunting. To find out more about the Ham's importance to the survival of the curlew go to <https://www.curlewcall.org/>

When the chicks have fledged and the hay has been cut, then sheep will graze the Ham. The Commoners (people who own houses on Church Street, the High Street and parts of Barton Street) have had the right to graze sheep and cattle on the Ham since before the year 1314.

As we think about the Severn Ham, we can resolve to do our best to understand and work with nature.
Question: which English King reigned in 1314?



The **Upper Lode** is separated from the rest of the parish by the weir and lock on the river Severn, which were built in 1856. The lock was built to make the River Severn deeper, so that larger ships could sail upstream as far as Stourport in Shropshire. This was at a time when river provided the best form of transport. Unfortunately, the lock was not good for Tewkesbury's own river port, which became too shallow for boats. The weir also created a barrier for fish. Go to <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/canal-and-river-network/river-severn-navigation/unlocking-the-severn> to find out how the Severn Rivers Trust monitors our special River Severn fish – the twait shad.



As we think about the Upper Lode we can resolve to show our care of people who are physically apart from us and ensure they know that they are not forgotten.



The boundary follows the river upstream to **Breaking Stone Meadow**, and the Mythe Waterworks, which takes water from the river and makes it safe to drink, for more than 150,000 people. Breaking Stone Meadow has long been a place for sport and entertainment. During the Second World War, the American Soldiers who were stationed at Ashchurch Camp used to hold American Football matches there. Then, in the 1970s it was the site of crazy stunts in which cars and buses were used to jump over other cars and even over the river!

The Know Your Place website has different maps that you can compare. You will find them on the right hand side of the screen. Keep Q2019 basemap as your main map and use the other maps as comparison maps. By dragging the main map to the right, you can see the comparison map below. Not all of the maps cover our parish.

As we think about Breaking Stone Meadow we can thank all the key workers who keep our essential services going.

Question: Which is the earliest map showing a waterworks on Breaking Stone Meadow? What was there before?

The boundary continues to follow the river. The **Mythe Bridge** was designed in 1823 by the famous engineer, Thomas Telford. It was paid for by local land owners and businessmen. Before it was built it was very difficult to travel west from Tewkesbury in the winter months.

As we think about the Mythe Bridge we can be thankful for those people who use their skills and ingenuity to find ways of keeping us all connected.

Question: can you name a more well-known bridge that was designed by Thomas Telford?

To the east of the river, the **Mythe Tute** was a motte and bailey castle. It is sited on the highest ground in the parish, which is a very good defensive position for a castle. There is footpath to the top from the main road. At one point on the path it feels as if you're going into someone's garden, but it's okay. On the Tute itself there are steep steps to the top, from which you get a wonderful view over almost all of the parish.

As we think about the Mythe Tute we can thank God for keeping watch over all of us and for keeping us safe.

Question: How many places can you identify in this photograph that was taken from the top of the Mythe Tute?



The Mythe Hook was the site of a brickworks. Most of the older houses in the Oldbury area of Tewkesbury were built of bricks that were made here. Now, the pits from which the clay was dug have become ponds, filled with wildlife. It is possible to follow the public footpath here until it reaches the Ripple Brook.

The Mythe Hook reminds us of the many things that the earth provides us with.

Question: Which is the earliest map that shows the clay pit at Mythe Hook?

The Ripple Brook marks not only the northernmost edge of our parish but also the County boundary. So much of our parish boundary is either a river or a brook that, in 1844, when the Borough Councillors beat the bounds they completed parts of their journey by boat. It took them all day and at the end, they all fell in the river.

As we think about the Ripple Brook we can reflect that the rivers around Tewkesbury are a blessing for us, and a problem. They attract visitors to the town, and they make our fields lush and green, but floods have always been a worry.

Question: How many rivers, brooks and streams can you find on our parish boundary? Which one can you find on the boundary in more than one place?

If you follow the Ripple Brook a little way you will find the Mythe Brook. The boundary follows the Mythe Brook, before skirting around the caravan park and Shuthonger Common. **Shuthonger Common** and **Woodend Farm** lie on either side of the road to Worcester. The road was built in the 1820s. Before that time, there was a road that went around the other side of the Tute, which meant that there wasn't such a steep hill to climb, but it often flooded. Our boundary runs along the south edge of the common, crosses the road and follows the little lane to Woodend Farm. After the farm, the boundary follows the River Avon southwards.

Here we can reflect that sometimes we have to choose between alternate ways of doing something. Do we choose the more difficult way to keep safe?

Question: In the 19th Century a railway line passed by here. Where did the trains go to?

Tewkesbury Marina used to look like the Severn Ham, many years ago, with two mills on it. It was actually a part of the Severn Ham and it was called the 'Gouts'. From the Marina, the boundary heads east to the Bredon Road and then south towards Tewkesbury.

Here, we can give thanks for all the wonderful leisure facilities we have in our parish.



The **Carrant Brook** flows underneath the Bredon Road. It brings water down from Bredon Hill. Here's a bit of horrid Tewkesbury History. Beside the brook there was a Pudding House, which is where all the butchers in Tewkesbury had to throw all the bits of animals that nobody would eat. How yucky is that? Luckily we have learned a lot about hygiene since then and we understand that keeping clean and disposing of waste properly help to keep us healthy. The boundary continues south and down Oldbury Road. Close by, there is the Fire Station. It is not in our parish, but we can be so very glad that it is nearby.

Here, we can give thanks for our emergency services.

Question: Where does the Carrant Brook flow to?

Holy Trinity Church stands right on the boundary of our parish. Until about 200 years this area, known as the Oldbury, was all gardens, orchards and fields, but then the houses were built and also Holy Trinity Church. Eventually, a new parish was created around Holy Trinity church, which includes Mitton, all the way to Morrisons and the north side of Barton Street. Every October the Mop Fair fills Oldbury Road, Barton Street, East Street and Spring Gardens. It is only recently that the Mop Fair has been sited here though. It used to be around the Cross. If you want to know what the Mop Fair looked like when it was at the Cross you should take a peek through the window of the Museum in Barton Street and see the model that is on display there. When the Museum opens again you will be able to see the fairground rides moving. There has been a museum here since the 1950s, when Martin Cadbury bought the building for the Town.

Here, we can think of the many different churches and faiths that exist within our parish, remembering those occasions when the churches come together for worship.

Question: How many churches and chapels are there in our parish?





The boundary turns east along Barton Street, down Orchard Court and then along Howells Road, behind the Hospital. **Tewkesbury Hospital** is not inside our parish, but where would we be without it. When you clap for the NHS on a Thursday evening you might like to spare a special thought for this hospital that we are very lucky to have, so close at hand. The hospital was founded in 1865, after a campaign led by Dr Daniel Devereux, who became its first surgeon. The original hospital building was in the Oldbury but it moved to its present site in 1911.

This is perhaps a moment to clap, bang on a saucepan, blow a whistle or ring a bell for our NHS, even if it isn't Thursday.

Question: What is the name of the medical centre opposite the hospital?

Our parish boundary continues to follow the river Swilgate, through the **Nature Reserve**, round the back of Oldfield and onto the Ashchurch Road. The Nature Reserve was created after the 2007 floods, to help protect Tewkesbury from severe flooding in the future and also to create a home for wildlife.

Here, we are reminded that within our parish there are some homes and businesses that had less than a month to recover from the winter floods before the lockdown started.

From the Ashchurch Road, the boundary goes south along Walton Cardiff Lane, east alongside the Tirl Brook and through the culvert that runs under the **M5, at junction 9**. The M5 links West Bromwich in the Midlands to Exeter in Devon. In the summer time it is usually very busy with holiday makers heading south for some sunshine. This part of the motorway was opened in 1971. Before then everyone had to drive through the middle of Tewkesbury and there were enormous traffic jams in the town. Recently, the motorway has been very quiet, because the virus has stopped people from travelling so much.



Tewkesbury is a tourist destination. We might not get see many tourists this year, but can we support our local tourist businesses. Make a list of all the tourist attractions in Tewkesbury that you haven't visited yet.

Question: What Tewkesbury attraction are you looking forward to visiting, as a tourist, soon? There are lots to choose from!

Half way across the field, on the other side of the M5, the boundary turns south, passing along the eastern edge of Milnes Covert, until it reaches the road between Walton Cardiff and Fiddington. It then follows the road west, crossing the M5, and skirting around the edge of **Wheatpieces** until it reaches Walton Cardiff Lane again. Wheatpieces used to be part of a farm before the houses were built. Now it is a large and growing community, with its own school, shops and community centre. Wheatpieces has its own civil parish council, but it is very much a part of our ecclesiastical parish. The two parish boundaries are not the same.

At this point we can think about newcomers to our parish and about making them feel welcome.

The boundary follows Walton Cardiff Lane south, almost to **Tredington**. This village was a medieval monastic community that was devoted to the care of people suffering from leprosy. Leprosy has been around for thousands of years and in the bible you will find the story of the ten lepers that Jesus healed. Like Covid 19, people can catch it from coughs and sneezes, so lepers were often discouraged from living near healthy people, but although it doesn't spread easily, people can have the disease for up to 20 years before they show symptoms. Nowadays, it is better understood and can be cured. Let us hope that the same will soon be said about Covid 19.

This is probably a good place to think about people we can't meet at the moment, because of the virus.

Question: What is unusual about Tredington Church?



From Tredington, the boundary heads west to the Hoo and the **Odessa Inn**. Hoo is a middle English word for 'round hill'. The Odessa Inn is beside the A38, on that round hill. There has been an Odessa Inn for many years. It was probably a good place for an inn because the low road from Tewkesbury to Gloucester met with the high road from Tewkesbury to Tredington at the crossroads here. This is the southernmost edge of our parish and there is a little community here, of people who live in the bungalows at Odessa Park.

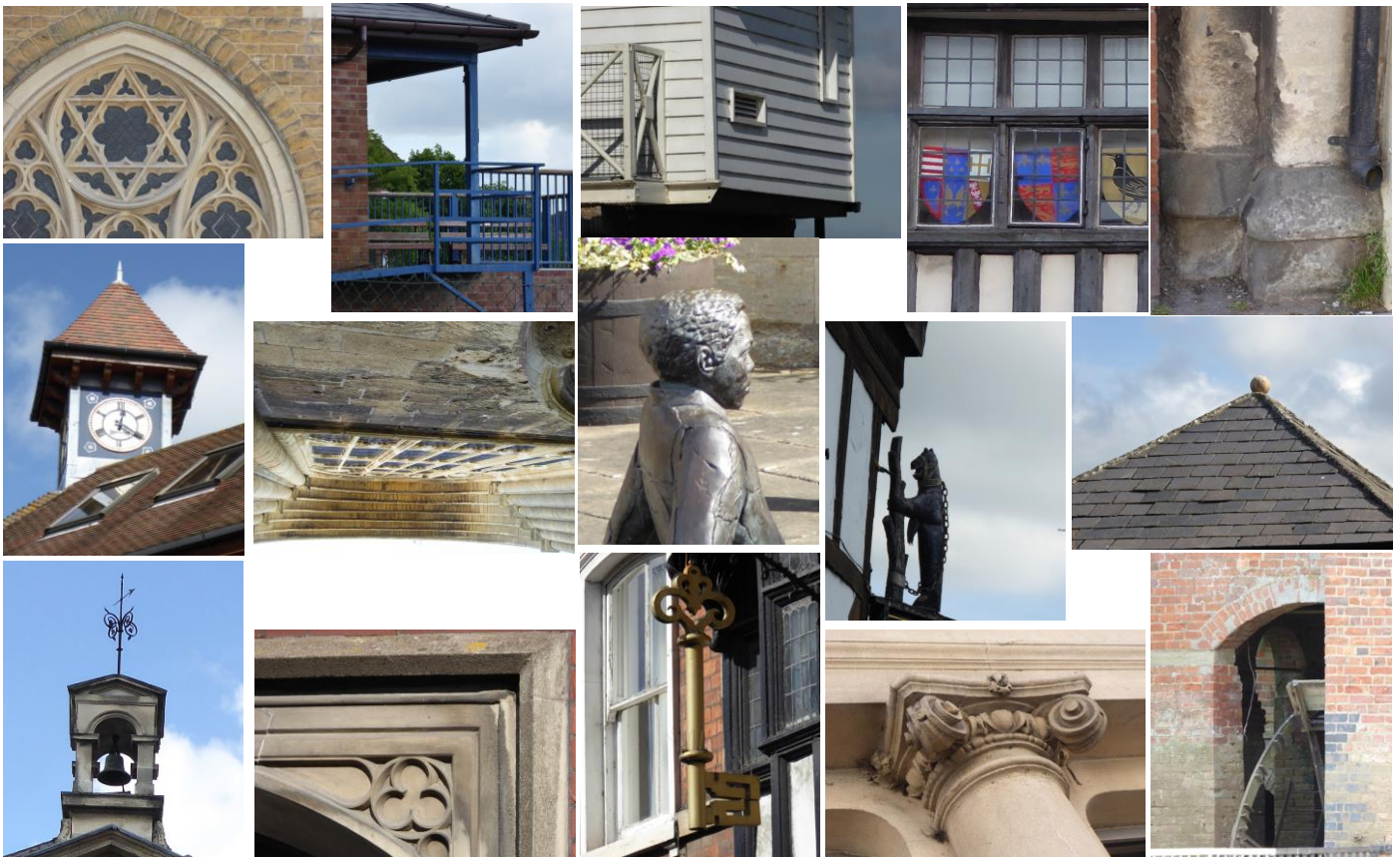
The boundary crosses the A38 and follows Hoo Lane. On the old maps, you can see that Hoo Lane very probably joined up with Lincoln Green Lane many years ago. The boundary follows the lane until it suddenly turns north, then it continues westwards, along the edges of the fields until it reaches the River Severn. It then heads north along the river, to the Lower Lode and the Severn Ham.

This is a good time to think about all the farms that surround Tewkesbury. Despite the virus, farmers are working hard to ensure that there is plenty of food in the shops. We can think, too, about how everyone in our parish works to support everyone else. At the moment, there are hundreds of volunteers too, who are working hard to make sure that everyone in the parish has the things they need to live on.



Before we end our virtual rogation, let's think about what is inside our parish too.

What do you recognise in the fifteen photographs below?



According to the [arcgis](https://www.arcgis.com) website, our parish has a population of 8.959 people. Let us ask God to bless them all. Keep safe and well. Perhaps in the autumn we will be able to walk together again.

Answers to the questions

Edward II was king in 1314. His body is buried in Gloucester Cathedral.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map is the earliest map on the Know Your Place website, to show the waterworks. Before then, it was a meadow with some trees.

Thomas Telford also designed the Menai Strait Bridge, between Anglesey and Wales.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map is the earliest map on the Know Your Place website, to show the Mythe Hook clay pit. No houses were built in Oldbury until after the enclosures were completed in the 1840s.

There are seven brooks and Rivers: the River Severn, the Ripple Brook, the Mythe Brook, the River Avon, the Carrant Brook, the River Swilgate and the Tirlle Brook. The River Swilgate appears in two different places on the boundary.

The Midland Railway line went through the Mythe, between Ashchurch and Malvern.

The Carrant Brook flows into the River Avon.

Today there are five churches and chapels in Tewkesbury parish: Tewkesbury Abbey, Priors Park Chapel, the Methodist Church and two chapels in the cemetery. The Roman Catholic Church used to be on the Mythe but is now in Holy Trinity parish. There are also two former Baptist chapels, just off Church Street and on Barton Street, two former Quaker meeting houses, on St Mary's Lane and on Barton Street and, also on Barton Street there used to be a Congregational church.

The medical centre is called the Devereux Centre.

Tredington Church has a wooden tower.

The photograph collage shows:

The Methodist Church, by the Cross

The Cricket Pavillion

The Sluice Control cabin, by the Abbey Mill

Tewkesbury Museum, on Barton Street

The remaining column that was part of the old railway station, next to Dominos Pizza on the High Street

Tewkesbury Library

Tewkesbury Abbey

The Touching Souls, outside the Abbey visitor centre

The Old Black Bear, on the High Street

The Gazebo, beside the Mill Avon, at the end of Elliott Court

Tewkesbury Town Hall, on the High Street

Abbey View School

The Halifax Building Society, aka the House of the Golden Key, or the House of the Nodding Gables

The Trustee Savings Bank

The Abbey Mill

If you want to explore our parish further, you will find that you can do so by following it many public rights of way, which can be found on this website

<https://maps.gloucestershire.gov.uk/MapThatPublic/Default.aspx?treeid=81@82@83>