

ISE VALLEY VAGABONDS

City of Leicester Heritage Trail BWF App No PT275

START & FINISH: Victoria Park Car Park, Granville Road, Leicester LE1 7RU

OS map 140 Grid Ref SK597035 Distance 11km

Fee £1.00 (€2,00 cash only)

Route last updated on 26 October 2016

This route description is valid from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017

This walk has been established by members of the Ise Valley Vagabonds Walking Club (BWF Club No 70) and is a qualifying event in the IVV award scheme. It can be walked at any time.

IMPORTANT Major special events at Victoria and Abbey Parks can cause closure of parts of the route and parking difficulties. (www.leicester.gov.uk/parks, www.visitleicester.info, Visit Leicester TIC: 0116-299-4444). Also Victoria Park improvement works may cause inconvenience and restrict parking at start during 2017. Suggested alternative car park at **Dover Street** (LE1 6PW) and join route where indicated.

Starting from Victoria Park's main entrance gateway between two stone lodge houses (*built in 1930*) at main road end of car park, turn left onto footpath at end of privet hedge towards the large white pavilion building (*built in 1950, café/ restaurant: random opening hours*). Follow the main path as it curves right and then take right fork past a large memorial stone surrounded by metal railings.

QUESTION 1. TO WHOM IS THIS MEMORIAL STONE DEDICATED?

At T-junction of paths turn right to pass new toilet block (on left), cross car park to Granville Road and turn left along pavement. Where road turns sharp right go straight ahead through gateway to left of entrance to De Montfort Hall (*Leicester's main concert venue, opened in 1913, Information Panel on fence*).

Follow this park access road to the huge 'Arch of Remembrance' war memorial (*designed by Edwin Lutyens, unveiled 4th July 1925, later WWII inscriptions*). Here turn right down 'Peace Walk' (*name on plaque on stone by small gate*) between memorial stones and leave through gateway to cross over University Road at pedestrian lights. Ahead down Lancaster Road to the Central Fire Station.

Turn right into De Montfort Street and cross to left-hand pavement. Continue over Regent Road (at traffic lights) and Princess Road East crossroads. At end of small park (*De Montfort Square*) with a statue turn left onto 'New Walk' (*Information Panel on fence*) and go gradually downhill passing New Walk Museum & Art Gallery (*free admission, café, toilets, open daily, Information Panel to right in Museum Square gardens*) on left and Holy Cross Priory and Catholic Church on right.

At bottom of hill turn right along King Street to traffic lights, cross over mouth of Wellington Street and turn right (opposite Fenwick's) along Belvoir Street to the 'Pork Pie Chapel' (*Information Panel*) on right. Cross road at traffic lights to head along Bowling Green Street (Fenwick's again on left) and turn first right into Bishop Street between Town Hall (left) and Central Library (right, *Information Panel*). At the

Methodist Church (*built in 1815, café, Information Panel*) on right turn left into Town Hall Square and immediately go half-right to the large, central fountain.

QUESTION 2. WHICH MAYOR IS NAMED AT THE BASE OF THE FOUNTAIN (BELOW THE RED SHIELD)?

Continue to far corner of square and turn left along Every Street (*believed so-named from its days as a horse-drawn cab rank from where you could get to 'every street' in Leicester!*). At end (*with Boer War memorial on left*) cross to opposite side of Horsefair Street (*name not displayed here*), turn right and follow pavement around corner to left into Market Place Approach with the 'Visit Leicester' tourist information centre (*open daily, note the famous 'Kemp's Clock', once a popular meeting place, above the door*) to your right.

In front of you can be seen the white clock tower of the Corn Exchange building (*1856, now housing a Wetherspoon's Lloyds No1 pub of that name*) rising up above the market stalls. (*There has been a market on this site for over 700 years and today's is claimed to be the largest open-air one in Europe. It is open daily except Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays*). Keep to the left of the market stalls and go ahead along Market Place South (*detour right at Nationwide to visit the Corn Exchange, Information Panel*) passing to the right of the former 'Fish Market' shelter (*note Roman Pavement fragment displayed on wall at end*), beyond which there are the market's public toilets (*closed Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays*) on your left.

Upon reaching the 'Leicester Seamstress' statue (*a tribute to Leicester's hosiery industry*) outside the 'City Rooms' (*built in 1800, see 'Assembly Rooms' Information Panel*), on your left, turn right along Hotel Street and follow it round to the left past the entrance to St Martin's Square in front of you. (*You are now on the edge of the 'Leicester Lanes' boutique shopping area*).

At the next junction go ahead along pedestrianised St Martins to the 'King Richard III Visitor Centre' (*open daily, admission charge, café, includes access to the spot in the car park where his remains were found*) on left and King Richard III statue on right. From the statue fork half-right across the gardens past the main porch of Leicester Cathedral (*visitors to the 2015 King Richard III tomb are welcome at appropriate times, no admission charge but donations are appreciated*) and turn right along cobbled St Martins West footpath with 'St Martin's House' (*the Cathedral Visitor Centre, café*) and adjacent Guildhall Museum (*free admission, café, toilets*) on left.

At the end turn left along Guildhall Lane (*see Information Panel on side of Guildhall*) past Radio Leicester and the 'Old Town Information Point' (*unstaffed TIC*) on right. Cross over Applegate (*see Information Panel on left corner*) to bear diagonally right to traffic lights across 'Jubilee Square' (*created to commemorate visit of QEII in 2012 at start of her Diamond Jubilee national tour, no nameplates as yet*) with 'Wygston's House' (*c1490, Leicester's oldest dwelling, Information Panel at far end*) over to left and the 'Highcross' pillar (*Information Panel*) over to right.

At traffic lights use pedestrian crossings on right over the main roads complex of St Nicholas Circle to reach the city's oldest (Saxon) church (*St Nicholas, Information Panel*), Roman Baths remains (*Information Panel*) and 'Jewry Wall' archaeological museum (*free admission, toilets*) on right. Follow pavement round to left (crossing Talbot Lane) and, where it bears right, go ahead over pedestrian crossings to enter Castle Gardens (opposite) via a gateway.

After *Information Panel* on right take left-hand path at fork to pass brick shelter (on right) and exit through another gateway, turning right onto Castle Street. Turn immediately right again along Castle View passing St Mary de Castro church (*Information Panel*) on left and 'Castle House' (*still used as Judge's Lodgings for Leicester Crown Court*) on right. Go under half-timbered 'Castle Gateway' and turn left through Castle Yard (*Great Hall of Leicester Castle, Information Panels and entrance to Castle Motte on right*). Pass under the stone-built 'Turret (or Prince Rupert's) Gateway' (*Information Panel, note portcullis grooves*) and continue to end of Castle View.

On your immediate left at the junction is the Newarke Houses Museum (*Information Panel, local and military history, Leicestershire Regimental museum, free admission, toilets, open daily*) and a short detour beyond it (at far end of Magazine Square) is the medieval 'Newarke Gateway' (*aka 'The Magazine', Information Panel*).

From Castle View turn right along The Newarke passing Trinity Hospital (*Information Panel*) on right and the Chantry Building on left. Immediately before bridge over canalised River Soar turn right through a gateway back into Castle Gardens. At *Information Panel* take left-hand path at fork and follow river on left (*another entrance to the Castle Motte [with Information Panels] can be seen over to the right beyond the maypole*). Opposite the end of the Castle buildings (high up on right) turn left over a grey metal footbridge across the river and then right down steps or ramp to the towpath, which you will now follow for approximately 1.75 km. Turn left (with the canalised river on your right) and walk under colourful West Bridge, 100 metres beyond which you will come to a metal milepost low down on your left. (*The area to your left was occupied by the 1832 Leicester & Swannington Railway and goods trains ran here until April 1966*).

Just after the restored Friars' Mills (*on right across river, Information Panel to your left*) turn right along the narrow cycle/walkway across Evans' Weir (*nameboard on left*), where the river and canal split. At far end of weir continue along the canal towpath passing under Soar Lane Bridge (*built by Midland Rly. in 1879. Immediately the other side of this bridge a branch of the Swannington Rly. crossed the canal by a lift- bridge designed by Robert Stephenson and two rail ends still protrude from the bank on your left*). Cross another narrow cycle/walkway over Hitchcock's Weir (*separating the canal and River Soar, no nameboard*) and a humped metal bridge (*over a weed-choked former mill race*) to reach North Lock.

At the end of the lock drop down under the VERY LOW North Bridge (*or keep ahead to cross the busy A50 road at 'Frog Island' opposite a former pub and descend the stepped path to rejoin the towpath*) and continue under Abbey Lane Bridge (*the A6 road on top is actually named St Margaret's Way!*) to a metal milepost on your left. Here turn left up a few steps, right through a gap in the black railings and left along a surfaced path to enter Abbey Park through a gateway next to a lodge house on right.

At large park *Information Panel* turn left along 'Cave's Walk' passing Miniature Railway Station. At end follow path around to right and alongside River Soar to turn left over a stone 'packhorse-style' bridge towards Abbey Park Pavilion building (*café, toilets, Leicester Abbey remains can be visited over to your right*).

QUESTION 3. WHOSE STATUE IS FACING YOU?

Retrace your steps over the bridge and bear left at the multi-arm signpost and *Information Panel* with weir to left. After 120 metres turn right, ahead over crossing path and bear right at pond. At paths T-junction turn right and then immediately left passing the 'Abbey Park (boating) Lake' *Information Panel*. At next junction (*red-doored toilet block over to right*) take left fork to pass through the Japanese Gardens between red and gold railings. At end cross over wide path and curve right into area of flowerbeds and lawns. Turn left on first right-angle path to multi-arm signpost and then bear left to follow black railings alongside the miniature railway (on your right) to exit park through gateway next to lodge house.

Turn left along path, bearing left and then right over canal bridge and through alley ('Abbey Walk') to road. Turn left and then right along Watling Street (*not the A5!*) and at end turn left and then right again along St John Street (*former Corah's hosiery factory on left*) to end. Cross the main road (Burley's Way) via footbridge or pedestrian crossings to continue along Abbey Street (opposite) past **St Margaret's Bus / Coach station** (*café, toilets*) on right.

At end turn right along Belgrave Gate passing the Police Station on right and the **Haymarket Bus Station** (*toilets*) on left. At the Clock Tower (*built in 1868*) go ahead along East Gates and bear left at fork up Silver Street (*Information Panel at entrance to Malcolm Arcade on left. You are now in the 'Leicester Lanes' boutique shopping area*) to 'The Globe' (*Leicester's oldest pub, c1720*). Turn left along Loseby Lane (*the far end of "O'Neill's" on right was previously 'The Crown & Thistle', another of the city's oldest pubs*) and at end turn left down St Martins. At junction bear left along Cank Street passing several interesting shopping arcades. Turn right into Cheapside (*opposite the Tudor-style façade of a former 'Market Tavern' pub*) and at the edge of the market turn left between three commemorative black bollards (*the originals were installed to disrupt 19th century unemployment riots*) down Victoria Parade.

QUESTION 4. WHAT YEAR IS RECORDED ON THE BOLLARDS?

At the end turn right through more bollards along the pedestrianised Gallowtree Gate to the road junction with the 'Visit Leicester' tourist information centre (*open daily*) on your right. Cross over Horsefair Street and continue in the same direction along the right-hand pavement of Granby Street with the former Leicestershire Bank (*now ISKCON Hare Krishna centre*) on right and the 'Turkey Café' (*Information Panel on corner of Bishop Street*) on left. (*The white building to right of the latter was home to Thomas Cook in 1843 to 1853. Known as 'Cook's Rooms', it was from here that he started his travel business*). Cross over Belvoir Street at the next traffic lights and continue ahead along Granby Street past the Mercure Grand Hotel (*built in 1898*) and 'The Last Plantagenet' (*Wetherspoon's*) pub at Dover Street.

This is the starting point for those using the suggested alternative car park (in Dover Street).

Continue along Granby Street (**turning right out of Dover Street if starting from here**) past former Thomas Cook's Temperance Hotel (*built in 1853, plaque on wall*), opposite Northampton Street, and 'The Barley Mow' pub. At end use the wide pedestrian crossing over the main road (*over to your left is the Portland stone former Leicester City Police HQ, built in 1933 and now residential apartments*) and turn right towards **London Road Railway Station** (*opened by the Midland Railway Co. in 1892*). Cross over the mouth of Station Street (*the stone gateposts visible at the end of which are the last remnants of the previous Campbell Street station of 1840-1892*).

QUESTION 5. WHOSE STATUE IS IN FRONT OF YOU?

Pass alongside the station frontage (*or through forecourt if you wish to see the station history Information Panels*), cross over the mouth of Conduit Street (*the site of Leicester's first running water supply*) and ahead up London Road to the pedestrian crossing lights. Cross over towards 'Wyvern Court' and several Indian restaurants, turn left and then immediately right along De Montfort Street (*past old houses now in use as Solicitors' offices*). Opposite the Belmont Hotel turn left over the pedestrian crossing and go ahead up 'New Walk' passing St Stephen's United Reformed Church (*this was rebuilt here stone-by-stone after being dismantled in the early 1890's to make way for London Road railway station*) and 'The Oval' (a small railed park) on right.

Cross over University Road at the pedestrian crossing and continue ahead up 'Upper New Walk'. At the top bear right (*Information Panel on left at road*) to cross over Granville Road via the pedestrian crossing. Turn left, follow pavement round to the right at traffic lights and turn right back into Victoria Park through the main gateway between the two stone lodge houses.

We hope you have enjoyed the walk!

The Ise Valley Vagabonds have established other Permanent Trails at Bedford (2), Daventry, Kempston, Kettering, Kings Lynn, London (2), Marston Moretaine (3), Oxford, Rugby, Rushden, Stamford, Stratford upon Avon, Warwick, Wellingborough and Woodstock.

They are all qualifying events towards the IVV award scheme. Further information about these walks, the IVV, the club and all its activities can be found by visiting our Web Site www.vagabonds.org.uk

THE ORGANISERS ARE NOT LIABLE FOR ACCIDENTS, THEFT, AND/OR DAMAGE TO PROPERTY. EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE BY THE ORGANISERS TO MAKE THIS A SAFE, ENJOYABLE AND MEMORABLE EVENT.

**ISE VALLEY VAGABONDS
PERMANENT TRAIL REGISTRATION FORM**

TRAIL	City of Leicester Heritage Trail	2017/1
ROUTE UPDATED	26 October 2016	
DATE WALKED		
NAME		
ADDRESS		
TEL		
EMAIL		
ADDITIONAL WALKERS		
ENTRY FEE	___ Walkers @ £1.00 (€2,00) each	Total £
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED		£
Please put my IVV stamps on a new set of Insert cards Yes/No		
ANSWERS		
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Comments		
<p>If you have a problem with this trail, please try and resolve it with the organiser. If you are unable to resolve the problem, then please contact the BWF Trail Officer.</p>		
<p>Please enclose a STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE (at least C6 (114 x 162mm) or DL (110 x 220mm)) with this form and send it to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Carol Jones 138 Rushden Road Wymington Rushden Northants NN10 9LE</p>		