

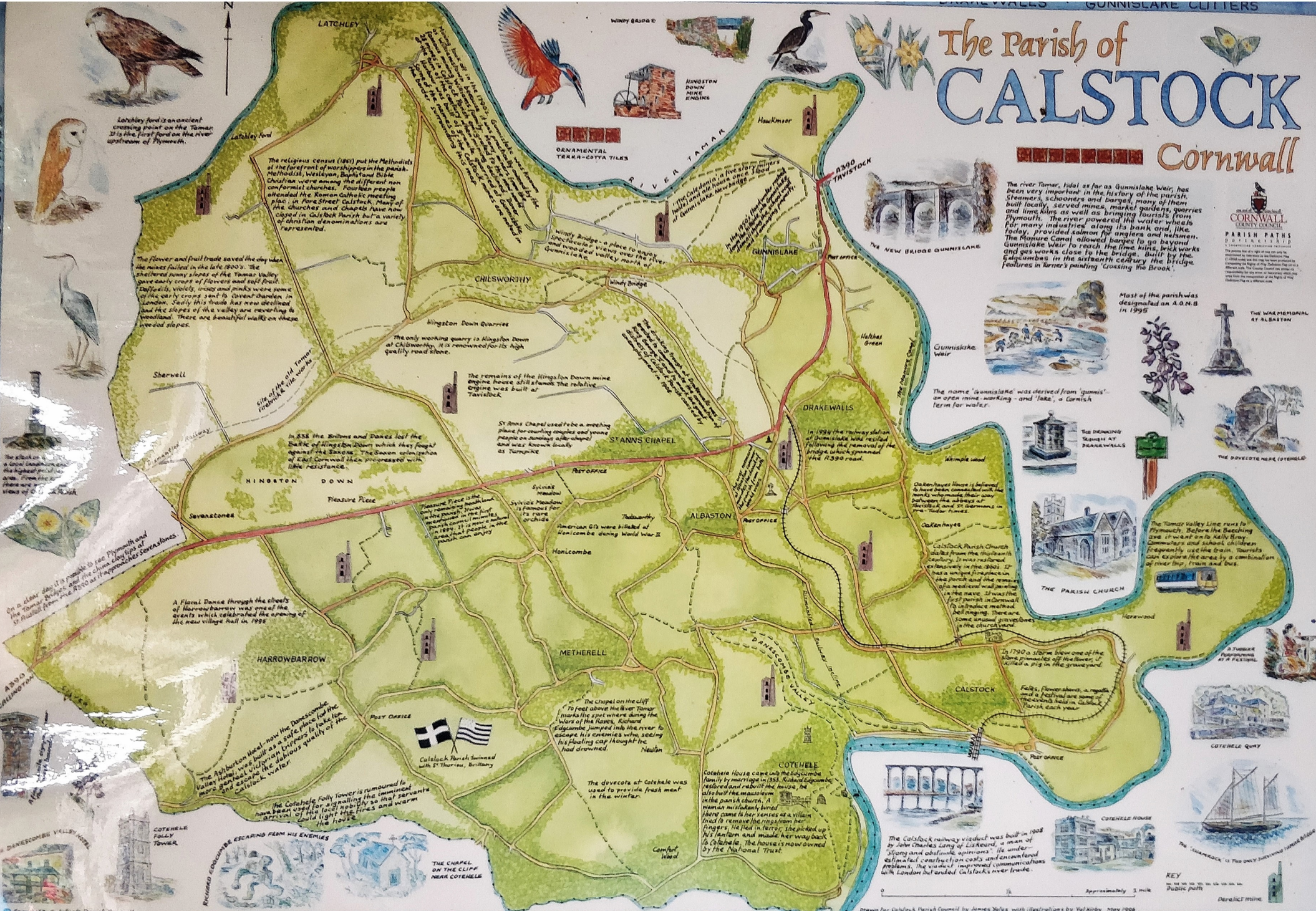




HARROWBARROW · WHEEL FORTUN · SILVER VALLEY · PRINCE OF WALES · WHEEL SISTERS · WHEEL WILLIAMS · WHEEL EDWARD · WHEEL ARTHUR · HAREWOOD

The Parish of CALSTOCK

Cornwall



Latchley ford is an ancient crossing point on the Tamar. It is the first ford on the river upstream of Plymouth.

The religious census (1881) put the Methodists at the forefront of non-conformity in the parish. Methodist, Wesleyan, Baptist and Bible Christians were among the different non-conformist churches. Fourteen people attended the Roman Catholic meeting place in Fore Street Calstock. Many of the churches and chapels have now closed in Calstock Parish but a variety of Christian denominations are represented.

The flowers and fruit trade saved the day when the mines failed in the late 1800's. The sheltered sunny slopes of the Tamar Valley gave early crops of flowers and soft fruit. Dahlias, violets, irises and minks were some of the early crops sent to Covent Garden in London. Sadly this trade has now declined and the slopes of the valley are reverting to woodland. There are beautiful walks on these wooded slopes.

The only working quarry is Kingston Down at Chilstworthy. It is renowned for its high quality road stone.

The remains of the Kingston Down mine engine house still stand. The relative engine was built at Tavistock.

In 1838 the Britons and Danes lost the Battle of Kingston Down which they fought against the Saxons. The Saxon victory at East Cornwall then progressed with little resistance.

Pleasure Piece is the only remaining heathland in the parish. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and was a natural site for rare orchids in 1991. It is now a nature reserve and is managed by the parish council.

Sylvia's Meadow is famous for its rare orchids.

American GIs were billeted at Harcombe during World War II.

On a clear day it is possible to see Plymouth and the Tamar Bridge and the chimneys of the Plymouth power station from the highest point in the parish. From the top of the hill you can see the views of Calstock.

A Flamin' Dance through the streets of Harrowbarrow was one of the events which celebrated the opening of the new village hall in 1998.

The Rehabilitation Ward, now the Danescombe Valley Hotel, was built as a safe place for the more hardy and capable of the Calstock water.

The Cotehele Folly Tower is rumored to have been used for signalling the imminent arrival of the local nobility so that servants could light the fires and warm the house.

Richard Dancombe escaping from his enemies.

The Chapel on the Cliff near Cotehele.

The dovecote at Cotehele was used to provide fresh meat in the winter.

Cotehele House came into the Edgcombe family by marriage in 1553. Richard Edgcombe restored and rebuilt the house, he also built the manor in the parish church. A woman mistakenly buried there came to her senses as a villain tried to remove the ring from her fingers. He fled in terror, she picked up his lantern and made her way back to Cotehele. The house is now owned by The National Trust.

The Calstock railway viaduct was built in 1908 by John Charles Long of Liskeard, a man of strong and obstinate opinions. He understood what constituted an estate and encountered problems. The viaduct improved communications with London but ended Calstock's river trade.

The river Tamar, tidal as far as Gunnislake Weir, has been very important in the history of the parish. Steamers, schooners and barges, many of them built locally, served mines, market gardens, quarries and lime kilns as well as bringing tourists from Plymouth. The river powered the water wheels for many industries along its banks and, like the Mynner Canal, allowed barges to go beyond Gunnislake Weir to reach the lime kilns, brick works and gas works close to the bridge. Built by the Corporation in the sixteenth century the bridge features in Turner's painting 'Crossing the Brook'.

Most of the parish was designated an A.O.N.S in 1995.

The name 'Gunnislake' was derived from 'gunnis' an open mine working - and 'lake', a Cornish term for water.

Calstock Parish Church dates from the thirteenth century. It was restored extensively in the 1860s. It has a unique fireplace in the parish and the remains of a medieval wall painting in the nave. It was the first parish in Cornwall to introduce method bell ringing. There are some unusual grave stones in the churchyard.

The Tamar Valley Line runs to Plymouth. Before the Beaching Day it was used by Kelly Bray, a Cornish and school children frequently use the train. Tourists can explore the area by a combination of river bus, train and bus.

In 1790 a storm blew one of the stone gravestones off the tower. It killed a pig in the graveyard.

Falls, flower shows, a regatta and a Festival are some of the events held in Calstock each year.

Cotehele Quay.

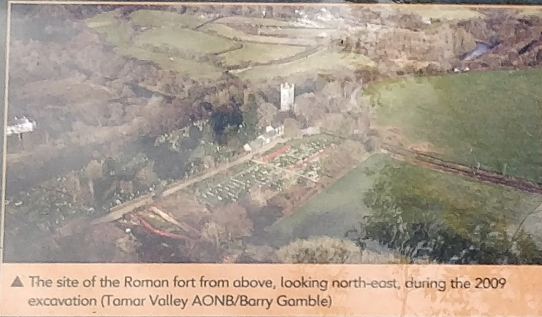
Cotehele House.

The 'Schooners' is the only surviving Harrowbarrow schooner.

KEY
Public Path
Direct Path

WHEEL BROTHERS · WHEEL ZION · WHEEL BRAMBLE · DANESCOMBE · COTEHELE · CONSOLS · EAST CALSTOCK · OKEL TOR

Occupying an elevated position on a prominent ridge and surrounded by a loop of the River Tamar, you are standing in a rich archaeological landscape that has seen human occupation for at least four thousand years.



▲ The site of the Roman fort from above, looking north-east, during the 2009 excavation (Tamar Valley AONB/Barry Gamble)

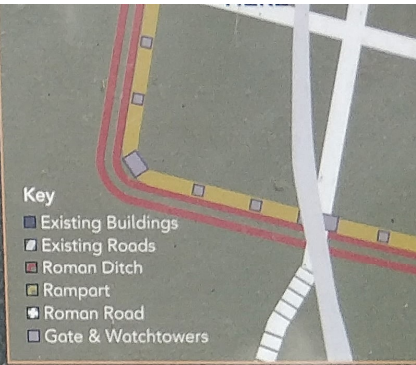


▲ Roman fort ditches excavated in the cemetery in 2009 (C. Smart)



▲ Excavating medieval buildings in the Parish cemetery in 2009 (C. Smart)

◀ 1st century AD mortaria, or mixing bowl, imported from Northern Gaul and found during the 2011 community dig (C. Smart)



In 2007 archaeologists from the University of Exeter came here and made a remarkable discovery – a Roman fort, large enough for around five hundred soldiers!

It was common belief until the 1950s that the Romans got no further than Exeter but that is no longer true as the Roman Fort at Calstock is one of three currently known in Cornwall. This was a strategic location for the Roman army, providing a view up and down river, and located between its highest navigable reach and lowest fording place.

Between 2007 and 2011 excavation and geophysical survey took place, including a community excavation in October 2011 (organised by the Tamar Valley AONB and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund).



▲ University of Exeter archaeologist



▲ Community archaeological dig, October 2011 (Tamar Valley)

The first settled populations were here in the Early Bronze Age (c. 2200-2000 BC). Excavation to the southeast of the church has revealed a series of small pits containing a distinctive form of handmade Beaker pottery. The story of occupation leaps forward to the Late Iron Age, 350-500 BC. The hilltop is surrounded by an enclosure, much larger than the Roman fort itself, stretching across the fields around the church. It is possible that Church Hill was the site of an Iron Age hillfort, re-used by the Roman army as a place to establish their fort. A large ditch, 3m wide and 2m deep, that defended the hillfort was filled in during the Roman occupation.

The types of pottery found during the excavations suggest that the Roman fort was established in about AD 50/55, much the same time as a legionary fortress at Exeter, and was occupied for thirty years. This lifespan is typical of Roman military sites in Devon and Cornwall, as the Second Legion Augusta moved northwards to South Wales in AD 75, leaving behind a number of auxiliary units - like the one here at Calstock.

Environmental evidence shows that the hilltop was open upon the arrival of the army, and remained so. Timber from the wooded hillslopes would have been used for building material and fuel supply. The fort was square in plan, measuring 170m by 170m and with an internal area about the same as three football pitches. It was defended by two ditches, each 4m across and 2m deep, and a rampart around the perimeter, perhaps over 3m high with watchtowers above it at regular intervals. Within the fort there were probably ten barrack blocks, each housing about fifty

The range of goods coming into the fort was rather exotic, with objects and food imported from Spain, France, Belgium and Germany, but pottery from Dorset, Exeter and West Cornwall was also being used. When the army left Calstock in AD 80/85 they did so in spectacular fashion, disassembling and demolishing buildings and levelling the rampart into the ditches, rendering it useless as a defence.

'Bar-lug' pottery from the Lizard, West Cornwall recovered from the cemetery suggests that there was a community here in the 8th century AD, and charcoal that fuelled an iron-smithing hearth has been dated to the 9th century AD. Between the 11th and 12th centuries AD, around the time of the Norman Conquest, when Reginald held Calstock from the Count of Mortain, a timber longhouse was built, which may have been part of a larger, possibly manorial, settlement. Around a century later the longhouse was replaced by a 'cruck-frame' building.

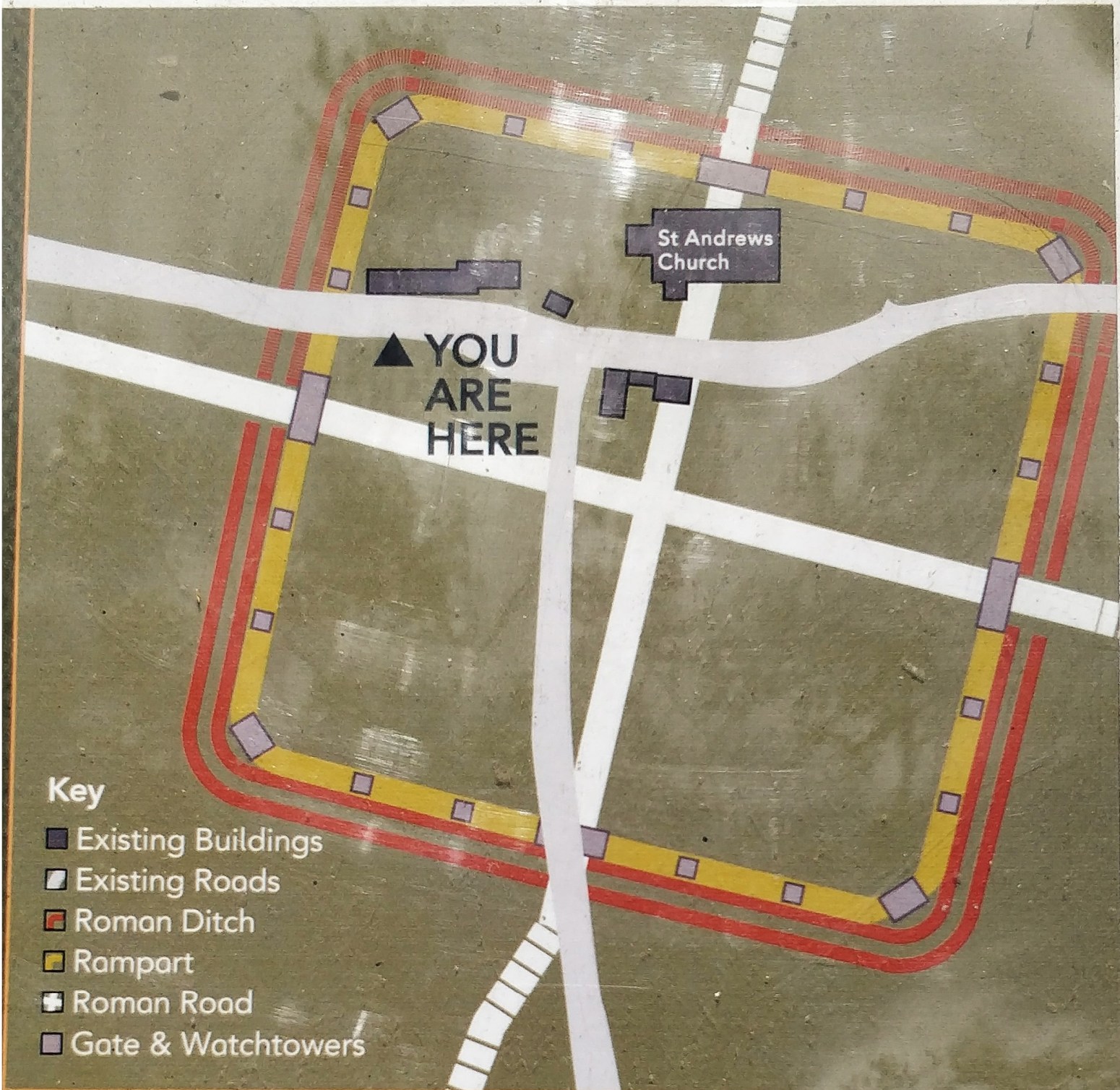
The construction of the church in the fourteenth century determined the character of the hilltop as we know it today. The fields along Church Hill were probably set out in this formative medieval period, but today's tranquil agricultural character is quite different from the area's diverse past.

To find out more visit www.tamarvalley.org.uk/projects/parishproject

ENGLISH HERITAGE LOT

TamarValley
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Leverhulme Trust



St Andrews Church

▲ YOU ARE HERE

Key

- Existing Buildings
- Existing Roads
- Roman Ditch
- Rampart
- Roman Road
- Gate & Watchtowers