KINGSCOURT - KING JOHN'S HUNTING LODGE | 3 MILES

WALK 3

1. From the Town Meadow, turn right into The High Street, crossing the Town Bridge over Shreen Water. Continue to the roundabout at the far end and then over the railway bridge and the bridge over the River Lodden . The Gillingham Agricultural Shows used to be held at Lodden Farm in the early 1900s.

2. Cross the road here to walk on pavement and recross in 100m into Kings Court Road.

Kingscourt was King John's hunting lodge and this area was part of the medieval Gillingham Forest At the end of the road there is an information board giving a brief history of the site of Kings Court Palace in the field ahead, and full information is available in the Town Museum.

Cross over the Fernbrook Bridge and through the gate. The Fernbrook joins the Lodden just to the left. Follow the track across the remains of Kings Court

3. Continue to far corner of this field. Go through the kissing gate and cross the railway with care and go through a second kissing gate. Follow the track and turn left in front of Woodwater Farm.

4. Cross the Lodden and immediately turn right off the track and then left over a stile in the hedge. Follow the path beside the hedge on the right reaching a large oak tree with the remains of a seat beside.

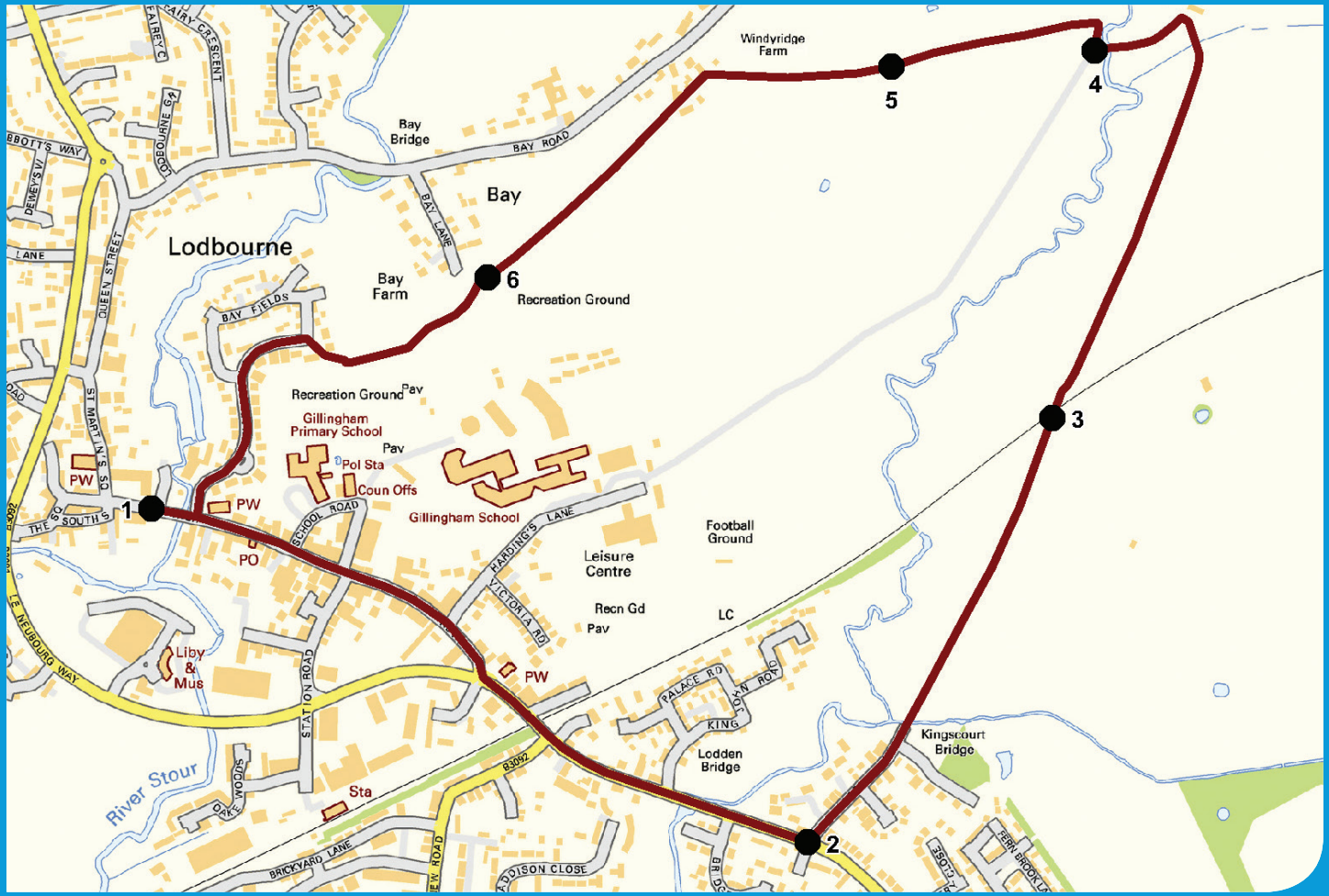
This is the 'King John Oak', a veteran tree which may go back to the mid sixteen hundreds, when most of the remaining Royal Forest was cut down.

5. Go through the gate to the right and diagonally across the field to Windyridge Farm. Follow the track between the chicken coops into the field at the bottom of the farmyard. Cross the field to the far corner where the hedge meets a row of conifers.

6. Go over the stile, along a short path, and through a kissing gate.

This area is called Bay, which has an old meaning, 'an embankment to form a dam'.

Follow the tarmac path straight ahead and between two bungalows to the top of Barnaby Mead/Bay Fields. Bear left and follow the road to the High Street, turning right to get back to the Town Meadow.



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