

UNCOVER OUR BEAUTIFUL GARDENS AND LANDSCAPES

UNCOVER
THE STORY TRAILS

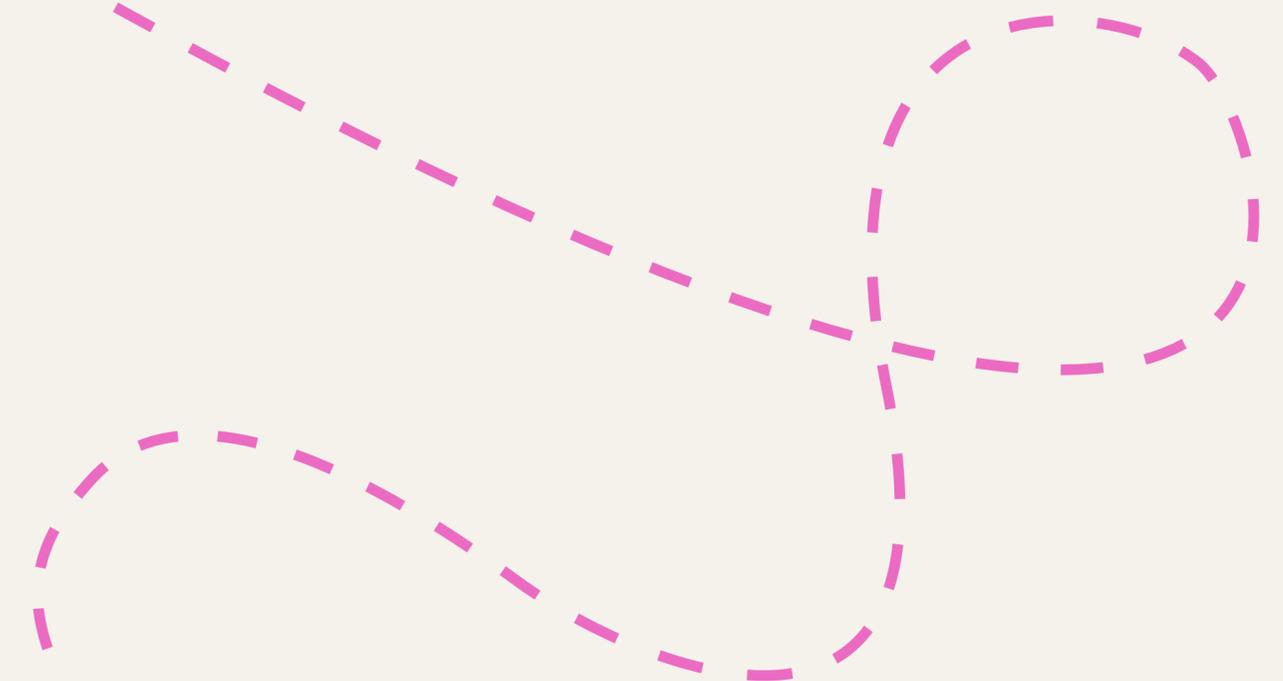
Leicester
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WELCOME TO A NEW APPROACH IN TELLING OUR STORIES.

Whether you want to get active with a walk, run or bike ride, or simply relax and take in the splendour of Leicestershire's lovely landscapes, there are so many places to visit.

Some of the county's most historic attractions not only display treasures inside, but also out, set within ancient forests or surrounded by stunning gardens. Former industrial sites have been reclaimed and regenerated and now offer excitement and adventure on and above the ground, and our canals and rivers give stunning views both of and from the water. With so many beautiful outdoor spaces to discover, the great outdoors have never been so great.

JOIN US ON THIS FASCINATING TOUR TO FIND OUT MORE.

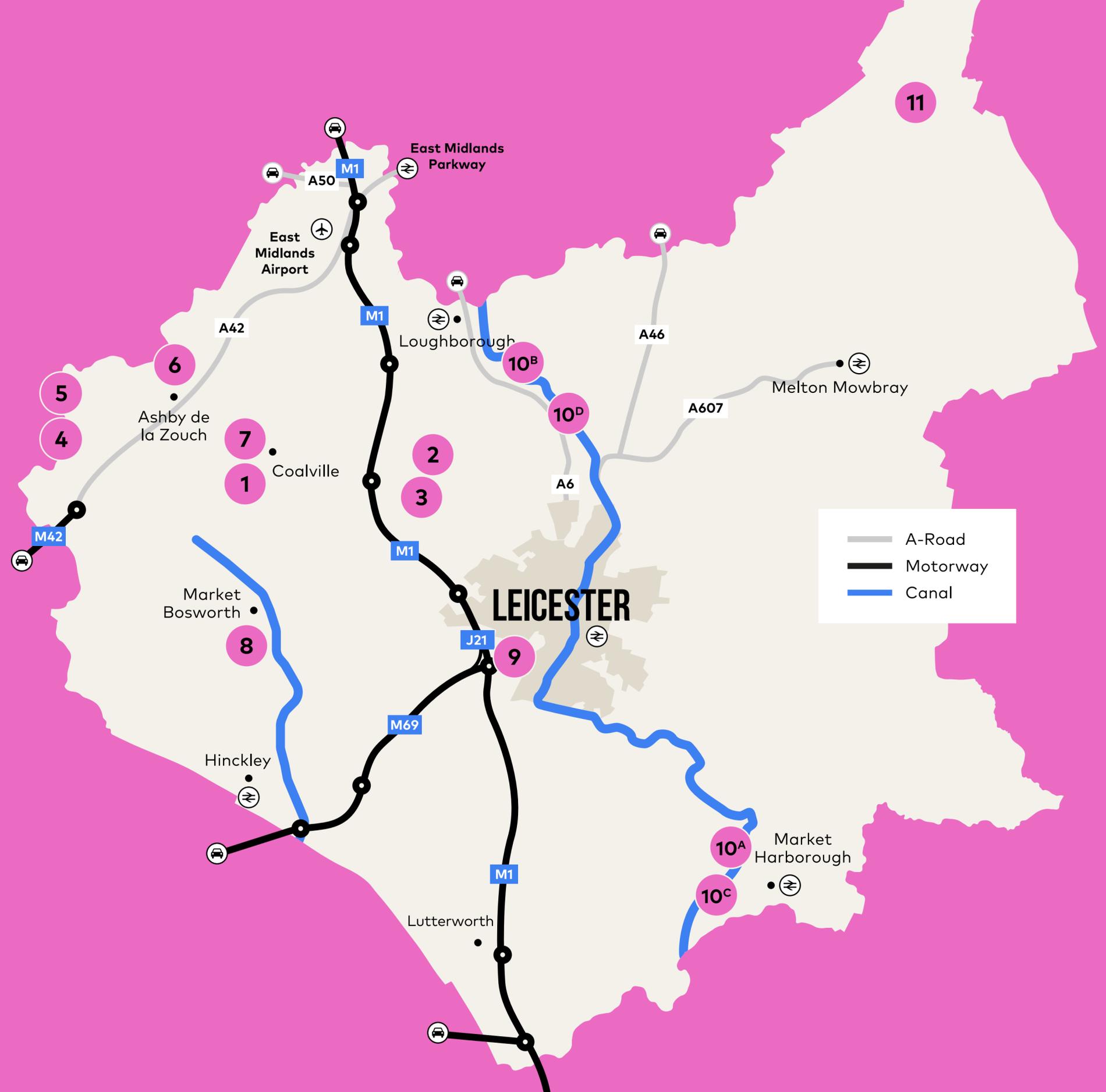


Uncover more about
the attractions featured at
visitleicester.info/uncoverthestory

POINTS OF INTEREST

- 1. 1620s House & Garden**
Manor Road, Donington
le Heath, LE67 2FW
- 2. The Charnwood Forest**
- 3. Stoneywell**
Whitcrofts Lane,
Ulverscroft, LE67 9QE
- 4. The National Forest**
- 5. Conkers**
Rawdon Road,
Swadlincote, DE12 6GA
- 6. Staunton Harold Estate**
Staunton Harold,
Ashby de la Zouch, LE65 1RT
- 7. Snibston Colliery Park**
12 Chiswell Drive,
Coalville LE67 3JX
- 8. Bosworth Battlefield**
Ambion Lane,
Sutton Cheney, CV13 0AD

- 9. Everards Meadows**
Cooper Way,
Everards Meadows,
LE19 2AN
- 10. Canals**
 - A. Foxton Locks, LE16 7RA
 - B. Pillings Lock Marina,
Quorn LE12 8FE
 - C. Union Wharf, Market
Harborough LE16 7UW
 - D. Barrow Boating,
Barrow on Soar
LE12 8LQ
- 11. Belvoir Castle**
Vale of Belvoir, NG32 1PE





1620s HOUSE & GARDENS

As you explore this medieval manor house, you'll discover many dark stories linked to its history. Hit by the turbulence of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, linked to murderous Gunpowder Plotters and a home where witchcraft superstitions ran wild, its grounds are a peaceful post-tour haven.

Surrounded by National Forest woodland, the beautiful gardens have been recreated in 17th century style. Take in the scents of flowers and herbs of the day, and find out among the labelled plants and vegetables why potatoes were taboo.

A tearoom offers refreshments, and on special days, the garden blooms as a venue for open-air theatre, historic re-enactments, early-music recitals, plant fairs, talks and tours.



THE CHARNWOOD FOREST

This vast expanse of woodland and ancient rocks – some the oldest in England – is an adventure playground created by Mother Nature millions of years ago. As you explore an other-worldly landscape of craggy outcrops and heather-clad hillsides, you'll be following in the footsteps of young naturalist-in-the-making David Attenborough.

The area is home to over 20 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, including Bradgate Park, where herds of deer roam, and Beacon Hill, whose location offers spectacular views.

Stroll into the Charnwood villages of Woodhouse Eaves, Mountsorrel and Quorn, and you'll see more of the forest's natural materials. Quarried for centuries, slate and stone have been used to charming effect on buildings including pubs and cafés – a welcome sight to weary walkers.



STONEYWELL

Bursting monolith-like from its Charnwood Forest surroundings, Stoneywell cottage was inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement, and built by one of its founders, Ernest Gimson.

Its walls are formed from stones removed to make way for its gardens, which offer year-round colour and treats for all the senses.

Over four perfectly planted acres and an 11-acre woodland, discover winding pathways, a stone fort with views of historic Bradgate Park and a huge variety of flowers ranging from fiery rhododendrons to delicate bluebells.

Stop for a game of boules, spread out your picnic blanket, join a guided tour, or just sit and listen to the joyful soundtrack of the many species of birds that also flock to this rural haven.



THE NATIONAL FOREST

The National Forest, a 200-square-mile expanse of countryside running through Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire, was once a place of industry. The land, which was mined for its clay and coal, is now a vast outdoor playground, with nine million trees planted since 1990, linking to the ancient forests of Charnwood and Needwood.

Whatever your interests, you'll find something to do here. There are hundreds of miles of walking trails and cycle paths, with opportunities to spot wildlife, stop for a picnic or climb ancient rocks. History buffs and family fun-seekers are also well catered for. Ancient treasures including Stoneywell cottage and the 1620s House nestle within the forest, and at its heart is adventure park Conkers.



CONKERS

With its forest-themed attractions, this family adventure park gives visitors the chance to experience the great outdoors right in the heart of the National Forest. Set over 120 acres of woodland and lakes, a great place to start is the Sky Viewing Tower, offering spectacular views over the treetops. The Lo and Hi Ropes Courses are also suspended above the forest floor, and fun activities on the ground include a squelchy barefoot walk and a challenging woodland trail.

Explore the National Forest further, on foot or by bicycle, by following the circular Conkers Circuit. Moira Furnace is also nearby – this museum and country park boasts a fascinating history and a picnic-perfect location on the restored Ashby Canal.



STAUNTON HAROLD ESTATE

Georgian mansion Staunton Harold Hall is a private residence not open to the public but don't let that stop you from visiting this picturesque hamlet. Walkers and cyclists are very welcome to explore the estate's beautiful grounds, which run for 2,000 acres and open out into the National Forest.

Entrance is via a bridge which spans the estate's lake and offers equally stunning views of the hall and the Chapel of the Holy Trinity – a rare example of a church built during the Commonwealth.

Take one of several walking trails, including the John Blunt Poetry Walk, or head to the Ferrers Centre for Arts and Crafts to shop, watch craftsmen at work or enjoy an indulgent Afternoon Tea.



SNIBSTON COLLIERY PARK

On land that was mined for its coveted coal reserves for over 150 years now stands Snibston Colliery Park. Part outdoor adventure, part open-air museum, the first sight to greet visitors is a collection of rare machines and buildings. Preserved as scheduled monuments, they form the Snibston Heritage Trail, and tell the story of Coalville's mining past.

The Colliery Manager's garden has become a nature reserve – complete with wetland, wildflower meadows and fishing lakes – and the former spoil heap is now a 4km blue grade mountain bike trail.

With a backdrop of the National Forest, the views around this former industrial landscape are a breath of fresh air and can be enjoyed from an outside seat at Grounds Colliery Café.



BOSWORTH BATTLEFIELD

On 22nd August 1485 the bloodcurdling sounds of a battle that changed history and brought the Middle Ages to an end rang out across the Bosworth countryside.

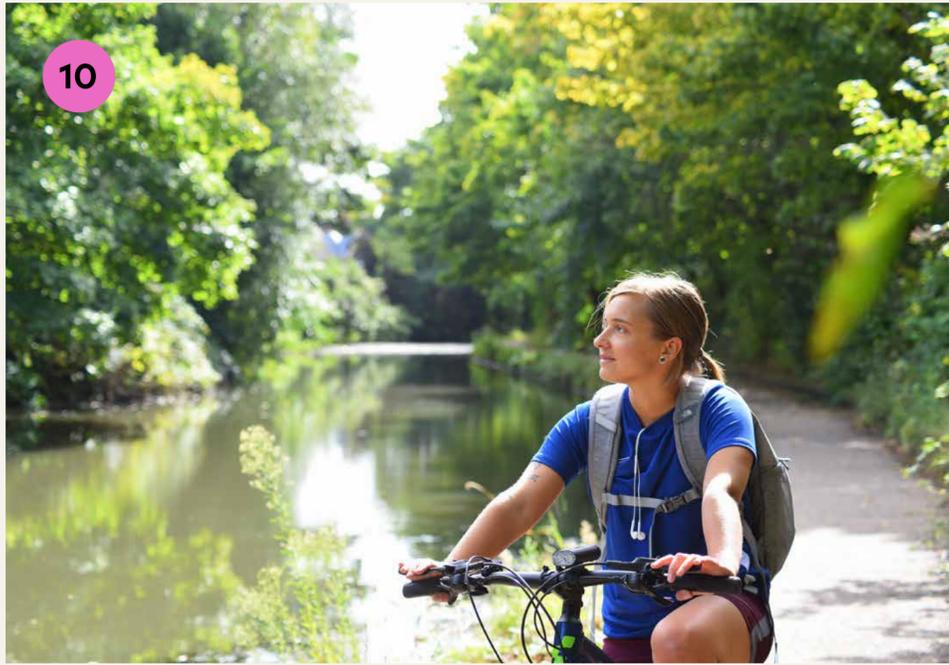
In the same spot today, it's birdsong that accompanies walkers enjoying the peace and quiet of Bosworth Country Park along the 2.2km Battlefield Trail. The route, peppered with visual and audio information stations, connects with the Battlefield Railway at Shenton Station, the Ashby Canal and, via a footpath through Ambion Wood, Sutton Cheney Wharf. Barges were used to transport coal and lime when the canals had a crucial role to play during the Industrial Revolution. Nowadays, walkers can relax at the wharf's waterside café and watch as pleasure cruising narrowboats glide by.



EVERARDS MEADOWS

City dwellers may think they have to journey into the rural county to enjoy a walk in the countryside, but the city has a tranquil hot spot or two right on its doorstep.

Everards Meadows offers walkers and cyclists a 70-acre trail of pathways which are connected to the National Cycle Network. After meandering through wildflower-strewn grassland and alongside the Grand Union Canal and River Soar, stop for al fresco refreshments from the Everards Beer Hall or at Jennos Coffee House. Bikes can be hired from Rutland Cycling, so explore riverside nature reserve Aylestone Meadows, where the Kings Lock Tearooms, a lock keeper's cottage built in 1796, is located at the exact spot where the river becomes a canal.



CANALS

It's said that spending just two hours a week by water can improve health and happiness – and even in landlocked Leicestershire there are plenty of places to try out this theory.

A feat of Victorian engineering, Foxton Locks not only shows visitors just how to get a boat up a hill, but also offers 34 acres of countryside to explore and the chance to cruise the Grand Union Canal.

Hire a boat of your own at Pillings Lock Marina in Quorn, Market Harborough's Union Wharf or Barrow Boating on the River Soar. Alternatively, sit, sip and watch boats glide by at a riverside pub or café, or head to a picturesque towpath for a healthy walk, run or bike ride.



BELVOIR CASTLE

Set high on a hill, all turrets and towers, it's little wonder that this quintessential castle has been seen on screen numerous times, cast as royal counterpart Windsor.

Actors have recreated garden parties in grounds that spread over 16,000 acres and are surrounded by the rolling countryside of the Vale of Belvoir.

The gardens on display today were the dream of renowned landscape designer Capability Brown, thought lost in a fire but brought to life nearly 250 years after their conception.

Paths lead to formal gardens of roses and statues, a Japanese Woodland planted with striking magnolias and camellias, and hidden tranquil corners. For young visitors, there's even an adventure playground complete with turrets and towers just made for climbing.

OTHER COUNTY TOURS

ROYAL MELTON

INDUSTRIAL PAST

HISTORIC
LEICESTERSHIRE

MARKET TOWNS

FAMILY FUN

GARDENS AND
LANDSCAPES

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