

Eardisland and Berrington Hall

Days out with a religious theme: St Mary the Virgin Church, Eardisland

David and Elaine Melhuish recommended Eardisland in Herefordshire for a really pleasurable day trip, with a church well worth seeing. My wife and I started out at about 11am and it took around an hour to get there from Sedgley: follow the road to Tenbury Wells, then to Leominster - Eardisland is a small village just off the A44 Rhayader road on the way to the Welsh border. It's about 35 miles.



We chose probably the best day of the year so far for our expedition and it really made a difference to our appreciation of the village to see it in splendid sunshine. We parked in a free car park off the High Street, just by the oldest remaining AA kiosk in the country and as it was time for lunch,

we walked up to a bench by the river Arrow where we had lunch. As we ate, a passing Australian remarked on the idyllic scene!





We walked back into the village and sought out the church, St Mary the Virgin. Alas the bulk of the church is undergoing extensive repairs to replace rotten joists, but it was possible to visit the eastern section, which houses a small exhibition.



A place of worship has probably stood on the site of the present church since Saxon times. Of the present building the Nave was built in the 12th Century and the Chancel, Vestry and South Porch were added in the 14th Century. The original Tower (of probable 15th Century origin) collapsed in 1728 and was replaced by the present one in 1760. A saxon motte stands close by the church surrounded by a moat but nothing of the castle remains and much of the area is overgrown.



We wandered back to the High Street and stopped off for a pint in the garden at the rear of the White Swan public house, then strolled along to the old dovecote which is now the only village shop remaining.



It is run entirely by volunteers and were it not for this fine community effort, villagers would have to drive to Morrisons in Leominster, the nearest point for provisions.





On the upper floor of the dovecote is a quaint exhibition about wartime England and looking upwards you can see the roof structure of the dovecote, which would have supplied a source of meat to the village in winter in days gone by.



The roads off the high street are worth a look too, featuring buildings in the vernacular typical black and white construction of Herefordshire villages.



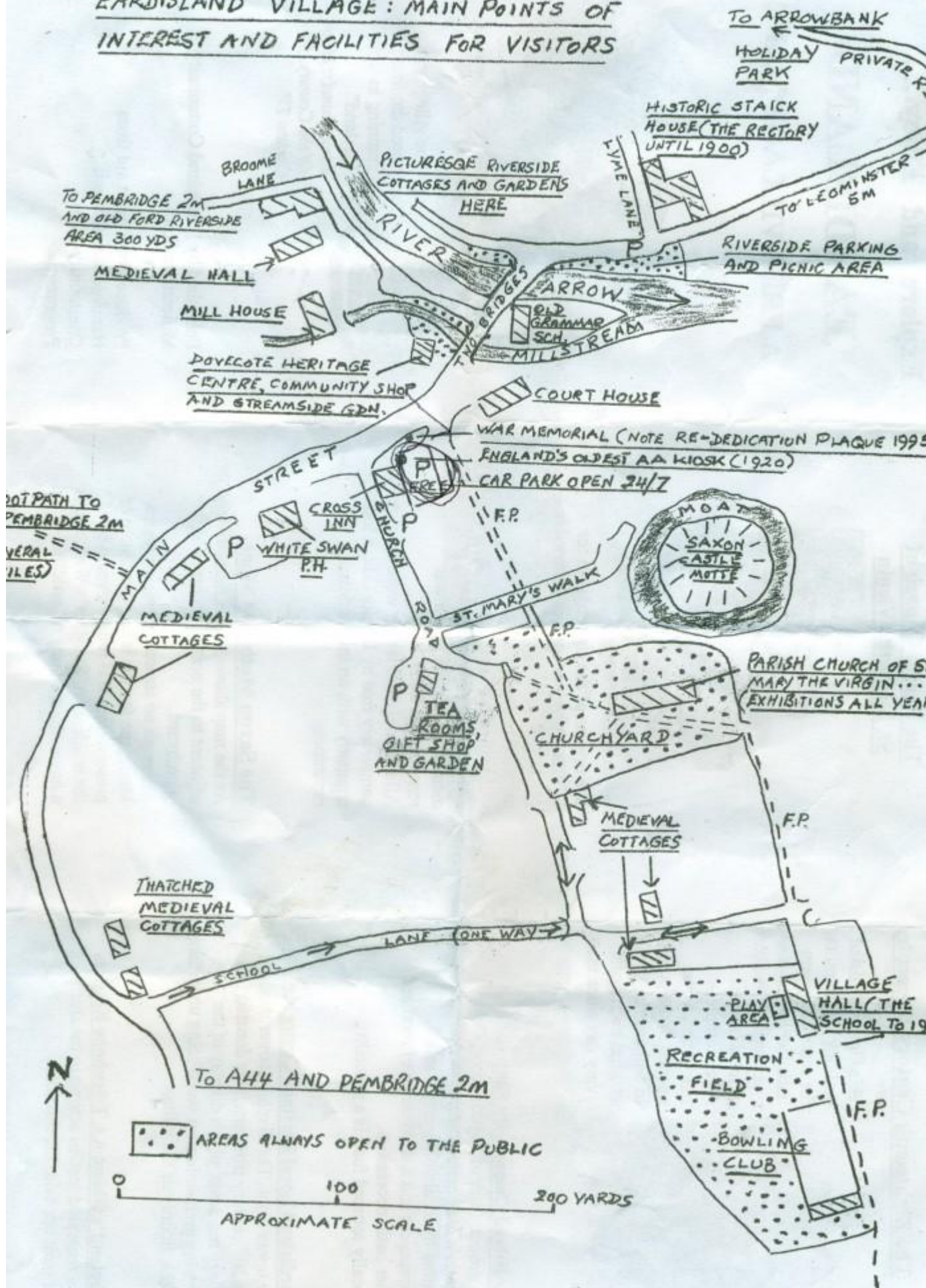


On our way back home, we stopped off at the National Trust property Berrington Hall, about five miles from Leominster on road to Ludlow. It has a beautiful walled garden filled with flowers and we were fortunate enough to visit at its height in midsummer.



The grounds of the Hall stretch down through sheep pasture and meadowland to a vast lake which formed a spectacular and peaceful end to our visit.

EARDISLAND VILLAGE: MAIN POINTS OF INTEREST AND FACILITIES FOR VISITORS



Martin and Magda Jones

July 2011