

# The National Forest Way

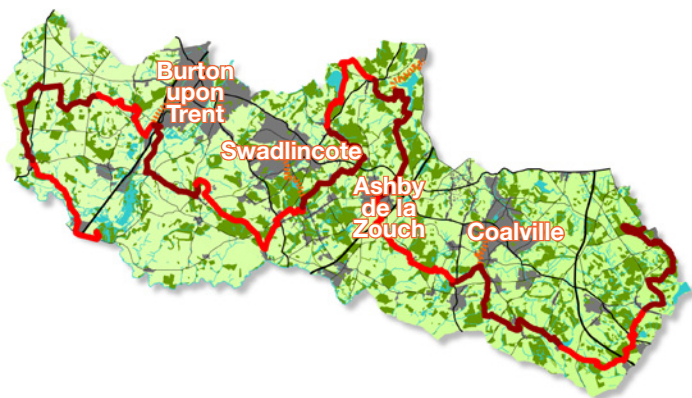
This leaflet can be used in conjunction with OS Explorer 245 (The National Forest)



The National Forest Way takes walkers on a 75-mile journey through a transforming landscape, from the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire to Beacon Hill Country Park in Leicestershire.

On the way, you will discover the area's evolution from a rural landscape, through industrialisation and its decline, to the modern-day creation of a new forest, where 21st-century life is threaded through a mosaic of green spaces and settlements.

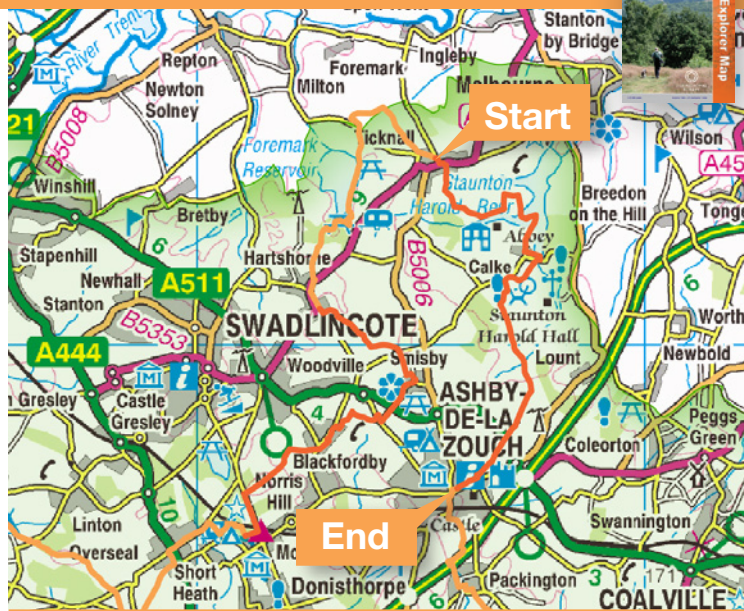
The trail leads through young and ancient woodlands, market towns and the industrial heritage of this changing landscape.



The National Forest Way was created by a partnership of the National Forest Company, Derbyshire County Council, Leicestershire County Council and Staffordshire County Council, with the generous support of Fisher German.



To find out more, visit:  
[www.nationalforestway.co.uk](http://www.nationalforestway.co.uk)



## Stage 5: Ticknall to Ashby de la Zouch

Length: 7½ miles / 12 kilometres

### About this stage

**Start:** Ticknall Village Hall (DE73 7JW)

**End:** Bath Street, Ashby de la Zouch (LE65 2FH)

This stage includes the National Trust's Calke Abbey with its deer park and ancient oak trees. Look out for glorious views across Staunton Harold Reservoir and visit Dimminsdale, one of the best places to see snowdrops in early spring. The undulating landscape between Calke and the historic market town of Ashby de la Zouch is framed by distant woodlands.

### The National Forest Company

Bath Yard, Moira, Swadlincote,  
Derbyshire DE12 6BA

Telephone: 01283 551211

Enquiries: [www.nationalforestway.co.uk/contact](http://www.nationalforestway.co.uk/contact)

Website: [www.nationalforest.org](http://www.nationalforest.org)

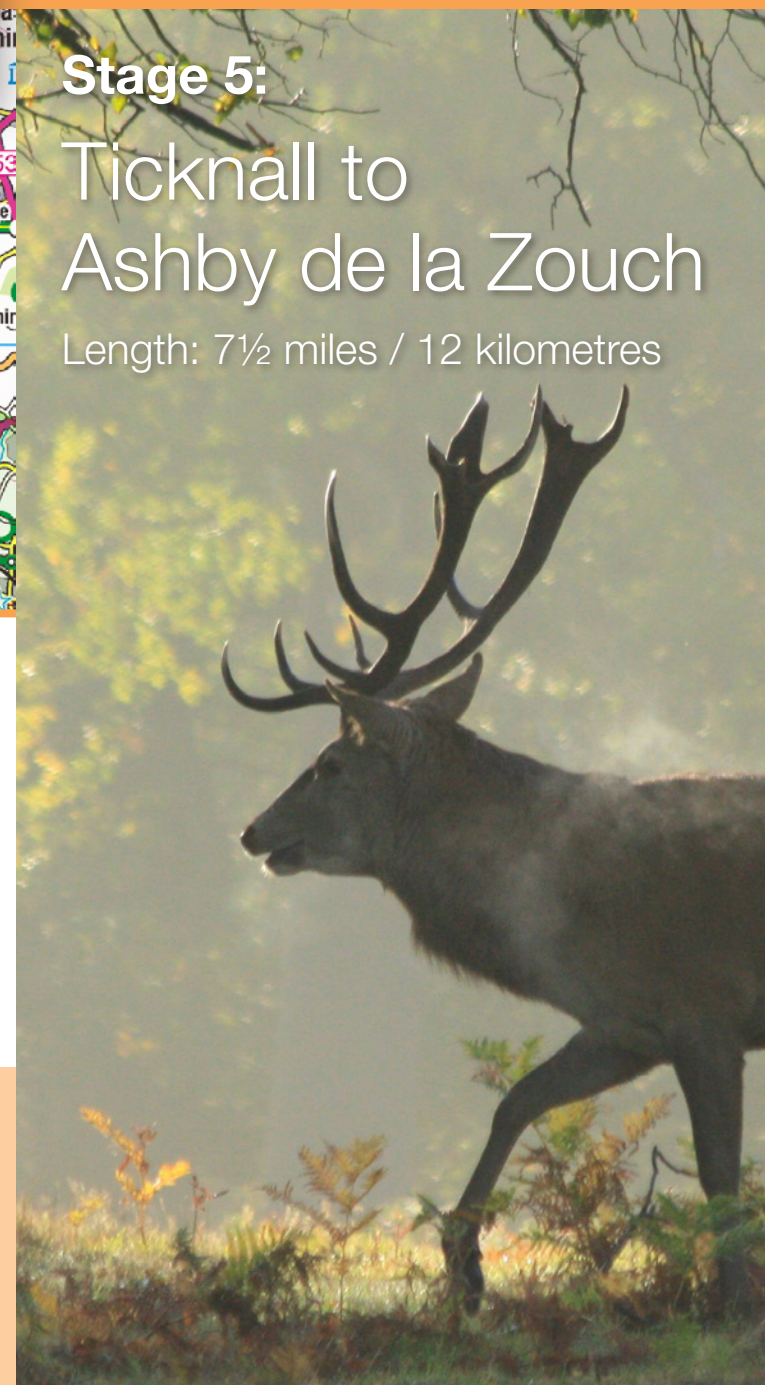
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THE NATIONAL  
FOREST

Route directions: Eastbound





# Ticknall to Ashby de la Zouch

- 1 From Ticknall village hall car park, head through the pedestrian gate and turn right, onto Ingleby Lane. When you reach Main Road, opposite the Wheel Inn, turn left. After a short distance, turn right into Bantons Lane and walk to the gateway at the end, which leads into the National Trust's Calke estate.
- 2 Head through the gate and bear diagonally right across the field towards the far corner. At the end of the field, walk between the two sets of fencing aiming for the next stile. Go over this and walk past the pond on your left. Ignore the paths off to your left and right.
- 3 At the next stile, continue straight on along a clear path along the right-hand edge of the open parkland. Then, after you pass a stile on your right, bear diagonally left across the parkland until you reach a copse of trees. Head for a pedestrian gate in front of you, ignoring the ornate vehicle gates to your left. Cross the stile and walk down the left-hand edge of the field until you reach a stile on your left.
- 4 Cross the stile and walk through the shelterbelt of trees to cross another stile. Then head diagonally right across the parkland to the trees opposite, crossing the paved driveway.
- 5 Once you reach the trees, bear right to take the path into the woodland and follow this over another path, passing Betty's Pond on your right.
- 6 When you reach a fence with three gates, take the left hand gate and follow the small path along the side of the river (to the left of the steps). Follow the river path until you reach a gate next to a weir.

**NOTE:** If you wish to visit Calke Abbey, take the steps up to follow this path towards the car park. To rejoin the main route walk to the other end of the car park and join the path going downhill. This will take you down to the main path by the river, where you turn right to rejoin the main route at Point 8.

- 7 Go through gate by the weir and continue to follow the river path, keeping the river on your left. Ignore the path on your right and follow the path ahead as it turns left and crosses the water. As the path starts to go uphill, you will notice high deer fencing on your right.
- 8 When you reach a fork in the path, take the right-hand path, staying next to the deer fencing. Follow this path to the top of the hill.
- 9 At the top of the hill, turn right, passing through a gate to follow a path which continues alongside the deer fence. Keep following the fence as the path turns to the right and begins to drop downhill again. Cross the footbridge at the bottom of the hill and then continue onto a boardwalk along the edge of Staunton Harold Reservoir.
- 10 When the boardwalk ends keep following the path, which will turn right, up a hill and out onto a road by a small car park. Go through a gap in the stone wall and walk straight on, away from the reservoir. Follow the road for about 750m through Calke village until you reach a junction. Turn left and follow the road downhill, keeping to the verge to avoid any traffic.

- 11 Before the bottom of the hill, where the road bends left, turn right into Dimminsdale Nature Reserve. Follow the path up the steps and continue along the path, crossing a boardwalk. After descending a set of steps, there will be a pond in front of you. Turn right and continue following the path. The path turns to the left and down some steps, going past a squeeze stile, and up another set of steps.

- 12 At the top of the steps, turn right and go through another squeeze stile to follow a track which leads to a gate. Go through the gate and you should have a fence/hedge on your left and a field to your right. Follow this path until the field opens out and the path bears right to reach the drive to Staunton Harold Hall.





**13** Turn right to follow the drive, using the gate alongside the cattle grid, until it meets the road.

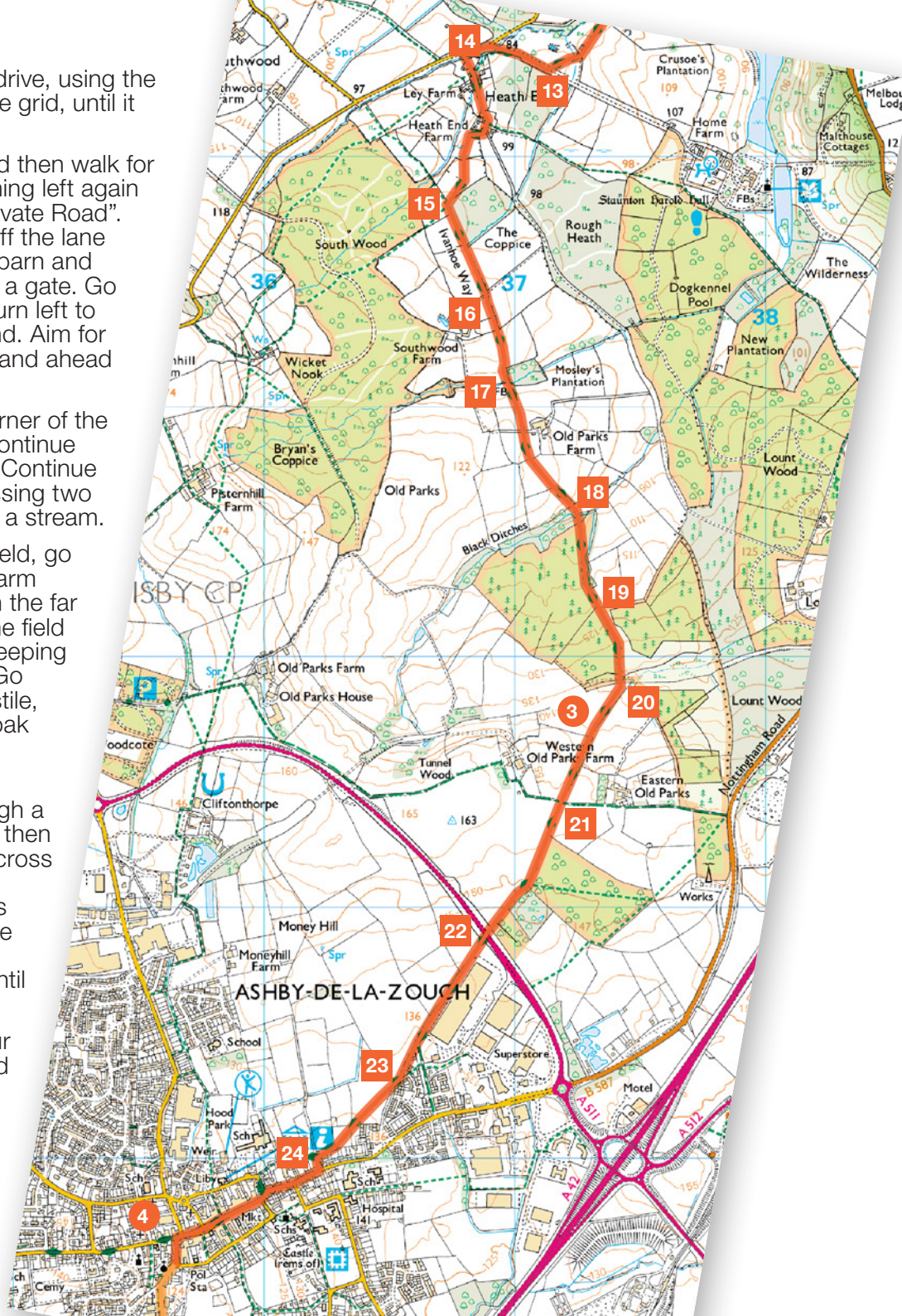
**14** At the road, turn left and then walk for about 100m before turning left again onto a lane marked "Private Road". After 300m, turn right off the lane opposite a timber-clad barn and follow the path towards a gate. Go through the gate, and turn left to walk across the parkland. Aim for the corner of the woodland ahead of you.

**15** When you reach the corner of the woodland, turn left to continue walking along its edge. Continue following this path, crossing two stiles and a bridge over a stream.

**16** At the end of the next field, go straight on across the farm track. Cross the stile on the far side and walk across the field on the left-hand side, keeping the hedge to your left. Go straight on at the next stile, walking past the large oak tree.

**17** Carry straight on at the bottom of the hill, through a gate and over a bridge, then head uphill. Continue across the track by Old Parks Farm, with kissing gates either side, and continue along this footpath through several fields until it reaches a woodland.

**18** Go over the stile on your right into the woods and cross a deep gorge using the bridge. When you reach the tall deer fence, go through the tall gate into Park Pale Woods. Keep to the path which goes straight on.



**19** When you see a gate in the fencing to your left go through this and continue in the direction you were walking. Follow the path alongside the fence, ignoring the gate on your right. At the end of the fence, bear left down a grass track. Then cross right towards the waymarker posts.

**20** At the waymarker post, go straight on, keeping alongside the hedge on your left. When you reach a stile, go straight over and keep alongside the edge of the field with the hedge on your left. Again, at the next stile, keep straight on until the path crosses a lane.

**21** Go straight across the lane, crossing a stile, and along the track opposite. At the sign for Old Parks Farm, where you will also see another waymarker post, continue straight on until you reach the A511.

**22** Follow the track under the A511 and continue past the large warehouse on your left. Where the path bears left, keep straight on across a wooden bridge. Pass between two hedges and then keep straight on at the cul-de-sac of houses. Turn right over the footbridge, before turning left and immediately right again. You will find yourself by a waymarker post.

**23** At the post, bear left across the field to the right of the first set of houses. After passing through a kissing gate and over a bridge, bear left diagonally across the next field. Head towards the hedge, then follow this to the kissing gate in the corner. Go through the gate, and turn left onto a paved lane (Wood Lane) and follow it towards the main road.

**24** Turn right onto the main road through Ashby de la Zouch. Walk through the town along Market Street, passing North Street, and crossing at one of three sets of pelican lights. At the bottom of Market Street, turn left at the mini roundabout onto Bath Street. The stage ends at the Loudoun Memorial.

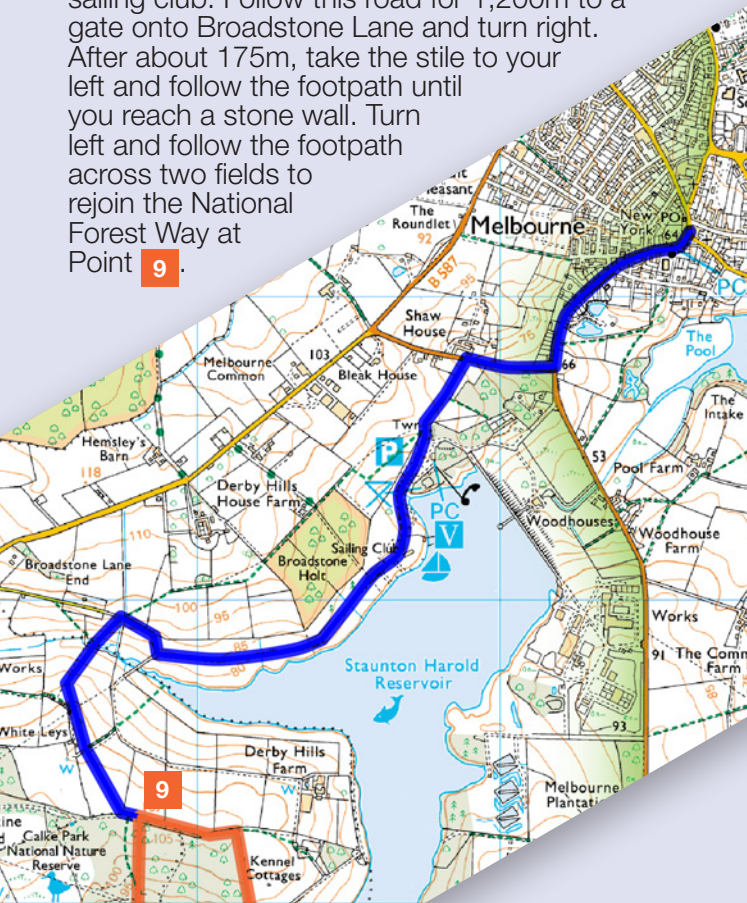


# Link to Melbourne

To visit the nearby town of Melbourne, the first in Derbyshire to be awarded **Walkers are Welcome** status, follow the 2-mile link below.

**To Melbourne:** From Point **9**, turn left to take the path towards Melbourne. When the path forks, take the right fork and follow the path to Broadstone Lane. Turn right and, after about 175m, go through the gate on your left. Follow the road alongside the reservoir until you reach the car park. Cross the car park to the derelict tower and follow the footpath on to Robinsons Hill. Turn right and then left at the next junction to take Ashby Road into Melbourne.

**From Melbourne:** Head south along Ashby Road, turning right after the Melbourne Arms pub. After about 275m, take the footpath off to the left. At the derelict tower, turn left into the car park. Walk through the car park and onto the road to the sailing club. Follow this road for 1,200m to a gate onto Broadstone Lane and turn right. After about 175m, take the stile to your left and follow the footpath until you reach a stone wall. Turn left and follow the footpath across two fields to rejoin the National Forest Way at Point **9**.



# Points of interest along this stage

## 1 Calke Abbey

With peeling paintwork and overgrown courtyards, the National Trust's Calke Abbey tells the dramatic story of the country house estate in decline. Calke Park, part of which is designated a National Nature Reserve, features an ancient deer park and gnarly thousand-year-old oak trees, remnants of a vast forest that historically covered much of this area.

## 2 Dimminsdale Nature Reserve

A history of mineral working accounts for the 'hobbitesque' appearance of Dimminsdale Nature Reserve. When limestone and lead mining ceased, the quarries flooded to create pools and brooks. Each spring, parts of the reserve are carpeted with a spectacular display of snowdrops.

## 3 Ivanhoe Way

Along this stretch, the Way follows the route of the Ivanhoe Way – so called in tribute to Sir Walter Scott and his novel *Ivanhoe*, set around Ashby de la Zouch castle and the surrounding countryside. Enjoy distant views across connected young Forest plantations including Alistair's, Bignall's and Jaguar Lount Woods.

## 4 Ashby de la Zouch

Ashby's fascinating 15th-century castle was mostly destroyed during the Civil War and is now a captivating ruin. Elsewhere in the town, browse the farmers' market and independent shops, and visit the intriguing museum to discover where the name 'de la Zouch' came from.

# Useful Information

## Parking

Parking is available in Ticknall and Ashby de la Zouch.

Please be aware of car park closing times before setting off.

## Public transport

Ashby de la Zouch is on the 9/9A/9E Coalville-Burton bus route (Mon-Sun). Ticknall is on the 61 Derby-Swadlincote bus route (Mon-Sun). Change at Swadlincote to travel between the start and finish of the stage.

For detailed information on bus routes and times, call **Traveline** on 0871 200 22 33 (charges apply).

## How to use this leaflet

The maps in this leaflet are based upon the Ordnance Survey's 1:25,000 scale Explorer maps and are presented at the correct scale if printed on A4 paper.

- 1 Square symbols on the maps link with the route directions that are provided alongside the map.
- 1 Circular symbols represent key points of interest along the route of the trail.

To find out more, visit:

**[www.nationalforestway.co.uk](http://www.nationalforestway.co.uk)**

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