

Next door to the right of studio was the original location of the Swan Inn, which was thatched in its previous life, as indeed was the blacksmith then next door. Unfortunately around 1890 a fire occurred in the Smithy's and they both burnt down. The Reading Room, together with the terraced houses now adjacent (nos 7-11) and the new Swan Inn further along just passed the car park, were all built after the fire in the early 1890's.

Take note of the pavements along the left hand side of Rodden Row. The surface of the original paving was of stone flags and cobbles, replaced now by modern materials for understandable reasons of economy and safety. Examples of the original paving surfaces survive in some of the lanes and back streets. The pavement still has attractive stone kerbs but little evidence remains of the taps, which, prior to mains water being introduced, provided residents with their water, supplied directly from the springs in the hills above.

Please cross the road here with care - you are now back at the car park but your tour still has a long way to go.

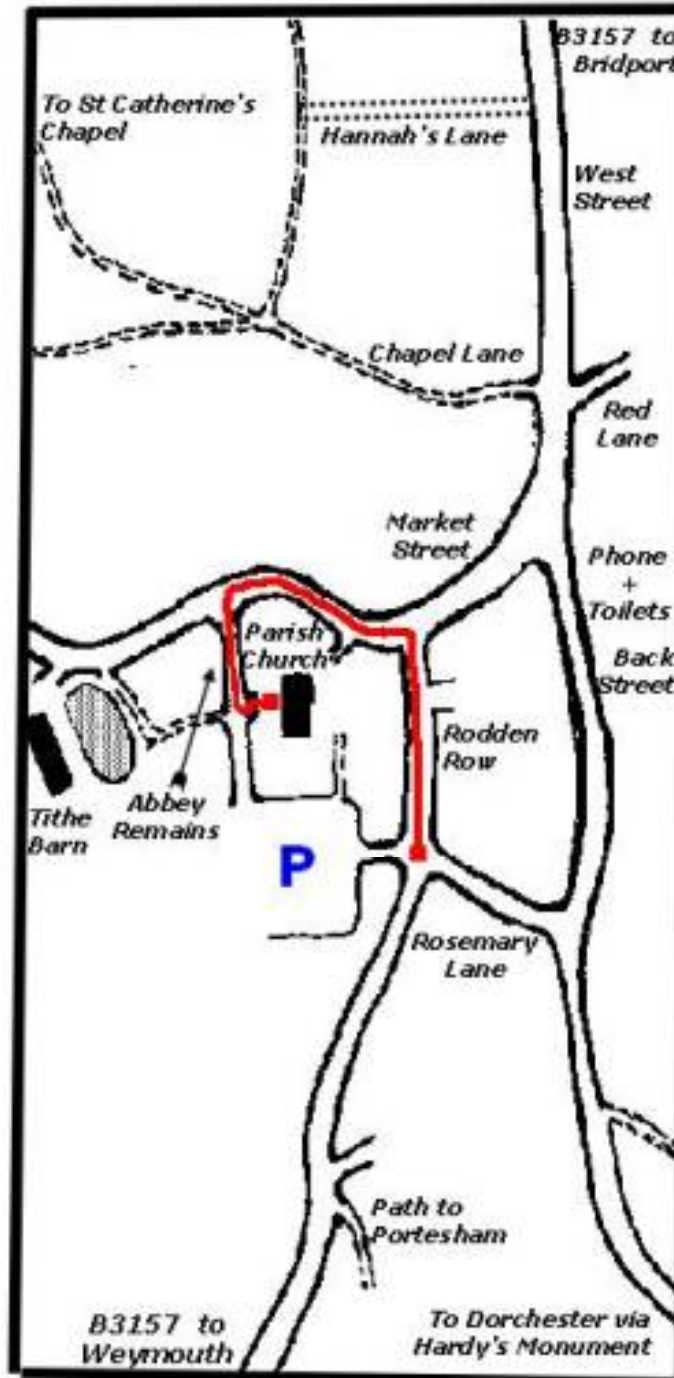
Continue your journey **Discovering Abbotsbury** with the next leaflet in this series:

5: Rosemary Lane, Back St & Market Street.

For more information about our village visit the Abbotsbury Heritage website at:

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DISCOVERING ABBOTSBURY



4: Church Street & Rodden Row (Walk – wheelchair access with care on road)

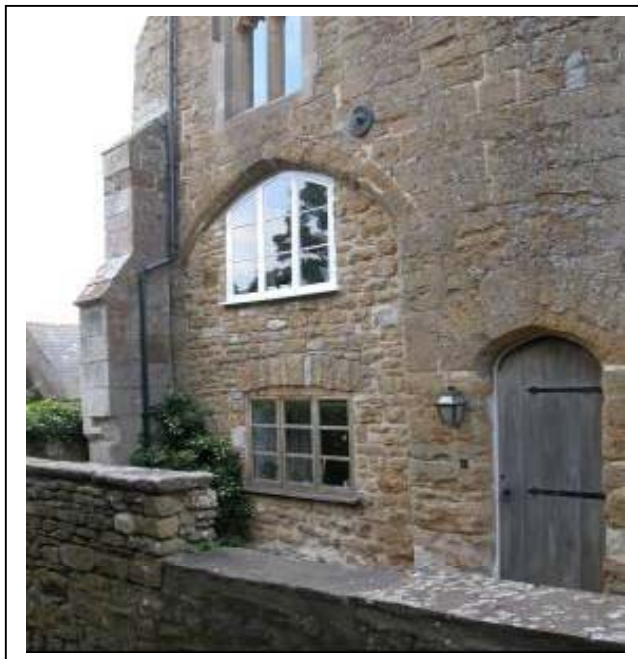
Prepared by Chris Wade & Peter Evans for
Abbotsbury Heritage Research Project

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From your position facing the Tithe Barn you will see an archway on your right (front picture). Its history is disputed – possibly a gateway into the Abbey courtyard, maybe part of the Strangways manor but most likely an 18th century folly. Walk through the gateway to the road that is **Church Street**. **Take extra care along this often-busy road since it is narrow and has no pavement.**

If you take a short detour to the left you will find an interesting building on your right called **The Gatehouse**.



Much of this building was constructed at the same time as the Abbey and, as its name implies, was one of a number of gateway entrances to the monastic estate. It has many interesting features – note the 14th century buttress on the outside and the arched coach entrance now filled in. Inside there are a plethora of ancient beams and fine carvings, including the Abbot's coat of arms (three keys).

Retracing your steps along Church Street you will see pillars on either side – these are the remains of the gate walls that led from the

gatehouse. Although difficult to see from the road part of the gate wall remains on the left hand side and it has been extended using many remnants of stone from the Abbey, including a "Green Man" carving pictured below.



Continuing you will see the high walls of **The Manor House** on your left. Note also the original stone roof over the front entrance. As the name implies this building was a residence for the Strangways family during the last century although their main ancestral home is at Melbury Sampford.

You now pass the main entrance to St Nicholas's Church on your right and continue past the **Old Vicarage** on your left to reach the junction with the main road.

Opposite, at the end of Rodden Row and on the corner with **Market Street**, is what used to be the **Old Post Office** now one of Abbotsbury's tea rooms.

Watch out for traffic negotiating the sharp bend - coaches and heavy goods vehicles in particular have difficulty rounding the corner and frequently mount the pavement!

Turn right here and enter Rodden Row. On your right **No 19** (pictured opposite) was the original village school before the new one was built in

1785 (now Strangways Hall in Market Street). Note the glass in the top window of **No 20** on the opposite side – probably the oldest glass left in the village.



Further along on your left you will find **Dansel**, a Craft Council gallery that specialises in contemporary woodwork, handmade by selected British craftsmen. These buildings were originally designated as "Barns in Strangways Estate Yard" but were converted to their present state in 1979.

A little further up on the same side you will see **Wheelwrights**, which, until the 1940's, was the home and workshop of Sam Mundy, the local wheelwright, village carpenter and undertaker. In the late 1980's it was bought and turned into a gallery by Greg Shepherd and his wife Lesley who were both internationally renowned glassware artists. It was Greg who engraved the glass window that depicts Sam with a cart named "Josie Rose", in celebration of the birth of their first daughter. Rather than glassware, embroidered hangings now adorn the walls.

On the opposite side of the road is an artist's studio that was once the **Reading Room** where the Victorian inhabitants of Abbotsbury came to access books and newspapers to improve their knowledge of the outside world.