

Thorpe Acre & Garendon

This leaflet is one of a series produced to promote circular walking throughout the county. You can obtain others in the series by visiting your local library or Tourist Information Centre. You can also order them by phone or from our website.



It is advisable to wear suitable footwear when walking. Stout shoes or walking boots are recommended.

Some stretches of the route follow minor country roads. Beware of traffic approaching from both directions. If possible stay on the verge, if not walk in single file on the right hand side of the road.

Enjoy the walks, whilst observing the Countryside Code.

Contact Details

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email: footpaths@leics.gov.uk Website: www.leics.gov.uk/paths

www.thorpeacre2000.freeuk.com or trail@garendon.freeuk.com

The information in this leaflet is available in other formats on request.

Special thanks go to the committee of the Thorpe Acre 2000 project who compiled the information in this leaflet.

Reprinted 2009



Thorpe Acre & Garendon

2 circular walks

1 3½kms / 2¼ miles

2 8½km / 5 miles



Thorpe Acre lies on the western side of Loughborough, linked to Garendon, the site of an ancient Cistercian Abbey and Deer Park.

Thorpe Acre's name derives from "hawker's settlement". Until the 1970's it was a small agricultural hamlet attached to the Garendon Estate. Several of the original buildings remain. The church was built in 1845 to replace Dishley Church; the Church Hall occupies the old school building. On the walk you will pass a number of landmarks and follow the inscribed finger posts of Thorpe Acre Trail.

Both walks start from Thorpe Acre Green, opposite All Saints Church on Knightthorpe Road.

Walk 1: 3½kms (2¼miles) allow 1 hour, relatively flat.

At the Thorpe Acre Village sign turn towards the church heading along Thorpe Acre Road.

Opposite the church are the converted buildings of Barnet's farm. Further down the road are two old cottages, the first is the old post office.

At the Plough Inn turn left into White Bridge Way. At the end cross Sandringham Drive passing the old stone bridge, cross the modern footbridge and turn left.

The moor around Gorse Covet wood was cattle grazing land for the Abbey. Look out for small sculptures created by local University art students along the trail.

A Follow the trail between the brook and the shopping centre following the Thorpe Acres Trail finger posts until it meets Buckingham Drive.

Cross and follow the path to Mount Grace Road.

The finger posts are carved with quotations.

The Black brook is Loughborough's largest brook and flows from Shepshed into the Soar.

B Here the signpost directs you left. Cross the road, go over the bridge and turn right into Stonebow Washlands. Check your bearings on the interpretation board and follow the route through the Washlands towards the ancient Stonebow Bridge.

The stone carved bench at the end of the board walk was made by Mary O'Neil. Stonebow Bridge was used by monks on their way to their sheepfold at Dishley

C At Stonebow Bridge turn back and continue on to Garendon Lane. Turn left towards Thorpe Acre.

Ahead and to your right you will see the Garendon Obelisk, one of several follies created by Ambrose Phillipps in the eighteenth century.



The Lane is part of the National Cycle Network so watch out for cycles. As you follow the lane notice the high wall on your right; the stones come from the ruined Abbey.

D When you reach the end follow the signs into Coe Avenue. Continue to the end of Coe Avenue across Althorpe Drive into Kenilworth Ave which takes you to Knightthorpe Road. Turn left to return to Thorpe Acre Green and the start of our walk. *Along Kenilworth Avenue is an interpretation board showing the route you have followed.*

As you reach Thorpe Acre Green you will see the route charted in mosaic (by Peter Massey), with further features. In the base of the mosaic is a time capsule containing various objects which were put together by the children at Thorpe Acre Junior school.

Walk 2: 8½km (5 miles), allow 2½hours, some farmland, some hard paths.

Follow the description for **walk 1 until point C**. Cross the bridge and continue up through the wood, called Bailey's plantation to reach a stile and lane at the top of the hill (this part is very sludgy and slippery in winter).

You are close to Dishley Grange, home of the agricultural and genetic pioneer Robert Bakewell who pre-dated Darwin.

1 Turn left down Pear Tree Lane. At the bottom of the hill follow a footpath straight ahead to the left of the hedge which takes you soon along the Black brook and away towards Hathern Road. When you reach Hathern Road turn left and follow the road until you reach the motorway bridge.

Where the road crosses Black brook, you will pass Shepshed Watermill on the opposite side of Hathern Road. The mill is open to the public on certain days during the year and is well worth a visit.

2 Just before the motorway, take the footpath on your left over two little bridges. Follow this until you reach the footbridge over the M1. Turn left, back through Garendon and to the imposing gatehouse that leads into Garendon Deer Park.

The Bavarian Gate or Red Arch is a fine monument. Others on the estate are a Temple of Venus and Triumphal Arch modelled on the Temple of Vesta and Arch of Titus in Rome.

Garendon Abbey stood not far away through the gates. The Cistercian Abbey was replaced by a more modern building for the March Phillipps DeLisle family until this too was demolished in the 1960s after a fire.

Before leaving take a quick look at the culvert in front of the gates. Unless lichen obscures, you'll see an inscribed stone set by Italian soldiers, imprisoned here during the 2nd World War.

3 At the Bavarian Gate turn along the Lane left towards Thorpe Acre, following a stone wall until you meet **point D on Walk 1**.

Follow the route of **Walk 1** back to Thorpe Acre.

The routes are clearly marked with bold, yellow topped waymarker posts and waymarker discs with the Parish Walks symbol.



Useful Information

Buses: A regular bus service runs to Loughborough including: Routes 127 Leicester-Coalville (Mon-Sun) Route 99 Coalville to Nottingham (Mon-Sat), Shepshed Sprinter 4 (Mon-Sat), No. 11&12 Thorpe Acre to Loughborough (Mon-Sun). Please confirm with Traveline (0870 608 2 608) before you travel.

Car: A6 or A512 to the Epinal Way (A6004), then west along Knighthorpe Road, south of the University. Car parking is available on street or at Gorse Covert shopping centre

Refreshments: Shops and a pub in Thorpe Acre and shops at Gorse Covert.

Toilets: Public WC in Gorse Covert Shopping / Community Centre, Maxwell Drive.

Walking - Be fit and well

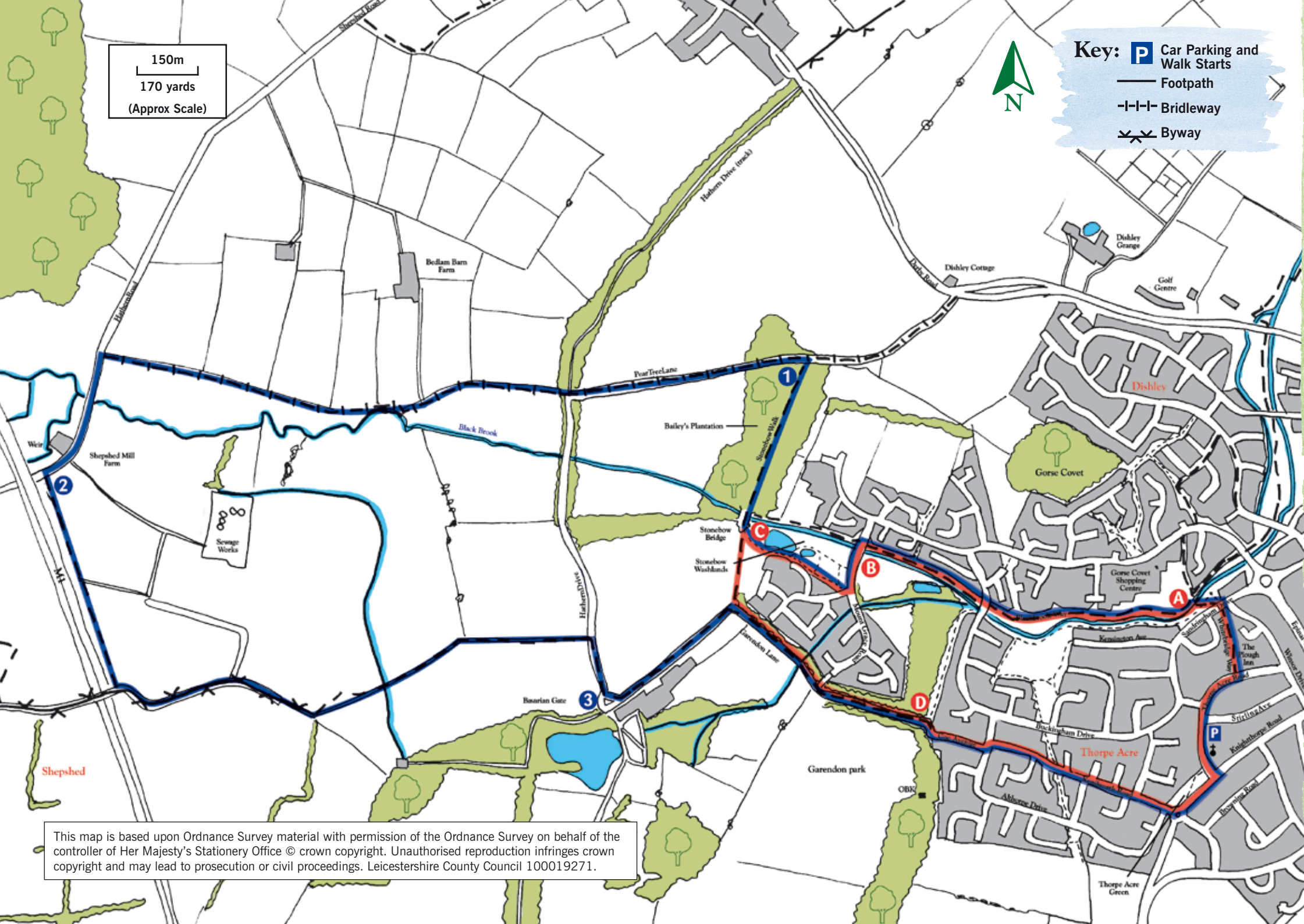
Walking is a form of exercise that is suitable and enjoyable for all ages. It's a free and fun way for families and friends to get fit together. Just 30 minutes of brisk walking on a daily basis can benefit your health and quality of life.



150m
170 yards
(Approx Scale)



Key: **P** Car Parking and Walk Starts
— Footpath
-|-| Bridleway
X/X Byway



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