

### Local snippets:

The village of Byfield lies in a valley in the Northamptonshire uplands It is 550 ft. above sea level and is midway between Banbury and Coventry on the A361. Many of the houses are built of the local ironstone, as is the Church and its spire which, at 40 metres high, is a prominent feature of the area.

This area has been cultivated for millennia but there is no longer any evidence of the two Roman villas and medieval collages known to have existed here. The first mention of Byfield or Bivelde is in the Domesday Book and at this time it consisted of four Manors: Parles, St Ebrulfs, Zouch, and St Andrews. Later the names changed and they were finally incorporated into one. There is no longer any trace of these left for us to see.

Byfield was in the Worden Hundred, Chipping Worden being then the principal and Market village of the area. However, Byfield did have its own markets and the remains of the cattle pens could be seen until recent years on the grass area near Five-ways

It is hard to date the Holy Cross Church though it is believed to have been built around 1340 when the area was prosperous through sheep farming. It is likely to have been built on the site of an earlier church and some 13th Century stone crosses, found nearby, can now be seen on the north wall of the nave. In 1952 the tower gargoyles were removed and now stand in the porch with some interesting old notices

The village has seen many changes but has always maintained a prosperous and lively population. It was the centre of a farming community with many local trades being practised but it also saw a changing population with the construction of the nearby Oxford Canal and feeder reservoir, followed by the railways, and, in the first half of this century, was surrounded by ironstone quarries

Little evidence of this industry remains but the footpaths around the village take you past many of their remains. Careful observation will be rewarded with views of the old Stratford and Midland Junctions Railway track, traces of the ironstone railway and the old quarries. These are a haven for wildlife. There are magnificent views across the Warwickshire plain, towards the Malverns, from the high ground by the Telecom Tower.

Remember the Country Code.

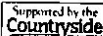
If you experience any difficulty on your walk such as barred wire locked gates or damaged signs and footbridges, please report them to the Principal Rights of Way Officer 55 Crackley Road Towcester. Tel. 50531

Your general comments on this leaflet and the routes will be welcomed by the County Leisure and Libraries Officer 27 Guildhall Road Northampton NN1 1EF. Tel 20262

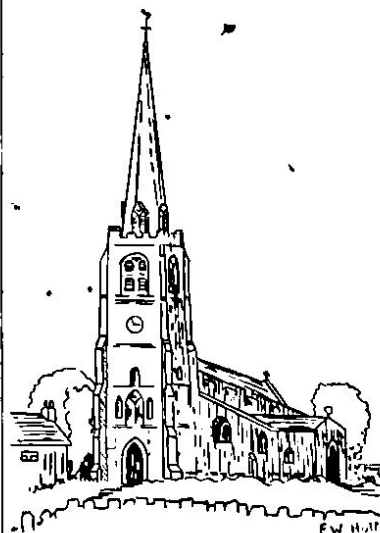
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## Village Trail and Countryside Walks Byfield



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