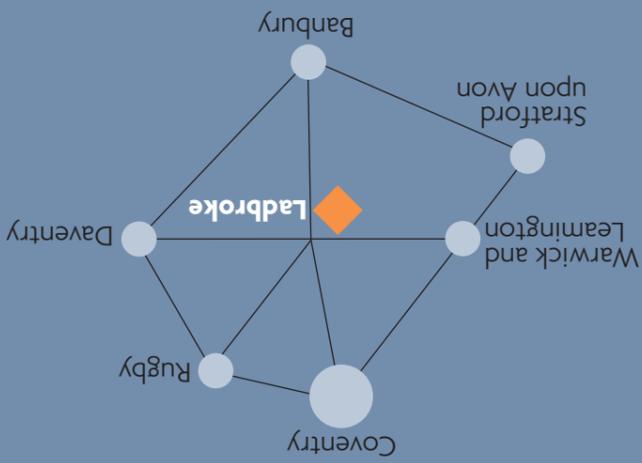




LADBROKE VILLAGE TRAIL



ladbrokeheritage.org.uk

"Ladbroke? Never heard of it!" Residents are not surprised that few people have discovered their hidden gem. Tourists looking for shops and tea rooms would be disappointed!

The treasures of Ladbroke reveal themselves slowly to those who have time to explore this picturesque Warwickshire village. Come and appreciate our historic buildings, majestic trees and nature all around. Allow some time to look inside the church too, the stained glass is at its best on a bright day.

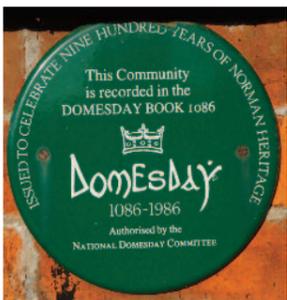
Despite a population of less than 300, Ladbroke's history is full of characters and stories. Read on to discover some of them and more about our natural and man-made heritage.



200 million years ago Ladbroke was underwater!
The main rock under our feet is Blue Lias, rich in fossils especially ammonites. Ploughing turns up fragments and large specimens have been found when digging foundations and drains.

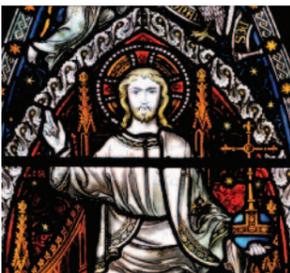


2000 years ago our farmers helped feed the Roman Empire There were several Roman farmsteads in this area and a hoard of more than 50 Roman coins was found buried on a hill, just south of the church.



Ladbroke was a thriving community when the Normans invaded
The Domesday book records 'Lodbroc' had 33½ households. It was much bigger than Birmingham which had only 9 households then. Large open fields around

Ladbroke were farmed co-operatively with different people responsible for strips of each. You can still see the ancient ridges and drainage furrows under the grass in some fields.



Ladbroke Church is over 700 years old It has a striped tower and fine stained glass. It was restored in 1876 by famous Victorian architect Sir George Gilbert Scott, better known for the front of St Pancras Station, London. Inside is Ladbroke's war



Detail of NPG 3346, eNational Portrait Gallery, London

memorial listing 9 men who died in WWI, 32 who returned and statistics on 'The price of war, lest ye forget'.

Celebrity owners The Catesby family held the manor of Ladbroke for 200 years until Robert Catesby, leader of the Gunpowder Plot, sold it in 1596. The new owners, Alice and Robert Dudley (son of Queen Elizabeth 1st's favourite), invested in more land here, buying some from ancestors of Princess Diana for '£1200 plus £20 for a velvet gown for Lady Spencer'. All their lands were confiscated when Robert deserted Alice and went abroad refusing the king's command to return. Alice was given £300 per year from the Ladbroke rents until the manor was sold in 1633.

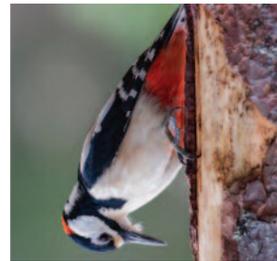


Master of all he surveys
The Palmer family held the manor for nearly 300 years. They converted a farmhouse across the road from the old Manor House into a grand residence set in parkland. In 1638 they employed surveyors to map their land. Four centuries later the location of the roads, field edges and many buildings are similar. The cottages between Ladbroke Hall and the church are conspicuous by their absence. Did they spoil the view?

Jackdaws usually pair for life. They roost and nest in the trees near the Lot brook and The acorns are in mossy cups on cold mornings perch on and remain on the tree for a year.



Great spotted woodpeckers proclaim their territory in spring by drumming on a tree trunk.



Pipistrelle bats roost inside Ladbroke church during the day. Each one can eat 3000 midges per night.



Nature

Half-timbered houses originally had the spaces between the wood filled with wattle and dab but later repairs used stone or brick. Many thatched roofs have gone but four still remain in Ladbroke. Look carefully and you can see the traditional flush ridge, the others a raised ridge decorated with points and curves and a peacock or two, the thatcher's signature!



Building materials



12th May 1876
Attendance thin. Picking cowslips. Some families depend on the proceeds of cowslips to buy their children's clothing.



Reasons for absence
Ladbroke School should have opened 10th January 1876 but the desks, slates and books had not arrived so it was postponed for two weeks! The school log paints a vivid picture of rural life, summer holidays started when the harvest began and reasons for absence included picking cowslips to sell to the Southam apothecary.

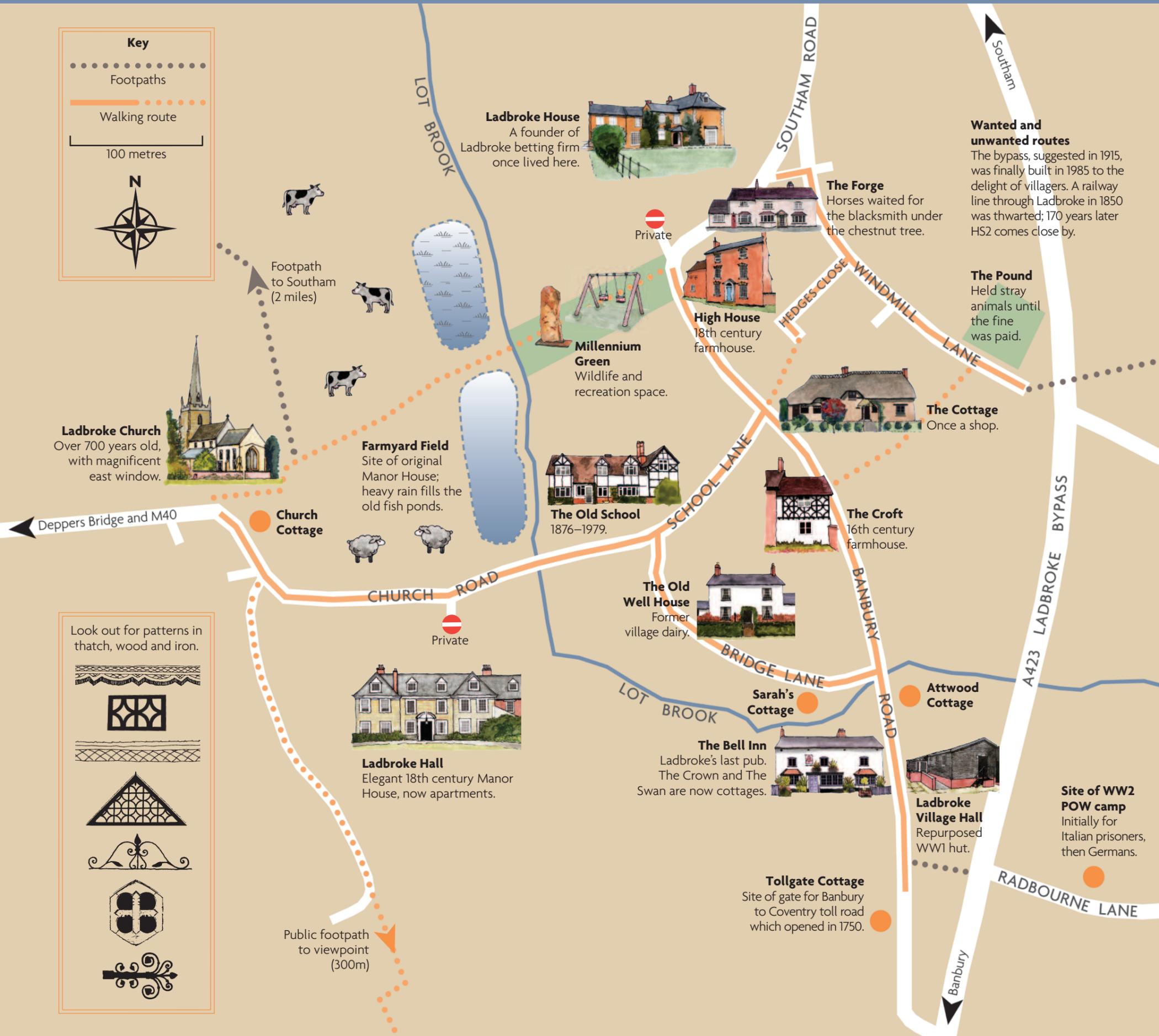
A schoolboy's war-time memories Initially the Italian POW camp in Radbourne Lane had no mains water, so one of the prisoners, nicknamed 'Musso', came every day to Sarah's Cottage for 'two buckets of wet'. Children would hang around outside the camp, throwing back a stray football to the Italians playing inside. The inmates helped clear the river at Deppers Bridge of willow, which they made into baskets and bartered for eggs. Later it was a German POW camp with high fences. After the war it housed displaced people from Eastern Europe until 1984.



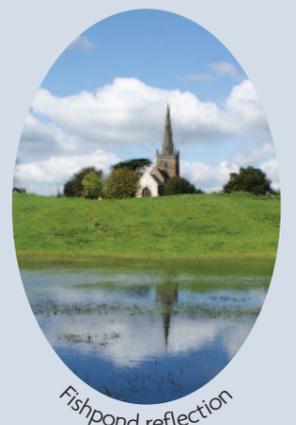
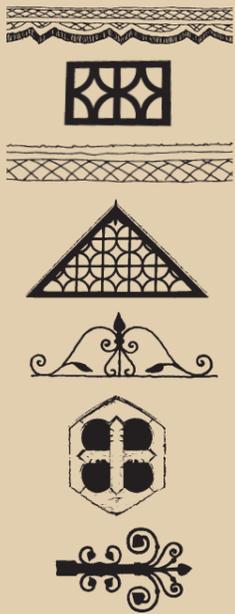
Marking the turn of the Millennium A bare field in 1999, the Millennium Green was planted with native and other species, such as Horse Chestnut, introduced to Britain in the late 16th century. The tall stone by the play area marks a buried time capsule. It is the same Hornton ironstone as gives the church tower its orange stripes.

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Use this map to discover some of Ladbroke's history and keep your eyes and ears open to appreciate nature too.



Look out for patterns in thatch, wood and iron.



THROUGH THE SEASONS