Two Churches and a Canal

Enjoy the peace and tranquillity of two walks exploring the Louth Canal and nearby villages of North Cokerington and Alvingham, with two churches in one churchyard. Keep a watch for the darlington blue of the kingfisher or the antics of the moorhens as they squabble amongst themselves.

The two churches at Alvingham shared the one churchyard, St Mary's (top centre) and St Adelwold’s, the larger of the two.

The Riverhead area has much evidence of life from the 18th and 19th centuries when this was a busy and important part of the town. At the heart is the Navigation Warehouse, an old wool warehouse built in the 1770s. On the edge of the Warehouse's decking is a weather vane - part of the Louth Art Trail. This stands high above the water, gently rotating with the changing winds, reminding us of the role of this vital element in navigation. There is a small seating area near the warehouse, again part of the Louth Art Trail. Constructed of English oak and steel, the designs echo the boats and bridges of the canal.

Milestone

In 2000, with only two of the original canal milestones left, the Louth Navigation Trust financed and organised the installation of 10 new stones between Louth and Tenney Lock. One of the remaining stones can be seen by the footbridge at Alvingham.

Local Public Transport Information

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

Louth Community Access Point, Town Hall, Cannon Street, Louth

Navigation Locks

The locks of the canal are unique in that no two locks are of the same dimensions and that six of the eight locks are of barrel sided construction.
Ticklepenny Lock is still in reasonable condition after having been repaired by the Louth Navigation Trust in 1996. There used to be a wooden swing bridge here which has now been replaced by one made of concrete. In the early 1930s a sheep wash was built alongside the lock and this can be seen amongst the trees on the left hand side.

Cross the road to follow the towpath. Go past farm buildings and the sewage works on your right. Continue along until you come to Lock Farm at Alvingham Lock, where a tributary of the River Lud runs under the canal, by way of a brick bypath, to feed Alvingham Mill. Cross the road to follow the towpath.

FOR THE SHORTER WALK

At the junction with two other footpaths, turn left to cross the canal on the concrete footbridge for a chance to explore the village of Alvingham. (There is a farm shop about 1/2 mile through the village.)

Ticklepenny Lock

While there are two churches in one churchyard at Alvingham, the smaller of the two, St Mary's, has an unusual history and setting, being a mile from its parish of North Cockerington. St Mary's is no longer used for worship but is managed by the Churches' Conservation Trust.

Alvingham's St Adelaide's is the only church in the country dedicated to the saint who later became Bishop of Lindisfarne. The present church dates from the 12th century although it is thought that an earlier Saxon church stood in its place before being destroyed, possibly by Viking invaders.

For the Longer Walk

Continue along the towpath until you reach High Bridge. The road turns right, leaving the canal, past the houses. At the end of the road, turn right onto the bridleway.

Continue along the ride way as it crosses fields and ditches until you meet a road and continue straight ahead. After the road first bends to the right then left, turn right along a footpath. Follow this along the edge of Green Dike until you join another road.

Turn right then left as to Meadow Lane at the next road junction through North Cockerington village. Just past the public phone box, turn right down a footpath. At Chapel Lane, walk straight across to join another footpath. Follow this to rejoin the towpath, turn left and retrace your steps back to Louth.

The present day Alvingham Mill dates from the 17th century. The machinery was installed in 1782 when the building was extended. However, there is evidence that this site has been used for mills previously, with a mill recorded here in the Doomsday Book of 1086.

Near North Cockerington, the remains of the medieval settlement of Cockerington village can be seen as 'bumps and bums' within the fields. The origin of the name Cockerington means a 'farmstead by a stream called Cocker' which is a Celtic river name - perhaps an earlier name for the River Lud.
THE LOUTH NAVIGATION

The canal was built after it was realised that Louth was beginning to fall into decline. Construction began in 1765 at Tetney Lock, with the canal reaching Louth in 1770 at total cost of £28,000. The 12 mile route allowed sea-going vessels to navigate between Louth, the North Sea and beyond. The main imports were coal and timber, whilst corn and wool were exported. With the advent of the steam engine and railways, the canal fell into decline towards the end of the 19th century. The Louth flood in 1920 caused much damage to the locks, bridges and roads serving the canal. This was finally the end of the canal as a business and it eventually closed in 1924.

The Louth Navigation Trust was established in 1986 to promote the canal, its history and wildlife for recreation and education. It works to restore and regenerate the canal and its corridor and hopes to re-open the waterway for boats. The Trust, working with Groundwork Lincolnshire, was instrumental in renovating and reopening the Navigation Warehouse, currently used as offices for the Trust.

For more information contact: Louth Navigation Trust, Navigation Warehouse, Riverhead Road, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 0DA. Website: www.louthcanal.org.uk  Email: secretary@louthcanal.org.uk  Tel: 01507 605496  Facebook: @Louth Navigation Trust

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