Walks in Redditch

Arrow Valley Walk (A1)
Bordesley Abbey to Papermill Farm

Distance:	approx 2 miles (3 km)
Terrain:	Fields. Grassy and gravel paths. Some gentle slopes. Road crossing
Toilets:	At Forge Mill Needle Museum
Parking:	Car Parks off Needle Mill Lane
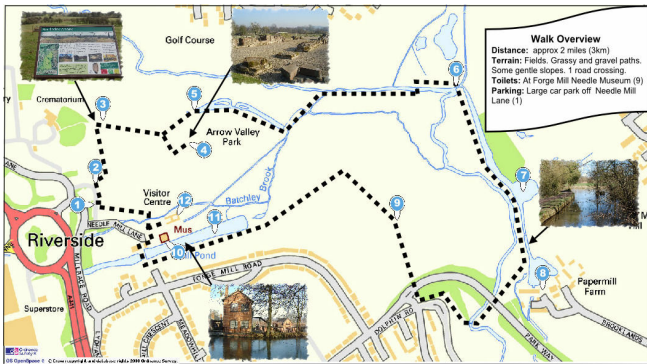
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1 Passing through the gate, you will see to the left a tall pine tree with a clearly marked grass path in that direction. Follow this path to the enclosed area with the pine. This is the site of St Stephens Chapel which was sited just outside the monastery for the people of the surrounding area. Some of the gravestones and the outline of the chapel can be **2** seen. It was pulled down in 1805 and rebuilt at the present site of St Stephens Church where a new dynamic industrial town, Redditch, was developing. Spend some time exploring the site and then leave by the gate and walk up the slope following the hedge. At the peak of the hill, which **3** is not very high, gives extensive views of the Arrow valley and on a clear day the Arrow Valley Lake can be seen.

4 Descend from here towards the Monastery Ruins. The Abbey at Bordesley was founded in 1138 by Cistercian monks and became a major landowner in the area. It was destroyed in 1538 on the orders of Thomas Cromwell, the Vicar General to Henry VIII as part of the King's acquisition of ecclesiastical property during the reformation. The site has been excavated and much of this has been left visible for visitors (with additional information at the Visitor Centre).

5 Leaving the Abbey Ruins, turn right and right again at the perimeter fence and you will then arrive at the beginning of the fishponds built by the monks to ensure a supply of fresh fish. Follow the fish ponds until you reach the gravel path and turn left and right at the river. Cross the small bridge and follow the path along the River Arrow. The monks diverted the river, to drain the land, and dug this straight channel nearly mile long **6** to achieve this. Cross over the bridge and follow the path and you will arrive at Beoley Floodgates. These were designed to divert water to the Beoley Paper Mill.

7 Continue to follow the gravel path and you will arrive at the paper mill ponds. Beoley Paper Mill and Papermill Farm have been converted into private dwellings. There are two pools which originally fed the mill and the first record of paper making here was in about 1650. Continue along the path passing under the road bridge and bearing right at the fork to cross the river over a **8** small bridge.

9 Arriving at Dolphin Road, turn immediately, cross the road (bus route) and continue through the opening in the hedgerow re-entering the meadows. Continue along the track and bear left following the grass track. The field has many mounds which are the buried remains of Bordesley Abbey Forge and Mill, which is the earliest water powered metal working complex yet discovered in **10** Britain. Bear sharp left heading up the slope to arrive at the Forge Mill Pool.

11 Forge Mill is the National Needle Museum and explains the history of needle making in Redditch, which was the world's manufacturing centre for this essential product. Continue along the path by the mill pool, turn right at the end and on your right is the the Visitor Centre This has a selection of finds from the excavations, historic documents and displays on the monks life at Bordesley, **12** entry to the Needle Museum and a seasonal cafe. Return to the car park along Needle Mill lane..
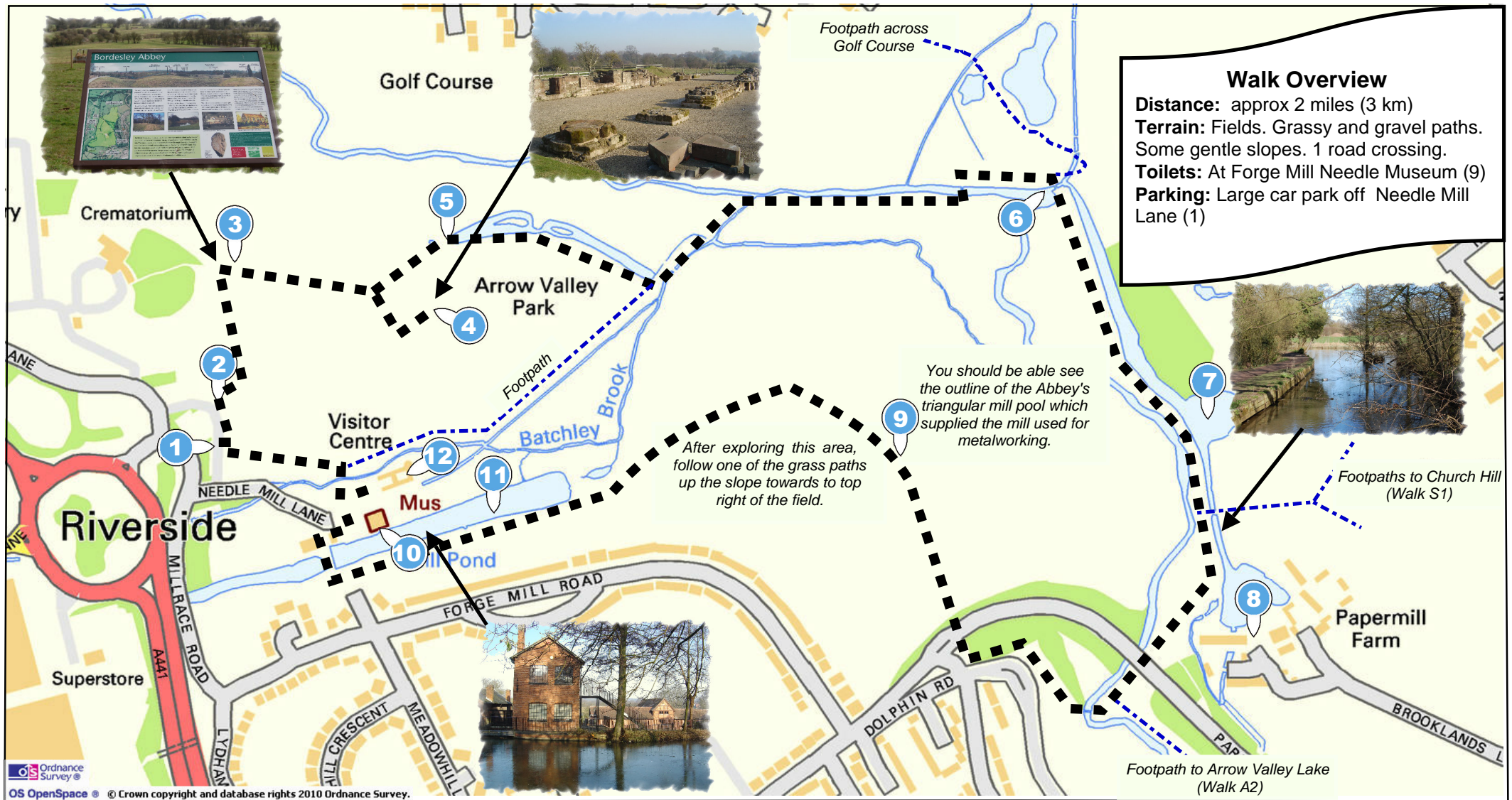
Arrow Valley Walk (A1) - Bordesley Abbey to Papermill Farm

Footpath across Golf Course

Golf Course

Bordesley Abbey

Crematorium

3

5

Arrow Valley Park

4

2

Footpath

Walk Overview
Distance: approx 2 miles (3 km)
Terrain: Fields. Grassy and gravel paths. Some gentle slopes. 1 road crossing.
Toilets: At Forge Mill Needle Museum (9)
Parking: Large car park off Needle Mill Lane (1)

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7

Visitor Centre

Batchley Brook

You should be able see the outline of the Abbey's triangular mill pool which supplied the mill used for metalworking.

9

1

After exploring this area, follow one of the grass paths up the slope towards to top right of the field.

NEEDLE MILL LANE

12

11

Mus

10

Mill Pond

Riverside

Superstore

A441

MILLRACE ROAD

LYDHAM

HILL CRESCENT

MEADOWHILL

FORGE MILL ROAD

DOLPHIN RD

Footpaths to Church Hill (Walk S1)

Papermill Farm

8

BROOKLANDS L

PAP

Footpath to Arrow Valley Lake (Walk A2)