

The name of this village has not undergone so many alterations in spelling as others in the county. From a document dated 1312 we find it spelt Braundeston and all topographers, including Saxton (1576), have spelt it Braunston. There are places bearing the same name in Northamptonshire and Suffolk. The name is, doubtless, of Saxon origin from Brauns (a man's name) ton (town) i.e. Braun's Town. Braunston is not mentioned in the Domesday book; indeed, nothing is known respecting the history of this parish before the year 1200.

As is frequently the case in the county, the main part of the village is grouped in and around a rough rectangular figure. The cottages are of stone with thatch or stone roofs; a few are built of brick with tiled roofs. There are several farm houses in the village, one with a stone dated 1660, another with a modern stone tablet with the inscription 'Cheseldyne Farm 1604'.

The village is in the Oakham Soke Hundred and it was historically part of the Forest of Leighfield. The appearance of this part of the county has been greatly influenced by its long existence as a Royal Hunting Forest.

The village of Braunston, along with Brooke, Belton, Loddington, Launde, Withcote, Owston and Krossington lie on the perimeter of a large area with no roads or villages, only tracks and farms, believed to be the sites of the foresters' dwellings. The area is not particularly wooded now, but around the margins



Braunston

RUTLAND WALKS



The Braunston Goddess

are spinneys which are some of the most famous fox coverts of the Cottesmore Hunt, including Priors Coppice. Priors Coppice is an ancient woodland situated to the south of Braunston. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest managed by the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust. It is home to a variety of wildlife. So far over 230 species of flowering plants and ferns have been recorded, including wood anemone, early-purple orchid and broad-leaved hellebore. Badger, fox, stoat, muntjac and grass-snake have all been recorded along with 71 species of birds. There are good numbers of nuthatch, blackcap, garden warbler and many others. Rare visitors have included pied flycatcher and redstart.



Travel

Road: Braunston is situated approximately 2 miles south west of Oakham on the C5305 (Braunston Road)

Bus: Oakham Hopper 146 on a Wednesday or Saturday. Contact Traveline for more information: T: 0871 2002233 E: www.traveline.info

Rail: The nearest railway station is Oakham.

Ordnance Survey Maps

Explorer 234 Rutland Water
Landranger 141 Grantham

If you require further information regarding this leaflet or require it in an alternative format please contact Rutland County Council Highways at the address below:

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LE15 6HP
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W: www.rutland.gov.uk/row



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All Saints Church

This attractive ironstone church has an oversize clock mounted on the tower. Installed in 1879, it is almost certainly the first clock in the church. It was installed at the cost of Mr Evan Hanbury, a local landowner and later High Sheriff of Rutland, who stipulated that the clock should face east so that his employees could see the time from the Brooke road. In 1999 the clock and dial were refurbished as a Millennium project. Prior to this the clock had not struck the hour for many years.

The first recorded church on this spot dates from the time of the Normans with a second building replacing it in the 14th century before it too was demolished in 1848 and the material reused in the building of the present church. During one of these building phases the figure could have been symbolically and literally 'cast down' to form the door step, with further insult being added by being walked over by the feet of the pious churchgoers.

What is interesting is the fact that the churchyard is built on a raised circular mound and this may indicate a previous pagan sacred area. The carving could therefore represent some form of Iron Age or Romano-Celtic goddess figure that once stood on the site. With the arrival of Christianity the carving may have been incorporated into an early Christian church to try to encourage the local people to attend. If there was such a church here evidence of it has now been lost to history.

The figure is thought to represent a grotesque female form and could be interpreted as a church gargoyle but this seems unlikely as it has no drainage channel. It may have been used to ward off evil spirits. It has certain facial and stylistic similarities to Irish Sheela na Gigs.

down and used as a doorstep for the church before being rediscovered and re-erected in the 1920's.



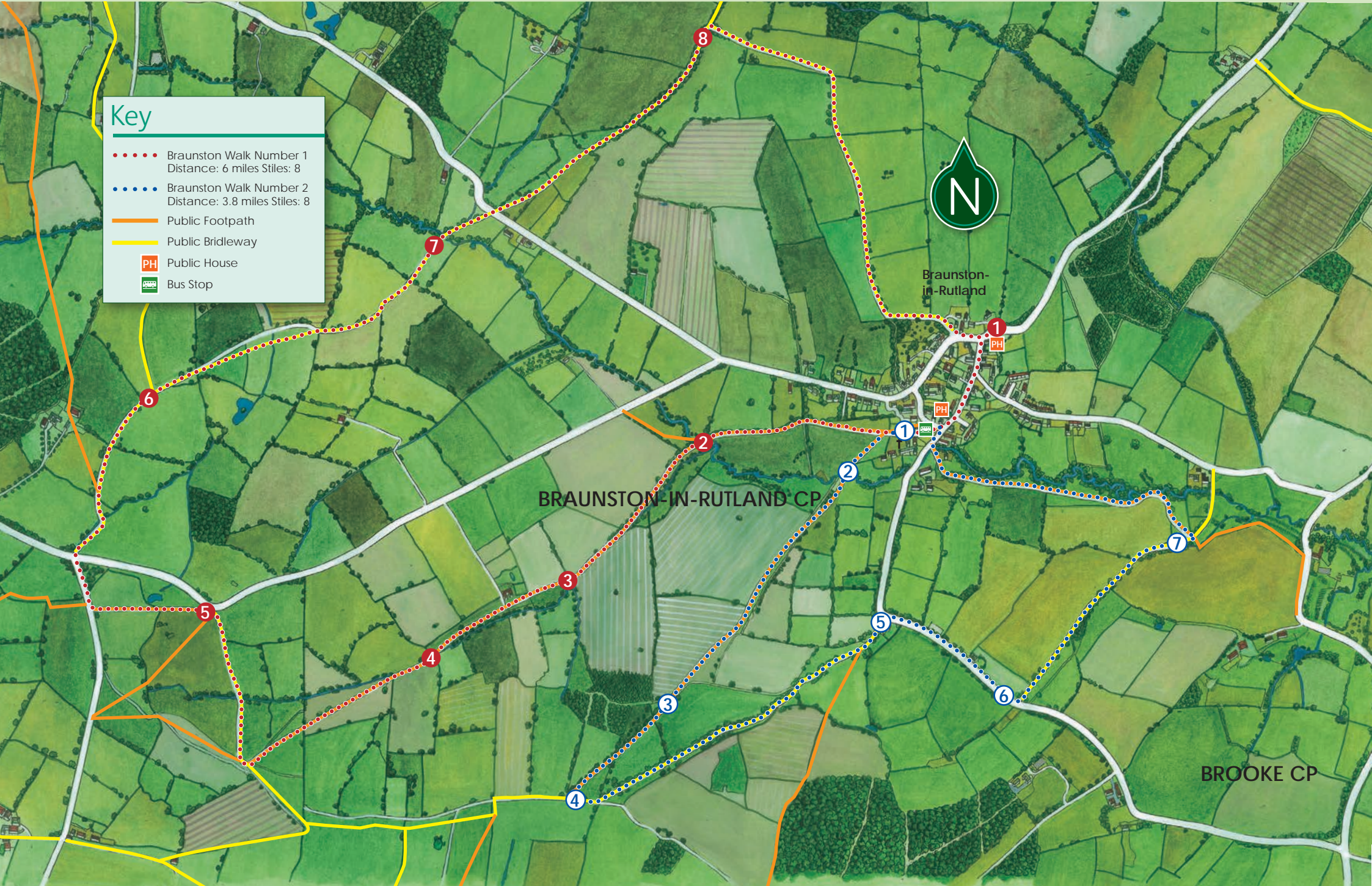
Braunston Walk Number 1

Start from the Old Plough.

- 1 Standing with your back to the Old Plough take the road on your left to the church. Enter the churchyard and take the path past the main door to a gate at the rear of the church. Continue straight on to a kissing gate. Pass through the gate and over a ditch then continue straight ahead to a footbridge. Traverse the bridge and then walk across the next field before crossing a second footbridge.
- 2 Continue straight on to a kissing gate and ditch crossing. Bear left when you enter the next field and you will soon see a footbridge.
- 3 Pass through a hedgerow, then over a stile and on your right is a pond. Make your way to the field gate ahead. Carry on with the hedge on your left, passing the farmhouse. At the end of the field a waymark directs you to turn left over a footbridge.
- 4 Cross the footbridge and turn right. Continue along the hedgerow and cross a ditch into the next field. Now

- aim diagonally left and head for a double trunked ash tree beneath which is a stile. Continue diagonally left to the top of the field where a gateway leads you on to a broad bridleway. Turn right and pass through a gate across the track. Now turn right again and follow a grassy track all the way to a road.
- 5 At the road there are two paths on your left. To avoid walking the busy road take the right hand path across a field to cross a stile and continue to a field gate on the roadside. Turn right and, at the T junction, cross over on to the bridleway opposite. With the hedge on your left continue to a gate. Pass through the gate and cross the corner of the next field to another gate.
 - 6 Here, stay on the bridleway with the hedge on your right and pass through another field gate before reaching a junction of bridleways. Go through the gate and with a fence on the left and hedge on the right walk to a further gate. Here, strike diagonally left across the field to a gate. Through this gate make your way diagonally left towards the hedgerow avoiding a ditch at the bottom of the field. Follow the hedge to a bridle

- gate, pass through to the far end of the field and another gate leading down to a footbridge over a stream.
- 7 Keep on the track to until you reach the road. Cross over and enter the field opposite. Follow the path diagonally right through the field, past a bridle gate and on to a further gate leading in to an enclosed track. Follow this through two further gates until you find a gate on the right leading to a bridleway across a grassy pasture.
 - 8 Cross the grassy pasture, pass through one gate and head diagonally towards the right hand fence where a yellow waymark post can be seen. A further gate takes you into a green lane which takes you down to a metal gate across the track. Pass through the gate, turn left, and follow the track to the road. Here to your left you will see The Old Plough on the corner.



Braunston Walk Number 2

Start from the Blue Ball.

- 1 Starting with your back to the Blue Ball enter the church yard opposite by the main gate and follow the path past the left side of the church. Use the hand gate you can see to your left and then head towards the field gate and stile that are straight ahead. Bear left once you enter the next field and you will soon see a foot bridge.
- 2 Cross the bridge and continue ahead to a second bridge and a stile. Walk along the right side of the next field and about two thirds of the way along you will find a stile leading on to yet another bridge. Cross the bridge and turn left on to a grass track around the edge of the field. Continue up the hill and turn right when you meet a stone track. Follow this track for a short distance until you encounter a foot bridge (and a yellow topped waymark post) on your left.

- 3 Cross the corner of the next field to a gap in the hedge which leads you into a small copse / spinney. Follow the track to a waymark post on the far side. Pass through a gap in the hedge and then head for the corner of the next field, where you will find a hand gate.
- 4 Turn left on to the track and after a short distance you will find a gate on your left. Follow a path around the right side of the field and you will soon see a stone surfaced track ahead of you. Follow the track until it meets a road.
- 5 If you would like to cut your walk short at this point - turn left and follow the road down the hill and back into Braunston - otherwise, turn right. As the road reaches the bottom of a hill you will see a bridleway on your left indicated by a wooden gate and a Leighfield Way sign.
- 6 Follow the bridleway with the stream on your right. After you pass through a wooden gate you will see footpaths on either side.

- 7 Take the footpath to the left and head for a stile in the hedge. Turn right on to a grass track around the field edge. At the end of the track cross the stile and head for the field gate at the opposite end of the field. Continue straight ahead to a stile and a bridge and then head for a stile in the corner of the next field. Crossing this stile will take you on to a track between stone walls that will eventually lead you to a stone bridge over the river Gwash. Ahead on your left you should now see All Saints Church and the Blue Ball.

