

UNCOVER FUN FAMILY DAYS OUT

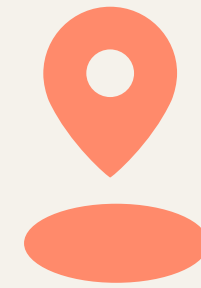
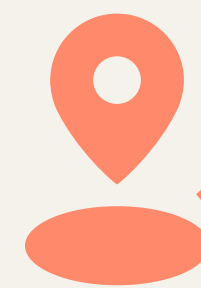
UNCOVER
THE STORY TRAILS

Leicester
visitleicester.info

WELCOME TO A NEW APPROACH IN TELLING OUR STORIES.

Family fun comes in all shapes and sizes in Leicestershire – inside and out, on land and on water. Get active on a High Ropes aerial walk, a mountain bike trail or in the twists and turns of a towering maze. Have the ride of a lifetime on a steam train, a canal barge or a rollercoaster, or go wild in the great outdoors. There are woodlands to explore and rock faces to conquer, or you could step back in time on former coalmining sites, beyond castle turrets or even on a battlefield where history was made. From theme parks to museums, whatever adventure you're after, it's right here.

**JOIN US ON THIS FASCINATING
TOUR TO FIND OUT MORE.**



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

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. **Conkers**
Rawdon Road,
Swadlincote DE12 6GA
2. **Foxton Locks**
Middle Lock, Foxton LE16 7RA
3. **Great Central Railway**
Great Central Road,
Loughborough LE11 1RW
4. **Belvoir Castle**
Adventure Playground
Vale of Belvoir NG32 1PE
5. **Moira Furnace & Ashby Canal**
Furnace Lane, Moira DE12 6AT
6. **National Space Centre**
Exploration Drive,
Leicester LE4 5NS
7. **Leicester Museum & Art Gallery**
53 New Walk, Leicester LE1 7EA
8. **Snibston Colliery Park**
12 Chiswell Drive,
Coalville LE67 3JX
9. **The Battlefield Line**
Shackerstone Station,
Shackerstone CV13 0SB
10. **Charnwood Forest**
11. **The National Forest**
12. **Twycross Zoo**
Norton-Juxta-Twycross,
Atherstone CV9 3PX
13. **Wistow Maze & Wistow Rural Centre**
Kibworth Road,
Wistow LE8 0QF
14. **Abbey Pumping Station**
Corporation Road,
Leicester LE4 5PX
15. **1620s House & Garden**
Manor Road,
Donington le Heath LE67 2FW
16. **Bosworth Battlefield**
Ambion Lane,
Sutton Cheney CV13 0AD
- ★ **Twinlakes Family Theme Park**
Melton Spinney Road,
Melton Mowbray LE14 4FF





CONKERS

As you run barefoot through mud and grass, or get a soaking in the Splash Park, it's hard to imagine that this site was once a pit. As Rawdon Colliery, the land was mined for its coal for more than 150 years. When it shut, the area was transformed into National Forest woodland, and Conkers, spread over 120 acres, is a forest-themed adventure park offering fun for all the family.

Outdoor adventures include an activity trail, a climbing wall and the High Ropes aerial walk. Indoors, special effects are put to thrilling use within a simulated tree-top walk, 4D cinema and interactive woodland exhibits.



Image © Canal & River Trust

FOXTON LOCKS

Home to the longest, steepest staircase flight of locks in Britain, Foxton Locks sits amongst 34 acres of lush green countryside.

Pack up a picnic or treat yourself to an ice cream and sit and watch as the boats glide by, then give youngsters a fun history lesson at the Foxton Canal Museum. Located in the Boilerhouse, it details this ingenious feat of Victorian engineering using interactive games, a collection of waterway artefacts and a working boat lift model.

Taking to the water is another great option, with passenger boat trips running between April and October, and boats available for private hire.



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

Great Central Railway is the only place in the world where the thrilling sight of full-size steam engines passing each other at speed can be experienced.

As the UK's only double-track mainline heritage railway, train fans, young and old, can board a diesel railcar or steam locomotive for a journey from Loughborough to Leicester. Along the 8-mile track are four stations, each restored to reflect a different era in the railway's history, and each with a café for hungry and thirsty travellers.

Galas and festivals run throughout the year, first-class dining trains serve lunch, dinner or afternoon tea, and childhood dreams can be realised with a 'Drive a Loco' package.



BELVOIR CASTLE

ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

Set in four acres of woodland, Belvoir Castle Adventure Playground has been inspired by the architecture of the castle itself, with turrets, tunnels and towers to discover.

Youngsters can crawl and climb, run and jump as they discover the multi-levelled timber-built castle with giant tube slide and secret climbing wall. Once the castle has been explored, there's a tall ship too, complete with portholes, climbing net and zip wire. Adult companions can join in the fun, unleashing their inner pirate, knight or explorer as they go.

Vale View Café is a great place to refuel, especially if you choose to make a day of it with a tour of the real castle and its gardens.



MOIRA FURNACE & ASHBY CANAL

As a blast furnace, the one built at Moira was beset by problems and shut after just five years in 1811. Although it was bad news back then, the good news is that instead of being modernised, it was left alone, and now stands as a rare piece of history.

Moira Furnace Museum & Country Park welcomes visitors who want to step back in time to see how iron was produced, and how the people who called the site home used to live.

Visitors also love its stunning location. Set within the National Forest, close to the restored Ashby Canal, why not bring a picnic, explore the woodlands or take a sedate trip on heritage barge, the Joseph Wilkes.



NATIONAL SPACE CENTRE

With an address on Exploration Drive, it's no wonder that there's a whole universe of family fun to discover at the National Space Centre.

Budding astronauts of all ages will find six interactive galleries, a collection of oddities, including Tim Peake's Sokol suit and Buzz Aldrin's space underpants, as well as Booster's Café and the Cargo Bay Shop.

Whether it's watching an award-winning show in the Sir Patrick Moore Planetarium, the UK's largest, seeing space rockets in the iconic 42-metre-high rocket tower, or learning about our solar system and the search for extra-terrestrials, a visit is an out-of-this-world experience.



LEICESTER MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

Opened in 1849 as one of the UK's first public museums, this fabulous attraction still offers a free-to-enter journey through the world's natural and cultural history.

Permanent galleries include Dinosaurs, Life and Death in Ancient Egypt and Leicester Stories. Always a huge hit with young visitors, the Dinosaur Gallery is home to the famous Barrow Kipper, the first dinosaur of its kind ever discovered. Also, next to a portrait of Sir David Attenborough – a frequent visitor as a youngster – is the Precambrian *Charnia Masoni* fossil.

Picasso ceramics, donated by his brother, Lord Richard Attenborough, and the masterpieces in the Victorian Gallery are equally impressive. The same can be said for the rare Georgian walkway on which the museum sits.



SNIBSTON COLLIERY PARK

Coal was mined at Snibston Colliery for over 150 years, before the pit closed in the 1980s and the site was regenerated. Snibston Colliery Park not only tells the story of the area's mining heritage but also provides all manner of family fun.

Admire historic mining buildings classified as 'scheduled monuments' due to their rarity, or head off in search of wildlife. Its nature reserve has a wetland area with boardwalks, two fishing lakes and footpaths leading into the surrounding National Forest landscape.

What was once a spoil heap is a blue grade mountain bike trail, and for the less adventurous, there's the Colliery Café. The site even has its own theatre, which is Britain's oldest surviving travelling theatre.



THE BATTLEFIELD LINE

Just one section remains of the Ashby and Nuneaton Joint Railway, which was created in 1873 to serve the North West Leicestershire coalfields.

Lovingly restored by a group of railway enthusiasts, visitors to The Battlefield Line can enjoy a journey back in time on board steam, diesel-hauled and railcar trains. With stops at three stations – Shackerstone, Market Bosworth and Shenton – the line runs alongside the Ashby Canal. Stop at each for a mid-journey drink, bite to eat or just a stroll. At Shackerstone, there's a museum and loco shed to discover, and from Shenton it's just a short walk to Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre & Country Park.



CHARNWOOD FOREST

Charnwood Forest is the place to head for an adventure in the great outdoors that takes you on a journey back nearly 600 million years.

Its rocks date to Precambrian times, and a fossil discovered right here in 1957 changed what we know about the evolution of animal life on Earth.

From Bradgate Park, with the ruins of Bradgate house, where nine-day Queen Lady Jane Grey was born, to Beacon Hill, which affords spectacular county-wide views and a labyrinth full of hidden sculptures, there's so much to discover. Children are encouraged to follow in the footsteps of a young David Attenborough and use the woodland as a huge playground.



THE NATIONAL FOREST

A landscape scarred by centuries of coalmining was transformed in 1990 by the creation of the National Forest.

Nine million trees have been planted throughout 200 square miles of Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire, linking the ancient woodlands of Charnwood in the east to Needwood in the west.

Now, instead of pits and spoil heaps, there are rolling hillsides and rocky outcrops to climb, and wildflower meadows and canopied woodlands to explore. Set off on foot or hire a bike from Hicks Lodge. Located right in the heart of the forest, its cycle trails, which twist and turn through stunning scenery, have been designed with family fun in mind.



TWYCROSS ZOO

Marking its 60th anniversary in 2023, Twycross Zoo can celebrate a whole range of other achievements too. As a renowned conservation centre it has a proud history of breeding endangered species, and every admission contributes to this valuable work.

It's the only UK zoo where you can see all four of the great apes – chimpanzee, orangutan, gorilla and bonobo – and its tiger habitat offers the thrill of seeing a Sumatran tiger walking right over your head.

With the chance to walk with lemurs, handfeed lorikeets, pet goats and even meet The Gruffalo, family fun at this 80-acre attraction comes with a huge sprinkling of animal magic.



WISTOW MAZE & WISTOW RURAL CENTRE

Getting lost or going on a walk has never been as much fun as it is at Wistow Maze. On arrival, grab a map and a pencil and set off on a thrilling three-mile trail. Towering above you will be 8ft high walls of maize and sunflowers, and around each bend is a viewing tower to climb, a quiz question to answer, or the dreaded dead end!

This summer-only attraction bursts into life each July and has a different design each year. Enter and exit as many times as you like, escaping for a bite to eat, to play in the Activity Funyard or visit the shops, model village and café at Wistow Rural Centre.



ABBEY PUMPING STATION

No bog-standard museum, Abbey Pumping Station tells the story of sewage and how Victorian engineers dealt with what was a mighty problem.

Visitors will see exhibits including Victorian toilets, Roman water pipes and a see-through loo showing the journey of an object from flush to drain. They'll also see four steam-powered Woolf compound rotative beam engines built by Leicester firm Gimson & Company in 1891 to pump waste from the River Soar.

Still in situ in the original Victorian building, those engines are the only ones of their kind still in working order. On special days, visitors can see them in action, and take rides on the site's narrow-gauge railway.



1620s HOUSE & GARDEN

Built in the 13th century and modernised around 1618, the 1620s House has many historical stories to tell. Links to the Age of Enlightenment, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and even the Gunpowder Plot make this fully furnished medieval manor house a fascinating place to visit. Add in the fact that you can touch exhibits and sit on furniture, apart from a bed said to have been used by Richard III, and you'll see that this is no ordinary museum experience.

Costumed volunteers tell tales of life in the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods, 17th century-style gardens feature an ornamental maze, and special events range from craft workshops to family fun days.



BOSWORTH BATTLEFIELD

Thanks to the discovery of cannon balls and the Bosworth boar badge, visitors to Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre & Country Park know that they are standing close to the spot where Richard III was slain.

Follow the 2.2km Battlefield Trail and as well as a lovely countryside walk with panoramic views, you'll find audio and visual information points which bring the famous battle and the surrounding area to life.

For a full day of family fun, head into the heritage centre, where another incredible journey begins. Through films, images and hands-on activities, discover medieval England, get an insider's view on the battle itself and even try on a suit of armour.



MORE PLACES TO UNCOVER

TWINLAKES FAMILY THEME PARK

With over 50 rides and attractions set over 100 acres of countryside, TwinLakes Family Theme Park promises non-stop action and adventure.

Not just a theme park, Twinlakes is also home to one of the UK's biggest water parks, with lagoons, slides and flumes to enjoy. For the fearless there are rollercoasters of all shapes and sizes.

With cute animals to pet at Red Rooster Farm and dazzling flying displays to watch at the Falconry Centre, there's something for all ages.

OTHER COUNTY TOURS

ROYAL MELTON

INDUSTRIAL PAST

HISTORIC
LEICESTERSHIRE

MARKET TOWNS

FAMILY FUN

GARDENS AND
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