**Introduction**

This is an enjoyable circular walk from Louth to Tathwell and Rathby. The route crosses fields and follows grass tracks and quiet lanes to explore these small hamlets. Great views towards Stenigot Mast and beyond can be seen on a clear day.

**Points of Interest**

The name of Tathwell originates from the old English version of Tadewelle, the name recorded for the village in the Doomsday Book of 1086. The meaning of Tathwelle is a ‘spring or stream frequented by toads’.

The former Louth to Bardney railway line was completed in 1876 to link the East Lincolnshire line (Grimsby to Boston) with the line along the River Witham from Lincoln to Boston. Its 20 mile course through the Wolds included two long tunnels under the Bluestone Heath Roul and the Caistor High Street. Goods moved on the line included agricultural supplies, equipment and animals and armaments for the local bomber airfields. Perhaps the most unusual export was the bunches of white violets picked from a huge area of nearby embankment and sent to London.

Louth is named after the River Lud, which means ‘the loud one, the noisy stream’. The Lud rises from the chalk Wolds and runs through Hubbard’s Hills. It is home to the water vole, affectionately known as ‘Ratty’ from the classic book ‘Wind in the Willows’. The water vole makes its home in river banks, is a competent swimmer, a vegetarian and is very shy - in fact you may not see one, but you could hear the characteristic ‘plop’ as they drop into the water.

**Local Public Transport Information**

For bus services to Louth contact Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or www.traveline.info

Tourist Information Centre, St James Church and Louth Town Hall, Cannon Street, Louth

The line was never profitable, the last passenger train ran in 1951 and the last goods train in 1960.
From St James's Church walk out of the town centre uphill, along Uppose. Cross the traffic lights carefully and continue past Marlon View and the disused quarry. Turn right along the next track, which leads past several houses.

Turn left past a bungalow, over a gate onto the footpath. Continue on an obvious path across the field to the annex. In the next field bear left through the hedge continuing along the path as it crosses bridges and three more fields to the bypass.

Carefully cross the bypass and join the footpath as it passes the small stream, then head for the left side of Brock a Dale plantation. Follow the path, keeping the plantation on your right, up the track. Cross the next field with trees on your left, over the bridge, then continue on the footpath as it crosses diagonally the next 4 fields and emerges onto a lane and crossroads.

If you would like to visit the church of St Vedast at Tithawell, go straight over the crossroads into the village which is situated around a spring-fed lake probably created in the eighteenth century. The water flows out over a cascade just behind the War Memorial. Follow the road to the left of the War Memorial, marked unsuitable for heavy traffic.

View towards Brock a Dale plantation

This is the site of the medieval village of Martby, where a cottage would have stood within each of the raised rectangles. The distinct moated square at the end of the field continued in use for a longer period.

After approximately 1 mile, you emerge onto the Horncastle Road. Cross carefully, turning left downhill, then turn right to follow the footpath past some trees. Follow the path over grassland and into the 2nd field. Head towards the left corner and over the footbridge onto the road. Turn left and continue to St Peter's Church.

The Church was almost completely rebuilt in 1839. The bright and pretty interior contains box pews and a working barrel organ on the west gallery. In the windows are oval medallions of early German glass depicting biblical scenes.

Hubbard's Hills has been a public park since 1907. It was given to the town by the trustees of Auguste Alphonse Pahud, a Swiss who settled in Louth to teach German and French at the Grammar School. Since then the deep valley with its meandering river has been enjoyed by the town's residents and visitors.

Opposite the church, go through the gate and into the uneven grass field. Follow the bridleway as it crosses the field to the left of the brick pillars and across the stream at the footbridge, and continue to the small gate through the hedge.

Cross over the track, and turn left up a slight rise and turn left, keeping the hedge on your left as you walk along the grass bridleway at the edge of the field. Ignore the bridleway gate on your left, but continue to the next-signposted left turn.

Cross the old railway line and go into a small area of woodland. Follow the path through the woodland and continue along the edge of the field, walking round the Louth Flood Alleviation Scheme to join the torncar path to reach Hallington Road. Cross the road and turn right to walk under the bypass bridge and into Hubbard's Hills.

Follow the path along the River Lud through Hubbard's Hills, along Crumwell Lane and turn left into Westgate Fields with its wooden leaf sculptures created as part of Louth Art Trail. When you emerge into Westgate, turn right and continue to St James's Church, your starting point.
The Lincolnshire Wolds

The Lincolnshire Wolds is a nationally important and cherished landscape. Most of it was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1973. Covering an area of 558,000 hectares or 216 square miles, the AONB contains the highest ground in eastern England between Yorkshire and Kent, rising to over 150m along its western edge. Rolling chalk hills and areas of sandstone and clay underlie this attractive landscape.

The Lincolnshire Wolds has been inhabited since prehistoric times and the appearance of the countryside today has been greatly influenced by past and present agricultural practices.

A Countryside Service helps to protect and enhance the landscape through partnership projects with local landowners, farmers, parish councils, businesses and residents of the Wolds.

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