

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.

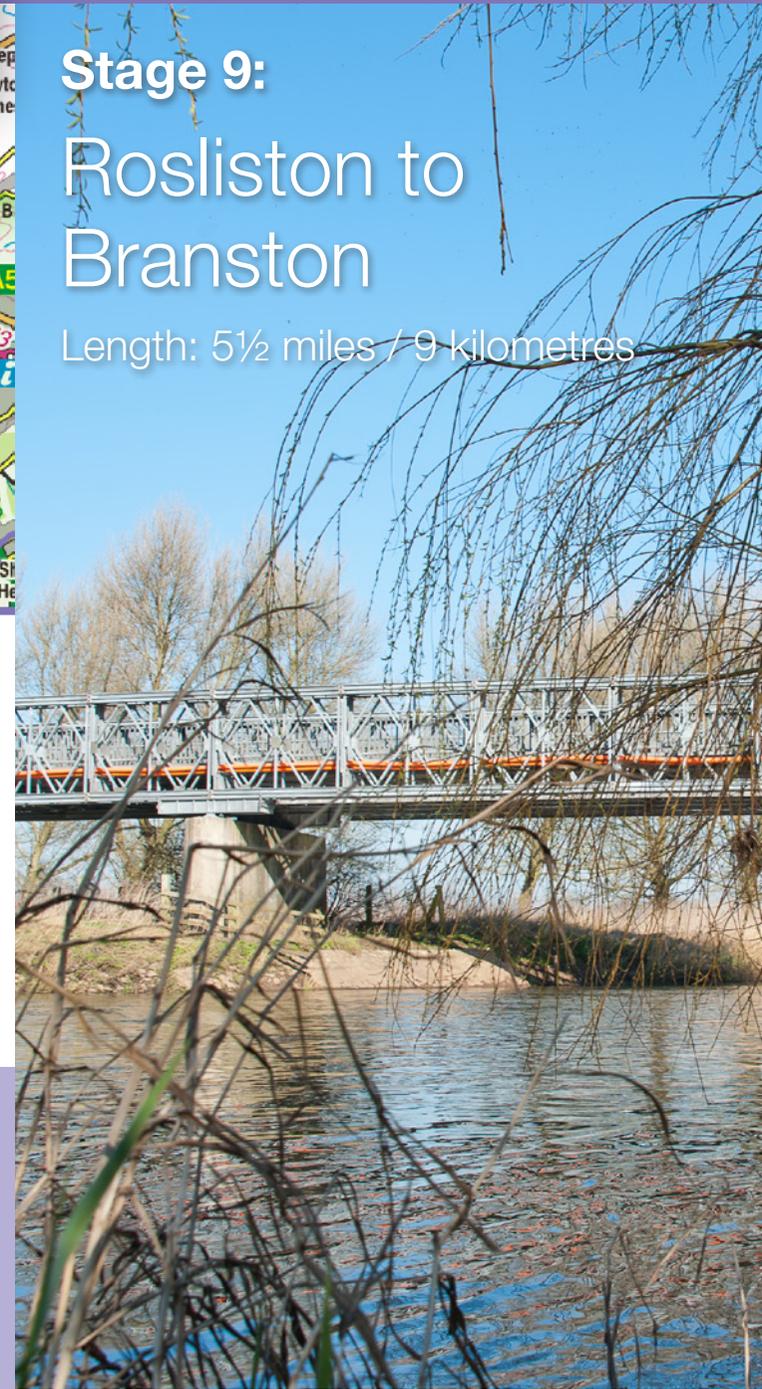
The trail leads through young and ancient woodlands, market towns and the industrial heritage of this changing landscape.



## Stage 9:

# Rosliston to Branston

Length: 5½ miles / 9 kilometres



## About this stage

**Start:** Rosliston Forestry Centre (DE12 8JX)  
**End:** Branston Water Park (DE14 3HD)

Leaving Rosliston Forestry Centre towards Branston Water Park, the Way takes you through young woods and farmland before crossing the River Trent via the Bailey bridge at Walton on Trent. The river is your companion for a while before you enter the flat plains of mineral workings and skylark country.

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.



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Photos: Jacqui Rock, Christopher Beech and NFC



To find out more, visit:

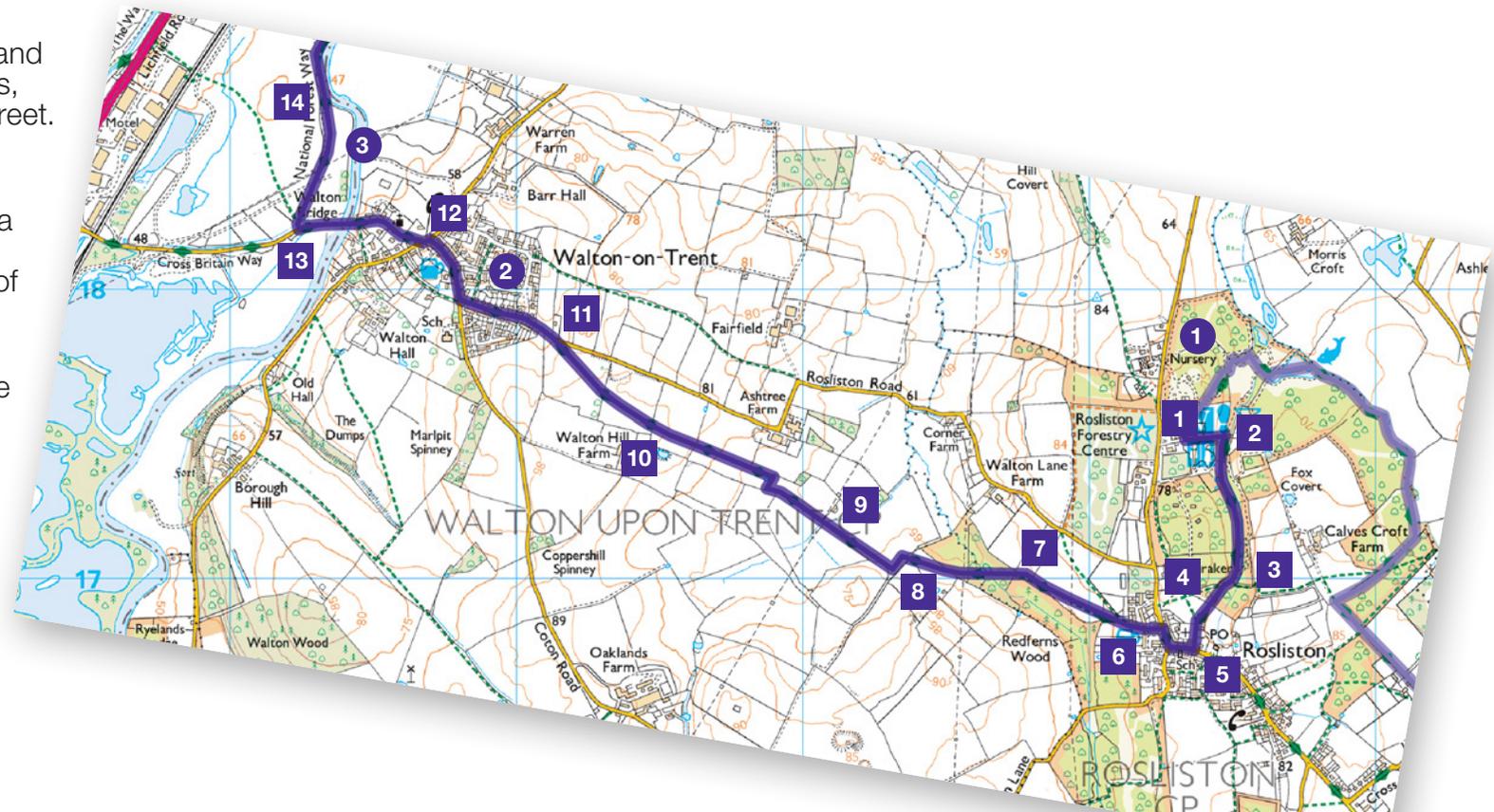
[www.nationalforestway.co.uk](http://www.nationalforestway.co.uk)

# Rosliston to Branston

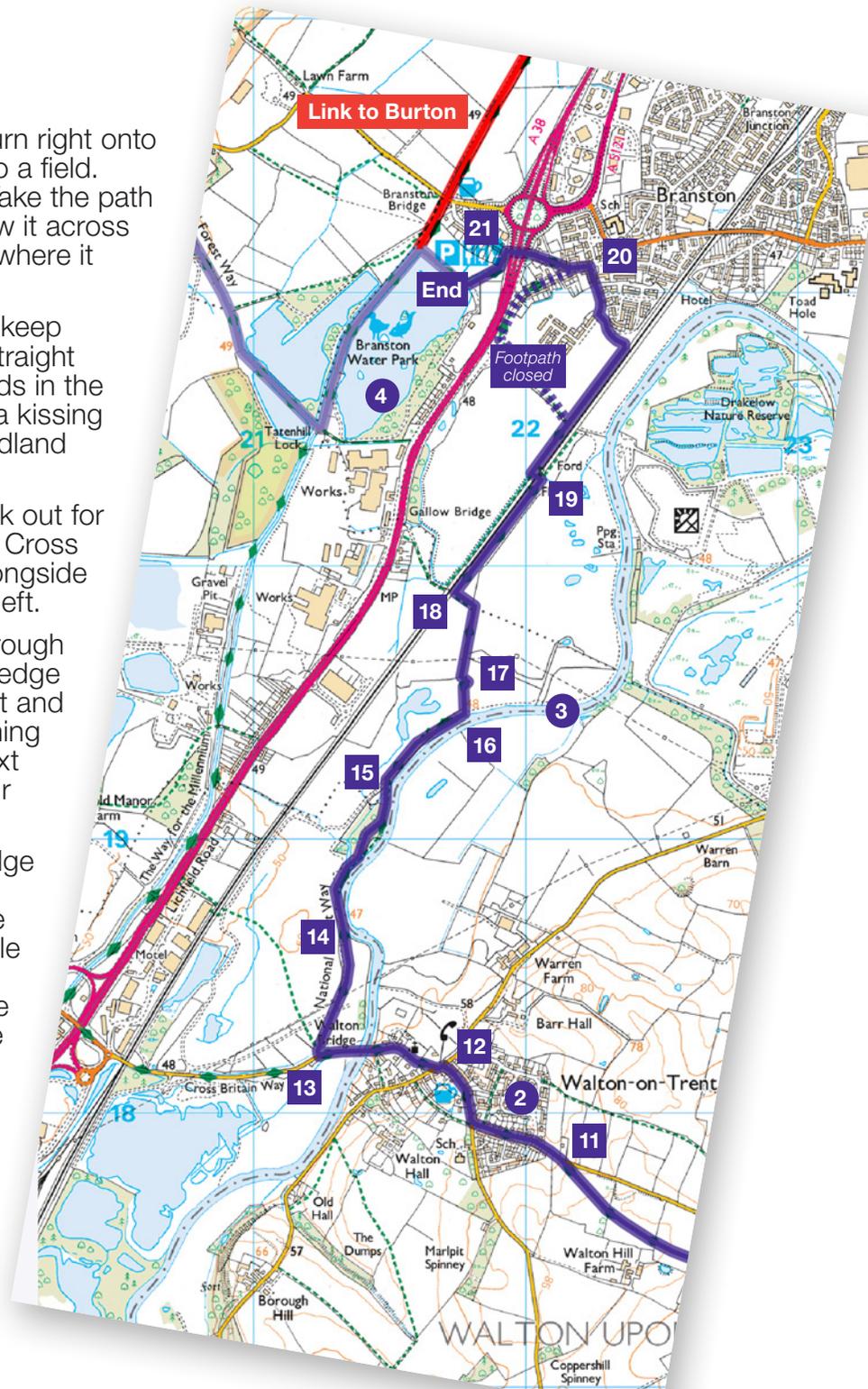
- 1 From Rosliston Forestry Centre car park, head to the far side of the visitor centre, then walk in front of the Hub cafe. Turn left, just after the café, to walk downhill on a concrete track.
- 2 When this surfaced route ends, turn right onto an unsurfaced track, just in front of the water treatment works. Follow this path straight on for about 500m, ignoring paths to the left and right, and on past a wooden bridge and bench to your left.
- 3 When you reach a junction of four paths, follow the route straight ahead onto one of the smaller paths. You will pass a sign directing you to Rosliston village and then enter Snowdrop Wood. Continue through the wood and pass through the gate at the far end.
- 4 Walk along the edge of the next field and take the footpath between two houses, past the church and out onto Main Street.
- 5 Turn right and follow Main Street as it bears right. Just before the Bulls Head pub, turn left off the road on to a footpath. Follow this footpath past the houses, for about 125m, to the edge of the village.
- 6 As the fencing for pony paddocks finishes, continue straight on along the edge of the field, keeping the hedge on your left.
- 7 After about 400m, the path begins to pass through new woodland plantation. Follow the footpath past a pond on the left and on to a bridge on its far side. Cross the bridge and walk straight across the narrow woodland to a kissing gate.

- 8 Go through the kissing gate and walk straight across the field and across a stile. Head diagonally right, across the next field to the corner before passing through onto a track. Turn left to walk up to the edge of the field on your right. Cross the stile on your right, and walk straight on along the edge of the field with the hedge on your left. Follow this to the end of the field and across a bridge.
- 9 Pass through an area of scrub into the next field and continue to follow the footpath ahead, keeping the hedge to your left. The path turns right and then left at the end of this field before continuing ahead for about 450m (through a gap and over a stile).

- 10 When you get to a second stile, set further away from the hedge on your left, go diagonally right across the field to another stile. Cross the stile, and bear right towards the hedge and walk along the edge of the field to a gate and stile onto a road.
- 11 Turn left to walk along the road into Walton on Trent. At the junction with Coton Road, follow the road as it bears to the right and on to the T-junction with Main Street.
- 12 Head diagonally across Main Street to take Station Lane, opposite the White Swan pub. Follow Station Lane past the church and over the River Trent (using the footbridge alongside the Bailey bridge used by vehicles).



- 13 About 100m after the bridge, turn right onto a track and then over a stile into a field. Two paths lead from the stile. Take the path that bears to the right and follow it across the field and through a gate to where it meets the river.
- 14 As the river curves to the right, keep following it (ignoring the track straight ahead). Keep following the bends in the river as the path goes through a kissing gate, then through a small woodland plantation.
- 15 As you leave the woodland, look out for a stile and a bridge to your left. Cross these then turn right to walk alongside the river with a lagoon on your left.
- 16 At the end of the lagoon, go through a gap and turn left to follow its edge to the end of the field. Turn right and cross a pair of stiles before turning left to follow the edge of the next field, keeping the hedge on your left.
- 17 When you reach a wooden bridge with a stile either end, keep following the path alongside the hedge. on the left Ignore the stile to your left just before the end of the hedge. Instead, follow the path as it turns left (keeping the hedge on your left).



- 18 Turn right immediately before the railway line and follow the footpath for 500m until you reach a stile on your left, leading to a bridge over the railway. Cross the bridge and then turn right to head in the same direction as before, with the railway to your right.

**Please note:** There is a temporary footpath diversion in place on the public footpath between the railway line and the Gate Inn. This is due to the construction of a new housing development.

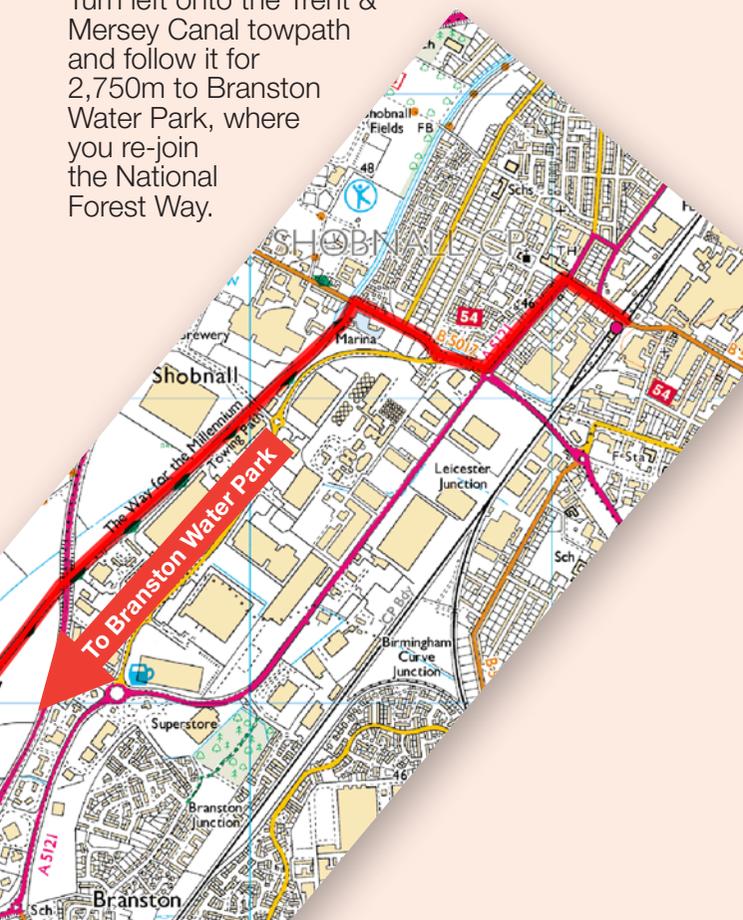
- 19 Continue forwards along the unsurfaced path, keeping the railway line on your right. Follow the path round to the left, keeping the trees to your right, and join Acacia Lane. Turn right and continue to the shops.
- 20 Turn left at the junction (Main Street) and take the first right (Court Farm Lane) to access the subway under the A38. Just before the end of the subway, turn left rather than heading straight onto the road.
- 21 When you leave the subway, continue along the path and then turn right into Branstall Water Park. Follow the path until you reach a play area on your left, then turn right and walk to the car park.

# Link to Burton upon Trent

To visit the nearby town of Burton upon Trent, which has a range of shops, pubs and things to do, follow the 2½ mile link below.

**To Burton:** From the car park at Branston Water park, walk to the Trent & Mersey Canal and turn right to follow the towpath into Burton. After 2,750m you will reach Shobnall Marina. Turn right here onto Shobnall Road and follow it for 500m to the second of two roundabouts. Turn left onto Wellington Road for 400m and then right onto Borough Road. Burton station is 200m on your right.

**From Burton:** Turn left out of Burton station car park. Follow Borough Road for 200m and then turn left onto Wellington Road. After 400m, turn right at the roundabout and follow Shobnall Road for 500m to the Marina. Turn left onto the Trent & Mersey Canal towpath and follow it for 2,750m to Branston Water Park, where you re-join the National Forest Way.



# Points of interest along this stage

## 1 Rosliston Forestry Centre

This popular visitor centre was the first to open in The National Forest. You can walk and cycle through the woodlands, spot the wildlife or take part in the Centre's environmental education programme.



## 2 Walton on Trent

This attractive village is an ancient crossing point of the River Trent. It was here that King Edward II crossed the river in pursuit of the disaffected Earl of Lancaster. Built in 1974, the bridge over the Trent is the second temporary Bailey bridge to cross it. The first Bailey bridge was built in 1947 to replace the original bridge, built in 1834, which was damaged by floods.

## 3 River Trent

The earliest human presence in The National Forest area was probably alongside the River Trent, with primitive stone tools revealing that people lived there as long as 25,000 years ago. Ever since, it has been a focus for settlement, transport and industry. Today it is also a haven for wildlife, with otters, kingfishers and herons all to be found here.

## 4 Branston Water Park

These restored gravel pits feature one of the largest areas of reedbed in Staffordshire, together with wet woodland, open grassland and wildflower meadows. These valuable habitats attract a wide range of birds, butterflies and other insects.



# Useful Information

## Parking

Parking is available at Rosliston Forestry Centre and Branston Water Park. Please note that there may be a charge for parking at either site and also be aware of car park closing times before setting off.

## Public transport

Rosliston Forestry Centre is on the 22 Swadlincote-Burton bus route (Mon-Sat). Branston is on the 7/7A/7E Lichfield-Burton bus route (Mon-Sun), the nearest bus stop to Branston Water Park is at St Saviours Church on Main Street). Change at Burton 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)**

*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.*