

# Calke Park



Built for the Harpur family in 1703, Calke Abbey (often called *The House That Time Forgot*) has remained virtually unaltered since the death of the last baronet, Sir Vauncey Harpur Crewe in 1924. Owned and managed by the National Trust, it is set in beautiful parkland containing ponds, ancient oaks and open pasture.

Calke deer park contains a herd of over one hundred fallow and red deer. The large parkland trees scattered throughout the park are mainly oaks and are remnants of a vast forest that historically covered much of this area. These 'veteran' oaks are important for the invertebrates (beetles, flies and bugs) that thrive on them. This is because of the amount of dead timber that occurs both on standing trees and on fallen limbs or trunks on the ground.

Much of Calke Park is a National Nature Reserve (NNR) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Look out for parkland birds like nuthatch, tree-creeper, little owls and all three species of British woodpeckers.

Within the park, areas of bracken are being controlled to allow grasses and herbs to come through. These areas are grazed by longhorn cattle during the autumn and part of the winter.

Toilets are open year round from dawn to dusk. Opening times for the restaurant, shop and Calke Abbey itself vary. Visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/calke](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/calke) for details.



### Getting there:

There are car parks at Staunton Harold Reservoir and Calke Park. Bus service 61 (Derby to Swadlincote) serves Melbourne and Ticknall. Call 0871 200 2233 for times.

### Contact information:

#### The National Forest Company

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#### The National Trust

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[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/calke](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/calke)

#### Severn Trent Water

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

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

**Photos:** Christopher Beech, Lesley Hextall, National Trust, Severn Trent Water & NFC.

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## Wildlife & Woodlands

5¼ mile medium walk



# New Calke walk

**This is a 5¼ mile circuit through the undulating Melbourne Parklands of The National Forest. Along the way you will enjoy superb views, walk through a nationally important deer park, visit historic houses and see some of the new woodlands being created in the Forest.**

- 1 Start at the main car park at Staunton Harold Reservoir. Walk downhill through the car park to join the surfaced path that follows the edge of the reservoir.
- 2 At the Sailing Club, join the tarmac track and follow it for 1km to a gate on to Broadstone Lane.
- 3 Turn right onto the lane and head uphill. After about 175m, take the stile to your left. Follow the footpath downhill, past a pond and over a footbridge before heading uphill across a field to a stone wall.

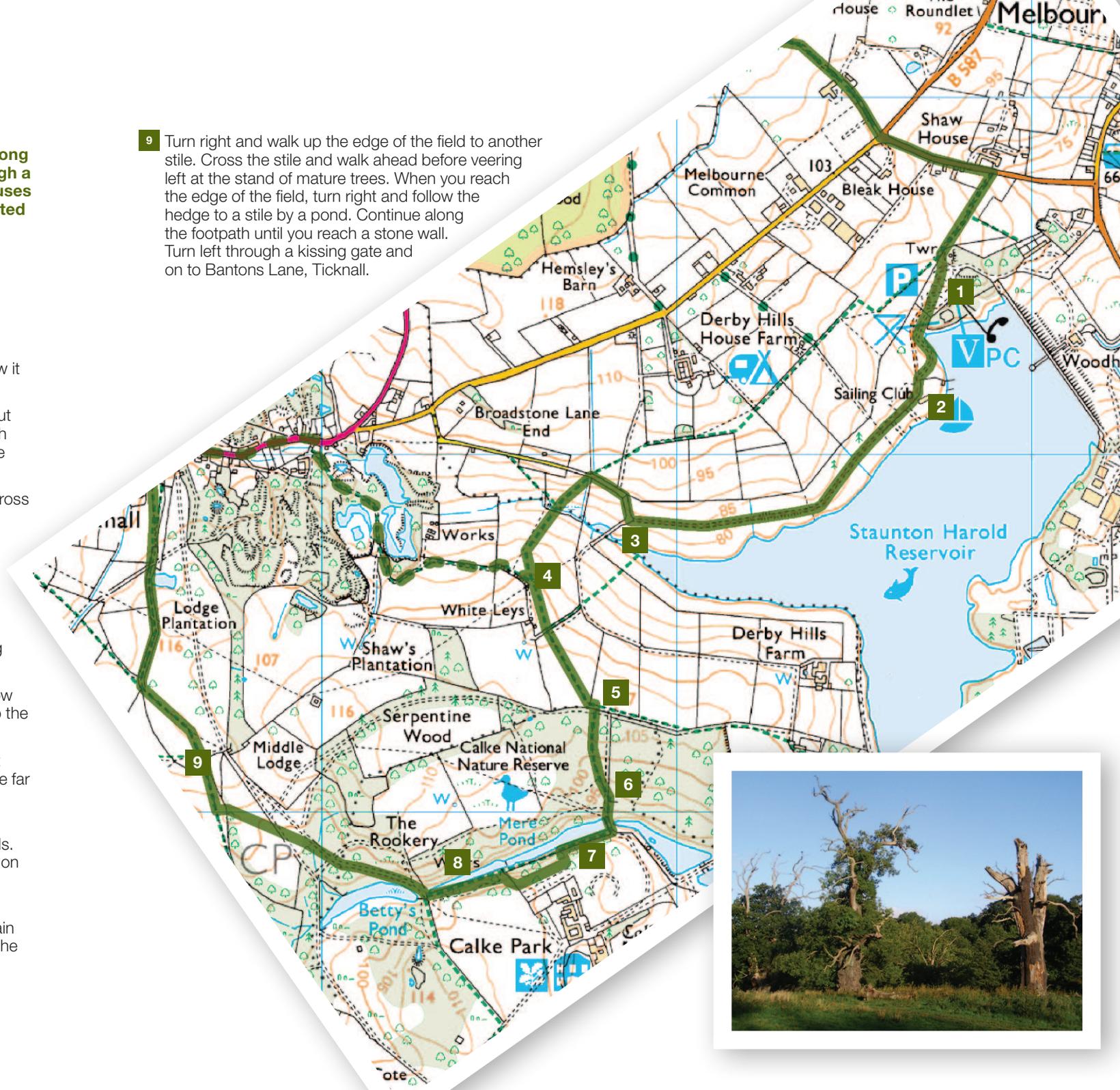
- 4 Turn left and follow the clearly defined footpath across two fields, past White Leys and on to the edge of Calke Park.

Alternatively, for a shorter route turn right at the stone wall and follow the directions contained in the 'Limeyards Shortcut' below.

- 5 Enter Calke Park through a wooden gate and turn left. After 20m, turn right to follow the deer fencing downhill (keeping the fence to your left).
- 6 At the foot of the hill, go through the gate and follow the path around the edge of the pond. Turn left up the steps to reach the car park.

From here you can access all of the National Trust facilities. Otherwise, follow the trees to a stile at the far end of the car park.

- 7 Keep to the path at the top of the bank, then take the steps down to cross a stile between two ponds. Follow the path, taking the left fork at the information board.
- 8 Cross the gravel track and on to a grass field. Continue straight across the field, crossing the main drive, to a stile in the fence on the far side. Cross the stile and pass through a gap in the stone wall.
- 9 Turn right and walk up the edge of the field to another stile. Cross the stile and walk ahead before veering left at the stand of mature trees. When you reach the edge of the field, turn right and follow the hedge to a stile by a pond. Continue along the footpath until you reach a stone wall. Turn left through a kissing gate and on to Bantons Lane, Ticknall.



- 10 Turn right onto Main Street and walk to the village green next to the bridge. Take the path across the green and through the gate into a paddock. Cross the paddock and through another gate before turning right to a stile in the hedge. Follow the footpath through the first part of Vee's Wood to a farm access track.
- 11 Cross the track and follow the footpath through the remainder of Vee's Wood to reach a second track, by a mobile phone mast. Turn right and follow the track to the road.
- 12 Carefully cross the road and follow the brideway as it skirts Nut Wood towards St Bride's.
- 13 Cross the farm track by St Bride's buildings and through the gateway. Follow the brideway to the gate at the bottom of the field. You are now entering Staffords Wood.
- 14 Continue along the brideway along the edge of Staffords Wood and onto a track until you arrive at the main road. Cross to Robinson's Hill opposite and



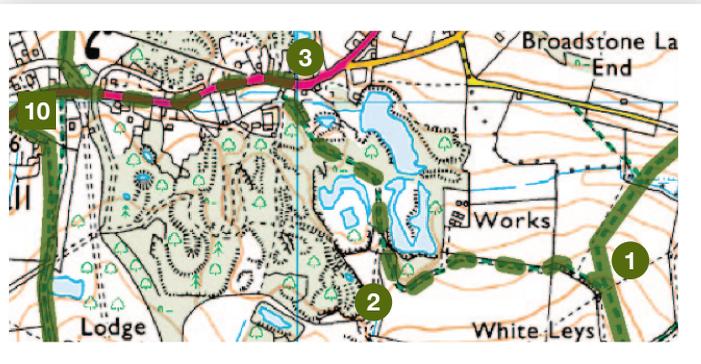
*This leaflet can be used in conjunction with OS Explorer 245 (The National Forest) and Landranger 128 (Derby and Burton upon Trent).*



## Limeyards shortcut

follow the road past the bus stop. Cross over by Shaw House and pick up the footpath on your right leading back to the Tower and the reservoir car park.

- 1 At the end of the wall, follow the footpath along the hedge and past the woodland before entering Ticknall Limeyards.
- 2 The wide gravel path takes you through the lime workings. Pass the cottages on your right to the main road through Ticknall.
- 3 Turn left and continue under the arch until you are opposite the entrance to Calke Park. Rejoin the main



## Points of interest along the walk:

- 6 Herons and little grebes can sometimes be seen here and during the summer large numbers of dragonflies and damselflies can be seen.
- 7 During the spring and early summer the hawthorn bushes towards the far end of this path are a good place to stand and listen for birdsong. Blackcaps, garden warblers, chaffinch and willow warbler can sometimes be heard. The large trees on the left after the stile are small leaved limes, as with the large oaks, these are another native tree that is an indicator of the site being an ancient forest.



- 8 If you visit in mid-March or April, look out for the lambs and sheep in this area, the Calke Abbey flock of sheep is looked after in this area.
- 9 The 82 trees in the lime avenue were planted in 1846 to celebrate the birth of Vauncy Harpur Crewe, last Baronet of Calke.
- 11 Vee's Wood was planted in 2000. It has a strong nature conservation focus, with pools, hedges, bat and bird boxes, a deer hide and an orchard with traditional varieties of fruit.
- 13 The farmhouse at St Brides Farm contains evidence of Norman stonework recycled into its structure and is believed to have been a grange or wayside chapel connected with one of the local monasteries. A number of interesting artefacts have been unearthed over the years - a graveyard in 1852, stone coffins in 1880 and recently, a pre-Reformation (16th Century) priestly burial complete with pewter chalice - all confirming the religious connections of St Brides.

# The Reservoir

Staunton Harold Reservoir, which was originally constructed in 1964, covers an area of approximately 209 acres and is up to 80ft deep. It is owned and managed by Severn Trent Water as a water supply reservoir and as a popular visitor site. Public facilities include parking, refreshment kiosk, picnic areas, toilets, surfaced trails and a children's play area. There are also a range of water based activities including sailing and coarse fishing.



Staunton Harold Reservoir is now a haven for wildlife and is carefully managed to help support a rich variety of flora and fauna. As well as the reservoir, the site also includes the Springwood and Dimminsdale nature reserves.

The Reservoir provides a diverse range of habitats for wildlife including: open water, ancient woodland, farmland, rough grassland, mature hedgerows and species-rich wildflower meadows. On the water look out for a variety of waterfowl including swans, ducks, geese and great crested grebe. You may even be lucky enough to see kingfishers feeding from a nearby tree.

In the summer months, the wildflower meadows provide a welcome splash of colour. They support a variety of flowers including cowslips, lady's bedstraw, poppies and even the occasional orchid. A wide variety of butterflies and other insects can be seen on the meadows in the summer, while year round interest is provided by numerous bird species – including goldfinch, reed bunting, meadow pipit, yellowhammer and tree sparrow.

## Points of interest along the shortcut:

- 1 Ticknall Limeyards date back to the 15th Century and continued to burn lime until 1940. The site is now made up of ponds, spoil-heaps, quarry floor and rock outcrops, all of which has been re-claimed and hidden by nature. Some areas have been cleared to allow the calcareous grassland flora to thrive.



- 2 Ticknall was first recorded in the early years of the 11th century. Much of the land in the older part of the village was owned by the Harpurs of Calke and many reminders of the family can be found in the village.



- 3 Ticknall Arch was built by the Ashby Canal Company in about 1800. It had been intended that a link would be built between the canal at Willesley and Ticknall but this proved to be too expensive. Thus, the Ticknall tramway was built instead.