

1. From the Town Meadow cross the footbridge towards Waitrose and turn right and a little further on left between two hedges. Cross the busy road with care to a kissing-gate. Follow a short stretch of made-up path to a second kissing-gate. Turn half left to make for the railway bridge over the river.

*Amongst many other events, a great Fete was held here in 1859 to mark the opening of the Railway and early Baptists had their open air meetings in the fields, using the Stour for baptisms.*

2. Go under the railway bridge, left across a narrow footbridge and then bear right

*Across the river is Millennium Wood which was planted in 1999 as part of the Three Rivers Project with the help of GANG (Gillingham Action for Nature Group) and the North Dorset Rangers.*

Follow the path to a ditch and hedge ahead. Turn right after the ditch. The path now follows the course of the river in a wide arc right the way round to a gap in the hedge. Go through the gap to an 'Irish Ford' (large diameter pipes covered with turves designed to lessen the danger of flooding). Turn right over the ford and follow the path which eventually becomes a passageway alongside Madjeston Farm house.

*Madjeston is from the old English 'farm belonging to a man called Malger'.*

3. At the end of the passage turn right along the road. After about 250 yards turn left up a track beside some farm buildings. Follow the track right up to the metalled Folly Lane, around many right-angled bends: "the Crooked Mile"
4. Turn right along Folly Lane and again right into Bleet Lane. At the T junction at the bottom of Bleet Lane turn left.

*The old Eccliffe Mill is straight ahead. This is now a private house, but externally looks much the same as it did when John Constable sketched it during one of his visits to Gillingham in the 1820's.*

5. Cross the mill waters and where the road bends left go straight ahead and follow the path under the railway. Cross several stiles and come out onto the road opposite entrance to Thorngrove, the Scope Garden centre.
6. Turn right and use the path behind the hedge then turn right again into a lane.

*Just beside the lane excavations have shown a Roman settlement from 250-350AD of a house and outbuildings. Pottery, spearheads and a Roman grave were found. This lane leads to the electricity substation and the sewage works.*

7. Before reaching these turn left through a kissing gate then bear right to another gate in the hedge to the right.

*A seat on the far side of the hedge is a good spot to rest and enjoy the view of Duncliffe.*

8. From here walk down the slope to the left to wide gap in the hedge, then through two fields and two more kissing-gates back to the main road and retrace your steps to the Town Meadow.

