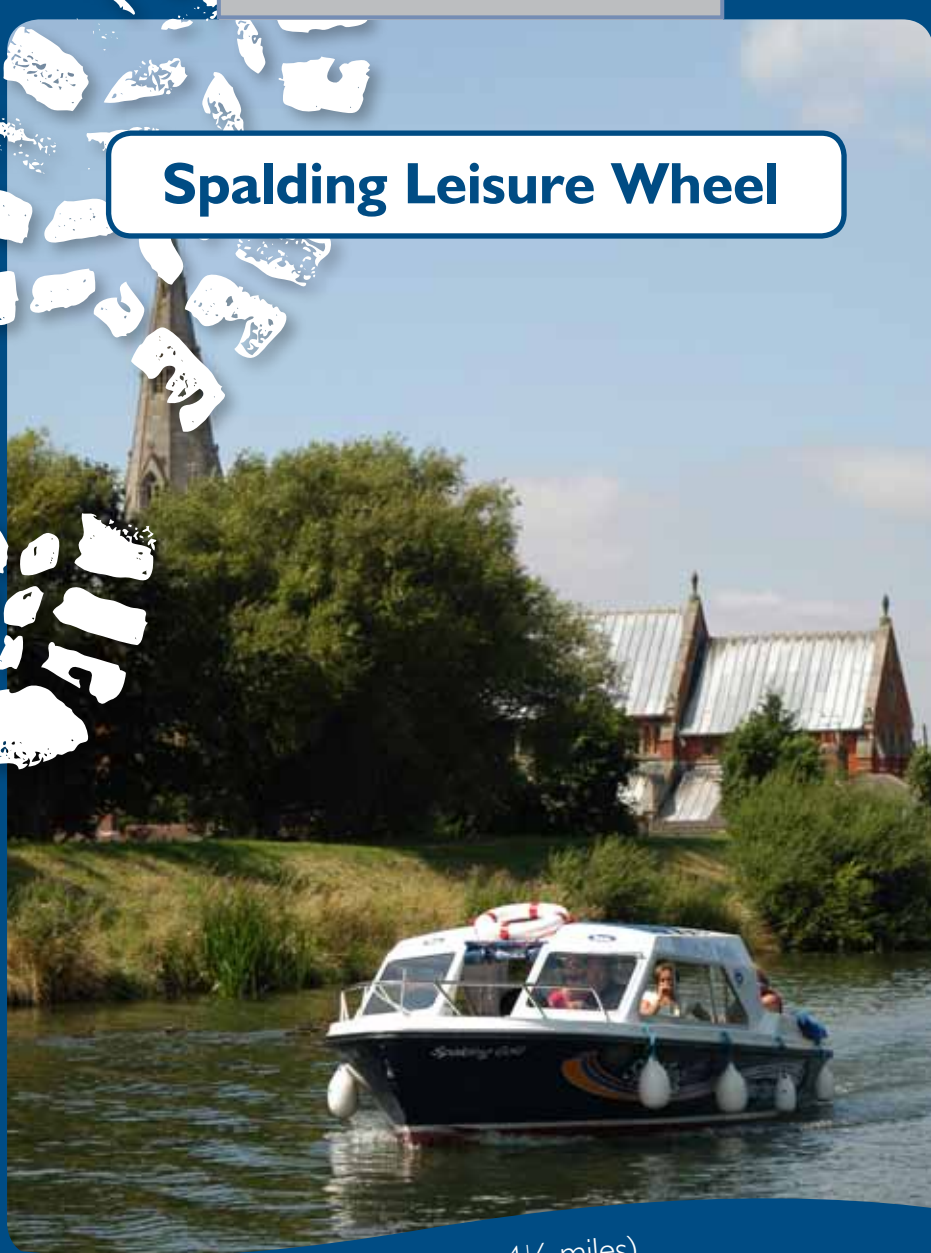


Spalding Leisure Wheel



A circular walk of 20 or 7km (12½ or 4½ miles)

Introduction

Spalding is the largest market town in the South Holland area. An attractive town, it is situated on the River Welland with grand Georgian terraces and buildings which reflect the town's historic importance as a major trading centre and port.

In Norman times there was a castle, although no trace of it remains, and in 1051 a Benedictine priory was established. The town then grew into an important trading centre, exporting corn, and importing coal, timber and general provisions.

Spalding sits at the heart of The Fens the unique man made landscape reclaimed from the sea. A thousand years ago Spalding and other settlements including Pinchbeck and Whaplode sat on a silt ridge which was surrounded by water during the winter. It was a good place to live, close to a supply of fish and fowl and excellent summer grazing. To increase the fertile area banks and drains were constructed by the Romans. Reclamation of land continued up to the 13th century. In the 17th century reclamation continued alongside the embankment of rivers including the

Welland. Unfortunately the peat soil began to shrink and flood again as it sank below the levels of the rivers and sea. Wind pumps were installed to remove the water from the land and by 1800 more than 700 pumps were in use. However it was not until the arrival of steam power that The Fens were effectively drained. Today electric and diesel pumps are used to maintain the water levels.

The reclaimed land is particularly fertile making it ideal for growing vegetables and flowers and the area is the centre of the flower industry with more daffodils grown in South Holland than any where else in the country, with over 10 000 acres in production.

This walk, part of the Spalding Leisure Wheel and Spalding Community Travel Zone Initiative, circles Spalding and gives an insight into the history and life of the town as it takes in its urban, rural and horticultural faces. Using many of the local waterways it is also an opportunity to see a variety of wildfowl including mallard, tufted duck and swan as well as great crested grebe, coot, moorhen and water rail.

The Walk

This walk is well waymarked with Spalding Leisure Wheel signs.



Springfields is home to more than 40 stores as well as gardens, woodland walks and a play area.

- 1 Leave the west car park via the pedestrian gate to the water taxi boarding point. Climb the steps up onto the channel bank. Turn left and follow the Coronation Channel to the road.

Cross the road and continue to walk along the banks of the Coronation Channel, built in 1953 to protect Spalding from floods.

If you look into the first field on your left after the industrial complex you are likely to see at least one heron and probably more. Standing up to a metre tall and with a long neck this elegant bird is usually seen close to water where it feeds on fish.

- 2 Continue along the Channel bank. Look out for Arnold's Meadow Nature Reserve on the left just before the Channel bends to the right. To enter the reserve turn left at the bridge and follow the track. If you do visit the reserve please stay on the waymarked route and close any gates.

This 2½ hectare (6½ acres) manmade reserve has two ponds, a moat, a hay meadow, and a small wooded area.

- 3 Where the channel meets the River Welland, and you come to a junction with a road, turn left and follow the roadside path for approximately 160m to a bridge over the river. Cross the road and river.

For the **SHORTER walk** turn right and follow the riverside path, past the town centre, to a roundabout, a distance of approximately 2½ km (1½ miles). Turn right and cross the river; turn left along Holbeach Road and rejoin directions at point 12



The Walk

There are many fine buildings to admire as you walk along the river. On the opposite side are the thatched White Horse pub, St Mary's and St Nicholas's church, and Ayscoughfee Hall, a beautiful medieval manor of a wool merchant which now houses a museum. On the same side you will pass grand Georgian houses including the impressive Welland Terrace.

For the **LONGER walk** turn left and walk to a crossroads.

- 4 Continue straight ahead along Cradge Bank.

After approximately 100m turn left along River Bank.

Follow the public footpath behind the Yacht Club and along the river bank.

For thousands of years the River Welland has been the main waterway across The Fens. Its source is in Northamptonshire and it flows through Stamford before draining into The Wash. In total it is 131 km (82 miles) long.

- 5 After approximately 2 km (1½ miles), and just before the A16 bridge, turn right down the bank. Cross the road and walk straight ahead along the bottom of the embankment. At the junction with a tarmac path turn right and follow the lane to a road junction.

- 6 Turn left and cross South Drove Drain before turning right along West Road.

The South Drove drain is maintained by the Welland & Deepings Internal Drainage Board which is responsible for over 270km (169 miles) of drains in the area. The pumps at Pode Hole pump the water from the drain into Vernatt's Drain which then flows by gravity into the River Welland. The banks of the drain are now managed for wildlife and a variety of birds can be seen.

- 7 At the traffic lights turn right then left to continue along the opposite drain bank.

- 8 At the T-junction in Pode Hole, turn left to the Fishermans Arms, past Pode Hole Pumping Station. Turn right in front of the pub and follow the bridleway along the drain and then a short section of road.

Turn right over the bridge and turn left to continue alongside the drain on the other bank.



The Walk

The first steam powered pump was installed at Pode Hole in 1827 and is still retained there today. During the 1950s and 1960s these pumps were replaced with electric and diesel pumps.

Cross the railway line with care and continue along the drain bank to a junction with a road.

- 9 Cross this busy road with care and continue to walk along the footpath by the side of the drain.

It is well worth taking a detour into Vernatt's Local Nature Reserve.

The 1½ hectares has a variety of habitats including a pond, meadow, grassland, scrub, woodland and marshy fenland. It is home to a variety of wildlife including the secretive water vole, and in summer is a hive of activity with butterflies, dragonflies and birds filling the air.

Continue along the drain bank and walk past the power station.

- 10 At the road turn right and follow the road side path for approximately 1½ km (1 mile) to a roundabout and road bridges over the river.
- 11 Turn left and cross the river. Cross the road and turn left along Holbeach Road.



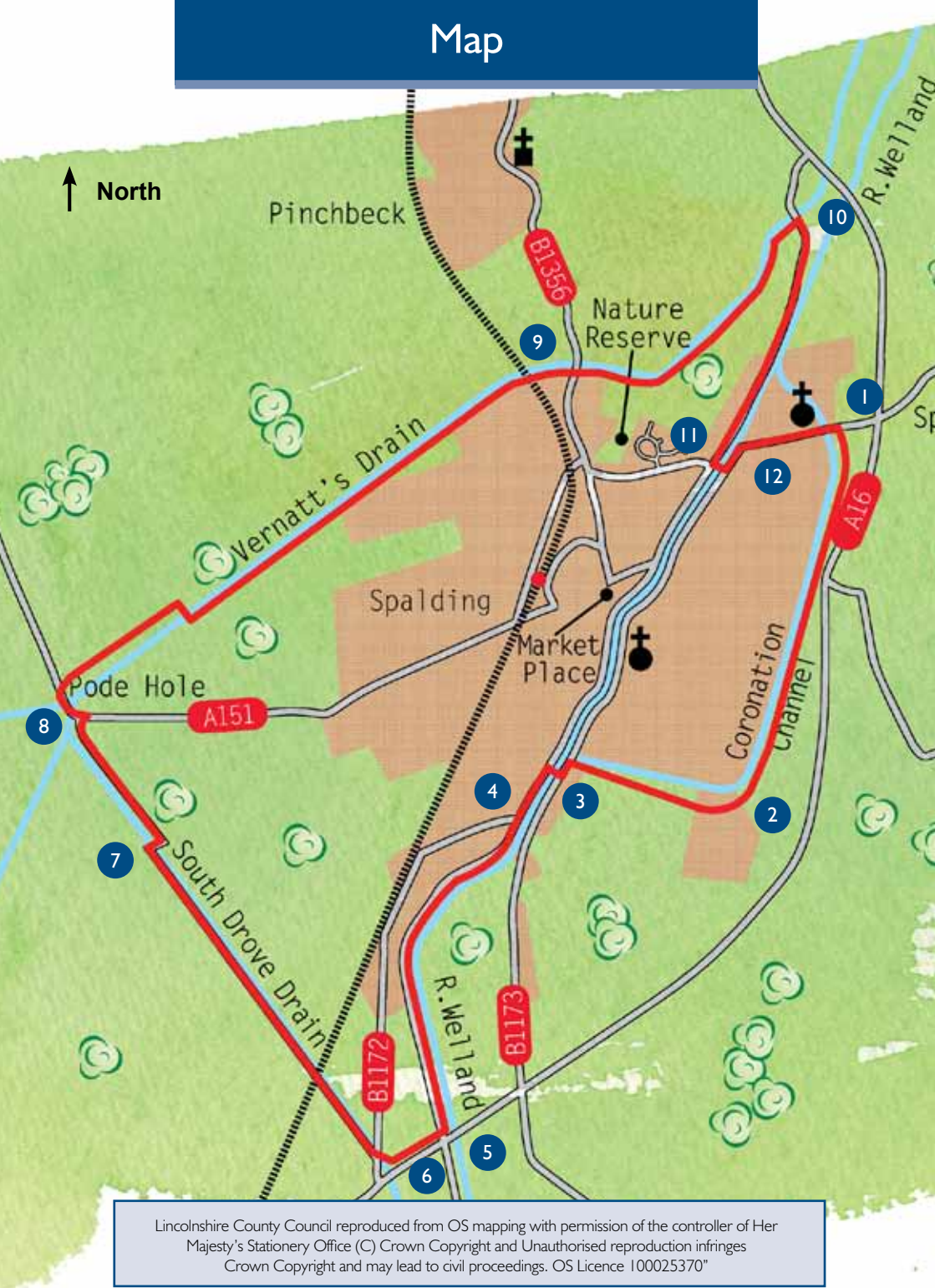
The 135 ft steeple visible ahead is part of St Paul's church which was built between 1877 and 1880 in red brick and Ancaster stone. The steeple is connected to the church only by an arcade.

- 12 After passing Queens Road, and in front of the shops, cross the main road using the central island, and then continue walking in the same direction towards the church and Springfields.

Cross the Coronation Channel and at the roundabout turn left to return to Springfields.



Map



Lincolnshire County Council reproduced from OS mapping with permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright and Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to civil proceedings. OS Licence 100025370*

Be a responsible walker

Please remember the countryside is a place where people live and work and where wildlife makes its home. To protect the Lincolnshire countryside for other visitors please respect it and on every visit follow the Countryside Code. Thank you.

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Most of all enjoy your visit to the Lincolnshire countryside

This leaflet is one in a series of walk leaflets produced by Lincolnshire County Council's Countryside Access Team to help you explore and enjoy the County's countryside. If you have enjoyed these walks and would like information on other walking routes in Lincolnshire then please visit our [website](#).

If you encounter any problems whilst on these walks, such as an overgrown path or a broken sign post, please let us know so they can be corrected.

We would also welcome your comments and suggestions on the walk and leaflet to help improve future editions.

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

Lincolnshire County Council
Countryside Access Team

Tel: 01522 782070 **Minicom:** 01522 552055

Email: countryside_access@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Web: www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/countryside



Useful information

Walk location: Spalding is 64 km (40 miles) south-east of Lincoln and 34km (21 miles) north of Peterborough.

Starting point: Springfields Outlet Shopping and Festival Gardens, Camelgate (just off the A16) PE12 6EU. Grid reference: TF 263 240.

Parking: Charged parking at Springfields. If possible park in the West car park.

Public Transport: The area is well served by buses. For times and more information call the traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or visit www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/busrailtravel or www.lincsbus.info. During the summer (Easter to October) a water taxi links Spalding town centre and Springfields.

Ordnance Survey maps for the area: Explorer 249 Spalding & Holbeach and 235 Wisbech and Peterborough. Landranger 131 Boston & Spalding.

Walk length: Shorter walk: 7 km (4½ miles), longer walk 20 km (12½ miles). At a leisurely pace the shorter walk will take approximately 2 hours and the longer walk approximately 6 hours to complete.

Type of walk: The walk uses drain and river banks, which may be muddy in places, roadside paths and roads. You may encounter stiles on the longer walk.

Refreshments: Refreshments are available at Springfields and Pode Hole. There is also a good selection of shops and pubs in Spalding.

Public Toilets: Springfields and Spalding town centre.

