

Walks in the Woods



Two circular walks; one of 7 miles, the other of 8 miles from Market Rasen through Willingham Woods and the surrounding countryside

INTRODUCTION

Both walks start from Market Rasen and head through fields and woodlands towards Willingham Woods, the shorter one returning along a road. The longer walk takes you through farmland over the Coversands; soils which are very deep and acidic. On a clear day the views of the Lincolnshire Wolds rising before you are very impressive and you may be able to see Claxby Radar Tower on the horizon.



The old chimney in Lammas Leas Road in Market Rasen which powered an eight-sailed windmill



The common blue damselfly is often found in large numbers by rivers and ponds.

LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION

For train times to Market Rasen, phone 08457 48 49 50
For bus services and Call Connect services to Market Rasen contact Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or www.traveline.org.uk

POINTS OF INTEREST

The River Rase has had a long history of flooding Market & Middle Rasen and the surrounding farmland. The Environment Agency took action to help prevent this natural process from flooding the town by creating the River Rase Flood Storage Reservoir - a wetland area that allows floodwater to be stored effectively. This has had the added bonus of bringing a wider variety of wildlife to a previous arable area.

The woodlands near to Market Rasen are an important feature of the area. Many of them are owned and managed by the Forestry Commission which was set up after the First World War, by the government to ensure this country had enough timber for future wars. Whilst many conifer trees have been planted over the years, they are now being harvested and re-planting is taking place with a mix of native broadleaves and conifer trees. This will provide timber in the future and, with a mixed species woodland, will ensure more wildlife diversity.



Hazel leaves and catkins

One such native tree is the hazel. It is particularly visible at the edge of woodland paths from February onwards, first with its sticky yellow catkins, then its furry leaves and lastly its autumn harvest of nuts, a favourite of squirrels and mice. The hazel can often be seen with honeysuckle, a common plant which twines itself around young trees and saplings, earning itself the old name of woodbine. The leaves are one of the first to appear, sometimes in December, whilst the flower can vary in colour from purple through to pale peach.



Honeysuckle

THE ROUTE

1 Start in the car park in John Street, Market Rasen. Leave the car park by the John Street entrance and turn right. At the end, cross the main road into the Market Place.

Go into the churchyard and follow the path to the left. Turn right, and then first left into Church Street. At the T-junction, turn left and continue to the end.

2 Cross straight over the road to go down the footpath at the side of Waterloo House. Follow the path past the floodwater storage area.

3 As you continue on this path, ahead of you is Hamilton Hill and Willingham Woods. The footpath continues straight across a field and into the wood.

4 Keep straight on until the first path intersection then turn right, keeping the pines on your right. Follow the track over a small brick bridge and continue ahead.

5 At the next crossroads turn right and continue on the gravel track until it reaches a T junction by a yellow fire hydrant sign.

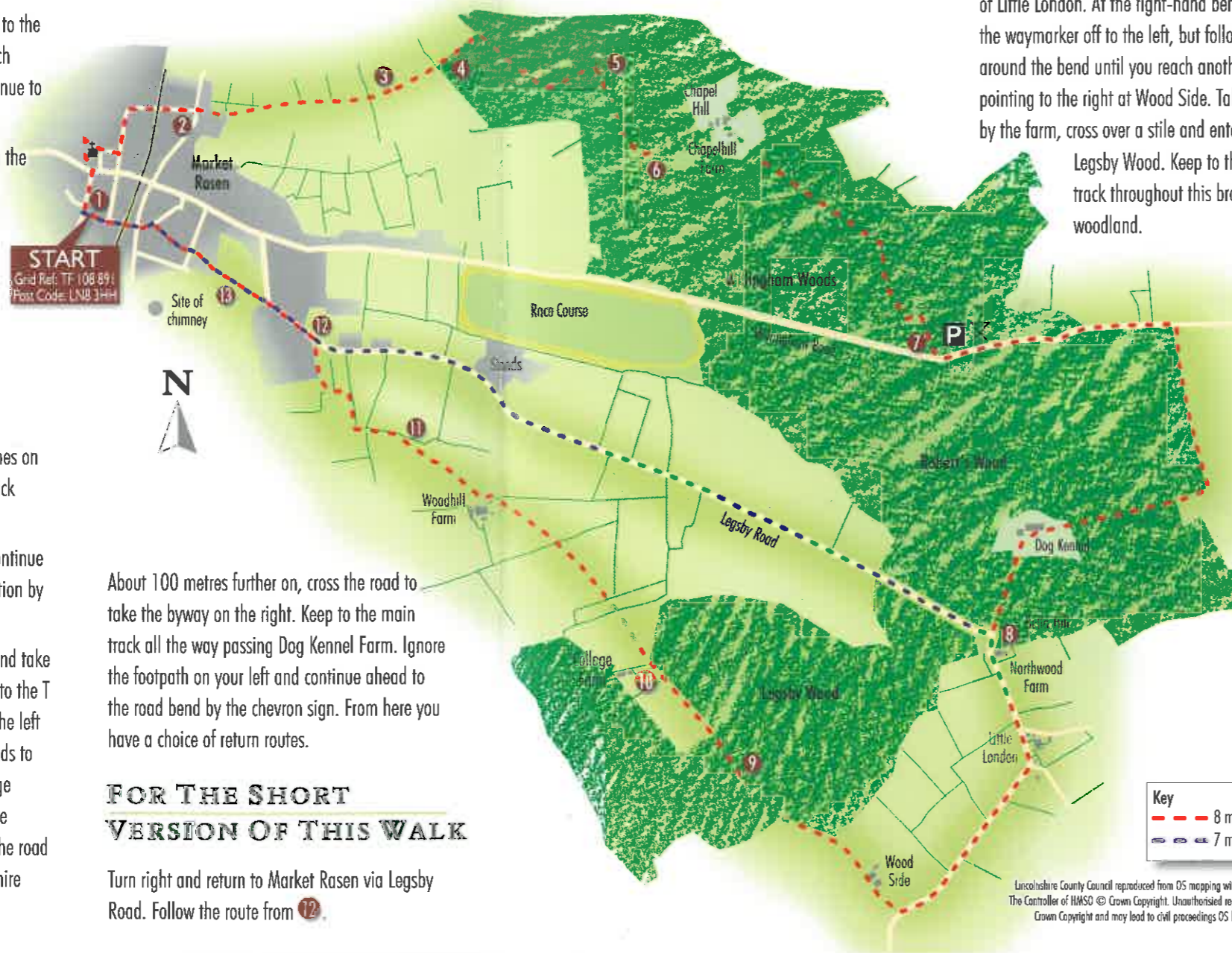
6 Turn left, pass the building on the left and take the right-hand fork, along the gravel track to the T junction. Turn right and take the path on the left at the second set of marker posts which leads to the car park and picnic area. There is a large Forestry Commission information board here giving useful information, and another at the road entrance, explaining all about the Lincolnshire Wolds.

7 Exit onto the Willingham Road and turn left keeping to the footway alongside the road, passing Wisteria House on the left.

About 100 metres further on, cross the road to take the byway on the right. Keep to the main track all the way passing Dog Kennel Farm. Ignore the footpath on your left and continue ahead to the road bend by the chevron sign. From here you have a choice of return routes.

FOR THE SHORT VERSION OF THIS WALK

Turn right and return to Market Rasen via Legsby Road. Follow the route from 12.



FOR THE LONGER VERSION OF THIS WALK

8 Continue to the left of the road to the hamlet of Little London. At the right-hand bend, ignore the waymarker off to the left, but follow the road around the bend until you reach another marker pointing to the right at Wood Side. Take this path by the farm, cross over a stile and enter Legsby Wood. Keep to the main track throughout this broadleaf woodland.

The silver birch is known as the "Lady of the Forest", with its characteristic white bark and graceful slender form. Its timber makes good spindles and bobbins for the textile industry, whilst its twigs have been used traditionally for making 'besoms' for beating and sweeping.



9 Cross straight over the gravelled Forestry Commission track, and then exit the wood by a stile. Continue through the fields, which can be muddy at times, keeping the woodland on your right until you reach the driveway entrance to College Farm.

10 From here go across the next field diagonally left, aiming for the waymarker in Willingham Lane byway. Cross the next field, which can be muddy, on the same course to the large tree and marker post. Continue diagonally left to the corner of Woodhill Farm and around the hedge to the farm entrance. Over the farm track and enter the next field, crossing the field diagonally right, in line with the tree in the hedge.

11 The path then follows the hedge downhill to a stile. Once over the stile, follow the fence on the right, and go over the next stile. Head to the corner of the bungalow and follow the path that goes between the houses to Legsby Road.

12 At Legsby Road, walk left until you reach a footpath on your left. Follow this path beside the cemetery and through a gate at the end of a wall.

The chimney on Lammas Leas Road was once used to steam power a windmill, at least when there wasn't enough wind! One of four eight-sailed windmills in Lincolnshire, it was destroyed by fire in 1923 (a similar eight-sailed windmill can be seen at Heckington).



13 Continue on this route, passing through a metal gate and over the end of the cul-de-sac to emerge at the corner of Maltings Court in Serpentine Street. Turn left, cross over Linwood Road and go under the railway bridge, passing the impressive frontage of the Methodist Church into Chapel Street and then John Street, back to the car park.

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ROUTE INFORMATION

Distance: 8 miles, 13 km or 7 miles, 11 km

Time: Approx. 4 - 5 hours at a leisurely pace for the longer route
Approx. 2 - 4 hours at a leisurely pace for the shorter route

Maps: OS Landranger 113 OS Pathfinder 747
OS Explorer 282

Parking: Car park in John Street, Market Rasen - Map ref: TF 108 891
Postcode LN8 3HH

Terrain: Good footpaths and tracks on shorter route with verge walking,
byways and fields can be very muddy at times on longer route.
All on level ground.

Refreshments: Cafes and pubs in Market Rasen, kiosk in Willingham Woods

Toilets: John Street, Market Rasen & next to kiosk in Willingham Woods

Stiles: Numerous on longer route



Tourist Information - Tel: 01427 676666

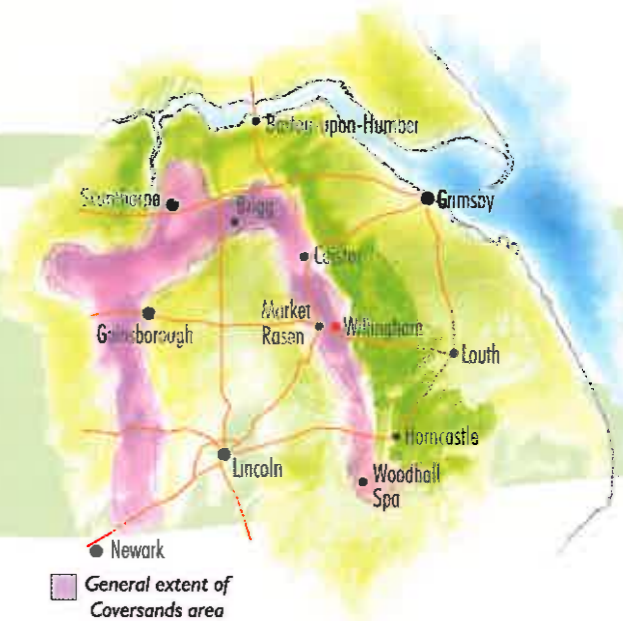


COVERSANDS HEATHLANDS RESTORING THE COVER

Lowland heathland is rarer than tropical rainforest, with the UK still having 20% of the world's resource, despite massive decline over the last 200 years. The heathland found in the northern half of historic Lincolnshire and the eastern edge of Nottinghamshire is even more special, having a wider variety of plants than typical southern heaths, as well as characteristic short-cropped grasslands, lichen-rich heath and sand dunes. This area, known as the Coversands, has gradually lost its important wildlife to farming, forestry and development.

The £1.5 million Coversands Tomorrow's Heathland Heritage Project has worked to restore this precious habitat. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, this 5 year project restored 700 hectares and re-created 250 hectares of this internationally important heathland. The project was not just about wildlife; it also developed strong community participation and school links by working with local organisations and Coversands partners whilst boosting the economic prosperity of the area through grazing projects.

For further information or to request a DVD about the Coversands Heathland Project, contact the Environment Team, North Lincolnshire Council, Church Square House, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire DN15 6XQ - Telephone 01724 297390



If you would like this leaflet in an alternative format please contact us