

Desford was mentioned in the Domesday Book, but "Deor's Ford" is of Anglo-Saxon origin and evidence of Roman kilns has been found. There are several interesting old buildings. The village gave its name to Desford Pit, the site of which has been restored to nature and now has pleasant walks of its own. About 2 miles away, near Bagworth.

Walk 1: 4 km (2½ miles) allow 1 hour. Mostly field paths; easy walking with some slight gradients. Park near St Martins Church in Main Street and start at the church

The church is largely 13th and 14th century, heavily restored in Victorian times. There is a Norman font.

Go straight through the churchyard. As you exit through the gate you will see the footpath sign opposite. Follow the wall down towards a gate and enter the field.

A Take the right of two diagonal paths. The next field has a pond and various fowl. Keep straight on over pasture, until a double stile, bear diagonally right to a stile which takes you onto the railway line. *This is part of the original Leicester to Swannington railway built by Robert Stephenson in 1832, is the 3rd oldest railway in the world, carrying goods trains only since 1964.* Cross the line and next field to a footbridge. Bear right to cross another footbridge. Keep straight on with a garage with a clock on your right – this belongs to the former Desford Mill which is visible from here. *There has been a mill on this site since at least the 13th century.*

B In the top corner of this field is a gate with steps leading to a bridge over the mill stream. Take a diagonal left towards a telegraph pole in the middle of the next field. Keep the diagonal line to the field corner, where you cross another stream and a ditch out on to the road. Turn left and walk into Botcheston, keeping left at the road junction. Carry along Main Street until just after the red telephone box.

(For a refreshment stop, the Greyhound Pub is a little further along on the right)

C Turn left following the footpath sign, between two houses then slightly downhill. Cross the stream and

head straight to another footbridge. *This is Rothley Brook. It can be fast flowing and is good for Pooh sticks!* Keep straight on to cross the railway line, followed by a footbridge. Aim straight towards the yellow marker, midway along the top fence. Turn left and walk between the hedge and wire fence of the former sewage works. Turn right, following the wire fence. Keep straight on; do not turn left. Walk uphill and onto Little Lane. At the junction with Main Street you will see a thatched cottage on your right. *This is a 17th century timber framed building with eyebrow dormers in a typical Leicestershire style.* Turn left and retrace your steps back to the church.



Walk 2: 6½km (4miles) Allow 2 hours. Open countryside with slight gradients. Part of this walk can be muddy in wet weather.

Park near the Co-op in Newbold Road.

- 1 Take the footpath opposite Cottage Lane, to the right of The Malt House. *Possibly medieval, this has a box frame and massive granite chimneys.* The path slopes downhill between fences to an open field.
- 2 Turn left over a bridge and head straight across the large arable field. About 100m before the end of the field bear right to cross the ditch, which you follow to the stile. Keep straight across 3 fields of pasture, passing a row of cottages on your left. As you approach the factory cross the stile and walk in front of the buildings to the left corner of the car park, a bridge and onto a track.
- 3 Turn right then, after about 20m, turn left through a gate next to an old railway van. Go straight ahead into a copse. Turn right, then left. Keep the Christmas trees on your left and cross a stile onto a bridle path, and turn right.

A cottage on your left often has flowers and vegetables for sale. Go downhill and at a metal gate keep right, passing by a barrier and continue between 2 hedges. *This stretch can be muddy.* Cross the stream and pass through a hand gate.

- 4 With the hedge on the right walk up the next field, ignoring the footpath on the right. Maintain the same direction through three fields, across a track, then another field.
- 5 In the last field, Fox Covert will be on your left; full of bluebells in the Spring. When you reach the road, turn immediately right to climb a stile into the next field. Take a diagonal left line across the next 3 fields. You will see a farm to your right. Cross a track, then, follow the slurry pit to the next track. Carry straight on, across another track. Walk straight uphill, keeping the telegraph poles on your left. When you reach the brow you will see the yellow waymarker. Over the bridge walk towards the left of 2 waymarkers in a line of trees. Through a farm gate, cross the drive into another field. Head diagonally right to a tree at the corner of a hedge.



- 6 Turn left. *At this point over to your left, depending on the time of year and the amount of vegetation, you can see what remains of the moat around the medieval site of Lindridge Hall. This is private property, so please keep to the footpath.* Cross the stream and keep the hedge on the right. *This next field of rough pasture is the site of an early coal mine. The shaft sunk in 1875 was abandoned 2 years later due to flooding.* Pass by a wood then, 2 fields of pasture leading downhill to a stile. Ignore the wishway to the right; continue straight on. At the corner of this field is a gap where the path to the right is the one you took at the beginning of the walk. Retrace your steps up the hill back to Newbold Road.

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



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.

useful information:

Buses: Arriva 152, 153, Leicester to Market Bosworth & Ibstock

Refreshments: Several shops & pubs in the village. Tea-room at Tropical Bird Garden.

Key: **P** Car Parking & Walk Starts

--- Footpath

-|-| Bridleway

≡≡≡ Byway

Merrylees

Fox Covert

Lindridge Farm

Lindridge Hall Farm

Lindridge

Mapfield Lane

Main Street

Botcheston

Lindridge Lane

Former Sewage Works

Slupton Rd

Desford Hill

Newbold Rd

Little Lane

Main Street

Manor Rd

High St

Church Lane

Desford

5

6

4

3

2

1

C

B

A



280m

300 yards

(Approx Scale)