

History of the Canal

In 1778 a canal was built from the River Trent to Loughborough. A year later the opening of the Erewash Canal provided Loughborough with a cheap supply of Derbyshire coal.

When a Loughborough to Leicester canal was proposed the Leicestershire mine owners feared losing their market. They insisted that the forest canal was built before any Derbyshire coal was taken by canal to Leicester.

Christopher Staveley planned a route that followed the contours of the land. William Jessop was the engineer. The canal opened in 1794.

Nanpantan is much higher than Loughborough and there was insufficient water for a flight of locks. A horse-drawn wagonway was planned. The cost of transferring coal between the canal and the wagonway and back to a canal at Loughborough was a factor in the project's failure.

In 1799 the bank of Blackbrook Reservoir burst. Although repairs were made, the Charnwood Forest Canal was abandoned in the early 1800s.

Walk introduction

The village of Nanpantan had its origins in the 1790s at the end of the Charnwood Forest Canal, where coal was transferred from barges to wagons.

Starting at the footpath sign near 259A Nanpantan Road, the signed walk initially follows a fence line. This area, at the end of the canal, would have been a busy place where barges arrived, their loads were transferred to wagons and horses were changed. The canal would have been on your left. This is now private gardens.

Continue ahead. At the road, cross carefully and climb over the stile. There is often water in the former canal. The trees here are beautiful and there are many bluebells in spring.

From the golf club parking area keep following the yellow posts. You will be crossing golf fairways, so keep a look out for golfers. Turn over for a plan.

Photographs by Anne Speight.

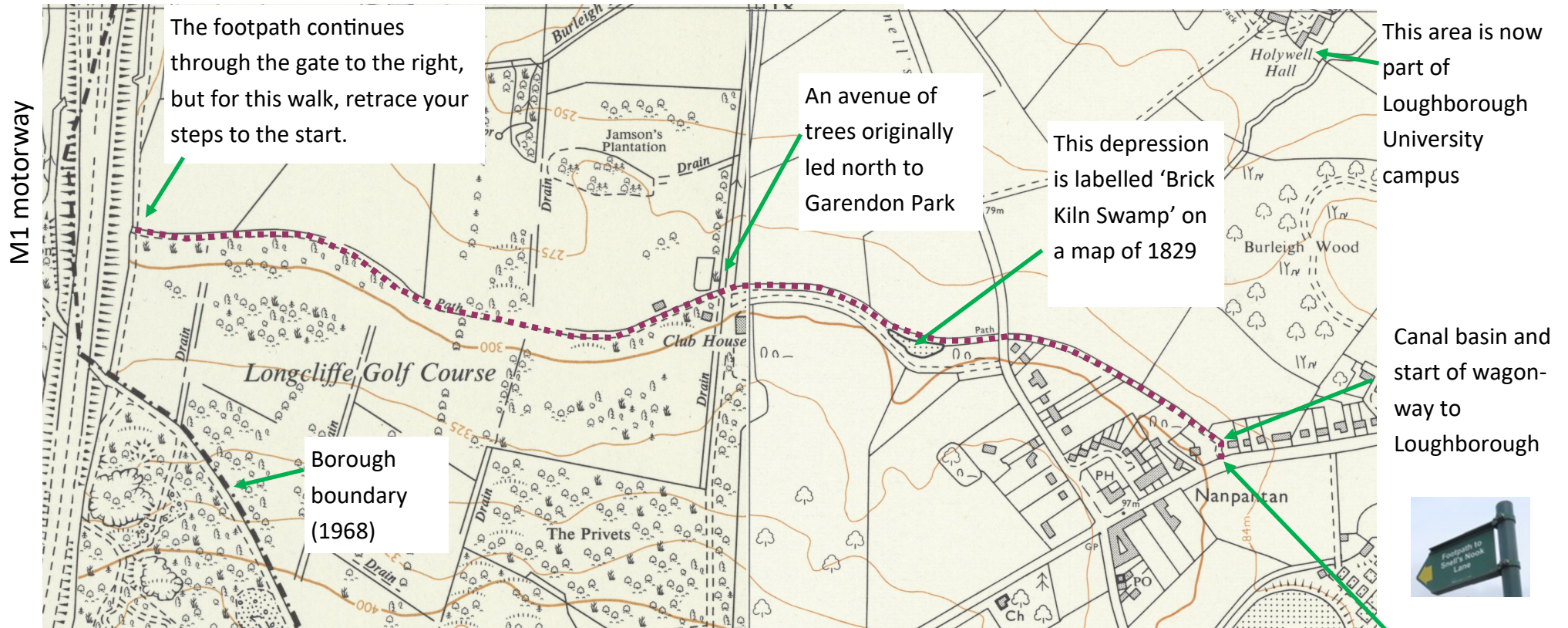


Visit Nanpantan and explore the Charnwood Forest Canal



Before 1779 Leicester received its supplies of coal by packhorse from the mines in Charnwood Forest. But things were about to change.

A there and back walk of 2 miles alongside the former Charnwood Forest Canal



Please note:

The walk includes a stile.

It is rough. Look out for badger holes and tree roots.

There are overhanging trees.

Sections have open water.

It crosses fairways. Watch out for golf balls.



Longcliffe Golf club was formed in 1905. The 18-hole course fully opened in 1907. Some land was lost in 1964 when the M1 motorway was extended through this part of Leicestershire.

The motorway also cut through the route of the former canal, which continues to its west.

Maps are from OS 1:10,000, SK41NE (1968) and SK51NW (1974)

The walk starts by 259a Nanpantan Road.

Footpath along former towpath of canal