



## U3A WTT Bagworth

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### Route Summary

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A circular walk around Bagworth.

### Route Overview

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Category: Walking

Length: 6.450 km / 4.03 mi

Parking: Bagworth Heath

Date Published: 27th April 2016

Difficulty: Medium

Rating: Unrated

Surface: Average

Last Modified: 27th April 2016

### Description

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Walk starts at Bagworth Heath car park on Heath Road. Nearest postcode for satnav is LE67 1DL. The walk has some high stiles which some people may find difficult.

### Waypoints

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#### **1** Sculpture

(52.65651; -1.32371)



Before starting the walk there is a sculpture by Robert Dawson celebrating the park's industrial history and woodland future at rear of the main car park.

Mining started here in 1902 finishing in 1984. Bagworth mines were among the deepest in the country. Two main shafts were sunk to the lower main coal seam at a depth of 218m. Concrete marker posts can be found near the car park area.

**Exit the car park and cross the access road and enter the park through the kissing gate.**

### **2** Desford Colliery

(52.65710; -1.32411)



This is a reclaimed colliery site, managed by Leicestershire County Council and covers 75 hectares of woodland, grassland, heathland, lakes and pools within the National Forest.

It was Desford Colliery. (Not Bagworth pit which was further along the road in Bagworth. This mine closed in 1991) Two main shafts were sunk to the lower main coal seam at a depth of 218 metres. Concrete marker-posts can be found near the car park area

Before mining subsidence, 18 semi-detached houses stood between the lakes and the road.

The pit winding wheel relocated onto the island in the main lake came from Desford Colliery.

Mining started here in 1902 and was the last mine to be opened; it finished in early 1984. It has provided wetland habitats for wildfowl and aquatic plants. To your left a pit winding wheel from Desford Colliery sits on an island in the centre of the main lake.

**Turn immediately right along the hedge to a wide path on the left**

**Follow this main path through Bagworth Heath and into Manor Wood. Continue along the main path through Manor Wood.**

**Exit Manor Wood alongside Cross Hills Chapel (built in 1885 to hold 300 people. Now there is only an attendance of 22) and cross the road to the footpath sign (hidden in hedgerow). Pass through the kissing gate.**

**Walk straight up the grassy slope with the hedge on the right and a yellow way marker comes into view at the top of the slope. Head towards this and cross over the marsh area.**

**Again walk up the slope with the hedge on the right and another yellow way marker comes into view. Cross over this second marsh. With the hedge on the right walk towards the yellow marker by a gate. Go through the gate and walk down the field towards the railway bridge and through a gate.**



**Turn left under the railway bridge. Continue along the roadway. Just before the Private No Public sign for Bagworth Park Farm take a gate on the left in the hedge marked by a yellow way marker.**

### 3 Bagworth Park Moats

(52.67308; -1.33035)

In the 15th century Sir William Hastings, a distant cousin of Edward IV, served as Lord Chamberlain, Master of The Mint and Lieutenant of Calais. He held authority over large section of the English Midlands. In 1642 he was invested as a Knight of the Garter. He married Katherine Neville, Earl of Warwick's widowed sister. On 17 April 1474, King Edward IV granted Sir William Hastings royal licence to crenellate at three of his landholdings in Leicestershire: Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Kirby and Bagworth. He built extensively at Ashby, mostly making additions to the pre-existing manor house built by the de la Zouch family in the 13th century. His greatest achievement at Ashby was, of course, the Hastings Tower. At Kirby Muxloe he began an intricate and beautiful fortified house of red brick, one of the first of its kind in the county. Both castles at Ashby and Kirby can still be seen, but regrettably nothing survives to indicate any construction at Bagworth.

Hastings supported Richard Duke of York's formal installation as Lord Protector and collaborated with him in the royal council. He was accused by Richard of conspiring against him with the Woodvilles. He was immediately beheaded in the courtyard of the Tower of London 13th June 1483 for treason.

In 1616 a moated fortified house was built on the site by Robert Banaster in this area known as Bagworth Park. During the Civil War around 50 men were garrisoned. for Charles 1 and devastated in the Civil War..

After the fall of Leicester in 1645 the garrison quit Bagworth Park and the house was demolished. By 1769 the ruins were taken down and a farmhouse was built on the site where it is still today.

**Pass through the gate and cross the field towards the yellow marker. Go through 2 more gates (picking up National Forest Way sign) and onwards up the incline.**

### 4 The Bagworth Incline

(52.67328; -1.33188)

This was built in 1833, had a gradient of 1 in 29, too steep for a railway engines. Stephenson had intended to have a separate stationary engine at the top of the hill but it was decided to cut expense and rely on heavy wagons coming down from the coalfields full of coal to counterbalance the empty wagons returning. This was done by using a pulley cable wound around a turntable at the top of the Incline. The Incline keeper lived at the top of the Incline and was in charge of communication between the two ends signalling the movement of trains by wire operated bells. The Incline keeper's house, built by Stephenson in 1835, was one of the oldest railway buildings in the UK and indeed the world. Unfortunately it was vandalised and allowed to fall into decay. It was pulled down in the 1990s. A second Incline can be found at Swannington.

**Cross into the field on the left and head towards the yellow way marker. Cross the stile and go down the steps to the railway line.**

**Cross the railway and take the steep steps up the other side. Climb over a very high stepped stile and follow the yellow markers across 2 fields. In the second field follow the hedge on the right side and look for a gap and yellow way marker in the hedge.**

**Walk across the field (the path is clearly marked through the crop) towards the houses.**

**Turn left onto Station Road and left again at the road junction.**

### High Stile

(52.67614; -1.34124)

Take care as this stile is high and not in the best of repair.

### The Bier House

(52.66501; -1.33279)



The bier as for the use of all the inhabitants of Bagworth at any place of worship or burial place within the parish. It is hand pulled and has 4 wooden wheels with solid rubber tyres. He also built the he small stone faced building to house the bier. Land for the Bier House was given to the parish by the Countess of Warwick This building and funeral bier which it houses, were gifted by Thomas Morton Bloxson, a local farmer in memory of his wife Lucy, who died 25 October 1930 aged 77 years.

**Cross the road and turn right into Old School Lane. Pass through the Holy Rood Church gate and under the concrete canopy.**

### 6 Holy Rood

(52.66378; -1.33198)



Bagworth's Church of England chapel of the Holy Rood was a dependent chapelry of the parish church of Saint Peter, Thornton, built in Norman times

In 1848 Holy Rood was described as having a Saxon door and that its walls bore the date 1637. In 1873 the entire church except for the tower was rebuilt in granite with limestone dressings, with buttresses banded with red brick and blue vitrified brick.

In the 20th century the Victorian church and medieval tower suffered subsidence so in 1968 they were demolished. They were replaced with a new modern church building with a free standing tower that is unusual in being built of CLASP prefabricated concrete panels on a floating foundation. Sadly the church suffered from a disease in the concrete and was demolished in 2013.

The Norman arch still stands - see picture

Holy Rood Churchyard contains one Commonwealth war grave from the First World War.

**Follow the path right round into the graveyard and bear left away from the church towards the more recent gravestones.**

**Take the gate on left hand side and follow yellow markers into Centenary Wood. Follow the path down through the wood (keeping the road on the left hand side).**

### 7 Centenary Woods

(52.66187; -1.33233)

A woodland planted to commemorate the centenary of Bagworth Parish Council in 1994, Centenary Wood is managed by the Woodland Trust. Native broadleaved trees and shrubs have been planted on former farmland with wide rides

and glades to create edge habitats and open spaces.

**Where the woodland path joins a cinder path, bear left and follow the path towards Royal Tigers' Arboretum.**

### 8 Royal Tigers Wood

(52.65798; -1.32964)



This Woodland Trust managed site which was planted in 1993/4 through funds raised by the now-disbanded Royal Leicestershire Regiment.

An arboretum containing 17 species of trees from countries in which the Regiment served (as the 17th Foot) lies at the bottom of the slope by the hedgerow.

A locally quarried memorial stone bears a Regimental plaque. The Royal Leicestershire Regiment was an infantry regiment. It was formed in 1688 and served with distinction around the world until being merged into The Royal Anglian Regiment in 1964. Since 1825 it was known by its famous nickname "The Tigers".

The Regiment has a thriving association for old comrades (The Royal Tigers' Association), a splendid Regimental Chapel in Leicester Cathedral, a fascinating Regimental Museum in Leicester and a living memorial to the Regiment at Royal Tigers' Wood.

**The path leads round to the left and back to Heath Road. Cross Heath Road into Bagworth Heath Woods by the gate and follow the path round the fishing lake to the exit on the right.**

# Choose your trail

