



Long  
13.5 miles  
(21.5km)

# Grange walk

Linking historic houses, working quarries and new woodlands to celebrate the evolving National Forest.



© Jacqui Rock

## Be a responsible visitor to the National Forest

To get the most out of your visit, please follow some simple rules:

**Respect other people** • Consider other people enjoying the outdoors • Leave gates and property as you find them and follow marked paths

**Protect the natural environment** • Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home • Keep dogs under effective control

**Enjoy the outdoors** • Plan ahead and be prepared • Follow advice and local signs

# Exploring the National Forest


Located right in the heart of the country, the National Forest embraces 200 square miles of the Midlands. It spans parts of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire, and aims to link the two ancient forests of Charnwood and Needwood.

After centuries of coal mining and clay extraction, the closure of the pits in the 1980s left a scarred and derelict landscape. Now, more than a quarter of a century later, millions of trees have been planted, breathing life into the landscape and its communities – turning a landscape from black to green. This bold regeneration shows how trees can transform not only the landscape, but also, vitally, people's lives and the local economy.




To find out more about the National Forest and how you can get involved, visit:

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

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The National Forest Company  
Charity No. 1166563

National Forest Company, Enterprise  
Glade, Bath Yard, Moira, Swadlincote,  
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THE NATIONAL  
FOREST



# Walking in the National Forest

There are hundreds of miles of paths and trails to explore in the National Forest, and plenty of places accessible for all ages and abilities. Grab your walking boots, your trainers or your dog and head out into the woods for a walk or a run, or try your hand at orienteering or geocaching.

Follow gentle trails through vibrant young woodlands and nature-rich ancient forests. Discover more about the area's heritage or just let a canal towpath take you to the nearest pub lunch.



## Walking highlights



### Snibston Colliery Park

Located on the site of the former Snibston Colliery, the park is owned by Leicestershire County Council and covers over over 40 hectares of woodland, wetland and meadows. It features a variety of walking and cycling trails, plus a collection of mining memorabilia and sculptures. The café lies next to the Century Theatre, the oldest surviving travelling theatre in the country. Snibston Grange Nature Reserve, once home to the Colliery manager, has a Victorian arboretum, ponds and wildflower meadows. [leicscountryparks.org.uk/snibston-colliery-park](http://leicscountryparks.org.uk/snibston-colliery-park)

### The 1620s House and Garden at Donington-le-Heath

Dating back to 1290, the manor house is one of the oldest houses in Leicestershire. In 1618 its owners, the Digby family, remodelled the house in the fashion of the time, giving it a mixture of medieval and Stuart features. Everard Digby was a close friend of Guy Fawkes and became involved in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. The house, extensively renovated by Leicestershire County Council between 1965 and 1972, is now open as a museum with a walled garden and café. [doningtonleheath.org.uk](http://doningtonleheath.org.uk)



### New Cliffe Hill Quarry

The rocks in this part of Leicestershire were formed by volcanic activity over 600 million years ago. Quarrying originally started at the adjacent Old Cliffe Hill Quarry in the 1870s, and annual production of "Markfieldite" granite gradually increased from 1,000 tonnes to over 1 million tonnes by the 1970s. New Cliffe Quarry was opened in 1988, and the two were linked by a tunnel. Old Cliffe quarry finally ceased production in 2005, but the granite from New Cliffe is still washed, crushed and cleaned to be sold around the world as rail ballast, road surfacing, driveways and sports surfacing.

## Off route highlight

**Billa Barra Hill** is suggested to be a corruption of the word "barrow," meaning burial ground. This is thought to be linked to stories of a Saxon battle on the adjacent land with the dead buried on the hill. The hill-top is a regionally important geological site although only a few outcrops of pre-Cambrian rock remain after quarrying.

See the light at the six **Noon Columns** dotted around the Forest. Slots cut into these 3-metre-tall oak sculptures, designed by internationally renowned artist David Nash, allow rays of sunlight through at true noon each day. Visit the Charnwood Noon Column, a short walk from the car park.



# Grange walk



Long length

**Distance:** 13.5 miles (21.5km)

**Shortcut option:** 9.5 miles (15.5km)

**Time:** Allow 6 hours.

**Path type:** Unsurfaced paths, farmland, woodland and tarmacked sections. Stiles. Sturdy footwear recommended.

**Use with map OS Explorer**

**245 The National Forest**

**Start at:** Snibston Colliery Park, Ashby Road, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3LN.

**OS Grid Ref:** SK418144

**Latitude:** 52.726231

**Longitude:** -1.382495

**what3words:** /// zone.souk.groups

A shortcut option is available, to make an 8-mile walk.

## Map Key

Trail route	Route marker
Shortcut route	Point of interest
Footpath	Parking
Bridleway	Bus stop
Road	Pub
Woodlands	Café
Rivers and ponds	Shopping
Buildings	Public toilets
Trig point	Theatre
	Cycle trails



**1** From the café at **Snibston Colliery Park**, go through the car park and up the flight of steps. Turn left and follow the 'blue trail' perimeter path (watch out for bikes!) around the edge of the Colliery Park. Turn left to go through **Snibston Grange** car park and fork left to follow the path as it winds through the trees. Keep straight ahead until you reach a wooden fence with a gate to your left.

**2** Go through the gate and turn right, taking the footpath towards the pylon and across two fields. Turn left at the second field boundary to follow the footpath by the hedge to the road. Cross over the road and head down St Mary's Lane, opposite. Where the lane turns 90 degrees right, take the footpath to the left, passing the 13th-century church (*one of the smallest still in use for regular worship in England*).

**3** Walk along the footpath past the farmyard and along the field edges until you reach houses. Turn right to walk along the edge of the estate to Berry Hill Lane. Turn left at the road and walk down to the junction with Manor Road with **The 1620s House & Gardens** in front of you. Turn right and go down the road, to take the footpath through a kissing gate at the end of a stone wall on your left.

**4** Go straight ahead on the public footpath past woods then along a field to a junction of paths. Turn right down the surfaced path to a set of railings, then bear left down an alley. Turn right at the main road and go to the bus stop. Cross the road, take the footpath ahead and bear right at the path fork. Follow the River Sence, crossing two bridges. Keep ahead on the path across the meadow, go over a third bridge then turn left to go through two

kissing gates. Keep the houses on your left and stay on the footpath until a flight of steps on your right. Climb the steps (slippy when wet), cross the disused railway and descend the steps on the other side. Follow the footpath across the field towards the trees and River Sence.

**5** Turn left and follow the river to a bridge on your right. Cross this and head uphill on the footpath. Carry on up the hill to follow the hedge line, crossing two stiles. At the top of the hill, the footpath bears half left, taking a diagonal line across the fields, keeping the hedge on your right until you reach the road.

**6** Turn right and go past the roundabout, crossing the road at the bus stop. Take the surfaced path through the **Penny Wakefield Wood**, taking the path round the pond, then turn right to follow the bridleway around the perimeter of the Amazon warehouse for approx. 1km.

**Shortcut option:** After 850m instead of crossing the road, take the footpath to your right and follow the stone track for approx. 1km and through two sets of gates to the road. Cross the road, turn left and after 300m take the byway on your right (after the village entrance sign) and follow the track to Pickering Grange Farm. Continue from point 12.

**7** Cross the road and follow the track and when it turns left, take the footpath straight ahead. Go over the stile, cross the active railway line and go up a flight of steps. Follow the path then descend another flight of steps to your right, turning left at the bottom and follow the railway line. Keep ahead on the well-surfaced track and turn left just before reaching the road to take the footpath

through the woods, parallel with the road (B585). With the road to your right, follow the path until you eventually cross a wooden footbridge and go up to meet the road (take care, busy road and no footpath!).

**8** Cross the road and turn left to walk a short way on the pavement before turning right onto South Lane. Go along the lane, taking the footpath straight in front of you as the road turns left (East Lane). Walk along the disused railway line until you reach a road.

**9** Take the footpath on your right and follow until you reach a junction of footpaths. Turn right, cross the bridge and fork right to follow the path uphill. Turn left at the top and follow the path around the top of the quarry. The path gradually descends to a junction; turn right then next right over a footbridge. Go back uphill and keep ahead through the woods to a field. Cross the first stile and keep the hedge on your right to continue across three double stiles. Turn immediately left after the third to drop down the hill to the electricity substation and out on to the road over a stile.

**10** Turn right and walk along the road until you reach Strawhall Farm. Take the public footpath to the right of the driveway and follow as it passes along the top edge of **Bagworth Wood** then over the railway line again and into a wood. Continue along the footpath and out on to the road.

**11** Turn right and cross the road at the bus stop just after the roundabout to take the public footpath through a gap in the fence. Go straight ahead on the trodden path, passing a pond and boardwalk on your left. Follow the indistinct but waymarked

path through the wood and follow the footpath across a series of fields, passing beneath power lines, until it joins the drive of Pickering Grange Farm.

**12** Turn left and follow the drive until you reach a stile on your right. Cross the stile and go through the paddocks to go left through a waymarked metal gate. Head straight across the field, cross a stile in the hedge and then down along the edge of **Batram Wood** to a crossing of paths halfway down.

**13** Turn right to join the **National Forest Way** and **The Birthday Walk** and head straight up between the poplar trees through **Workmans Wood** to cross a stile and footbridge in the hedge and turn sharp right. Immediately after crossing a second footbridge and stile into a very large field, go half right up the field to reach a track. Cross the track and follow the footpath on, past the copse, to Ellistown.

**14** At the main road, cross over to a path between the houses to Sherwood Close. Turn right and then left to the footpath in the far right corner between the fences. Turn left, then go through the gap in the hedge and up the field. Follow the footpath on to Richmond Road, Donington-le-Heath.

**15** Turn right, then left at the Donington Arms pub and up Manor Road. Follow the route in reverse from Point 4. Go past the gate in the stone wall which you went through earlier and carry on up the hill. Turn left up Berry Hill Lane and retrace your steps back to the start, taking the footpaths over fields back into **Snibston Colliery Park**.