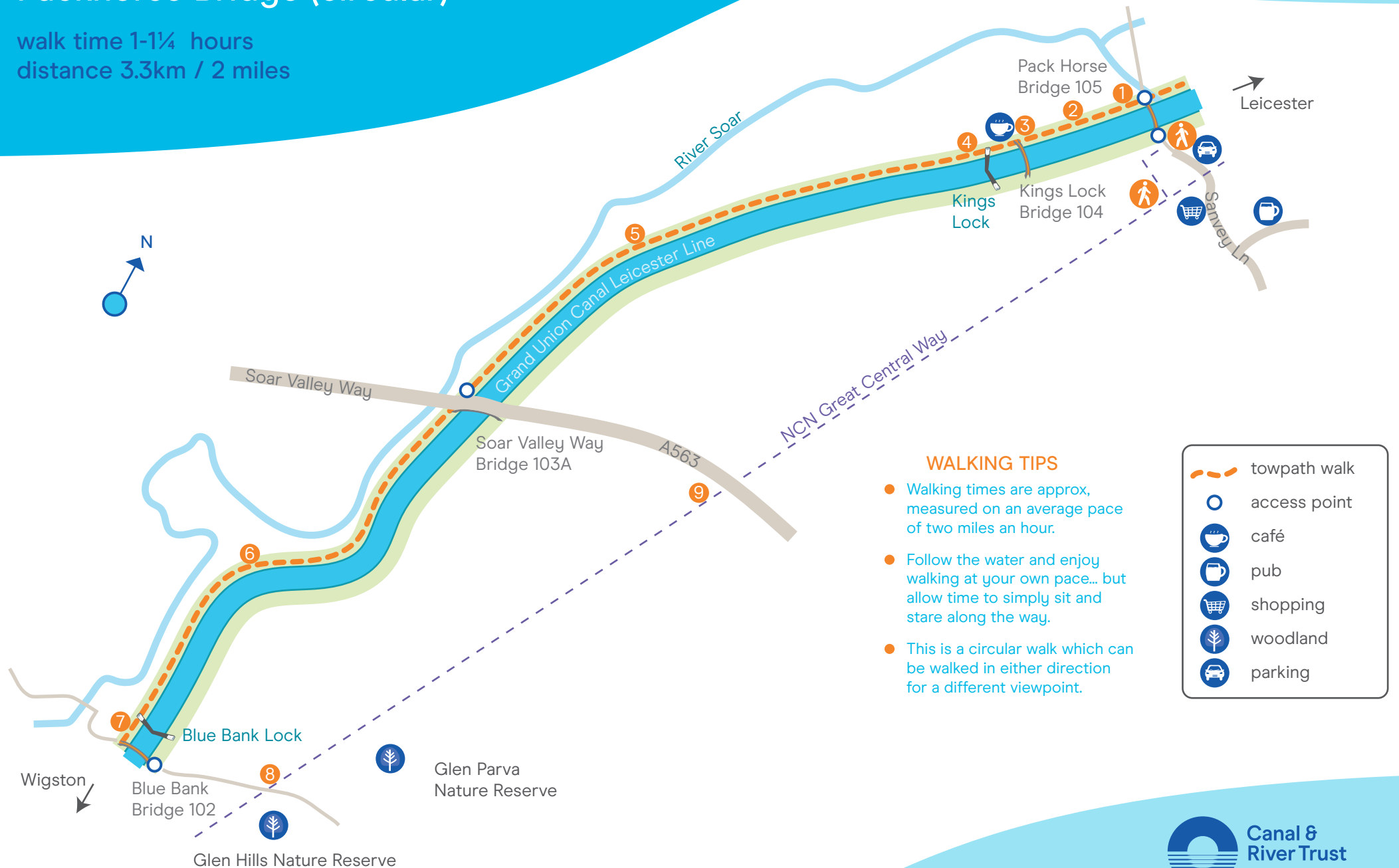


# Leicester Wellbeing Walk

## Packhorse Bridge (circular)

walk time 1-1¼ hours  
distance 3.3km / 2 miles














### WALKING TIPS

- Walking times are approx, measured on an average pace of two miles an hour.
- Follow the water and enjoy walking at your own pace... but allow time to simply sit and stare along the way.
- This is a circular walk which can be walked in either direction for a different viewpoint.

	towpath walk
	access point
	café
	pub
	shopping
	woodland
	parking

## The Walk - Step by Step

Old rival trade routes, the canal and the railway, now harmoniously treat the walker to a great leisure trail. Each step takes you further away from Leicester's urbscape as you follow the tree-lined waters of the Grand Union Canal Leicester Line and the River Soar south to Blue Bank Lock. Throughout your amble, wildlife and greenery line the way. Your return treads the route of the canal's rival, the former Great Central Railway, now the Great Central Way travelled only by walkers, cyclists and passing horses.

-  Your walk starts where the Grand Union Canal Leicester Line runs very close to the River Soar.
-  By the small car park, cross over the canal via the red-brick Packhorse Bridge, so-called due to the proximity of the ancient packhorse bridge over the River Soar and its surrounding meadows. Turn left to follow the towpath southwards with the river meadows to your right and the canal to your left.
-  You are immediately in leafy surroundings as the towpath is lined with lush hedgerows and, depending on the season, hawthorn blossom.
-  Another red-brick bridge, Kings Lock Bridge, announces your arrival at Kings Lock.
-  The canalside cottage, built in 1796 and once housing the lockkeeper, is the last remaining lock cottage on the canal through Leicester.
-  Heading away from Kings Lock, the Soar Valley's water meadows stretch to the west behind the intermittent hedgerow. Across the water you might see horses grazing in the fields up to the water's edge. Despite the occasional pylon providing electricity to Leicester, it feels like glorious open countryside here.
-  The A563, also known as the Soar Valley Way, is a brief noisy intrusion on your walk as it crosses over the water on two long low bridges. Keep your eyes peeled for birds and waterfowl attracted by the leafy surroundings and the proximity of the River Soar. The river swirls towards the canal then away again, before running alongside the canal as you round the bend to approach Blue Bank Lock.
-  Cross over the canal via the historic red-brick Blue Bank Bridge and follow the path through the trees north east to join the Great Central Way.
-  Turning left to head northwards, the path you are now walking is the very straight bed of the original Great Central Railway. It used to be a main line rail connection between Manchester and London.
-  The Way dips down to head under the A563 again before coming back up the other side.
-  Come down the steps, or the new wider access ramp, from the Great Central Way to Marsden Lane and the canal where you began. You could now choose to walk back along the towpath to Kings Lock for a canalside cuppa, or explore the canal further in either direction.

**CANAL:** Grand Union Canal Leicester Line

**START & FINISH:** Packhorse Bridge 105  
OS Grid ref: SK568009 Postcode: LE2 8LT

**DISTANCE:** 3.3km / 2 miles

**APPROX TIME:** 1-1¼ hours

**PUB/CAFÉ:** Black Horse near Packhorse Bridge, Kings Lock Tearooms by Kings Lock

**PARKING:** Nearest car park –  
Aylestone Meadows (postcode: LE2 8LT)

**TRAIN:** Nearest train station - Leicester  
National Rail Enquiries  
Tel: 03457 484950 [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

**BUS:** Traveline  
Tel: 0871 2002233 [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)

