

# Snibston

The Grange Walk starts and finishes at **Snibston Discovery Park**. Set on the site of a former colliery in the heart of The National Forest, it takes its name from one of the three coal mines sunk in the 1820s and 1830s that helped create the town of Coalville in North West Leicestershire.

In 1828, the famous engineer George Stephenson was invited to build a railway from Leicester to Swannington. This railway passed through an area called 'Long Lane', which was later to become Coalville. While in the area, George Stephenson's attention turned to coal mining and with a group of partners he bought the Snibston estate in 1831. Snibston Colliery was built in 1832, and, with its rail link to Leicester, it flourished along with the growing settlement of miners' houses nearby which developed into the town of Coalville.

When the colliery finally closed in 1985 the site was purchased by Leicestershire County Council with the aim of preserving the most important buildings, turning the rest of the derelict site into a recreation area and building a major new museum of science and working life.

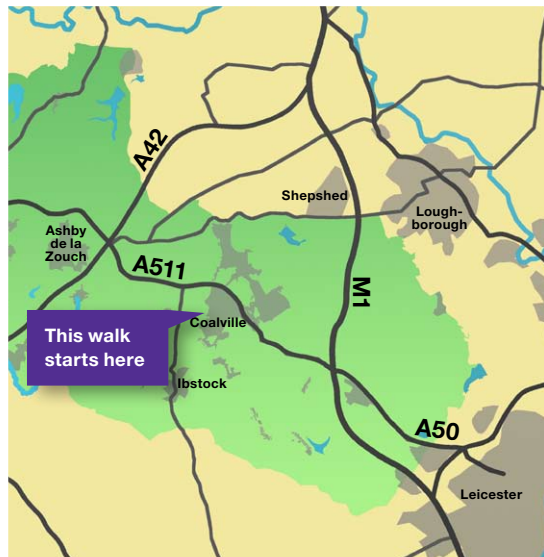
Many of the historic mining buildings are now very rare survivals of this once-widespread industry and have been designated as scheduled ancient monuments by the Government.



Snibston Discovery Park opened in 1992 and consists of an award winning interactive museum, the protected colliery buildings, the Century Theatre, and a 100 acre country park and nature reserve. The museum displays a diverse and rich collection of historic objects telling the story of technology and design and how it has affected everyday life from the past to the present day, and into the future.



*This leaflet can be used in conjunction with OS Explorer 245 (The National Forest) and Landranger number 128 (Derby and Burton upon Trent).*



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# The Grange Walk

14 mile long walk



# The Grange Walk

**This 14 mile walk links the past, present and future of The National Forest. Historic houses, former coal mines, working granite quarries and new woodlands are linked in a route which celebrates the industrial heritage of the area and its future as part of the evolving Forest.**

- 1 Follow the surfaced path through Snibston Country Park. Where the path forks, take the left fork out of the park and onto the bridleway. Turn right and follow the bridleway and then the footpath 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 church.

- 2 Walk along the footpath through the farmyard and on to Berryhill Lane, Donington-le-Heath. Turn left and then turn right at the T-junction with Manor Road. Walk on down the road, past the entrance to Donington-le-Heath Manor House and Holts Lane. Pass through a gate in the dry stone wall on the opposite side of the road by the road signs.

- 3 Follow the public footpath along the edge of the field to a cross roads of paths, turn right, down the surfaced path to a gap in the hedge, follow the alleyway out on to the main road. Turn right and just past the bus stop, cross the road to the footpath between the caravan park and the bridge.

Take the footpath past the cemetery and on to the railway embankment. Follow the path alongside the embankment until you come to a flight of steps. Climb the steps and cross the disused railway.

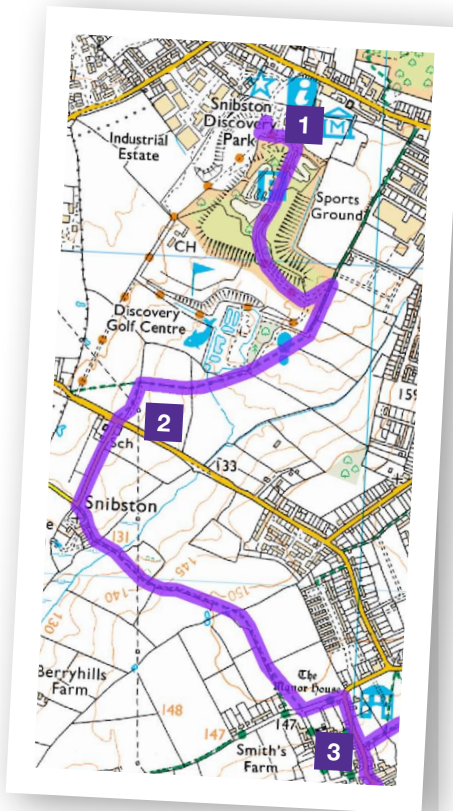
- 4 Descend the steps, turn right and cross a stile just before a clump of hawthorn and elder. Turn right and follow the stream. ignore the first bridge, but cross the second, heading uphill between the fences to cross a stile on the left. Turn sharp left and follow the hedge to cross a stile in the corner then shortly across another on your left and turn right along the footpath.

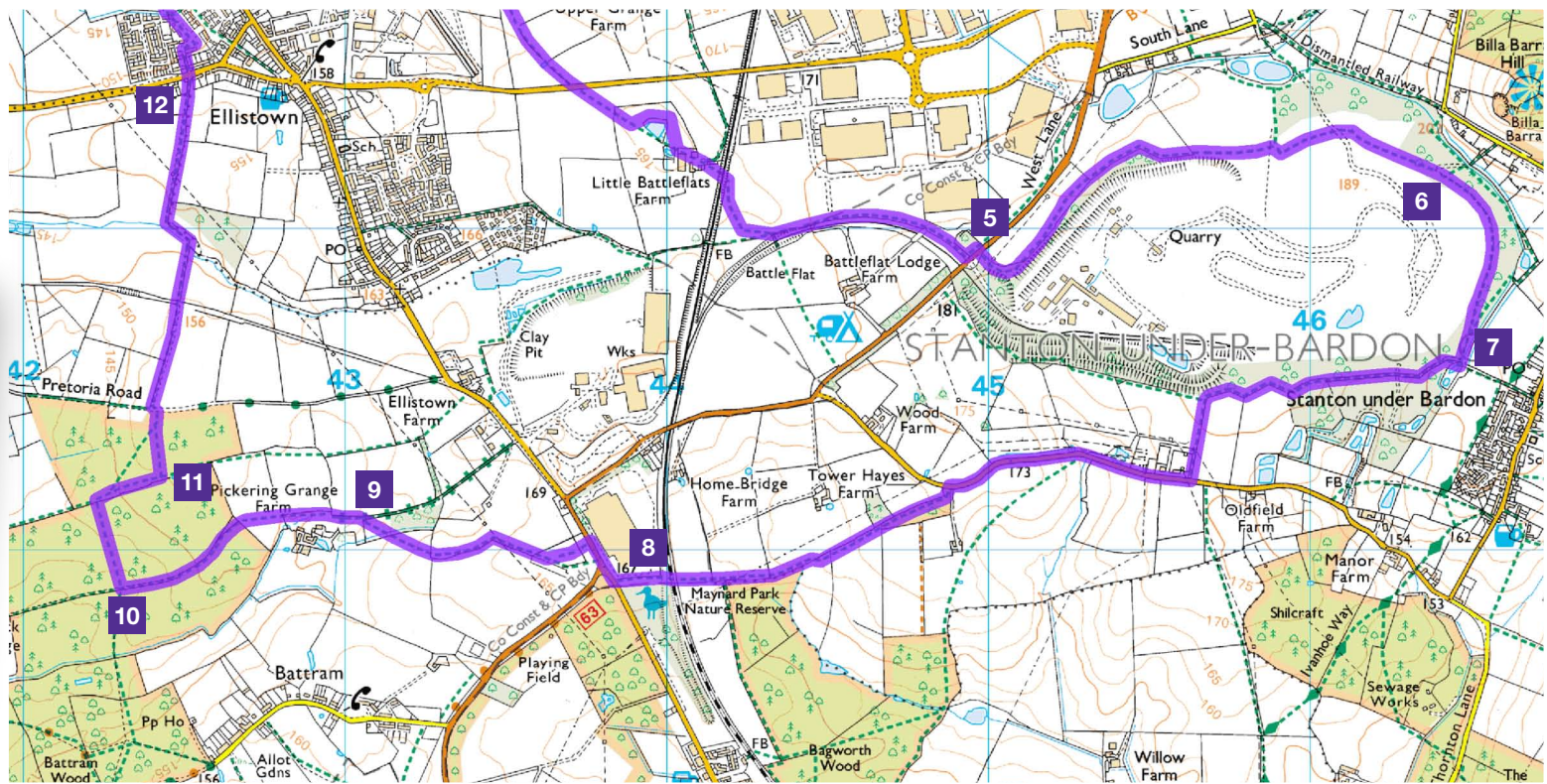
Follow the footpath until you reach the road. Cross over and continue on the footpath to Little Battleflats Farm and up the steps to cross an active railway.

After descending the step from the railway, bear right uphill along the track before turning left to follow the track behind the warehouses and on to the road.

- 5 Cross the road to a stile by the quarry entrance. The path heads uphill, then turns left to skirt the quarry.

- 6 As you walk around the edge of the quarry, to your left you will see Billa Barra, a prominent tree-topped hill. Continue to follow the path around the top of the quarry, dropping down to cross a footbridge. Turn right, then back uphill on the path marked "The Quarrymans Way, Footpath to Thornton".





- 7** Cross the first stile and continue across 3 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. Turn right along the lane until you reach "Strawhill" breeding kennels. Cross the stile to the right of the driveway and follow the public footpath as it passes along the top edge of Bagworth Wood then over the railway line again before entering Maynard Park.
- 8** Continue along the footpath through Maynard Park and out on to the road. Turn right and cross the road just before the bus stop. Take the second footpath on your left. Go straight ahead over a crossroads of paths passing a pool on your left.
- 9** Follow the footpath until it joins the drive of Pickering Grange Farm. Turn left and follow the drive until you reach a stile on your right marked "Miners Way".
- 10** Cross the stile then left through a waymarked metal gate. Head straight across field, cross a stile in the hedge and then down along the edge of Battram Wood to a crossroad of paths halfway down.
- 11** Turn right and head straight up between the poplar trees (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.
- 12** 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 through the gap in the hedge and up the field. Follow the footpath on to Richmond Road, Donington-le-Heath.  
  
Turn right and then left by the Corner Pin public house and up Manor Road and back to Point **3** at the stile in the dry stone wall near Donington-le-Heath Manor House, which you crossed earlier. Now retrace your steps past the Manor House and St Mary's Church and across the fields back to the car park.

## Points of interest along the walk:

### 1 Snibston Discovery Park

On the site of the former Snibston Colliery, the park houses a museum of science, engineering and the industrial heritage of NW Leics. A guided Colliery tour by ex-miners offers an insight into the everyday life of the mine before it closed in 1983. The Grange Nature Area was the garden of Snibston Grange.

### 2 St Mary's Church, Snibston

Dating from 1150 and measuring 10 metres by 5.5 metres, this is one of the smallest churches still in use.

### 3 Donington-le-Heath Manor House

Built in 1280, the house is an excellent example of a mediaeval first floor house.

### 4 Disused railway

The railway line was a spur off the line which ran from Shackerstone to Loughborough and served the South Leicester colliery. It also linked with the Leicester-Swannington Railway, the first public railway (1832), engineered by George and Robert Stephenson.

### 5 New Cliffe Hill Quarry

600 million year old "Markfieldite" granite has been quarried from this site since 1989. At 243ha and producing 4 million tonnes per annum, it the largest single unit owned by Midland Quarry Products. The reserves are used for rail ballast, road surfacing, driveways and sports surfacing.

### 6 Billa Barra

Owned by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, the summit is a Regionally Important Geological Site with a natural outcrop of Pre-Cambrian rock of the Bradgate Tuff formation. The summit consists of acid grassland and the lower slopes are planted with predominantly local tree stock.



### 7 The Quarryman's Way

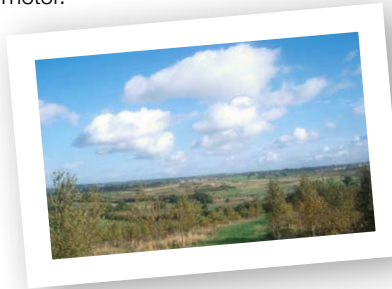
Midland Quarry Products replaced the public footpaths diverted when quarrying began and completed a footpath link between Battleflat Lane and Stanton village. Residents named the route in a competition organised by the company in 1997.

#### Chestnut Glebe

Small site planted in 2002 with widely — spaced "parkland" trees of oak, rowan, cherry, field maple and hazel.

#### Bagworth Wood

Planted in 2000 with a commercial poplar crop, native black poplars and mixed broadleaved trees. A permissive riding route has been created around the perimeter.



### 8 Maynard Park

Named after the last Lord Maynard who died in the 1860s, the former Bagworth Rapid Loader site is now public open space with lakes, paths and tree planting.

#### Miners Way

Created in 1994 to mark the centenary of Ibstock Parish Council, this 5.5 mile trail commemorates the many hundreds of miners who walked these paths to find work in the local coal mines.

### 10 Battram Wood

Created by the Royal Forestry Society in 1998, the woodland includes walking trails, cycleways, nature conservation areas, commercial plantations and a Millennium circle of oak and yew. One of a complex of 4 different woods covering a total of 163ha - Workmans Wood, Grange Wood and Park Farm being the others.

# Donington le Heath Manor House

Dating back to the end of the 13th century, Donington le Heath Manor is a fine example of a Medieval manor house. 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.

The Digby family had mixed fortunes. Everard Digby was a close friend of Guy Fawkes and became involved in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. He was the only surviving plotter to plead guilty and was executed in 1606.



The Manor is now run as a museum by Leicestershire County Council and includes a recreation of a 17th century garden with an ornamental maze. There are toys, games and clothing from the past 700 years for people to try out. There are regular events and opportunities to get hands-on with local history and archaeology.

The Manor's restaurant and gift shop are also well worth a visit.

For more information visit [www.leics.gov.uk/museums](http://www.leics.gov.uk/museums)