

RIDGES AND FURROWS

PART 1

SLEAFORD TO CRANWELL



Moderate Terrain

6 Miles
Linear
3 hours

220625



A 6 mile (9.5km) linear walk from Sleaford to Cranwell, forming the first part of the Ridges and Furrows Trail in Lincolnshire.

Starting from the imposing St Deny's Church, the walk follows a beautiful stretch of the River Sleas as it leads you out through open countryside. Passing through the pretty villages of South and North Rauceby, with glimpses of Rauceby Hall and its classic parkland, the route then heads north via the Cranwell Aviation Heritage Museum to reach the village of Cranwell.

ABOUT: Ridges and Furrows is a 30-mile (48km) arts and heritage trail, launched in 2018 and linking The National Centre for Craft and Design in Sleaford with Whisby Nature Park via the Lincoln Edge. With beautiful countryside, panoramic views, traditional villages, bustling towns and contemporary art venues, there's plenty to see and do. This guide is published through a collaboration between iFootpath and North Kesteven District Council.

LOGISTICS: As a linear walk, you will need to make arrangements for your return journey. If you are walking the whole 30-mile trail in one go, it is possible to catch a train from Hykeham rail station (near the trail end) back to Sleaford rail station. There is some accommodation along the route, including The Joiners Arms in Welbourn (14 miles along), The Marquis of Granby in Wellingore (16 miles along), The Bell in Coleby (20 miles along) and The Horse and Jockey in Waddington (22 miles along). For individual trail parts, there are some useful bus routes, although connections and regularity do vary, so check the details carefully if you intend to rely on public transport. Check details via Traveline on 0871 2002233 or at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/busrailtravel. It may be better to use two cars, leaving one car at the end of the trail part ready for the return journey.

FACILITIES: Refreshments are available at Sleaford at the start of the walk or at The Bustard Inn in South Rauceby (about 3 miles into the walk).

Getting there

Access Notes

1. The walk is relatively flat with only a couple of gentle slopes. It follows a mixture of riverside paths, farm tracks, field edge paths, woodland paths and a long stretch of road walking.
2. Some stretches can become muddy after periods of rain. You will cross one pasture that is likely to be holding sheep.
3. You will need to negotiate three stiles. One has a large hedge gap alongside for dogs, the other two are enclosed so dogs would need a lift (or these two stiles along with the sheep pasture can be excluded by following short stretch of road instead).
4. There are two A-road crossings (of the A15 and the A17), so take care as the traffic is fast-moving (although visibility is very good in both cases).
5. OS Map Explorer 272.
6. Please remember the Countryside Code.

The walk starts at the war memorial in Sleaford's Market Square, directly in front of St Deny's Church. If you are coming by public transport, Sleaford is served by both buses and trains which will take you to within easy-walking-distance of the start point. For information on bus transport, call Traveline on 0871 2002233 or visit www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/busrailtravel. If you are coming by car, there is a small amount of short-term parking in the Market Place or the larger nearby Eastgate Car Park. Approximate post code **NG34 7DJ**.

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Walk Sections



Start to Castle Causeway



The walk begins at the war memorial in the Market Square, directly in front of St Deny's Church. The Market Place was probably laid out in the early 1100s, serving as a trading centre for the estates of the Bishops of Lincoln who were lords of the manor until the 1500s. The earliest Market Days were on Sundays, although by the 1600s it had changed to Mondays where it has remained ever since. St Deny's Church dates from the 1100s, but was rebuilt in 1884 when the main tower was struck by lightning.

Standing alongside the war memorial with St Deny's Church to your left, walk ahead to exit the Market Place via the vehicle entrance and turn right along the pavement. Follow this pavement as it leads you past the ornate drinking fountain (with stone shelter) on your right to reach a road junction. Use the drop-kerbs here to cross over the road ahead, taking care of traffic.

Turn left along the far pavement and then take the first right turn into Watergate. Follow this road, passing the old Fire Station building on your left. At this point you will need to swap to the left-hand pavement. The pavement leads you across the River Slea then bear right to join the left-hand pavement of West Banks.

Follow the left-hand pavement along West Banks (with the river running parallel across to your right). Continue all the way to the end of West Banks, where you will reach a T-junction (with West Gate to your right and Castle Causeway to your left).



Castle Causeway to Cranwell Railway



Cross over the road diagonally right to reach the start of a riverside tarmac footpath, with a beautiful metal sculptural map of the river on your right. Keep ahead to join the riverside path, with the river running on your left. Almost immediately on your right, you will see another artwork installation; a number of metal plaques depicting the flora and fauna of the river and its surroundings, alongside two ornate metal benches.

Follow the riverside path ahead, to a point where the houses on your left end. Ignore the tarmac path to the right here, instead keep ahead on the riverside path leading you under the railway bridge. Continue for a further 400 metres, passing the extensive allotments on your right to reach a junction with a raised embankment tarmac path. This embankment path is the line of an old railway, the old Cranwell Railway.



Cranwell Railway to Boiling Wells Farm



Go straight ahead to continue on the riverside path. At the end of this stretch you will emerge out alongside the A15 road. Follow the fingerpost signs, leading you right and then left to reach the road crossing point. Taking extra care to wait for a suitable gap, cross over this fast-moving road. At the far side, follow the fingerposts once again, turning left along the grass verge and then turning right to re-join the riverside path with the river running on your left.

Follow this riverside path, leading you over a ditch footbridge ahead and then under some power lines (where the river bends left). About 30 paces later, you will see a waymarker post. Fork right here, leaving the riverbank and following the footpath diagonally over the crop field. At the far side go ahead, passing through the hedge gap and joining the path with the fenced paddocks of Boiling Wells Farm running on your left.



Boiling Wells Farm to South Rauceby

Beyond the paddocks, continue ahead to pass the farm buildings on your left and you will reach a waymarker post. Fork slightly right here, to continue on the footpath with a hedgerow on your left and fenced paddocks on your right. At the end of the hedgerow, go straight ahead, crossing a farm track and following the right-hand edge of an open field, with a hedgerow on your right.

In the field corner, cross the stile ahead (there are gaps in the adjacent hedgerow that should be suitable for dogs) and continue along the right-hand edge of the large crop field. Continue ahead along this field-edge path for some distance, passing one square of woodland on your right and continuing on





to reach a second area of woodland, Ash Holt (alongside a waymarker post).

Fork right here, to join the path leading into the woodland, passing the site of an old quarry on your right. Stay with the main path as it bends right to stay alongside this quarry and you will reach a beautiful metal sculpture on your right. This is called In the Field, was designed by Richard Farrington and represents the fields around the village of South Rauceby.

Stay with the main woodland path as it bends left at this point and you will emerge to a junction with a farm track, with a fenced area of parkland ahead. Turn left and follow the track and then lane to reach a T-junction in the village of South Rauceby. Turn right along the pavement and follow the main road as it leads you ahead and then bends left to reach The Bustard Inn on your right. This village pub was constructed in 1860, replacing the older pub that was demolished to accommodate the south gate of Rauceby Park. It is thought that its name commemorates the last Great Bustard shot in Lincolnshire.

4 → 5 South Rauceby to North Rauceby



Immediately after passing The Bustard Inn on your right, turn right onto the side road, Tom Lane, signed to North Rauceby. Follow the roadside pavement leading you past the beautiful stone boundary wall and open parkland of Rauceby Hall on your right.

Rauceby Hall was built by Anthony Peacock and was completed in 1846. During the Second World War the hall was requisitioned by the Royal Air Force, but today remains in the hands of the family that built it.

Continue along Tom Lane, passing the entrance gates and lodge for Rauceby Hall on your right. Alongside the hall gates, you will see a sculptural bench. If you look closely, you will see that it depicts a sleeping shepherd, surrounded by his sheep

and other animals.

Continue to pass the village school on your left. As the road bears right, you will pass an old stone cross on your left, marking the start of the village of North Rauceby.

5 → 6 North Rauceby to Aviation Museum



Continue on the right-hand pavement leading you through the length of the village. As you reach the national speed limit signs, and just after the right-hand pavement ends, look for a stile on your right. (This footpath will cut off a corner of the road, but if you would rather avoid the livestock and stiles you can stay with the road instead).

Cross this stile to enter a pasture (which may be holding sheep) and, with your back to the stile, cross the pasture diagonally left. Exit the pasture via another stile and you will re-emerge onto the road. Keep straight ahead to follow the tarmac road, taking care of traffic and using the grass verges for your safety.

After about 650 metres, you will reach the entrance for Cranwell Aviation Heritage Museum on your left. The museum is well worth a visit if you have the time. Entry is free and open times vary seasonally. The museum allows you to discover the history of RAF Cranwell and RAF College Cranwell through artefacts, storyboards, displays and exhibits. You can even try your hand on an interactive exhibit, including a flight simulator where you can attempt to land a Jet Provost on the runway at RAF Cranwell before your fuel runs out!

6 → 7 Aviation Museum to End



When you have finished at the museum, simply continue ahead along the lane, still taking care of traffic. After about 300 metres



you will reach the crossroads with the A17. Taking particular care of traffic here, cross over and go straight ahead on the side road signed to Cranwell. Follow this road for about 2 miles, passing the grounds of RAF Cranwell on your left.

Cranwell's association with aviation began during World War I. In 1915, the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) sought to establish a single unit at which officers could be trained to fly aeroplanes, observer kite balloons and airships. By November 1915, the Admiralty had requisitioned some 2,500 acres of farmland at Cranwell and in the following month, construction of a hutted camp and aircraft hangars began. With the amalgamation of the RNAS and the Royal Flying Corps on 1 April 1918, ownership of Cranwell was placed in the hands of the newly established RAF. The Royal Air Force College opened on 5 February 1920. The permanent prestigious building, known as College Hall, was completed in September 1933 at a cost of £321,000. Sir Frank Whittle, credited with inventing the jet engine, attended Cranwell in the 1920s and, when he died in 1996, his ashes were buried in a church within RAF Cranwell.

At the end of the road, you will reach a T-junction with the B1429. Turn right along the pavement and this leads you towards the village of Cranwell. You will soon reach the village stores on your right, where this stretch of the Ridges and Furrows Trail ends.

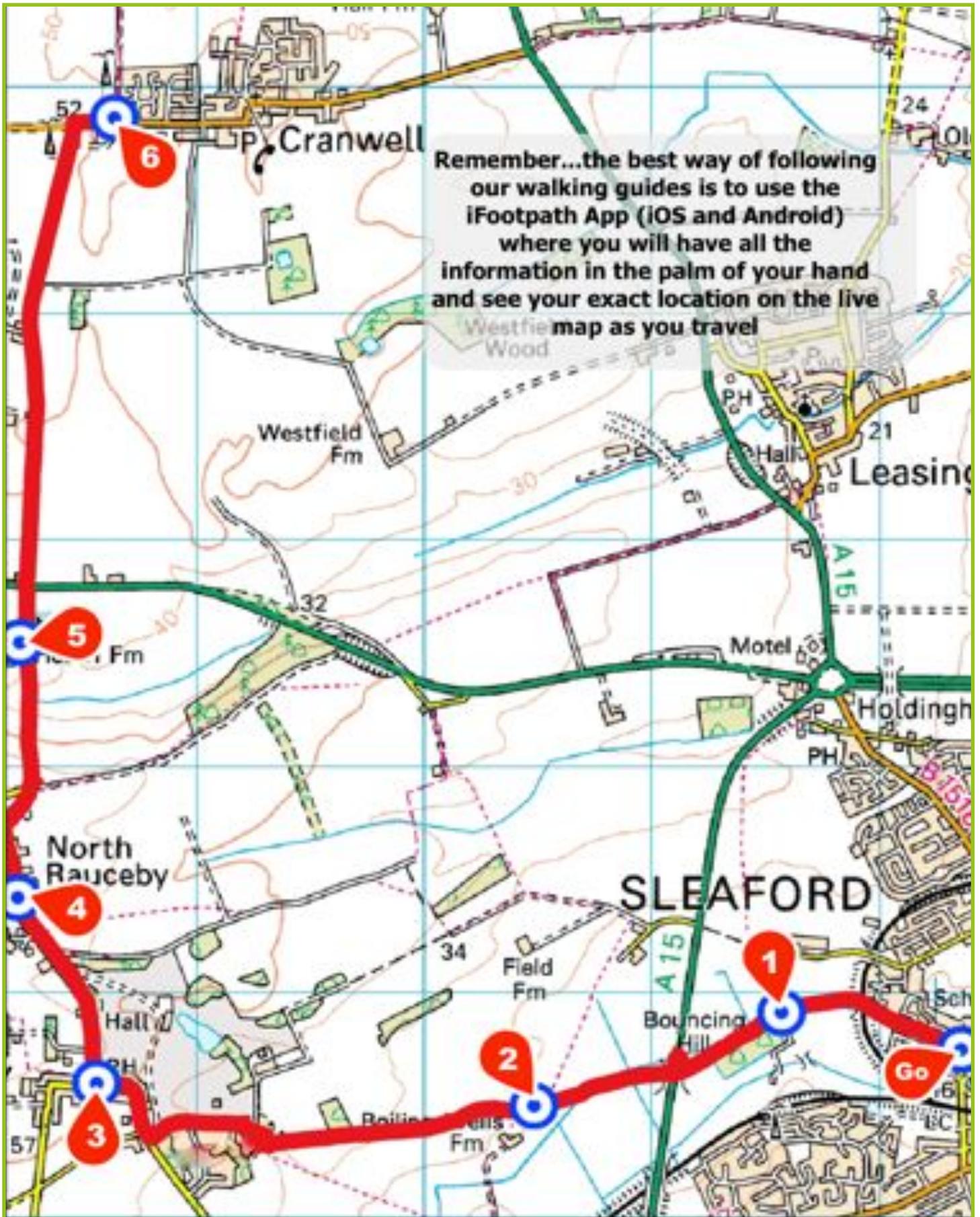
Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.





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