

Gloucestershire Local History Association aims to arrange occasional visits to areas of historical interest around the County. We are grateful to members of local societies for offering walks and talks about their area to GLHA members. On May 24th and October 11th 2021, John Dixon has taken two groups on a walk around Tewkesbury to look at its railway history. Here is an article about the October walk.

Railway Heritage Walk: Tewkesbury's Two Forgotten Railways
with John Dixon
President of the Tewkesbury Historical Society.

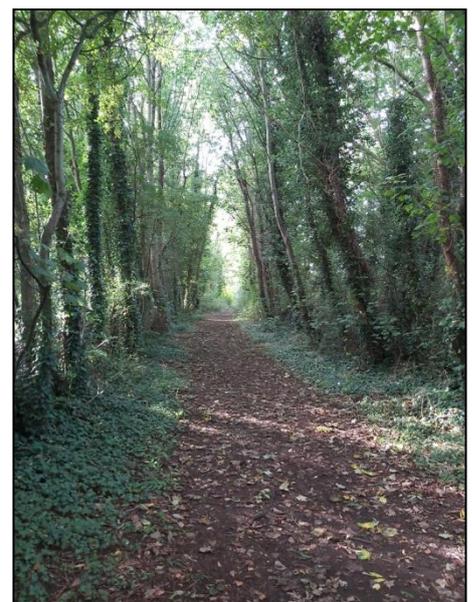


On a beautiful October afternoon, a group of about 25 walkers met in the car park of Tewkesbury's Morrisons supermarket. The group consisted of young and old, with a good mixture of seasoned historians and rail enthusiasts as well as people based locally who were keen to understand Tewkesbury's rail heritage.

One of the old branch lines had been converted to a cycle and pedestrianised path between Newtown and Tewkesbury town centre some years ago, and we joined this and walked westwards towards Newtown where we made our first discovery. John showed the Group the location of the old branch line from Ashchurch to Tewkesbury and where the signal box had been positioned, set back from the cycle path, hidden away in the nettles and undergrowth.

We then headed back towards Tewkesbury, stopping at places of interest along the way, including Station Road, at the back of Morrisons, where the brickwork and gates of the old platform could still be seen – many of the group had known Tewkesbury for decades and had never noticed these features before.

We reached Tewkesbury town centre, briefly pausing at the old level crossing cottage, and the stocking workers' cottages, and then on to the High Street to see where the old station once stood. From there, we headed down to Healings Flour Mills, which at one stage had a commercial rail track connecting it with the terminus, before we headed towards the Mythe Bridge along the tow path and towards Tewkesbury's second forgotten railway station, a branch line that once ran to Malvern. I think one could be forgiven for walking through this un-tarmacked pathway without realising you would have been walking on the old tracks with the platforms on either side.





After a further short walk, we realised that we had come full circle and were back at Morrisons' car park.

A superb two hour walk was enjoyed by all. The pace was leisurely and everyone in the group was interested in John Dixon's interactive snippets and tales of Tewkesbury's two forgotten railways. I would definitely recommend it if it was ever run again; it would appeal not just to railway enthusiasts but also to the casual local historian.

by James Stedman