

The Towpath Trail



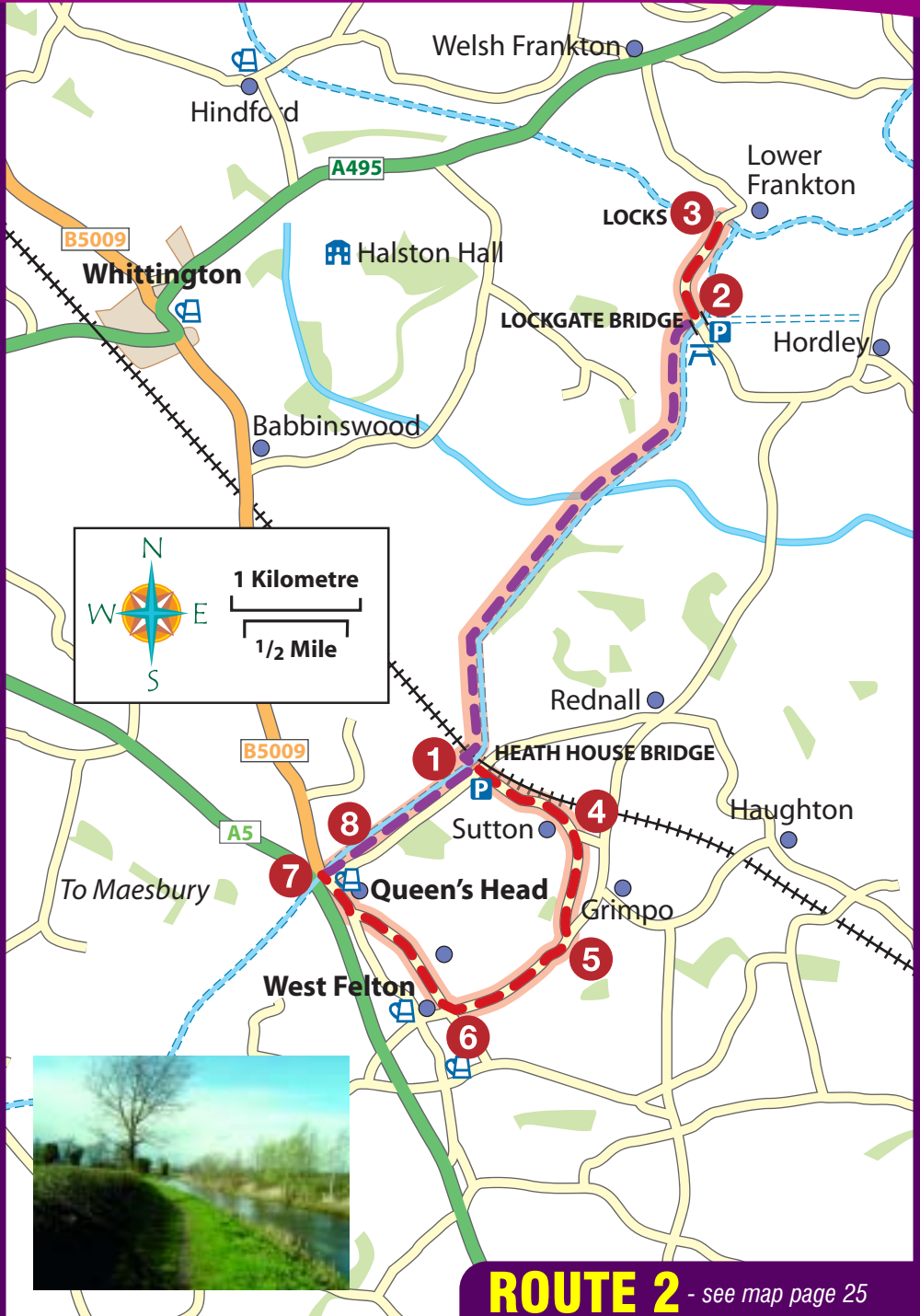
Lockgate Bridge near Lower Frankton

Starting at Heath House near Oswestry, this is a five mile, flat and off-road ride along the towpath, with a possible 4 mile extension along roads and a short section of towpath. *Due to narrow towpaths, and deep water, both routes are only suitable for older children with good control of their cycles.*

The Montgomery Canal was built in 1794 to carry lime for farming. It was abandoned in 1936, and lay derelict until restored by enthusiasts. The canal is open for cyclists from **Frankton Locks** south to **Queen's Head Bridge 76**. All cyclists using the towpaths must obtain a special cycle permit (*free of charge*) from British Waterways & Tourist information centres, or download from www.waterscape.com/cycling/permit.html. Always follow the Waterways Code and respect other users of the canal.

- 1 Cross over to the opposite side of the canal at the **Heath House** bridge 74 and ride north under the Railway bridge (73) over Perry Aqueduct, past **Graham Palmer lock** to Lockgate Bridge 71.

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2 Lockgate Bridge: A good place to spot boats, as they often moor in the disused section of canal. There are picnic tables and a carpark.

3 If you would like to see the 3 locks of the “**Frankton Staircase**”, walk approx. ½ mile to **Rowson’s Bridge (70)** at Lower Frankton where the Montgomery Canal joins the Llangollen Canal. (*Bikes are not permitted on this section of the canal*). Alternatively if you prefer to ride, cross over the humpbacked Lockgate Bridge and ride along the quiet lane to **Lower Frankton**. Return along this lane, then rejoin the towpath to Heath House Bridge. You may wish to end your ride here (*total distance 5 miles*), or continue on-road for a 4 mile loop.

4 To continue, ride past the canal car park towards Sutton. At **Sutton** take the right fork.

5 At the next junction turn right in the direction of West Felton. Continue straight on along the road to the south west towards **West Felton**.

West Felton has a shop, post office and pubs. St. Michael's Church is a 12th century (Norman) church with a 16th century roof, an eighteenth century tower and 19th century additions!

6 When you reach the crossroads, turn right towards “The Fords”. If you’d like to leave the route and ride to Oswestry, continue along this road through Woolston and Maesbury

7 At the T-junction, turn right and ride towards Queen’s Head. Take care as heavy lorries use this road.

Queen’s Head. The pub is completely non-smoking. It welcomes families and has a children’s menu. There are picnic tables overlooking the canal and carpark.

8 At Bridge 76A, join the towpath. This runs along the south side of the canal. **Take care, this section of the tow path is often muddy.** Ride in the direction of Lower Frankton. Ride past bridges 76 and 75 (**Corbett’s Bridge**) to return to Heath House bridge (74).

