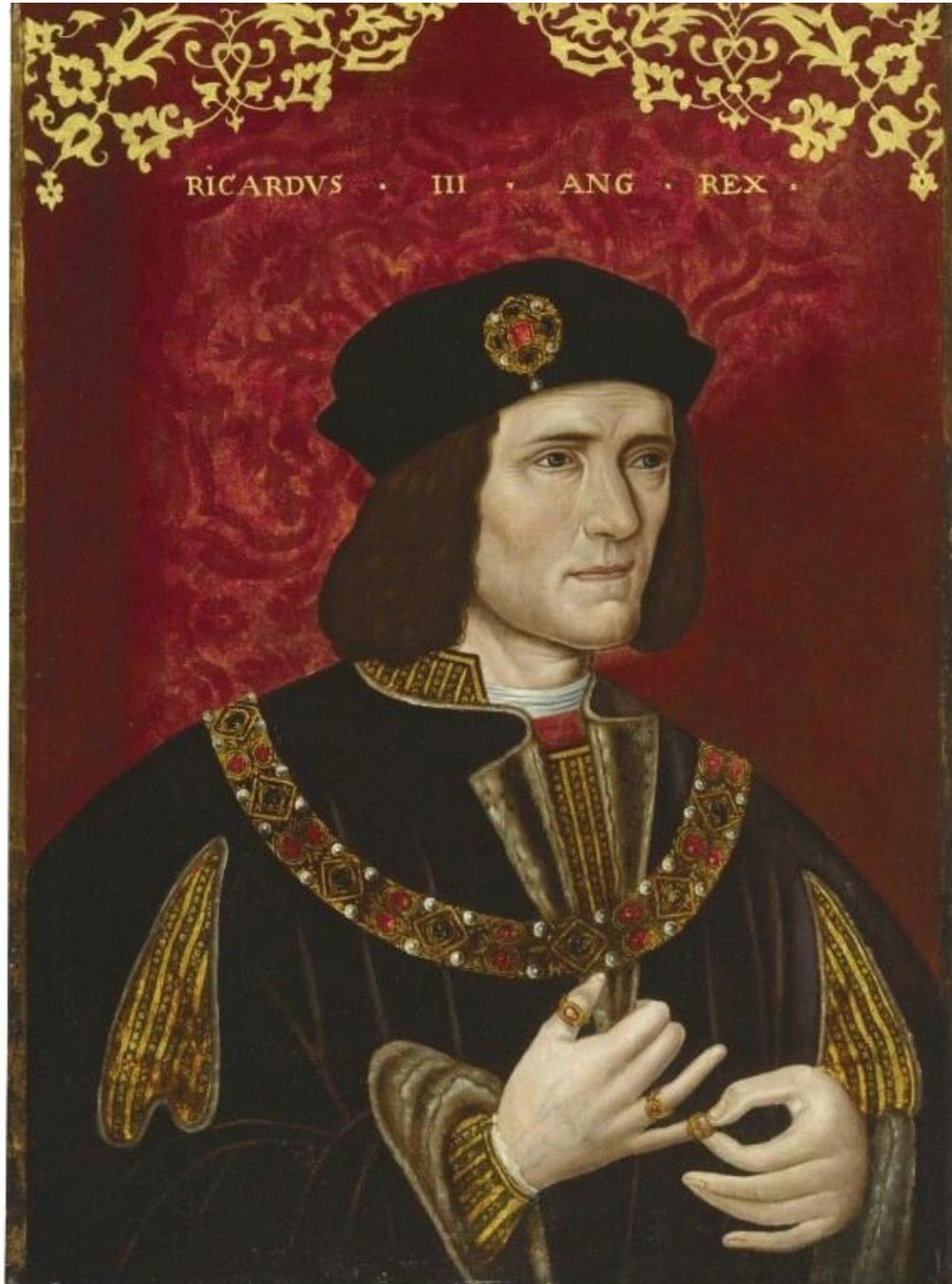


The Richard the Third Trail



Anon, late 16th century. Oil on panel. 25 ⅞ in. x 18 ½ in.
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Document R3T A: Section by Section Directions, PDF A

OS Landranger Maps 140, 141, 142

Our *Trail* intersects with, and/or uses parts of, the following long distance walks:

The Jurassic Way

The Market Harborough Round (our own)

The Macmillan Way

The Midshires Way

The Nene Way

The Rutland Round

The Uppingham Round (our own)

Total approximate distance, depending on options: 68 miles.

All distances for individual sections are approximate.

Introduction

Unlike our previous long distance walks – *The Uppingham Round*, *The Melton Round* and *The Market Harborough Round* – *R3T* is a point to point walk, and it passes through a major English city. As such, it demands a somewhat different approach to providing directions and contextual information for walkers. We have produced two documents, as downloadable PDF files, each with embedded photographs. ***R3T A: Directions***, and ***R3T B: Supplementary Information about Leicester***. **Please read them together to plan your itinerary and to familiarise yourself with associated documents.** *R3T: A* contains our usual field by field directions for the rural sections, with the route chosen to pass through some attractive landscapes, with bold type blocked sections noting places of interest. As with most long distance walks, there are places where one might go astray. These have underlined directions. This document also contains directions for passing through Leicester.

Please note that our *Trail* has no claims to follow the route that Richard actually took in any of his journeys (this would be impossible anyway given the public rights of way now available). It is simply a long distance walk from his birthplace to the site (more or less) of his death.

R3T B includes remarks on historical and architectural sites along, or near to, our route through Leicester, along with sources for further information. **PLEASE SEE PAGE 33 BELOW for details of additional downloads.** Anyone wishing to investigate Leicester in more depth might begin by contacting the Tourist Information Centre at www.visitleicester.info

R3T began after we decided to design and map a route following the establishment of Leicester as Richard's final resting place. Given his associations with Fotheringhay in the Soke of Peterborough (a location not far from King's Cliffe, through which our *Uppingham Round* passes) and Market Bosworth to the west of Leicester, the route almost chose itself. Getting through Leicester was an interesting challenge, and we hope we've solved the puzzle without sacrificing places of interest, and without a

laborious trek through mundane and traffic infested suburbs. We tried to delay the entrance to Leicester's built-up areas until the last minute, and to leave the city along a congenial path through some interesting 'edgeland' sites, though the stretch through Narborough cannot be completed without some walking along routine roads. Where possible we have always tried to keep walkers away from main thoroughfares by using footpaths and jitties.

The sections through Leicester amount to approximately 10½ miles, and walkers should plan carefully, since they are predominantly proceeding along hard surfaces, with plenty of possible detours to the Botanic Gardens, the Town Hall, etc. Note too that car parking in Leicester city centre can be a problem, and that the area at the entrance to the *Great Central Way* (the former track bed of the Great Central Railway, much used by walkers and cyclists) has no parking nearby. This area has been steadily colonized by De Montfort University, and is in any event best explored on foot. We have made suggestions for negotiating Leicester in the main body of our text below, following the section from Houghton on the Hill to Manor Road Extension, via Stoughton.

Getting out of Leicester was one problem. Another cropped up when the obvious route to Sutton Cheney – the nearest village to the *Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre* – passes through Kirkby Mallory, and indeed right next to Mallory Park racing circuit, which hosts a good number of events through the year. The walk from Kirkby Mallory, via Stapleton, to Sutton Cheney is an attractive part of *R3T* and we decided to keep it, rather than send walkers via alternatives, though a scrutiny of the OS Landranger map will suggest alternatives, even if they deviate markedly from the route we have mapped. Some walkers may not be bothered by noise from the circuit (which rather incongruously advertises itself as being located 'among tranquil lakes and rolling hills'); others are advised to consult Mallory Park's website for dates of events, and plan accordingly.

Leicester is now a famous multicultural city, and a fascinating one for historians and cultural theorists. Like all cities, it is a palimpsest of historical and cultural accretions and it is impossible in a document like ours to do anything but scratch a particular kind of surface. We've therefore tried to mention only those things which are close to the route itself (e.g. the frontage of London Road Station), and which can be explored without too much of a diversion. It should be added that we've concentrated on architectural features simply because they are easiest to notice *en route*. That these examples do not reflect Leicester's current diverse occupancy is simply accidental – there are no mosques, for example, on the route through to the Cathedral and the King Richard III Visitor Centre. A multicultural Leicester walk demands a quite different approach.

While towns and cities are inevitably overdetermined by their multiple histories, the countryside also has fascinating stories to tell. All our walks will provide an aesthetic return to those who undertake them. Yet the 'countryside' has both material and ideological contexts: read as a sequence of signs there are plenty of clues for further research for those interested in subjects such as land ownership, rural labour, industrialization, and so on. There are now so many publications about rural history, about country walking (including guides for other excellent long distance footpaths in the locality), and about country living that it seems invidious to provide even a basic bibliography. But it would certainly include classics such as W. G. Hoskins's *The Making of the English Landscape* (1955). Hoskins founded the first university department of English Local History, and his work includes ideas of continuing environmental relevance. He was Reader in English Local History at Leicester University College from 1938-1952, and Professor of Local History at the University of Leicester in 1965 until his retirement three years later. He has been commemorated by the Friends of the Centre for English Local History in the annual *W. G. Hoskins Lecture*. We'd like to emphasize the environmental context, since this has become increasingly

fraught over the decades. So if Hoskins continues to be important, Rachel Carson's groundbreaking *Silent Spring* (1962) remains a crucial text for national and international debates about how to farm the landscape. Walking any of our long distance routes puts us directly 'in the path' of these debates.

Prompted by Diane Davies's little book *Leicestershire Dialect* (Bradwell Books, 2015) we considered including some philological information about place names, but in the end decided this was beyond our remit. Anyone interested in how place names have been derived should be aware of A. D. Mills: *Dictionary of British Place Names* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

As with our previous Rounds, we've highlighted some of the notable churches en route, though our information is necessarily limited. Churches are some of the oldest buildings we can access (though in some cases a key may have to be obtained) and they often lie along footpaths. For the uninitiated, Richard Taylor's *How to Read a Church: A Guide to Images, Symbols and Meanings in Churches and Cathedrals* (Rider Press, 2003) is highly recommended. For those interested in Leicestershire's and Rutland's churches Leonard Cantor's *The Historic Parish Churches of Leicestershire and Rutland* (Kairos Press, 2000) is useful as an introduction. The following website should prove interesting: its 'Directory' lists the churches covered. As with all websites quoted here, we cannot guarantee its long-term survival, and we are not responsible for its content.

www.leicestershirechurches.co.uk

The standard compendium guide for churches remains Sir Nikolaus Pevsner's *The Buildings of England*, originally published by Penguin, with individual volumes by county. Later editions have revisions by other authors, with volumes now containing colour photographs issued by Yale University Press from 2003. Further information can be found online.

When we have encountered problems with overgrown paths, broken stiles etc. we've notified the local authority in question. (Sometimes land owners or farmers simply fail to cut a path through difficult to negotiate crops – oilseed rape being a notorious obstacle.) Responses have never been less than helpful, though it can take time to get things put right when resources are stretched. If you encounter a blocked path, try walking round the edge of the field. You will be doing a service to other walkers if you call in the problem to the local authority, which has a legal maintenance obligation. (Anything in Northamptonshire, which stretches into the Soke of Peterborough where we begin, can be reported using the *Street Doctor* online service.) Having mentioned local authorities we would once again like to record our appreciation of Leicestershire's and Rutland's excellent rural waymarking; the characteristic yellow topped posts can be seen from a good distance away and they help walkers to identify the direction of travel. If you come across any that are broken down, do let the local authority know. We are also indebted to the staff of Rutland County Council, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, and Northamptonshire County Council, who helped with various problems. We are especially grateful to the City Council for providing maps of the areas along the *Great Central Way* (see **R3T: B**).

Please observe the Country Code. Essentially, this means leaving things as you find them (gates shut or open), taking your litter home, and respecting the landscapes, flora and fauna through which you walk. Take particular care in fields with livestock. As with crops, these are someone's livelihood, and cattle, especially cows with calves, can cause serious injury if provoked. Without exception, we've found over the decades that mutual respect between farmers and walkers is always a desirable goal in the countryside. References in our directions to '5 bar' gates are generic: we mean the usual double size gates one encounters as entrances to fields, which may change their construction over the years.

All photographs in these documents were taken by DAW, unless otherwise indicated. We are very grateful for permissions to reproduce those taken by others, always without fee - a decided asset when researching, notating and writing up all our walks has been entirely self-funded.

**Elizabeth Bacon,
David A. Wragg,
Sue Wragg.**

Summer, 2017.



(Little) Dorrit (a.k.a. Dotty), Sue and David's rescued Jack Russell terrier, having a breather on *The Market Harborough Round* near Draughton, summer 2016. She walked all of our long distance routes as we mapped them, which means she's covered many more miles than us, as dogs usually do.



St. Mary and All Saints, Fotheringhay, on the River Nene.

Fotheringhay to King's Cliffe, via Woodnewton and Apethorpe: 7 miles.

Richard III was born in Fotheringhay in 1452, after the manor came into the possession of Edward III, who gave it to his son Edmund Langley, 1st Duke of York, founder of the Yorkist line. Richard III's father, Richard Plantagenet, 3rd Duke of York, was reburied in the church in 1476; his tomb also contains the body of his wife, Cecily Neville.

Only the motte and bailey of Fotheringhay Castle (c. 1100) now remains, after the building was razed in 1627. Mary Queen of Scots was held prisoner there from 1586 until she was executed on 8th February 1587. The earthworks probably originate in the 12th century, and predate the Castle's rebuilding in the 14th century.

The imposing church of St. Mary and All Saints makes a splendid sight across the surrounding fields. Sir Nikolaus Pevsner's *The Buildings of England, Northamptonshire* (second edition, rev. Bridget Cherry, 1973) tells us about the existing building's incorporation into the idea of a college attached to the Castle, which resulted in 'a grand and ambitious chancel', with a nave rebuilt 'to be of the same

height and width...[with] the same [being] stipulated for the aisles'. The chancel was destroyed in 1573 by Dudley, Duke of Northumberland following the dissolution of the college in 1553.

What remains, then, is a large fragment of the building just described, to include the west tower, the nave and the aisles. Pevsner concludes that the chancel must have been lower than the nave because of the latter's east window. The building's style is Perpendicular, and its attractions include its 'wide and airy' interior, 'decidedly East Anglian in character', and a 'very good' re-painted Perpendicular pulpit, whose testers include a Jacobean example.

This is a fine place, with a fine aspect, to begin *R3T*.

The Nene Way, the long distance footpath which begins in Badby, Northamptonshire, before running through Peterborough to end near The Wash, passes the village. (Various websites provide more information.) The sections beyond Thrapston progress through some delightful countryside, though the whole route has many points of interest as it tracks the course of the River Nene.

We get underway by walking down Fotheringhay's main street, heading west through most of the village. Just before the vehicle speed restriction ends, take the single track lane on the right. After a quarter of a mile or so you will find a footpath sign on the left as the lane swings round to the right. Enter and cross the field (a path should be indicated) to find after a short distance a gap in the hedge up ahead. Pass through, cross *The Nene Way*, and find the (probably quite narrow) gap in the hedge on the other side. Continue between hedge and fence. When you meet the farm track the correct route lies over the wooden bridge and through the field in front of you, but at the time of writing signage was inadequate, and there was no path cut through the crops as a guide. It is possible to follow this route by aiming for the top right hand corner of the field, then passing into the next field and continuing with the stream (Willow Brook) on your right, swinging left at the end of the field until you arrive at a wooden bridge. Continue here from the asterisk * in the next paragraph.

An alternative route, which was a permitted diversion signed by the landowner when we mapped this section in June 2017, is as follows. Do not cross the wooden bridge into the field but turn left to follow the farm track, which in time swings right to continue on its way. There are open fields on either side. When you get to a copse up ahead, a path on the right should be indicated by a waymarker disc and/or some other sign. Take this path to keep the copse on your left. Very shortly, leave the copse to cross the field towards Woodnewton, visible up ahead. When you reach the hedge *cross the bridge over Willow Brook and carry on along the left hand edge of the field. When you reach the end of this field simply continue. You will meet a metalled road which serves the small sewage treatment plant on your left. Walk between the houses to find a T junction. Turn right along Oundle Road which swings left to become Main Street. Continue all the way along Main Street, passing *The White Swan* pub, until you reach the church on your right.

As Main Street swings right past the church, take the single track lane on your left marked with footpath and 'No Through Road' signs. Cross the bridge (which looks as though it belongs to the house on your right) and simply continue with the hedge on your left. In time you pass through a copse, and a little further on a 5 bar gate (or a squeezeway at its side) to head down the slope towards the wood. Do not take the bridge that crosses the stream, thus to enter the wood, but turn right over the stile to keep the wood on your left.



Approaching the right turn from the track that enters the woods beyond Woodnewton.

Carry on to the end of the field; once there, do not enter the field in front of you across the grassy bridge but swing right to carry on with the hedge on your left. Now simply continue; large stone properties will come into view. You pass quite close to the border of the one on the left until you meet a metalled lane, which is, in fact, a bridleway not used by public vehicles (so your walk should be clear of traffic). Turn right here and proceed all the way to the edge of Apethorpe. You have now joined *The Uppingham Round*, which we will follow until we reach Barrowden.

When the bridleway swings right to run into the village you must carry on across it, along the signposted path to King's Cliffe. With a hedge now on your right, continue through this and the next field. At the end of the latter, cross the wooden bridge and the country lane and continue, still with the hedge on your right. At the end of the field go through the metal gate in the right hand corner and proceed along the right hand edge of the new field, with the hedge on your right. Exit this field by the bridge and hold course. Go through the gate at the end of the field, then cross the stile up ahead across the new, rather narrow, field. Continue between the fence on your left and the hedge on your right, passing through a 5 bar gate, then walking down the slope between the trees. Pass through the next gate and turn left along the track, walking parallel to King's Cliffe village. After about 75 yards or so, locate the gate on your right, pass through and down the steps, then across the bridge to pass the stone house/workshop on

your left. This brings you into King's Cliffe with the church on your left. If you walk up the road past the church you will find a pub called *The Cross Keys*.

King's Cliffe to Barrowden: 5½ miles.

Your route out of King's Cliffe lies at the other end of the village, where the road leads to Blatherwycke. So after passing the church, turn left along the main street (West Street) and go as far as you can until you reach the junction with a road (Wood Road) coming from your right. You must turn up **Wood Lane** (a right turn from Wood Road) and carry on up the track at the end of the metalled section. Going up the rise, this track leads into the wood directly ahead but you should take the stile/gate into the field on your left. Then proceed with the hedge on your left to a stile which allows you to cross a fence. Carry on holding the same line, now with the fence on your right. You will reach the wood ahead and enter over a stile. Keep to the meandering path; you will eventually reach the track bed of the old London and North Western Railway line, where you swing right. Almost immediately, and just before what remains of the bridge pillar, turn left up the bank and swing right to proceed through the avenue of trees, as illustrated:



King's Cliffe Wood: crossing the old London and North Western Railway track bed – go up the short rise and turn right...



...so you see this view. Follow the path ahead.

Railings will appear on your right as the path leads a little left, and the railway track bed below you bends away to the right. When the railings end, keep to the path through the wood.

When the fence on your left ends, bear left (not right, which will take you in the wrong direction). Then bear right when you come to a field and proceed to the gap in the hedge in front of you, where you can see another wood across the field. Walk round the right hand edge of this field until the wood is on your right – the access point is about half way along its length. (It used to be guarded by a stile, but this was broken down when we mapped *The Uppingham Round* in October 2009.) There is another meandering path to follow. You will come to a clearing where you should turn right onto a wider track which leads out of the wood via a gate.

Go slightly left downhill. (The stone buildings should be in front and on your right – do not take the stile in front of them which leads away from your route!) Aim for the stone bridge which leads you straight on towards the A43. Walk roughly parallel to the line of poplars on your right; the exit to the road is to the right of the building you can see ahead. Cross the A43 with care and take the gate with a sign 'Bridleway to Laxton'. You will now be following *The Jurassic Way* to Barrowden: the JW is signposted by circular waymarkers, bearing the image of a *Kallirhynchia sharpi* (which looks like a shell).

Go straight ahead towards Laxton Hall, but turn right at the next fence, following the JW markers over a stile to Wakerley Wood, which is entered in the right hand corner of the next field, via another stile. Carry on ahead, take a dogleg right-left at the bottom of the slope, and proceed to a T junction. Turn left towards a gravelled path, at which turn right. At the end, join the road leading left into Wakerley, with the wood now on you left. (The JW marker may be placed a bit misleadingly here, suggesting you should go through the car park.) Carry on towards Wakerley, round the bend in the road, after which you will find a sign leading you through the hedgerow on the left. Walk around two sides of the church, keeping to the edge of the field. As you turn the corner at the tower you will see a stile in the hedge ahead. Carry on until you come to the road, where you should turn left (ignoring the road to Barrowden). In a couple of hundred yards or so you will come to a sign reading 'Jurassic Way Footpath', leaving the road on your right. Follow this path into Barrowden, crossing the River Welland and skirting round the Mill Pond.



Barrowden Pond.

Alternative Route around Blatherwycke Lake, 6½ miles.

At the Blatherwycke end of King's Cliffe do not walk up Wood Lane. Instead, go down Orchard Lane on the left past the allotments. At their bottom corner take the stile on your right. Maintain a course on the left hand side of the first field and the right hand side of the next. Cross the stile and find the footbridge

over Willow Brook. Turn right and carry on along the waterside. After crossing further stiles you will come to Alder's Farm. You should carry on between the buildings, through a gate and over the field to the left hand corner, where there is another stile; then bear right to regain your direction. Carry on along the right hand side of this field. Blatherwycke Lake is visible through the trees to your right, and you may find an access point for a better view of the water and its inhabitants. Carry on until you reach Blatherwycke, noting the ruined house on your right. When you emerge onto the road, turn right and walk towards the other end of the village, crossing the fine stone bridge. When you reach the junction to Wakerley, go over the stile and proceed straight through the field, crossing another stile to continue down the left hand edge of this field. When you reach the corner take a left hand diagonal over the field, heading towards the left hand corner of the trees. Maintain your route through two gates, bearing right past the corner of the wood and cross the stile next to the stream. Go through the gateways to find the stone bridge on your left, then proceed as above on the main route towards the A43 and Wakerley Wood.

Optional detour: Barrowden is the closest approach of *The Richard III Trail* to **Rutland Water**, which lies about four miles away, north north east. By car, head for South Luffenham, then go through North Luffenham to Edith Weston, where there is good parking.

There are a number of relevant websites, with details of facilities and the Nature Reserve. See, for example: www.discover-rutland.co.uk/discover-rutland/rutland-water

Barrowden to Seaton, via Harringworth: 7 miles.



Walking beside the River Welland on the way to Harringworth.

Once in Barrowden you will arrive at a T junction. Turn left to pass the village pond on your left and *The Exeter Arms* on your right over the green. Carry on through the village until, at the far edge, you reach a crossroads signed to Seaton and Market Harborough, on the left. Take this option and almost immediately turn left at *The Jurassic Way* sign to proceed down the drive to Durant Farm. Again, almost immediately you will find a stile on the right (it should be marked with a *Rutland Round* disc) to let you into the field. Cross this field diagonally to pass over the next stile (in the hedge), and hold course (there should be a path in any crops) to keep to the right of the wooden electricity pole. Pass through the gap in the next hedge and when you reach the bottom of the field bear right at the waymarker to keep the new hedge on your left.

At the end of this long field turn left at the waymarker onto the end of a farm track, cross the stile and turn right to proceed with the hedge on your right. You are now tracking the course of the old London and North Western Railway which ran from Market Harborough to Stamford and Peterborough. The Welland Viaduct can be seen in the distance and will increasingly become a feature as we approach Harringworth. Simply carry on to cross three fields, keeping the hedge on your right. At the end of the third field swing left, following the hedge line, to find a stile which permits you to pass through the hedge to find a farm track. Turn left and carry on to pass the Rutland county boundary sign just before a bridge which crosses the River Welland. Immediately after the bridge turn right to continue on *The Jurassic Way* at a left diagonal. You will join the course of the Welland for this delightful stretch of the *Trail*. In time you will cross a farm track. Go through the gate and take a left diagonal to the top left hand corner of the field to reach Harringworth. Turn right into the village and pass the column with the cross atop, continuing along Gretton Road. Ignore all footpath signs until you have passed under the Welland Viaduct, then take the next footpath, signed on the right to head for Seaton.

Walk ahead to cross the bridge over the Welland, and carry on towards Seaton church up ahead. At the end of the field go through the gate to cross another bridge, and hold course. At the end of the new field cross the bridge over a stream and walk between the fence and the hedge to cross a stile which compels you to turn left. Swing left after a few yards and cross the stile to continue now with the fence on your right. You will reach the drive of the private house whose boundary you have been negotiating. Turn right along the drive to reach the road via the gate on the left. Cross the road at a right-left dog leg to find a gate in the hedge almost opposite, which takes you up the bank and down the other side of the LNWR track bed, previously mentioned. Cross the stile with its waymarker and carry straight on over the field. Cross the double stile and proceed to the left hand corner of the field where there is another stile in the dip. Cross to walk past the stone cottages on your left to emerge at Seaton church. Turn left (or carry on if you want to visit the pub) and then shortly turn right along Baines Lane. At the T junction turn left to walk through the village. As you leave Seaton turn left down Grange Lane which takes us to Lyddington.



The Welland/Harringworth/Seaton Viaduct.

Photograph by Richard Thomas, re-used under Creative Commons Attribution Share-alike License 2.0.

The diesel engine at the rear of the train is presumably being used as a banker for the steam engine at the front, as the ensemble heads for Corby.



The River Welland and viaduct on the way to Seaton.

Harringworth village lies almost underneath the Welland Viaduct, sometimes called the Harringworth, or Seaton, Viaduct. As we progress towards Seaton, further views become available. Grade II listed, and built between 1876 and 1878 with (reputedly) 20 million bricks made on site, it is the longest masonry viaduct over a valley in Britain, with 82 arches and a total length of 1,275 yards. It bridges the River Welland as it passes through this part of Rutland. The viaduct carries the double track line which, heading north, diverges from the main line between London St. Pancras and Leicester, north of Kettering. The line heads for Oakham, with a connection to the Leicester to Peterborough line at Manton Junction. It is mostly used for freight, but it has also been used for a limited passenger service from Oakham, through Corby (from where the service becomes more frequent) to and from St. Pancras. Periodically, the line carries steam excursions, when a good crowd usually assembles at or near the Viaduct.

Further information is available online.



The remains of Seaton Station (now a private residence).

The platform canopy can be seen behind the gates. The footbridge has exactly the same stock design as those at Narborough (see later in this document), and between Draughton and Maidwell on *The Brampton Valley Way* (see our *Market Harborough Round*). The station was on the line between Market Harborough and Peterborough. As noted above, the Harringworth Viaduct carries the line from Manton Junction, south of Oakham, to Corby, and is still in use. This line has a junction at Seaton for the branch at Manton which connected with Stamford, also still in use for east bound traffic from Leicester, via Melton Mowbray and Oakham.

Seaton to Stoke Dry: 4 miles.

Grange Lane ends at a farm. Enter the farm complex through the gate (or over the stile), and pass the barns on your right. Swing left and right through the trees to carry on with the hedge on your right through the huge field. Eventually, this track swings right through 90 degrees (you may be able to hear the stream in the undergrowth at this point) then left. So carry on, still with the hedge on your right. When the hedge comes to an end, swing left past the waymarker to continue along the grassy track, with a ditch on your right. At the end of this field swing right and left and proceed with the new hedge on your right. As the wood comes down to meet you from the hill on the left, at the end of the field pass through the 5 bar gate (or over the stile) with its waymarker, and carry on along the gravel track through the trees and hedge. Pass through another 5 bar gate (or over the stile) to keep to the track but almost

immediately turn left through a metal gate with its waymarker to proceed through the narrow field, with a playing field over on your right. Go through the next 5 bar gate and turn sharp right with the hedge on your right - you can see Lyddington just up ahead. Exit the field via the stile and pass between the houses. Swing right and you will come to the village main street, with *The White Hart* pub almost opposite. Cross the street directly and continue along Stoke Road (the nameboard comes up later). Just as you leave the 30 mph sign, locate the stile on the right and enter the field. Carry straight on to the far hedge. When you get there cross the stile to continue over the hill (paths should be marked through crops from this point on). Look behind you for a magnificent view! Cross the double stile in the next hedge, and another stile in the one after that. Pass through a gap in the next hedge to take a left diagonal through the field. This will lead you to the top corner, where you will emerge onto the A6003.

Lyddington is a fine village with many ironstone buildings, and a walk along its main street is worthwhile to get a feel for the place.

The Grade I listed Lyddington Bede House is now cared for by *English Heritage*. For more information, see:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/lyddington-bede-house



Lyddington Bede House.

Image reproduced by permission from www.britainexpress.com



Lyddington House. Interior view of roof structure.
Image reproduced by permission from www.britainexpress.com

Stoke Dry to Stockerston

Cross the A6003 and head down the lane opposite, signposted to Stoke Dry.

Option 1, Stoke Dry and Eyebrook Reservoir: 2½ miles.

For those who would like a closer look at Stoke Dry church with its interesting wall paintings, and/or Eyebrook Reservoir, carry on down the lane into the village. The church is on the left, just past the farm buildings. Resuming, continue down this road which swings right to track the eastern border of the reservoir, usually well populated with birders. Continue as the road swings left and at the T junction turn right down another narrow lane. This meets the road to Uppingham which passes through Stockerston. So carry straight on into the village to find the left turn into Church Lane, signed 'Village Only, No Through Road'. Then follow the directions below to Horninghold.



St. Andrew, Stoke Dry.

This is described by Pevsner as a 'most lovable church, small, in a small village off the beaten track, and full of curious features and furnishings'. It is rare to find Pevsner devoting a page and half of text to such a small village church. We cannot list the various features here; the WIKIPEDIA entry at April 2017 is certainly inadequate, should anyone be tempted to consult it. The website we cite in our *Introduction* is better, though Pevsner is a mandatory read. The interior wall paintings are a real curiosity. At one point, those in the Digby Chapel were thought to depict 'Red Indians' (Native Americans). This (art) historically illiterate fancy has been debunked, though it is still mentioned on some websites. In fact, the image, reproduced below, represents the martyrdom of St. Edmund, King of East Anglia, tied to a tree and killed with arrows. The church also includes Norman chancel arch shafts; on the north side we can see a dragon, a lion, a standing figure and an eagle, with a winged figure, which might be a bishop or abbot, on the capital. The south shaft has a bellringer, and a devil attempting to pull down a winged figure. The art of this church is very rare in England.



Digby Chapel, St. Andrew, Stoke Dry. Wall painting depicting the martyrdom of St. Edmund.

Eyebrook Reservoir:

This is a picturesque and interesting body of water. It sports a multitude of wildlife species, and is visited by ospreys introduced to the nearby Rutland Water; the programme led to a breeding pair for the first time in England for 150 years. For more information see:

www.ospreys.org.uk

Information on the reservoir's wildlife can be found at:

www.naturespot.org.uk/wild-place/eyebrook-reservoir

Birders might also like to consult the *Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society* at:

www.lros.org.uk/eyebrook.htm

Eyebrook was used as a practice run for the raid on the Möhne Dam by RAF 617 Squadron ('The Dambusters') in World War II. On 16th May 2013 a 60th anniversary fly-by occurred, to include one of the remaining Lancaster bombers.

Option 2, across the fields to Stockerston, via Stoke Dry Wood: 2 miles.

As the lane from the A6003 swings left, your route proceeds through two 5 bar gates in a broad space between a house on the right, and a bungalow on the left. (The signpost may well be buried in the hedge.) This is part of *The Rutland Round*. The yellow waymarker with the next gate is just up ahead. Pass through and carry on with the hedge on your left. Go through the next gate, still with the hedge on your left. At the next 5 bar gate the hedge ends. Cross the field at a left diagonal towards the far left top corner – a waymarker will gradually become visible. Views of Eyebrook Reservoir can now be had over to your left. When you reach the corner, go through the metal gate and continue with the hedge on your right along the narrow path, with more views of the reservoir. In due course the path swings round to the right and you will reach the edge of Stoke Dry Wood.



The view of Eyebrook Reservoir, as seen from Option 2 on a rather overcast day. This is the field route to Stockerston, before entering Stoke Dry Wood. Stoke Dry village is over on the distant left of the picture on rising ground.

Here, there are two waymarkers. The one on the right indicates continuance of *The Rutland Round*. The one on the left has a stile, which you must cross to enter the wood. Carry on between the trees and in due course this path meets a much wider track, with a Forestry Commission demeanour. Turn left here to continue into the wood. Do not deviate from this path, which after a while passes a waymarker on the right as you continue down the slope to pass another waymarker on the left. As you leave the wood,

go through a metal gate to pass the next waymarker. Now continue down the gentle slope of the field at a slight left diagonal. When you get to the fence at the bottom, cross the stile, then almost immediately another one, and then the bridge over the Eye Brook into the next field. Aim for the corner of this field (at the right hand edge of the cottages up ahead), cross the stile and go over the road to continue along Church Lane, signposted 'Village Only, No Through Road'.



**Bluebells along the route through Stoke Dry Wood, spring 2017.
Our *Trail* passes over the hills in the background, en route to Horninghold and Hallaton.**



Red Kites are a frequent sight in this area. This superb photograph was taken by Brian Rafferty, and is reproduced by permission. www.brianraffertywildlifephotographer.blogspot.co.uk

Stockerston to Hallaton, via Horninghold: 4 miles.

Just before you reach the end of this lane, go through the metal gate on the left hand side into the field, and turn right to pass by the grounds of the church and Stockerston Hall on your right. When you get to the end of this field pass through the gate with a waymarker and carry on with the hedge on your left. At the end of this field do not take the route past the waymarker straight ahead, but swing right to pass through the gate with the alternative waymarker, proceeding now with the hedge on your right. When this hedge comes to an end, carry straight on to find the next waymarker up ahead. Carry on with the new hedge on your right to go past the next waymarker, where you should take a slight right diagonal up the rise. You will arrive at the first of two waymarkers, with a metal gate. (**NB:** If this route becomes unavailable, pass through the gate at the second, or remaining, waymarker and turn left down the slope with the hedge. and then the wood. on your left to arrive at the road. Turn left and then take the right fork to walk into Horninghold. Turn right into the lane opposite the church to walk out of the village, then follow the directions in the second paragraph below). Pass through to take a right diagonal to find the right hand corner of this field, over the rise. Go through the gate here and continue between the

hedges to the farmyard. **DOGS ON LEADS HERE!** – there are usually many animals in adjoining fields and chickens in the yard. Pass through the yard to emerge onto the lane.

Go straight across and through the gate to pass the house on your left. When you come to the next waymarker and gate, pass through and turn sharp left. A waymarker and stile will come into view on the other side of the house. The route from here to Horninghold is essentially straight ahead, crossing half a dozen fields, and stiles with waymarkers, before you arrive at the edge of Horninghold. The final stile in this sequence lets you into the arm of a field to pass a fence and hedge which turn a right away from you to continue straight ahead. Proceed from here with the hedge on your left to find the next waymarker, and the stile which gives access to a narrow grassy jitty. When you get to the lane, turn right to head north, away from the village.

Before you reach the barns just up ahead, pass through the gate on your left, with its waymarker. Then continue with the hedge and trees on your right. At the next waymarker, turn right over the bridge and swing left to find a double waymarker and another bridge just up ahead. Cross, and head at a slight left diagonal up the rise of this huge field. There are superb views here. As you crest the rise Hallaton appears up ahead. Go down the slope towards the waymarker; when you reach it cross the bridge over a stream and carry on up the rise to a metal gate. Cross what remains of the old track bed of the London and North Western Railway and pass through another metal gate. Hold course to the top of the field, where the next waymarker should be visible. Cross the stile, go through the metal gate and emerge onto the road in Hallaton. Turn right, and at the T junction turn right again. Then turn left opposite *The Fox Inn* into North End.

Hallaton to Goadby

Option 1, across the fields: 3¼ miles.

Carry on until you leave the village; North End becomes Goadby Road. It does not carry through traffic and so is a good route for walkers. You will pass the hill on your left which was the site of a motte and bailey castle. Then cross the stream. *Those who wish to take the footpath across fields will see a waymarker on the right.* (The alternative route is mapped out in our next but one paragraph, below.) Climb up the grassy bank to the stile and waymarker. Enter the field and bear at a slightly right diagonal to pass the hedge on your right. You are aiming for the top right hand corner of this huge field. As you continue this section of the walk there are splendid views all round. Cross the farm track at the end of the field, and take the stile with its waymarker. Turn through a sharpish right diagonal to find the metal gate which allows you to pass through the hedge and across the stream. Hold course into the next field (there should be a path cut through any crops) and continue up the rise to cross another immense field. Go through the hedge at the next metal gate and waymarker, and continue to hold course across this next smaller field. Go past the waymarker with no gate into the next, and larger, field. At the end of this field, cross the stile at the waymarker. You have now reached the route of *The Midshires Way* which runs south (your left) to north (your right) towards Tugby along the farm track.

We must follow the line of the waymarker disc indicating straight ahead towards Goadby. So carry on across the field on the other side of the track, aiming gradually towards the hedge on your right. There is a waymarker about half way along the field which tells you to pass into a wooded area. There is then a metal gate; pass through and carry on to exit the trees through another metal gate. Walk between the ponds, and look for an unmarked gap in the hedge as you then swing left. Cross the plank bridge and

pick up the waymarker over to your right by walking round the edge of the field. Now simply hold course with the hedge on your right through all the fields until this same hedge swings to the left. Here there is a gap on the right with a metal gate, on the far side of which we have a Clapham Junction of waymarkers and possible routes. Turn sharp left. Do not follow the hedge as it bends left towards a 5 bar gate, but hold course for the paddocks, where a series of waymarkers confronts you. (**NB:** horse paddocks have a habit of moving, though the yellow topped waymarkers should be permanent fixtures.) You will progress through a single metal gate, two more in quick succession, then possibly a removable tape barrier, then a 5 bar gate. Go through this last to cross the strip of grass to another metal gate and waymarker. Walk ahead and swing right when very shortly the hedge ends, to cross the stile with yet another waymarker. Now head across the field at a slight right diagonal to walk down the steep slope. At the bottom you will see a public footpath sign which lets you onto the lane just outside Goadby, via a stile. Turn right and walk into the village. *At the junction turn left and carry on down this village street, walking out of the village until you reach a T junction with a barn opposite. Turn right (signed to Tugby), and almost immediately take the footpath on your left signed 'Rolleston 1½ miles'.

Option 2, the hard surface route for wet weather: 3¼ miles.

*For those who prefer a hard surface, simply carry on after the stream on Goadby Road. In time you will encounter an 'S' bend, after which the metalled road becomes gravelled, before reaching the top of rising ground to encounter a fairly flat open area with wide views. You will then arrive at a gap in the hedge up ahead, with a waymarker. This is the intersection with *The Midshires Way*, which comes in from your left, and is signed. Simply carry on down the track until you reach the country lane. Turn right and walk down the steep hill into Goadby. Then follow the directions from the asterisk * in the previous paragraph.*

Goadby to Gaulby, via Rolleston: 5 miles.

Walk between the hedges; at the end of this avenue pass through the gate with a waymarker, and walk down the steepish slope of the field to the next waymarker, about half way along the hedge line. Cross the bridge over the stream, almost immediately at the next waymarker, passing through two gates in the process. Continue between the trees of the woody area, carrying on with the hedge on your right when the trees end, passing under the power lines. The path turns into a farm track which swings left at the end of the hedge, but you must hold course through the field (a path should be cut through any crops) to meet another farm track. You can see how this track leads up the rise towards the Rolleston Estate, so carry on along it, through a couple of gates, to pass Rolleston Lake on your left.



Rolleston Lake.

Walk through the Estate until you reach a T junction, on the other side of another set of gates (the main one electrically operated – use the smaller of the two).

Turn right at the T junction and then left to take the lane signposted 'Billesdon 1 [mile]'. Pass through two metal 5 bar gates. After the second gate swing left almost immediately to take a diagonal past the waymarker on the verge, and aim for the left hand corner of the field. Pass through the metal gate with its waymarker and continue with the hedge on your right. At the next gate and waymarker turn sharp right – you will see the next gate letting you onto a metalled road which serves the houses (old stable blocks) on your right. Continue up to the main road. This is the B6047 (which connects Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray, passing over the A47), and it is often very busy so PLEASE TAKE CARE HERE. Turn right and you will see after a few yards a lane on the other side marked 'Illston Gated Road 1¼ [miles]'.



**Gated Road to Illston in the early spring.
The bridleway and footpath sign is on the right, a few hundred yards ahead.**

Take this lane and after a few hundred yards you will be able to locate a footpath and bridleway sign on your right. Enter the field and carry on with the hedge on your right. You will pass another waymarker at the bottom of the field as you enter a grassy track. This track takes you to a metal 5 bar gate at the precincts of a farm. Continue ahead to pass the farm on your left behind the hedge. The metalled lane loops round the farm and past two houses – carry straight on through the 5 bar gate. At the next waymarker you may be tempted to carry on ahead (it looks plausible) but what would be a convenient route ends up at padlocked gates on to the road just outside Gaulby – clearly, the farmer wants everyone to keep out. So at the waymarker swing right, go through the metal 5 bar gate to pass the houses, thus to arrive at the road (which is often not very busy). Turn left and walk into Gaulby. Pass the church on your left and at the T junction turn right into Stoughton Road, unless you want to have a look at King’s Norton church, in which case carry straight on down Norton Lane, with the church becoming visible in the distance. This building is, according to Nikolaus Pevsner in the Leicestershire edition of *The Buildings of England*, ‘one of the most remarkable [of the Early Gothic Revival churches] in England’. Should you take this option we have included the directions for re-joining our *Trail* from King’s Norton. This route connects with the one from Gaulby described immediately below, at the asterisk *.



St. Peter, Gaulby, April 2017 – a church with a remarkably narrow nave and chancel.

St. Peter, Gaulby, makes an interesting comparison with the remarkable church at King's Norton (see below). Pevsner sees it as transitional to the latter's architectural consistency. The original late Perpendicular style chancel was not altered by re-building in 1741, and some of its elements were taken over into the nave, but the tower is 'far less accurate or archaeological...[t]here is a great deal of progress from Galby [sic] to the church in King's Norton...but the fenestration of the nave at Galby points the way'. (Though it is possible to walk directly from Houghton on the Hill to King's Norton, we have taken the route through Gaulby so these comparisons can be registered.)



St. John the Baptist, King's Norton.
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St. John the Baptist, King's Norton: Interior view.
Image copyright *LeicesterPhoto Ltd.*, reproduced by permission.

St. John the Baptist church in King's Norton (1757-75) is much valued by Pevsner:

Of the churches of the Early Gothic Revival this is one of the most remarkable in England ...[t]he whole and especially the tower show a seriousness of purpose not surpassed before about 1800...the [west] tower is an amazingly archaeological piece of work: the stages are divided by three friezes of different, all accurate, designs...[w]here else in England would there have been so powerful a neo-Gothic tower at so early a date?...The interior is wonderfully complete and unchanged.

Gaulby (via King's Norton) to Houghton on the Hill

From Gaulby, omitting King's Norton: 2½ miles.

The footpath sign may be obscured by vegetation, but the grassy track is easily found on the right, just after the first house along Stoughton Road. As you progress, go down the slope with the hedge on your right; at the bottom pass by the hedge coming across on the left (there is usually some running water here, easily crossed) and head diagonally left through the next field – as with most of what follows there should be clear paths cut through any crops. At the bottom of this field, pass through the hedge with its waymarker and walk into the little copse. Enter the next field over the stream and pass the waymarker and proceed at a slight left diagonal up the rise. At the end of the field, pass through the hedge with its waymarker and hold course down the slope towards the hedge line. When you reach the hedge, turn left and move towards the end of the field. Just before the hedge begins to curve gently to the left locate a gap in it, with a double waymarker. Go through and then head diagonally left to cross a long but comparatively narrow field to pass the next waymarker at the gap in the hedge. Cross the footbridge and head through the next field at a slight left diagonal up the rise.

* You will reach a metal gate with a waymarker; pass through and carry on through the field to the right hand corner to find the next gate and waymarker, then continue with the hedge on your left. About half way through this field swing a little right to find two metal gates in the hedge up ahead, about half way along its length. Now carry on directly across the field, through the next gate and up the rise to enter St. Catherine's churchyard in Houghton on the Hill.

To include King's Norton: 3 miles.

Walk up Main Street to the top of the village; you will arrive at a T junction. The footpath sign is opposite. Pass through the hedge, and you will see two waymarkers on the other side of the field. The one on the right is the most direct route, so head towards it. (Once again, a path should be cut through the crops.) The route here leads towards a copse just up ahead, which you should pass by keeping it on your left.

Should you need to, getting to the other waymaker involves first turning hard left as you enter the field and walking a short distance before arriving at double metal gates on your left which give access back to

the road. Turn right into the body of the field and walk towards the waymarker at the end of the hedge growing towards you (so you see it end on). Keep this hedge on your right until you reach a gap. Pass through and continue, with the copse on your left. You are now at the point described in the previous paragraph.

Carry on to the end of the copse and immediately take a left diagonal into the field. Walk down the slope and at the bottom swing right past the waymarker and continue up the rise towards the copse at the top of the field. Pass these trees on your right to go down the next slope. At the bottom, cross the little footbridge and hold course up the rise. At the top, hold course again, keeping the rather undifferentiated 'scrubland' to your left. You will reach the metal gate, as described above *. Follow the directions into Houghton on the Hill.



Decay and replacement: the old and 'new' footbridges between Gaulby and Houghton on the Hill, looking back down the route, April 2017.

Houghton on the Hill to Manor Road Extension, Leicester, via Stoughton: max 5½ miles.

Exit the churchyard and turn left. The road swings through a tight right hand bend, but as it then swings left carry straight on along the footpath between houses (a jitty signed to Bushby), to pass through the

edge of a housing estate, arriving at a metal gate into a field. Pass through and head towards the hedge, pretty much straight ahead. At this point, and again before arriving in Bushy, you will see three of the tall buildings of the University of Leicester in the far distance. (The smallest one, on the left, is the James Stirling Building – see **R3T: B** for a photograph.)

Go through the hedge to pass a waymarker then hold course down to the bottom of the field. Go through the hedge and metal gate at the next waymarker and continue ahead, past the paddocks on your right. Go through two metal gates each side of a farm track and proceed across the field to the next metal gate and waymarker. Pass through this gate and find a path through the crops (which may involve a rapid right-left turn). The next waymarker should just be visible up ahead at the far side of this huge field. Go through its metal gate and carry on to the next one at the end of the following field, keeping the hedge on your right. At the next metal gate keep to the right of the hedge. Pass through the next field at a right diagonal. When you reach the hedge continue through the gate with its waymarker and take a left diagonal through this final field. Edge your way towards the line of houses over on the right to find another metal gate and waymarker. Carry on to the right hand corner of the field to find the gate which lets you into a small housing estate.

Proceed to the T junction, turn left, and carry on until you reach the *Rose and Crown* pub on your left. Find the footpath which begins on the other side of the pub car park, giving access to open countryside beyond. Cross the stile here and carry on for a short distance with the hedge on your left until you reach another stile and waymarker. Cross and continue down the slope with the hedge on your right. Cross the stream via the next metal gate and waymarker and turn left to locate the next metal gate and its waymarker a little distance ahead. Pass through the gate and proceed almost straight ahead to the top of the field, where you'll find another metal gate and waymarker. Here you will meet a well used track at right angles, which leads to a layby on the right, just off the country lane. But this is not the place to emerge. Instead, carry straight on to the right hand corner of the field, where a stile lets you onto the lane just mentioned.

NB: There is now a choice. The quickest way into Stoughton means using the country lane, but it is often surprisingly busy, and rather dangerous because there are no verges. If you walk this way, pass the church on your right after swinging round a left hand bend and at the T junction turn right into Gaulby Lane. Carry on out of the village to the T junction, then proceed across the fields to Manor Road Extension (see para 2 immediately below).

Instead we recommend as follows:

Before you reach the stile, there is a footpath sign pointing to your left. Take this route and walk with the hedge on your right. At the gap between hedges cross into the next field, thus to walk now with the hedge on your left. At the end of this field cross back to walk with the hedge on your right again. You will emerge onto a single lane track. Turn right and walk to the T junction. Turn right again to walk more safely into Stoughton. You will proceed along Gaulby Lane, passing the church on your right, until you leave the village and arrive at a T junction.

Enter the field at the signpost opposite and head towards the houses up ahead. (A path should be cut through any crops.) There is a waymarker at the end of this field. Swing right here to cross the plank bridge, then take a slight left diagonal (again, a path should be cut). This will bring you to a wooden gate which lets you continue up to the back gardens of the houses you have been aiming for. Turn right and left to emerge onto Manor Road Extension.

Leicester section, approximate distances:

From Manor Road Extension to Leicester Cathedral: 5 miles.

From Leicester Cathedral to the end of the *Great Central Way*: 5½ miles.

NB: At this point please refer to Document *R3T: B*, which provides supplementary information, including references to further documents, about your journey through Leicester. This document is essential to appreciate the many points of interest along, and close to, our route. The document begins with information about Manor Road, Oadby and its environs.

You can also download two very useful documents kindly supplied to us by Leicester City Council. These are made available for us by permission of LCC, and all content belongs to their copyright. These maps contain detailed routes along, and possible variations to, your route out of Leicester along the *Great Central Way*. Our *Trail* can be followed without these documents, but they show surrounding areas and places of interest. The documents appear in route direction order as:

riverside-central-2-of-3

riverside-south-1-of-3

Alternatively (or additionally), download the following, which covers the same area in a single document, with one or two details omitted – with thanks again to LCC:

LCC CycleMapSouthCentral

You will be passing through a conservation area along Manor Road, and through parts of Stoneygate en route to Victoria Park. Details of downloadable PDFs for these areas are included in *R3T: B*.

Continuing, then:

Turn right here (the footpath carries on opposite). Proceed to the bubble roundabouts and walk straight across to continue along Manor Road. Cross Stoughton Drive South and continue along Knighton Grange Road. After a short distance you will arrive at Glebe Road on your left, which gives access to the Botanic Gardens. If you wish to visit them, simply turn into Glebe Road – the entrance to the Gardens is on your left after a short distance.

Otherwise, carry on along Knighton Grange Road until you reach its end. Turn right into Guildford Road. At the end of Guildford Road go straight across to Allandale Road, swing left past the shops until you turn left into Francis Street. At the T junction turn right into Stoneygate Road. Just after the left hand bend turn right into Albert Road. You will arrive at London Road, one of Leicester's main trunk routes. Cross with care and turn right. Go past Clarendon Park Road, and just after the traffic lights locate the jitty: Dukes Drive. This comes out into North Avenue. Then take a right turn into The Avenue, and then left into Knighton Park Road, a dead end for vehicles. You will see the extensive area of Victoria Park on the other side of this busy road. Cross at the lights and turn left along the pavement, then taking the path into the park after a few yards. Continue along this path to view the Leicester University James

Stirling Building over to your left. When you reach the end of the path turn right to approach the Edwin Luytens War Memorial. Then carry on to pass the De Montfort Hall on your left. When you come to the gates of the Park you will have arrived on a bend where Granville Road becomes Regent Road. Carry straight on, with the car parks on your right on the other side of Granville Road. When you come to the first set of (pedestrian) traffic lights swing left into New Walk. This highly valued pedestrianized route to the city centre passes Leicester Museum and Art Gallery on your left. (Just before this point, and having crossed the dual carriageway by the bridge, you can turn right to view Leicester London Road Station's impressive frontage – **see RT3: B under 'Detours'**.) You will eventually cross King Street before the final, short, section of New Walk finds you at Welford Place. You are now heading for Leicester Cathedral and *The King Richard III Visitor Centre*.

Cross Welford Place, past the statue of John Biggs, to proceed down Pocklington's Walk. This road swings right, and if you follow it round you can take a short detour to view Leicester Town Hall and Square (**see RT3: B under 'Detours'**). If you carry on past the Town Hall and turn left just before reaching Gallowtree Gate you can visit Leicester's famous Covered Market, the largest of its kind in Europe. It was established over 800 years ago, and for around 700 of those years it has stood on the present site. It sells all manner of goods and foodstuffs; it includes an indoor market, established in 1973.

Otherwise, carry on down Berridge Street. Pass Friar Lane on your left and enter Grey Friars, taking the first left into St. Martins. Leicester Cathedral is immediately on your right, with *The King Richard III Visitor Centre* on your left.

**

We are now heading for the *Great Central Way*, our route out of Leicester to Sutton Cheney and the *Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre*. Carry on along St. Martins, which becomes Peacock Lane. Turn left along Southgates – you will see De Montfort University up ahead. Cross the dual carriageway at the traffic lights and turn left to enter the University precincts. Pass the *Newarke Houses Museum* on your right, opposite Magazine Square. You have now entered *The Newarke*. (The church of St Mary de Castro can be viewed by turning right down Castle View.) Pass Trinity House and the old Alms Houses to find the entrance to Castle Gardens on your right. Enter the Gardens and keep to the path; you will soon see a metal footbridge which crosses the Grand Union Canal on your left. Cross the bridge and swing left to pass between the De Montfort University buildings. Cross the road at the traffic lights to find the entrance to the *Great Central Way*, which is signposted. This is the site of the now demolished Bowstring bridge (see **RT3: B** – the green plaque reproduced there can be seen on the wall of a shop over the road if you look to the right).

(If, for some reason, Castle Gardens are closed simply carry on to the T junction with Western Boulevard. Cross the road, turn right, and the entrance to the *GCW* is on your left just before the traffic lights.)



Now simply carry on along the *GCW*, with any detours you desire, according the maps we've provided for download (see above).

Leaving the *Great Central Way*, and through Narborough: 5 miles.

At the end of the *GCW* the path swings left, past the Nature Area on your right, to emerge into a housing estate. Carry straight on down Needham Avenue (not signed until the far end) and then turn right into Cork Lane. At the end of this road, carry on along the *Guthlaxton Trail*, passing over the locks on the Grand Union Canal, before crossing a road. Continue ahead to cross the River Sence, and pass under the railway to emerge onto Winchester Avenue.

Turn right and walk to the roundabout, then turn right again (the 4th exit) onto the B582, which is signed as such a little farther ahead. Take the left hand pavement and when you reach Victoria Road on your left, turn into it. Proceed until you reach Station Street on your right. Take this no through road and you will find your next footpath on the left towards the end, opposite the *Whetstone Way*.

Carry on, but do not take the left hand option when you reach the bridges through the embankment on your left. Instead turn right after crossing Whetstone Brook and carry on through the metal gate. Go through another metal gate, keeping the brook on your right: do not at any point cross over into fields on the other side. The path swings round to run parallel to the M1 before you reach a waymarker, which tells you to swing left to pass under the motorway. Pass through another metal gate and track the edge of the field, soon swinging left to walk with paddocks on your right hand side, thus to emerge onto Riverside Way, with houses opposite.



Narborough Station Footbridge – compare the stock design with that at what remains of Seaton Station (see earlier in this document), and the relic between Maidwell and Draughton on the old Northampton to Market Harborough line; now *The Brampton Valley Way*. Our *Market Harborough Round* contains a section along the BVW, to include passage through Kelmarsh and Oxendon Tunnels (optional, but not to be missed).



Derelict iron footbridge on *The Brampton Valley Way* between Draughton and Maidwell, on a suitably leaden winter's day. See our *Market Harborough Round* for more details.

Turn right and walk along this road which passes Narborough Station before reaching a T junction. Turn right here and then take the first left, along Church Lane. At the top take the left hand option of three entrances to walk past the cemetery on your right. This path crosses a busy dual carriageway and continues on the other side. When you reach the end, swing left to emerge onto the bend where Desford Road becomes Forest Road. Turn left along the former and cross over as soon as possible so you can turn right into Copt Oak Road, as Desford Road swings left to reach the roundabout. Carry on until you reach the end of Copt Oak Road, then walk straight ahead along the footpath, which ends at a car park and *The Copt Oak* pub on your left.

Narborough to Thurlaston: 3 miles.

You have reached Hardwicke Road. Cross over and carry on straight down the leafy lane opposite, between houses. Ignore the footpath sign at the bridge and go to the end of the lane to find a waymarker at a metal 5 bar gate. Pass through and take a right-left dogleg to proceed to the next waymarker. Carry straight on with the hedge on your right. Exit this field in the top right hand corner via a metal gate. Pass the next waymarker almost immediately and hold course, now with the hedge on your left. At the end of this field, pass through the metal gate at the waymarker. There is now a curious situation: the path carries on straight ahead but another waymarker asks you to turn right over a wooden bridge, only to rejoin the path a few yards on by swinging left again. (Does this little section become flooded in wet weather?) So essentially, hold your course until you reach the road up ahead.

Cross the road at a right-left dogleg to continue our *Trail* at the 'Public Bridleway' sign. Carry on down this hedge/tree lined track, which will in due course lead you to the edge of the M69 motorway. Ignore the offer of a footpath on the left just before you get there and carry on into the field, to track the

border of the M69 on your right. (This is a noisy part of the country sections of the *Trail*, but it cannot be avoided.) You will see a bridge across the motorway up ahead, indicated by a waymarker. Cross over. With Thurlaston visible over the fields, you now have a choice: crossing the stile in front of you brings you in due course to the road into the village (turn right). This road can be quite busy, so a closer approach can be found by turning right and walking a mirror image path to the one on the other side of the M69, so the motorway is again on your right. When you get to the end of the field, turn left to keep the hedge on your right. The next waymarker stands a few hundred yards up ahead, and should be visible. Here you have another choice. You may pass through the hedge to find a Permissive Path which should be cut through the crops. This brings you onto the road just outside Thurlaston, just beyond Hill View Nursery. If this route is unavailable (Permissive Paths sometimes disappear if the Stewardship Scheme to which they are related no longer applies) simply carry on with the hedge on your right to the next waymarker. Here you should cross the hedge to keep it on your left in order to reach the road via a gate. (If overgrowth or crops make this passage difficult carry on to the top corner of the field, where you should find a way through the hedge to the gate just mentioned.) Turn right and walk into Thurlaston.

Thurlaston to Kirkby Mallory, via Peckleton: 4 miles.

Turn left into Church Lane. Carry on past the church and out of the village, ignoring the signpost on your left. As the road swings left ignore the farm track on your right and carry on for about a quarter of a mile to find a signpost on your right. Cross the stile and continue with the fence on your left. At the end of the field cross the farm track through two gates and continue, now with the fence on your right. Go through the next gate and hold course to find the waymarker at the end of the field. Go through the gate and carry on with the hedge on your left to reach the busy A47 main road, via a stile. Cross with care and go over another stile into the field. Continue at a slight left diagonal to find a waymarker, beyond the slightly rising ground, in the hedge on the left of this field, a little before the left hand corner. Cross the bridge through the hedge, turn right and pass through the next hedge with its waymarker and a plank bridge over the stream. Cross the new field at a left diagonal and aim for a spot just to the right of the house up ahead. You will find a gap in the hedge with a little wooden bridge. Pass through and simply carry on with a hedge and fence on your right. You will reach a gravel track; proceed along past a house (which used to be a barn and a stable block). As the track swings right carry straight on to find the waymarker in the fence just to the left of Peckleton church (which has been visible for quite a while). Cross the stile and emerge from the corner of this small field onto the track by the side of the church.



St. Mary Magdalene, Peckleton.

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Turn left and walk past the house on your left, then between hedges until you reach the lane. Turn right and almost immediately left at the footpath sign, to cross the stile and enter the field. The next waymarker is in the hedge a short distance ahead. Negotiate a double stile, and then go through a gate in the fence just a few yards ahead. Cross the field to find the next waymarker in the hedge – you will be closing in on the road behind the hedge to your right. Pass through the hedge, but aim for a slight left diagonal away from the road in this field. Pass through the next hedge, but now turn right to exit the new field through the hedge on your right, opposite the modern cottage on the other side of the road. (A footpath sign should be visible.) Turn left and walk into Kirkby Mallory – there is enough verge on the left hand side of the road to help with traffic here.

**Kirkby Mallory to Sutton Cheney, and the *Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre*, via Stapleton:
4 miles.**

At the crossroads hold course to continue along Church Road. Just before the entrance to Mallory Park, locate the footpath sign on the left. Enter the field and proceed at a right diagonal towards the hedge and trees coming up over on the right, finding the gravel track at the waymarker. Continue along this track to pass through a gap in the hedge up ahead. Carry on with the hedge on your right to meet another gravel track coming up from your left. Join this track to pass a waymarker, before another

waymarker appears just round the corner, with a stile. Cross and turn right to keep the Mallory Park circuit boundary on your right. Cross the stream via a narrow single plank bridge (no handrail!) in the bottom left hand corner and continue with the grassy bank on your right. You will encounter two waymarkers along here a short distance apart; at the second, take a right diagonal across the enormous field – you should be able to spot the next (distant) waymarker in the hedge up ahead. When you reach it, go through a gap in the hedge, cross the stile with a plank bridge and continue with the hedge on your left. Cross the next stile with its waymarker and aim at a slight right diagonal to find the next stile and waymarker in the hedge on the far side of the field. Cross the stile and head at a slight left diagonal up the rise. Cross the stile up ahead, and the farm track, and go through the single gate to continue with the hedge on your right. Hold course to pass another waymarker until you reach a metal gate, with its own waymarker. Pass through and continue across the field. At the next waymarker turn sharp right, and then almost immediately sharp left at another waymarker, to emerge onto the A447.

Cross this road to the pavement, turn left, and carry on until you reach Dadlington Lane. Turn right here and proceed to the recreation ground a short distance along on your right, after passing Beale's Close. Enter the recreation area (the footpath is signed with a disc) and cross diagonally to find the next waymarker in the corner. Cross the stile and hold course for the next waymarker in the fence up ahead. Cross the stile here and swing left through the trees to cross a double stile and a wooden bridge. You should now see two further waymarkers lined up ahead. So cross the field to take another double stile, and continue with the hedge on your left. Cross the next stile at the waymarker and turn left onto the gravel track, which goes past a house on your left. When the track runs out, enter the field through a 5 bar gate. Walk to the top right hand corner, using another gravel track. As this swings left take the stile on your right and walk on with the hedge on your left. The next waymarker is a little way inside the hedge line up ahead from the top left hand corner. Cross the stile – Sutton Cheney is now within sight.

At this point the posted directions may be somewhat confused. Make sure to aim for the bottom left hand corner of this field - if there is no line cut through the crops, simply walk right around the edge. In fact, what initially might appear to be two fields becomes one in this corner. There is a waymarker which may be all but hidden in the hedge; but no matter, since it tells you to carry straight on to the next waymarker which can be seen up ahead. Here, pass through the hedge, cross the field and pick up the farm track at the next waymarker, holding course towards the buildings you can see ahead. As you progress, ignore the footpath signs to left and right and simply carry on until you reach the end of the track, which lets you onto the village street, almost opposite the church. Note the lane opposite, which is signposted to Shenton and the *Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre*. Walk down this lane, swinging round a left hand bend, until you come to the *Leicestershire Round* signpost in the hedge on your left. Take this route and continue into the Visitor Centre.

Congratulations! You have now reached the end of *The Richard the Third Trail*.



St. James, Sutton Cheney, with its re-built squat tower, in brick.

Legend has it that Richard III heard his last Mass here before the Battle of Bosworth. The interior contains a memorial to those who fell in the Battle. The plaque carries the Plantagenet Arms and the White Rose of the House of York. It reads:

**Remember before God
Richard III
King of England
and those who fell
at Bosworth Field
having kept faith
22 August 1485
*loyaltie me lie***

Additional Information about this area

The *Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre* has a website:

www.bosworthbattlefield.com

The Centre offers guided walks of the battlefield, and specific events. There is a heritage 'experience', a shop, and other attractions.

The exact location of the Battle has aroused much debate. Current information can be found online.

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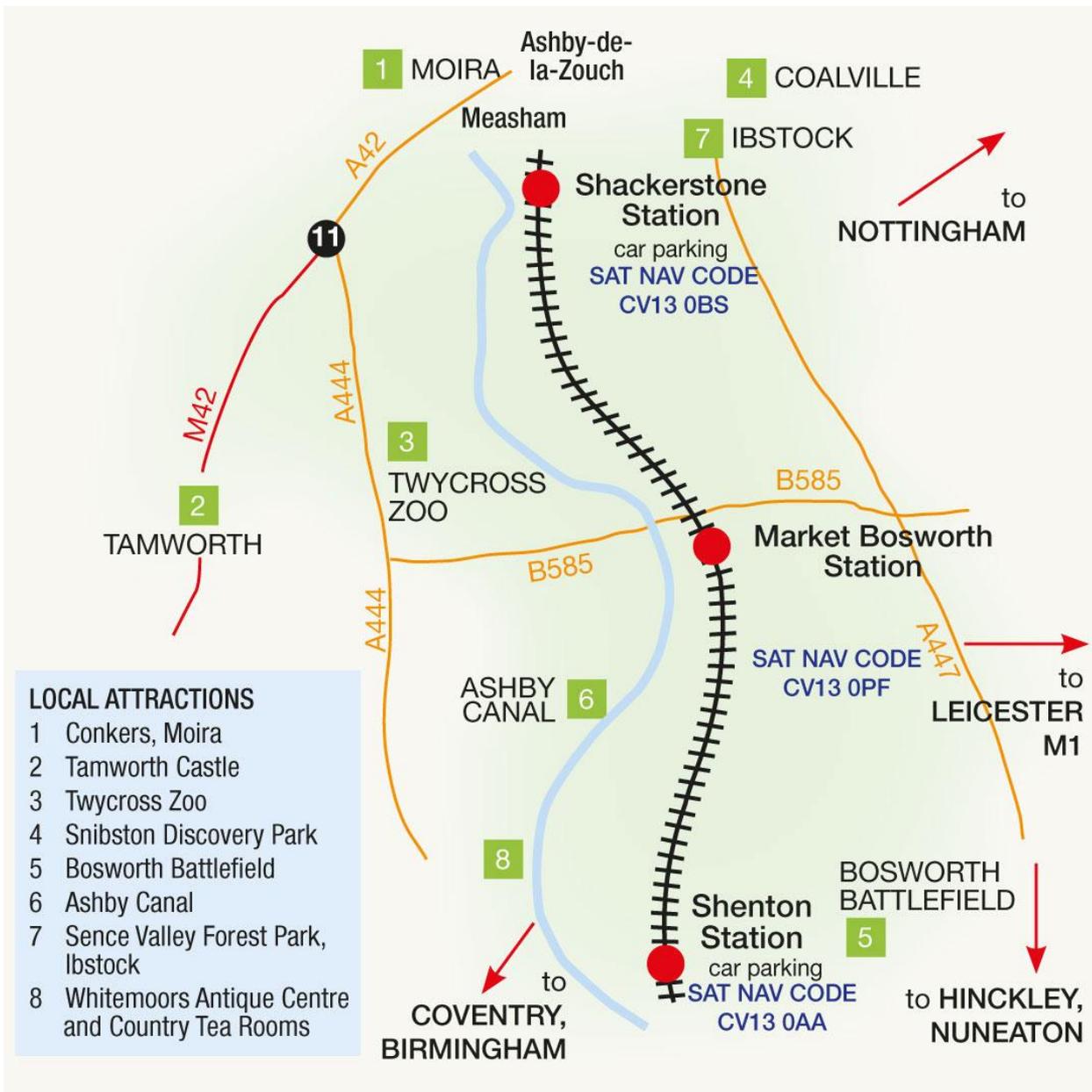
For those wishing to visit Market Bosworth, our *Trail* intersects with *The Leicestershire Round*, which circles Leicester with a total length of over 100 miles, passing through some beautiful, and historically interesting areas of the county. The *Round* is signposted with its own marker discs, and is shown on OS Landranger maps. Do not go south from the Visitor Centre. Instead, retrace your steps into Sutton Cheney. At the T junction (the signpost to Shenton mentioned in our Directions) turn left along Main Street to locate *The Royal Arms Hotel, Bar and Restaurant* on your left at the end of the village. The waymarker can be found at the back of the car park. It is a very pleasant walk into Market Bosworth, through Bosworth Park.

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A Preserved Railway can be found with its main station at Shackerstone; other stations exist at Market Bosworth and Shenton. For the last named, simply carry on along the road signposted to the village (see Directions above). The station stands about half a mile to the east of the village, and is quite close to the *Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre*.

For details, including timetables, see:

www.battlefieldline.co.uk





The above map and this photograph reproduced from the website named above, with permission.

The Ashby Canal runs close to the *Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre*. For a few details of its history and current situation see:

canalrivertrust.org.uk (Enter search as within 10 miles of Market Bosworth)

and/or

www.ashbycanal.org.uk