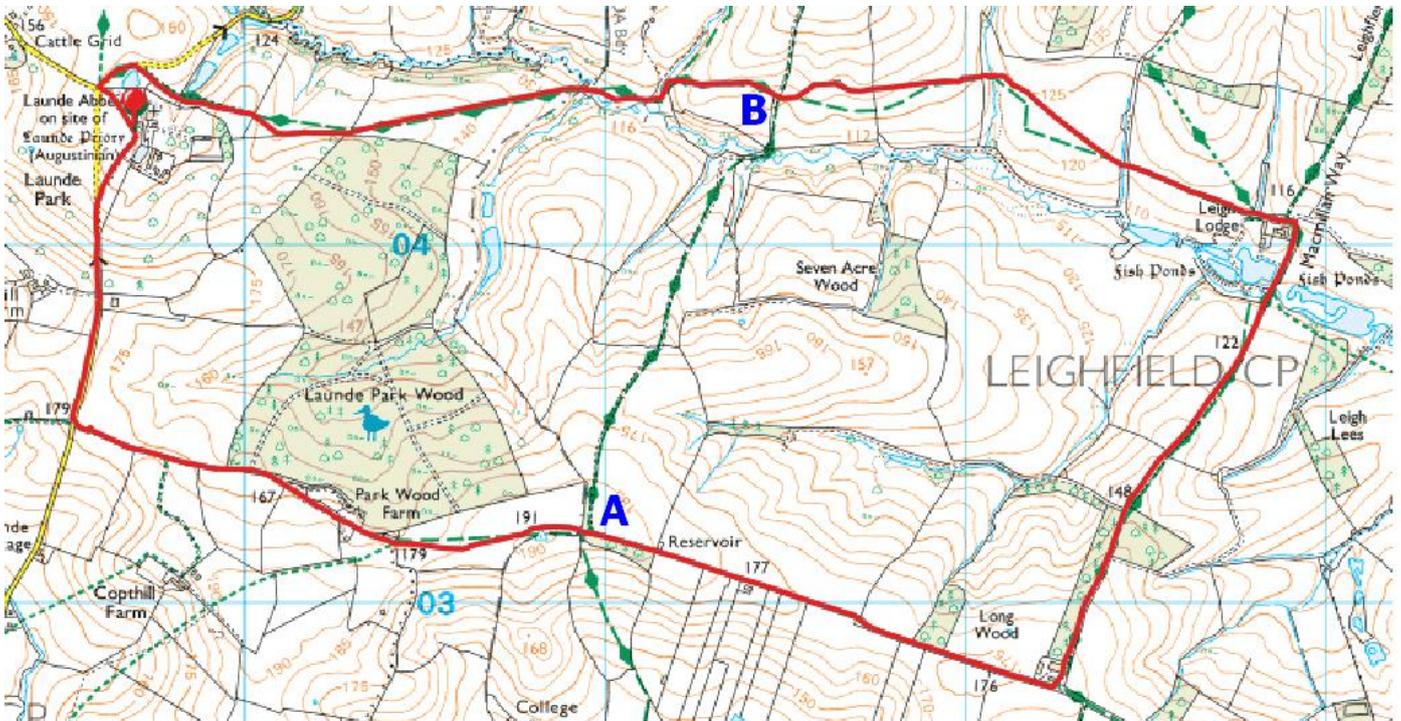


Walk 3 Launde — Leigh Lodge — Launde Lakes — Launde

(Circular – 5.6 Miles – 2 hour 30 minutes)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 233

Start SK797043



Caution: May be muddy in wet weather, however the views on a good day are quite spectacular.

From the front door of the Abbey, turn left pass the stable block and outbuildings and head south (uphill) toward Loddington. Cross over the cattle grid, pass the entrance to Hill Farm on the right and continue along the road until it begins to descend. Note the yellow top footpath marker on your right spot height 179), **turn left** immediately opposite it onto the bridleway that heads east. There is a bridleway marker post at this junction but it may be hidden in the hedgerow. Continue along the bridleway, a wide gravel drive, eastwards and bear right at the entrance to Park Wood Farm. The path leads to two gates either side of a small field skirting some semi-derelict farm buildings on the left and after passing the second gate head straight across the large field in an easterly direction. At this point the next yellow top marker post is not visible, it is over the top of the hill. You are at spot height 179 on the map above and are looking to walk to point **A**. On the horizon to the east is a large tree roughly at 11 o'clock and another at roughly 2 o'clock head towards a spot roughly halfway between and as you approach the hilltop you will see the yellow marker post in the right hand corner of the furthest boundary of the field. **Note:** If there are high crops in this field you may find it easier to keep to the left hand side (northern boundary) and follow the hedge past the wood and turn right (south) at the north east corner to find the yellow marker post at the south east corner. The right-of-way crossed diagonally across this field but if crops inhibit your free passage you will not be guilty of trespass if you walk around the edge.

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You are now at point **A** on the map overleaf, if you would like the shorter route back to Launde Abbey turn left at this point and walk north on the Leicestershire Round long distance path to point **B** on the map, see below for guidance from point **B** back to Launde Abbey.

Turn right onto a farm track immediately after the yellow marker post. This broad gravelled track runs along an escarpment with superb views on either side the beautiful Chater Valley to the left (north) and Belton in Rutland to the right hand side, (south), St Peter's church at Belton is well worth a visit (but not from this walk!). Continue along this bridleway until you reach three barns on your left and then turn left through the two stone gateposts. You continue to be on a broad gravelled track.

The track gently descends to the river Chater, cross the bridge and turn left immediately after the fishponds and Leigh Lodge. The tarmac road soon gives way back to the gravel of the previous bridleways, walk straight on ignoring the footpaths that lead off to the right. The bridleway runs parallel to the River Chater until it meets a 'T' junction of gravel paths at point **B** shown on the map overleaf. Do not turn but continue straight on to the now grass path directly in front onto the broad avenue between the two hedgerows. You have now joined the Leicestershire Round.

Guests who took the shortcut from Point **A** to Point **B** now re-join the route by turning left at the 'T' junction and join the grass path onto the broad avenue between the two hedgerows.

After about 200 meters, the broad path suddenly narrows as it crosses a stream then broadens out even wider than before and travels onwards in a straight line in a roughly westerly direction. At the end of the straight broad bridleway the route zig-zags through a number of turns, crosses the River Chater and then opens out into another field. You are at the bottom left corner and need to exit at the top right corner. The bridleway crosses diagonally and gently uphill across the field.

At far side of field pass through the gate and cross the next field towards a small mound. You will see the wall of Launde's walled garden on your left. Unfortunately there is no short-cut to the back door, you must follow the Leicestershire Round just a little further. Pass the mound to the right and gently descend the hill until you see the first of the fish ponds on your right. Look to the nearest bank of the pond and you will notice a brick entrance into the hillside. This is the old ice house, used by the early residents of Launde Abbey to store ice all year around.

Pass through the gate and, in about 100 meters, turn left onto the road. Follow the road to the cattle grid and back to the abbey.

You have just walked 5.6 miles and so deserve a nice cup of tea as your reward!

The shorter walk is 3.6 miles and ought to take about 1½ hours but the tea is just as rewarding!