

Opposite the stores is the **Chapel Yard Pottery** that was previously a dairy farm. Now head back towards the village centre.

As you return along Market Street you will find a variety of craft shops and tea rooms – the very essence of Abbotsbury, and as you turn the corner you will be greeted by the old coaching inn, **The Ilchester Arms**, a classical 17<sup>th</sup> century building with 18<sup>th</sup> century modifications. It dominates Market Street as the street opens out to form the centre of the village where, in ages past, there was once a bustling market that sold everything from ribbons to livestock. 18<sup>th</sup> century maps also show that there was a market house in the square. Above you are the colourful representation of the arms of the Earls of Ilchester and over the balcony, rather cluttered with metal supports and a flagpole, there are interesting cast-iron railings and an attractive lamp holder to guide the thirsty customer on dark nights. A useful initiative as you will not find a single street light in Abbotsbury.

As you return to Rodden Row once more see if you can spot the plaque on the wall on the right directly opposite the tearoom. It warns of the dangers of overloading the bridge – did you even notice the bridge? If not, look again. Now bear left into Rodden Row to return to the car park. A description of Rodden Row can be found in the fourth part of the series.

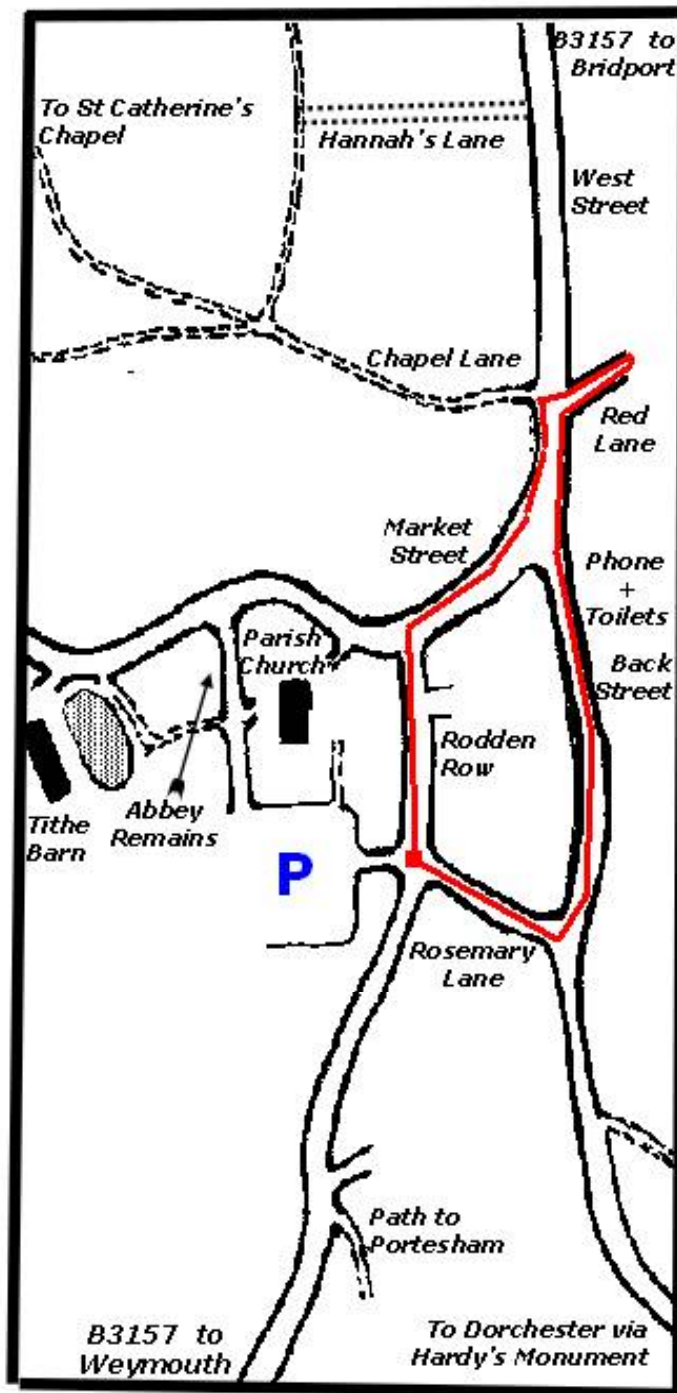
Continue your journey **Discovering Abbotsbury** with the next leaflet in this series:

## 6: West Street & St. Catherine's Chapel.

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

[www.abbotsbury-heritage.org.uk](http://www.abbotsbury-heritage.org.uk)

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# DISCOVERING ABBOTSBURY



## 5: Rosemary Lane, Back St & Market St (Walk – wheelchair access with care on roads)

Prepared by Chris Wade & Peter Evans for

## Abbotsbury Heritage Research Project



Heritage Lottery Fund



To continue the tour turn left from Rodden Row into **Rosemary Lane** (opposite the car park entrance) - a picturesque little street. The first property, **No 1** (pictured on the front cover), was one of several bake houses for the village from at least 1903 to 1939. On your right is **East Farm**. This is a traditional Dorset longhouse where a single building originally sufficed for both the family and the livestock. Despite its age evidence in the roof suggests that it has never been thatched.

About halfway up the lane on your left you will see a new house standing some way back from the road. It is in fact three houses but notice how the old traditional building style has been maintained (thatched roof on local stone walls) to fit in with the character of the village. There are other examples of new houses like this elsewhere in the village. If you look straight ahead as you approach the top of Rosemary Lane you will see an old shed which is the remains of the slaughterhouse that used to supply the village butchers.



At the end of the lane turn left into **Back Street**. The house on your right used to be a coal merchants at one time with the cart shed on the right hand side near the slaughterhouse. A little further on is **The Keep** (pictured above) - a 1980's construction: the buildings at street level were once a butcher's shop.

About half way along on the right hand side is **Blind Lane** - an unmade track that will take you to the top of the Ridgeway where there are truly magnificent views of the village and the Fleet. Beside this lane is a thatched workshop that was used for basket making by the local thatcher who once lived next door (in what is now Spring Cottage).

Back Street is lined by pretty cottages although many of them, like those you see first, are of relatively recent construction. Further down they are 18<sup>th</sup> century.



On the right you will come across an imposing ecclesiastical building that is now a studio. Originally this was the **Congregational Chapel**, built in 1870 on land leased to it by the then Earl of Ilchester. Records show that Congregationalists had been present here in Abbotsbury from at least 1672 but their final service was held in this building in 1977.

Note the gargoyle on the corner of **No. 3!** For those who may need it the only public toilet in the village is located at the far end just beyond the chapel - an ugly, flat-roofed building uncharacteristically out of keeping.

You leave Back Street and bear right into **Market Street** and will notice the imposing 19<sup>th</sup> century building on your right known as **Strangways Hall**. This was once the village school before government financial cuts dictated its closure in

1960. The schoolmaster lived next door in the Old Schoolhouse. Although a nursery school still operates from here, providing an essential facility for the community, the local school is now in Portesham village some 2 miles to the east of Abbotsbury. The hall is utilised for many village activities and there are frequent exhibitions and craft fairs held here. Forthcoming events are displayed on the notice board outside of the hall.

Continue along Market Street on this side of the road. The first house was once the village police house where our village bobby lived - note the 'P' etched on the wall right of the gate. Carry on until you reach **Red Lane** where you can still see evidence of the old cobbled pavement. If you walk to the top of the lane you will find an interesting geological feature under survey by the Dorset Geology Society. You can also see exposed iron ore on the left hand side embedded in the rock. Ore was once mined in Abbotsbury but, luckily for us, it was of insufficient quality for economic mining. A railway line was built to carry iron ore from Abbotsbury and pig iron from Portesham to Upwey and hence to Weymouth. Tourism alone could not keep the railway viable and in 1950 it closed. The station (pictured below) was at the east end of the village, past the houses known as the Glebe.



Return to Market Street. If you wish to continue your walk **proceed to leaflet 6**. For those who wish to conclude the walk for now cross over to **Chapel Lane Stores** that was once a fisherman's net store.