

# The National Forest Way

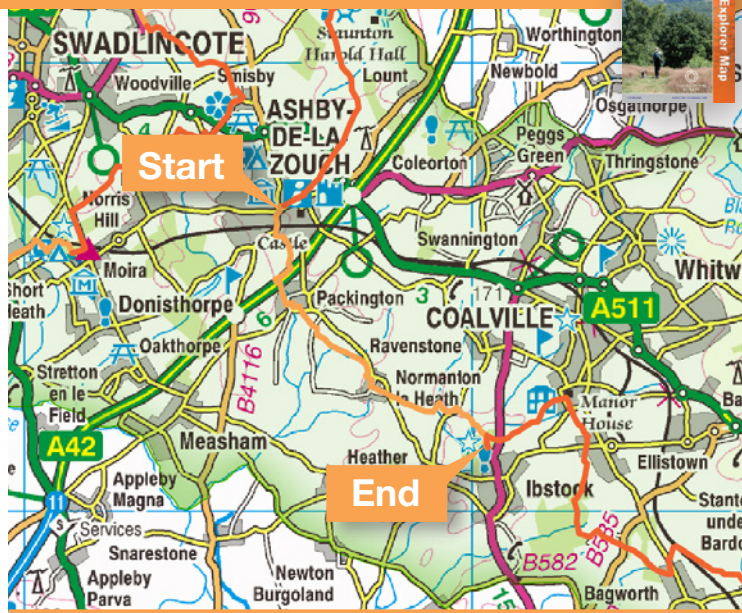
This leaflet can be used in conjunction with OS Explorer 245 (The National Forest)



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.

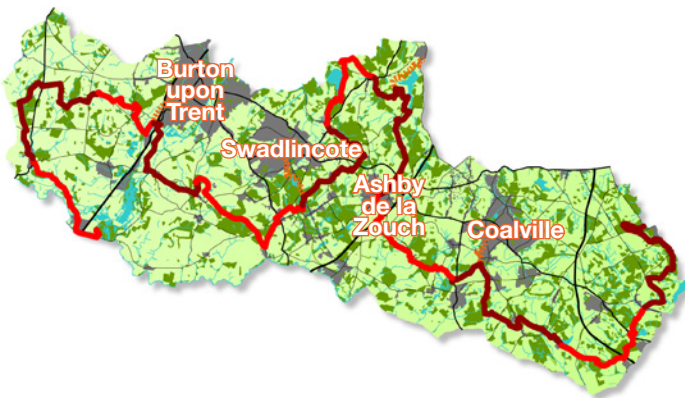
The trail leads through young and ancient woodlands, market towns and the industrial heritage of this changing landscape.



## Stage 4:

# Ashby de la Zouch to Sence Valley

Length: 5¾ miles / 9 kilometres



## About this stage

**Start:** Bath Street, Ashby de la Zouch (LE65 2FH)  
**End:** Sence Valley Forest Park, Ibstock (LE67 6NW)

On this stage, the National Forest Way travels through open farmland and attractive villages between the historic market town of Ashby de la Zouch and Sence Valley Forest Park. On the way, you will arrive on the edge of 'King Coal' country and pass through the Woodland Trust's flagship Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Wood.

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)

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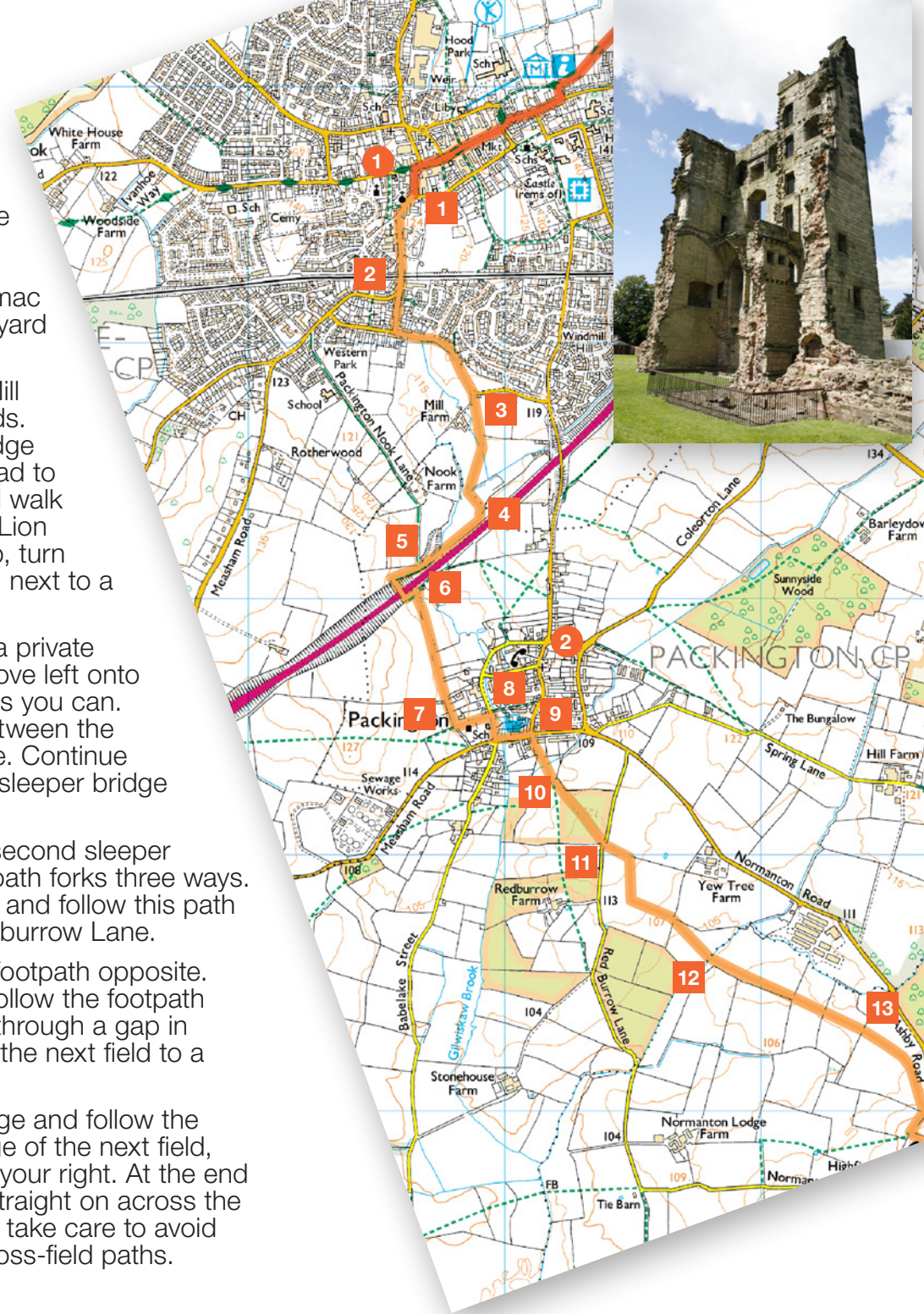
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Route directions: Eastbound

# Ashby de la Zouch to Sence Valley

- 1** Starting from the Loudoun Memorial on Bath Street, head away from the town centre. At the mini-roundabout bear left to go along Station Road, past the Royal Hotel and under the railway.
- 2** Immediately after the railway bridge, where the road bends to the right, take Lower Packington Road straight ahead. Follow this road for about 600m, around a sharp left-hand bend and a gentle right-hand curve. Where the road turns left again, turn into the driveway of Mill Farm on your right.
- 3** Almost immediately, go through the kissing gate on your left. Once through the gate, turn right to walk along the edge of the field. After about 200m, you will reach a stile and wooden gate. Pass through the gate, across a bridge and through a second gate before bearing diagonally left across the next field to another bridge.
- 4** Cross this and follow the footpath around the edge of the field to the far corner. Go over the stile in the corner, cross a bridge and then follow the footpath that runs parallel to the A42.
- 5** At the next gate, follow the bridleway as it slopes uphill alongside the A42. Cross the farm bridge over the dual-carriageway and then follow the bridleway down the other side.
- 6** The bridleway then turns right, after a large set of metal gates. Follow the bridleway for 400m to the edge of Packington.

- 7** Go through the next set of large metal gates and onto Vicarage Lane. After 100m, enter the churchyard through the wrought iron gate and walk to the left of the church. Follow the tarmac path out of the churchyard and onto Mill Street.
- 8** Turn right and follow Mill Street to the crossroads. Turn left here onto Bridge Street, crossing the road to use the footbridge and walk for 125m to the Bull & Lion pub. Just after the pub, turn right to take a footpath next to a residential drive.
- 9** The first section is on a private driveway, so please move left onto the footpath as soon as you can. Follow the footpath between the houses and over a stile. Continue straight ahead, over a sleeper bridge and on to a stile.
- 10** Cross this stile and a second sleeper bridge before the footpath forks three ways. Take the left-hand fork and follow this path across the field to Redburrow Lane.
- 11** Cross the road to the footpath opposite. Go over the stile and follow the footpath across the field. Pass through a gap in the hedge and across the next field to a sleeper bridge.
- 12** Cross the sleeper bridge and follow the footpath along the edge of the next field, keeping the hedge on your right. At the end of this field, continue straight on across the next two fields. Please take care to avoid damaging crops on cross-field paths.



**13** Go through the metal gate at the end of the second field and cross the sleeper bridge. Then follow another cross-field path across the next field. Head through another metal gate and turn left to follow the hedge around the top of the field. Ignore the first gate on your left and take the second one. Once through the gate, walk across the next field, aiming to the left of the church steeple ahead.

**14** When the path reaches Main Street, turn right to walk along the road to its junction with The Hollow. Turn left onto The Hollow and follow it for 350m to its junction with Heather Lane.

**15** Cross over Heather Lane to the stile opposite and take the footpath to the right (across the field). The path soon enters the Woodland Trust's Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood. Follow the footpath for about 900m across the new wood. This path follows the line of the Via Devana, a Roman Road linking Colchester and Chester.

**16** At the edge of the Diamond Jubilee Wood, you will reach a stile and sleeper bridge. Cross both of these and follow the footpath to the left, along the edge of the field. Where the hedge turns to your left, continue straight ahead across the field to the hedge on the far side. Go through the gap in this hedge and walk along the edge of the next field to the road. Turn left and walk along the road verge for about 350m to a gravelled track on your right.

**17** Turn right to leave the road and join the gravelled track. Follow this for about 1,000m to the edge of Sence Valley Forest Park.

**18** When you reach a gate, fence and horse hop on your right, turn here to follow the clear track between plantations of trees. At the end of this track, pass through the gate and turn left up the road. At the top of the hill, turn right to walk between the Noon Column and the toilet block into the car park.



## Parking

Parking is available at Sence Valley Forest Park and in Ashby de la Zouch.

Please note that there may be a charge for parking in Ashby and also be aware of car park closing times before setting off.

## Public transport

Ibstock, 5 minutes' walk from Sence Valley, is on the 15 Ibstock-Coalville and 159 Hinckley-Coalville bus routes (Mon-Sat).

Ashby de la Zouch is on the 9/9A/9E Coalville-Burton bus route (Mon-Sun).

Change at Coalville 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).

*Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information at the time of publication. However, the National Forest Company cannot be held responsible for any error, omission or subsequent changes.*

## 1 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.



## 3 Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Wood

This extensive site is the centrepiece of a national celebration by the Woodland Trust to mark the 2012 Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Over 300,000 native trees have been planted across the site, which features a lake, bird hide and trails.



## 2 Packington

The village of Packington has one of five 18th-century lock-ups to be found across North West Leicestershire and South Derbyshire. Also known as round houses, cages, watch houses, blind houses and clinks, these tiny brick buildings were temporary holding places for offenders being brought before the magistrate.



## 4 Sence Valley Forest Park

Sence Valley Forest Park was once part of a large opencast coal mine. Nearly 100,000 trees, planted in 1998, have softened a black, scarred moonscape into a lush green bowl, surrounding three lakes and a river, where swans, coots, ducks and even otters have made their home.



# 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.

# About The National Forest

The National Forest is one of Britain's boldest environmentally-led regeneration projects: the creation of a new forest across 200 square miles of parts of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire, linking the ancient forests of Needwood and Charnwood.

Over the last twenty years, The National Forest has trebled forest cover within its boundary, creating habitats for wildlife, a woodland economy and a beautiful landscape for everyone to enjoy.

