

The Whetstone *Heritage Walks*

It is more than likely that Whetstone came into being during the first Millennium. A Saxon group may well have travelled along the Welland valley looking for somewhere suitable to live that was not already occupied. This area would have looked good as there was an ample supply of water from the brook and a rise in the land (where the Parish Church now stands) for protection. The village was well established by the Norman Conquest and is documented in the Domesday Book.

For most of the second Millennium Whetstone remained an agricultural village until the nineteenth century when great changes began to occur. Records of 1801 show that there were 128 inhabited houses with 295 males and 303 females. Of these 70 were employed in agriculture and 223 in trade, manufacturing and framework knitting.

Shortly after the end of the Second World War a lot of council houses were built, followed by the first phase of a major private housing development during the 1960s. A further development to the south of the village began in the 1980s almost doubling the size of the village.

The Heritage Walks need not be followed in any particular order and allow the walker to choose between either walking in countryside, exploring the more historic sites in the village or combining a little of both aspects.

Quite a lot of the heritage of old Whetstone remains, which can be seen whilst enjoying the walks. Examples of this are as follows.

Hinds Crossing (1). It was here the bridle road from Enderby diverted into Whetstone. It crosses the Leicester/Birmingham railway. The line was opened in 1864 when the Hind family lived at the Grange.

Whetstone Grange (2). This interesting house is typical of the small country houses of its time. It was built around 1800 and is a Grade II listed building. The Hind family, who lived here, were the owners of the Swithland slate quarry and were prominent landowners in the area.

Farm house (3). Built around 1780 this is a Grade II listed building and is typical of a well to do farmer's home of the time.

St Peter's Church (4). This is the oldest and most interesting building in Whetstone. Built in 1335, probably on the site of an earlier church, it is now a Grade I listed building. It has been altered and restored over the years with more modern facilities added in recent years. The churchyard has some good examples of 18th century slate headstones. There is also an unusual memorial to a victim of the Lusitania disaster.

The War Memorial (5). The memorial is, in fact, a grade II listed building. It was erected in 1920 and is made from white granite. The names of the fallen inscribed on the memorial provide the names for most of the residential roads constructed since the mid 1980s.

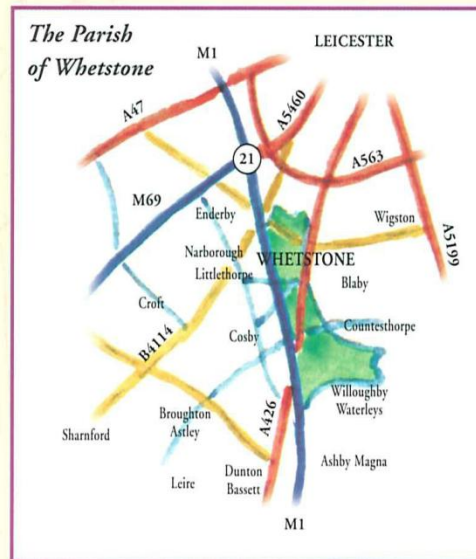
United Reformed Church (6). This building was opened in 1936 and was the third move for the church within the village. The first building was turned into a cinema, which closed many years ago.

Baptist Church (7). Again, this was not the original site of the first church. In recent years it has undergone internal alterations to make it more accessible and useable.

Three Arches Bridge (8). The bridge took the Great Central Railway over the Whetstone brook and, by using the steps alongside the bridge, access can be gained to the railway embankment and part of the Heritage Walk giving excellent views of Whetstone.

Brickyard Cottages (Not on map overleaf). Going past the junction with Dog and Gun Lane towards Cosby, and situated on the left side of the road, is a row of houses originally known as Brickyard Cottages. The Whetstone brickworks and clay pit were sited just behind these.

Where we are



Please *observe* the Country Code:

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants & animals and take all litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

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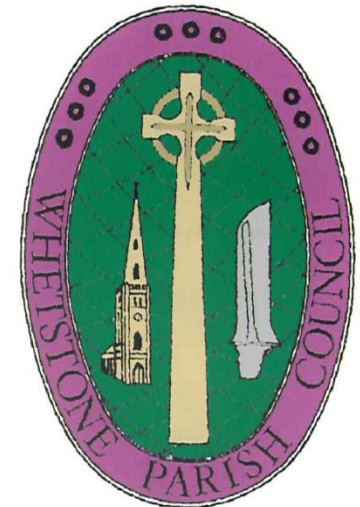
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WHETSTONE

COUNTRYSIDE

and

HERITAGE WALKS



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1 The 'Hinds Crossing' on the Leicester - Birmingham line



2 The gates to the Whetstone Grange



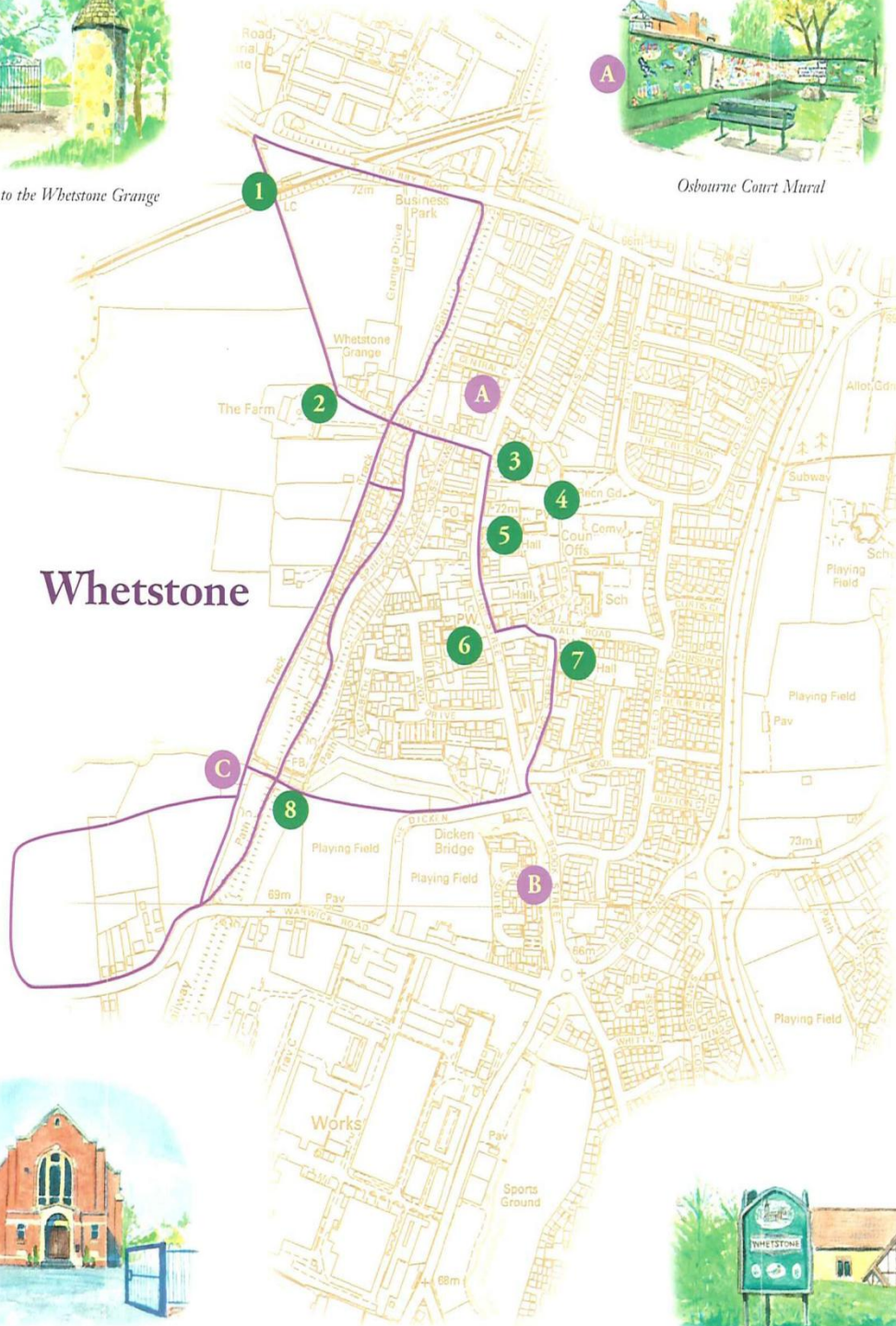
A Osbourne Court Mural



3 18th Century Farm House and St Peter's spire



B View of the Brook alongside Brook Street



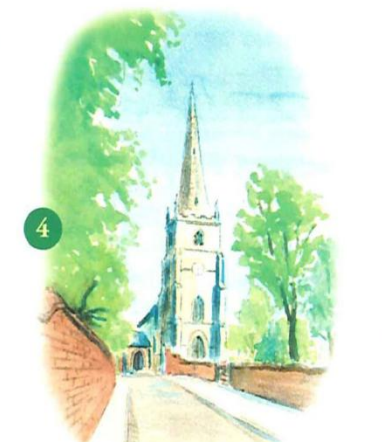
Whetstone



5 The War Memorial, High Street



7 Baptist Church



4 St Peter's Church, built in 1335



8 Three Arches Bridge



C North view of the 'Great Central Way' walk



6 The United Reformed Church



Whetstone sign near the Co-op