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with IBG

Travels and journeys

A free self-guided walk in Leicester



www.walktheworld.org.uk

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Walk the World is part of Discovering Places, the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad campaign to inspire the UK to discover their local environment. Walk the World is delivered in partnership by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) with Discovering Places (The Heritage Alliance) and is principally funded by the National Lottery through the Olympic Lottery Distributor. The digital and print maps used for Walk the World are licensed to RGS-IBG from Ordnance Survey.



The
Heritage
Alliance



Travels and journeys

Discover how Leicester became a multicultural city

Welcome to Walk the World! This walk in Leicester is one of a series of 20 in different parts of the UK. Each walk explores how the 206 participating nations in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games have been part of the UK's history for many centuries. Along the routes you will discover evidence of how many countries have shaped our towns and cities.

Leicester in the East Midlands is one of Britain's most vibrant and multicultural cities. An estimated 40 per cent of the population were born or descend from countries overseas, particularly from South Asia, East Africa and the Caribbean.

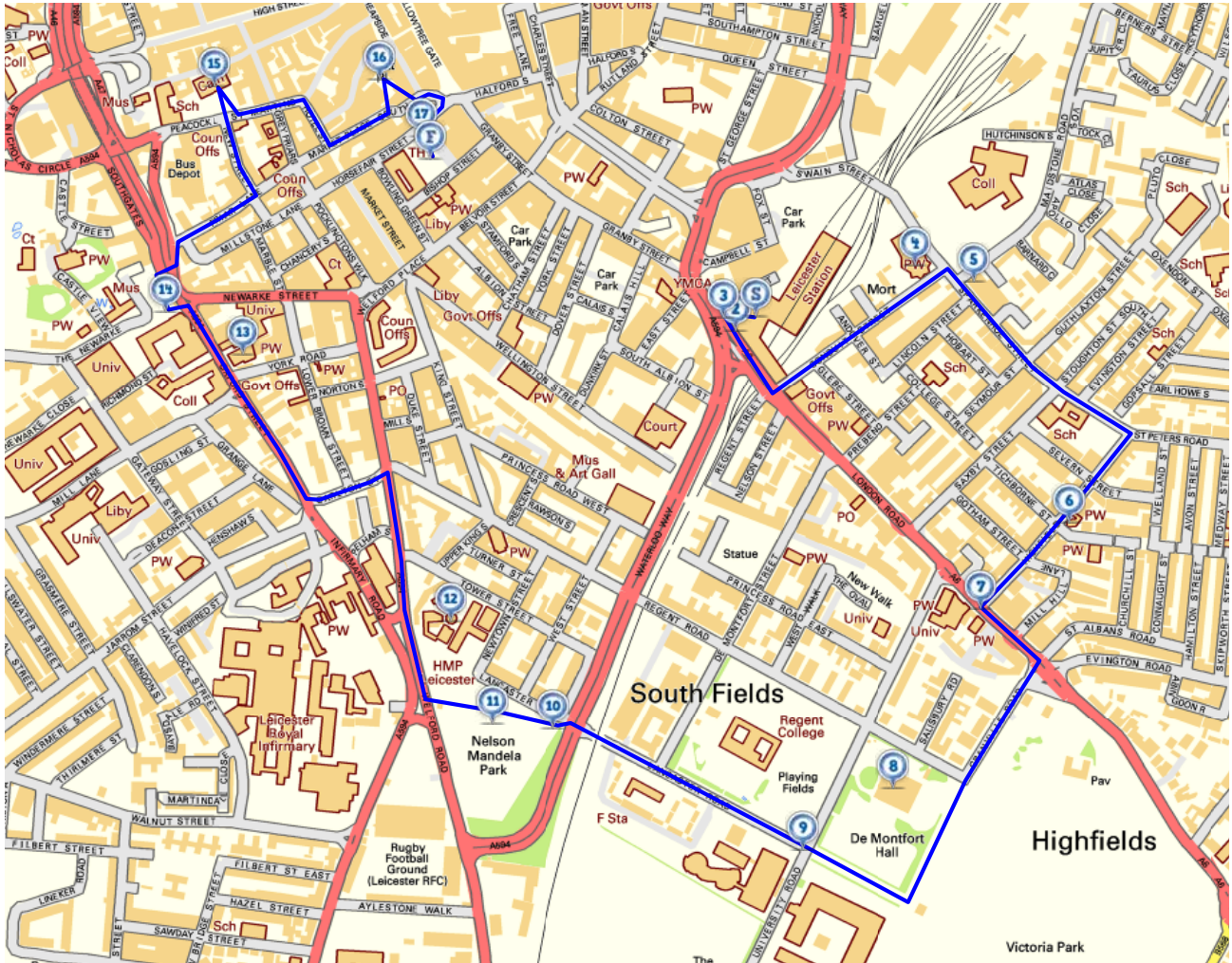
On this walk, created by local students, you can discover how people have travelled the world to live in Leicester. Visit a team of tigers, an unusual 'castle' and spectacular religious buildings. Hear about a French revolutionary, Caribbean carnivals and a South African statesman.

Leicester's motto is '*Semper Eadem*' or 'Always the Same'. Yet the city is constantly changing. From the Norman conquerors who built the Cathedral to Victorian exiles from Europe to today's migrants, Leicester has welcomed people, trades and cultures from worldwide.



Views of multicultural Leicester
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Route map



Stopping points

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 5. Leicester railway station | 10. Nelson Mandela Park |
| 2. Leicester railway station | 11. Welford Road Stadium |
| 3. Thomas Cook statue | 12. HM Prison Leicester |
| 4. Leicester Central Mosque | 13. The Jain Centre |
| 5. The African Caribbean Centre | 14. De Montfort University |
| 6. Leicester Synagogue | 15. Leicester Cathedral |
| 7. London Road | 16. Leicester Market |
| 8. De Montfort Hall | 17. Boer War Memorial |
| 9. University Road | F. Town Hall Square |

Practical information

Location	Leicester, Leicestershire, East Midlands
Getting there	<p>Train - Leicester is on the Midland Main Line. There are direct trains from Nottingham, Derby, Sheffield, Leeds, York, Birmingham and London St Pancras.</p> <p>Bus - Many local bus routes and long distance coaches. Leicester has two bus stations, the nearest to the walk is Haymarket on Charles Street.</p> <p>Bicycle - National Cycle Route 6 passes the city. The Leicester Bike Park is at the end of the route in Town Hall Square.</p> <p>Car - Access via Junction 29 of the M1, Junction 2 of the M6 and the M69 from Coventry. Plenty of car parking in the city centre (charges apply).</p>
Start point	Leicester railway station, LE2 0QB
Finish point	Town Hall Square, LE1 6AG
Onward journey	To return to the railway station use Directions 18 (on page 25)
Distance	2 ½ miles
Level	Gentle - a flat city centre route, though by some busy roads
Conditions	This walk is on pavements and paved paths; be careful of traffic when crossing busy roads.

Suitable for

Families - take care of young children by busy roads, especially near the railway station

Wheelchairs / pushchairs - an entirely step-free route

Dogs - must be kept on a lead in the city centre

Refreshments

There are plenty of places to stop for food and drink in the city centre at the end of the route. For a rest or a packed lunch try Victoria Park (by Stop 9) or Nelson Mandela Park (Stop 10).

Toilets

Public toilets available at Nelson Mandela Park and Leicester Market (Stop 16)

Other info

There are several religious buildings on the route. Most are open during the week to visitors, though please be respectful of their traditions of worship.

Welford Road Stadium (Stop 11) can be very busy on Leicester Tigers match days.

Family-friendly activities

Leicester Caribbean Carnival and **Leicester Mela** are both held in August. *(The walk route may be subject to road closures during the festivals)*

New Walk Museum and Art Gallery includes dinosaur and Ancient Egypt galleries. Open daily until 5pm. Free admission. Tel: 0116 225 4900

The National Space Centre all-weather family attraction is open Tues to Suns. For tickets and info tel: 0116 261 0261

Tourist Information

VisitLeicester.info, 51 Gallowtree Gate (near Town Hall Square). Tel: 0844 888 5181 or 0116 299 4444

1. Welcome to Leicester

Leicester railway station

Welcome to Leicester! Leicester is the tenth largest city in England, with a population of over 300,000 people. Leicester is also one of Britain's most multicultural cities. From the 1940s especially, many of Leicester's residents can trace their families from countries all around the world, particularly South Asia, East Africa and the Caribbean.

This walk was created by students from the Geography Department at the University of Leicester:

"We created this walk with Year 8 students from Moat Community College and Year 9 students from Soar Valley College. Through working on the walk we have all discovered so much about our city and its international connections."

On this walk you can find out about some of Leicester's different communities and how it became such a multicultural city. The route is about 2 ½ miles long and visits 16 sites across the city centre. The walk starts at Leicester railway station and finishes at Town Hall Square. There are some busy roads to cross so take care and do look after your valuables. We hope you enjoy the walk!



Views of multicultural Leicester
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Directions 1 - Make your way to Leicester railway station. Find a safe place to stop on the pavement outside the main building. Please take care crossing the roads.

2. Arrival

Leicester railway station

We begin our walk at Leicester railway station. This is an appropriate place to start as our journey around Leicester is all about people who have travelled to here from elsewhere. Leicester had one of the first railway stations in Britain, built in 1832, although the station we can see today was built later, in 1894.

The way Leicester's station has been rebuilt over time reflects how many people from around the world have changed the city.



Leicester station in the 1900s when it was known as Midland Railway Station
Wikimedia Commons

They include Saxon and Norman settlers who built the Cathedral, Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe who came in the Victorian era, workers from overseas who helped mend Second World War bomb damage and later migrants who came here to escape political and religious conflicts.

As we already mentioned this walk was created by students at Moat Community College and Soar Valley College. Like the wider city, both colleges have a diverse and multicultural student body. Moat Community College is also twinned with three schools from around the world in the Yemen, Russia and Namibia.

Country links - Namibia, Russia, Yemen

Directions 2 - From the pavement outside the station make your way to the corner of London Road and Station Street. Stop by the statue of a man on a pedestal.

3. A grand tourist

Thomas Cook statue

This statue is an important symbol of Leicester's links with the rest of the world. Thomas Cook was a cabinet maker who lived in the nearby town of Market Harborough. In June 1841 he walked from his home to Leicester, which was then only a small town, to attend a meeting. When he arrived Cook learned that the people he was meeting with had to go on to Loughborough. So he suggested a special train should be arranged for them.

The Midland Railway Company approved and 500 passengers travelled to Loughborough and back for a shilling on a train arranged by Thomas Cook.



Thomas Cook's statue
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

This trip inspired Cook to arrange more trips and by the late 1800s he had organised tourist travels to countries across Europe, including France, Switzerland and Italy. Cook then decided to create a tour across the world. He departed with a small group of people by steamship across the Atlantic to the United States. They travelled along the width of the country from New York to San Francisco, before they took a steamer boat across the Pacific Ocean to Japan.

Then they continued to China, Singapore, India and Sri Lanka, before they crossed the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea to go to Cairo in Egypt. The group returned to England from Cairo, but Cook continued and went on to Palestine, Turkey and Greece. He came back to Leicester after being away for 222 days.

Thomas Cook's travels led to the creation of the Thomas Cook holiday company which is still operating today. The Leicester branch can be found on Shires Walk on the High Street. Although Cook's company took Leicester people around the world, the rest of this walk will focus on how different people came from around the world to Leicester.

Country links - China, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Palestine, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Turkey, United States of America

Directions 3 - From the Cook statue walk past the front of the station along London Road. Immediately after the station building turn left into Conduit Street. Go along Conduit Street and stop at the junction with Sparkenhoe Street where there is a mini roundabout. The central mosque is on the left. Stop outside.

4. A city spectacle

Leicester Central Mosque

This building is one of many clues to the city's multi-ethnic communities. When migrant groups arrive in Britain they often set up shops, businesses and religious buildings catering for their particular tastes and needs. We will see many examples on this walk.

This building is Leicester Central Mosque which was built in 1988. Mosques are places of worship for people who believe in Islam. Islam is mainly practised in Arabian states such as Iran, Afghanistan and Syria as well as Pakistan. Islam has over 1 billion followers worldwide.



The mosque's domed roof
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Islamic worshippers, who are known as Muslims, believe that there is only one God, called Allah. Muslims believe that Islam began over 1,400 years ago in Mecca in Saudi Arabia and follow the teachings of the Qu'ran.

The first Muslim family from South Asia settled in Leicester in the 1920s and opened a spectacle shop. The first mosque in Leicester was built in 1968 by the growing community of Pakistani Muslims who emigrated here. Leicester Central Mosque features a prayer hall for 1,500 worshippers, a school and a community hall. The opening ceremony was attended by Muslim scholars from across the UK.

Leicester is home to around 31,000 Muslims, just over ten per cent of the city's population. A little further on the walk see if you can spot another Muslim community building: the Islamic Information Centre on Highfield Street.

Country links - Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria

Directions 4 - Turn right onto Sparkenhoe Street. Stop at the second mini roundabout and look across the road at the African Caribbean Centre.

5. Caribbean carnival

The African Caribbean Centre

Leicester's multicultural population also includes many people from the African-Caribbean community. Some of Leicester's African-Caribbeans arrived here in the late 1940s after the Second World War. Many were ex-servicemen looking for work and came here as Leicester had been badly bomb damaged and there was a short supply of labour. The first Caribbean people who migrated to Leicester were from the island of Barbuda.

This Centre was rebuilt in 2011 and serves the African-Caribbean community from countries including Jamaica, Barbados and St Lucia. People can come to the Centre to take part in drop-in activities, programmes and classes or to gather together socially. Although mainly used by people who come from the Caribbean and Africa, the Centre is open to all.

The Centre also tries to bring Jamaican culture to the city. For example salt fish pancakes are sold here on the Christian tradition of Pancake Day. Salt fish is the national dish of Jamaica. The Centre is also important in Leicester's Caribbean Carnival which is the second-largest in Britain.



Dancers at the Caribbean Carnival
Matt Neale © Flickr.com

Country links - Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, St Lucia

Directions 5 - Continue along Sparkenhoe Street as it climbs gradually. Shortly after passing a pedestrian crossing and a school on the right hand side turn right into Highfield Street. Walk along Highfield Street looking out for various religious community centres including the Islamic Information Centre, the Bangladesh Cultural Centre and a Hindu temple. At the junction with Tichborne Street is a redbrick synagogue. Stop outside the gates.

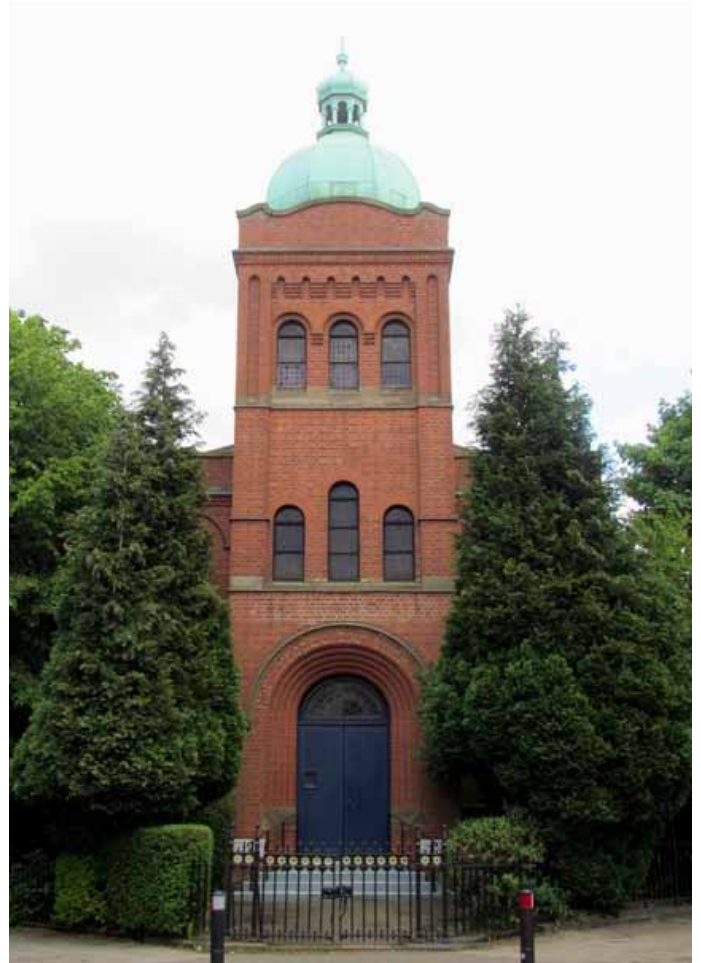
6. The textiles tower

Leicester Synagogue

Leicester Synagogue was built in 1898 and for many years was the only Orthodox Synagogue in Leicestershire. Synagogues are places of worship for Jewish people who meet in them to attend prayers, weddings, and to celebrate festivals such as Chanukah, the 8-day Jewish festival of lights.

Judaism originated in the Middle East, today's Israel, Lebanon and Palestine. Leicester's Jewish community can be traced back to the 1850s and there were once thousands of Jews in the city. The community expanded before the First World War as Jews from Eastern Europe migrated to Leicester, especially from Poland and Latvia. Many of Leicester's Jews set up tailoring businesses that helped the city's textiles industry to flourish.

Leicester's Jewish community increased again during the 1930s and Second World War as people fled Nazi persecution. Leicester's Orthodox Jewish community then shrank after the war with many migrating to other British cities. By October 2011 there were only around 600 Orthodox Jews in Leicester and this synagogue was even put up for sale.



Leicester Synagogue
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Country links - Germany, Lebanon, Israel, Latvia, Palestine, Poland

Directions 6 - Continue along Highfield Street. At the junction with London Road turn left. Look along the road or find a convenient place to stop if you prefer.

7. Worldwide workers

London Road

Look at the shop fronts along London Road and you will see many different shops with links to countries around the world. As you walk along, look out for adverts for international phone SIM cards. A lot of people who live in Leicester came from, and have relatives living in, countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Uganda and Kenya hence the demand for phone cards.

Migration to Leicester from these countries began after the 1948 British Nationality Act which gave people who lived in countries of the British Commonwealth the right to move to Britain. As we heard earlier many people were encouraged to migrate to Britain due to a shortage of workers after the Second World War.



Some of Leicester's international shop fronts
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

One group that came later was Leicester's Ugandan community. Uganda was once a British colony. As a result people from other British colonies, such as in South Asia, went to live and work there. By the early 1970s Uganda had a South Asian community of around 80,000 people. Then in 1972 the Ugandan leader Idi Amin ordered them to leave. As a result over 20,000 Ugandan people came to live in Leicester. Many set up their own shops and businesses. As you continue on the walk today, look out for more international shops, restaurants and businesses.

Country links - Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Uganda

Directions 7 - Continue up London Road. At the traffic lights at the brow of the hill turn right into Granville Road. Walk along Granville Road with Victoria Park on your left. Where the road bends round to the right, continue straight on through the gates onto the pedestrian walkway through the park. Stop beside the steps on the right leading down to the large hall.

8. Festival hall

De Montfort Hall

This large building is a concert hall. It is used to stage a wide variety of arts events including jazz, ballet, comedy and opera, plus world and roots music.

The Hall was built in 1913 and is named after Simon de Montfort. He was the Sixth Earl of Leicester. The Hall is not the only way De Montfort is remembered in Leicester and we will hear more about him later in the walk.



De Montfort Hall
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

De Montfort Hall welcomes performers from around the world. Since 1997 it has also been the home of the Philharmonia Orchestra, one of the world's leading orchestras. The Philharmonia was established in 1945 and has featured musicians and singers from many Olympic and Paralympic nations. The current conductor is Esa-Pekka Salonen from Finland.

The Hall also hosts the Hindu festival of Navratri, dedicated to the Hindu deity, Shakti. Leicester has a large South Asian community. We have already heard about the Muslim community but there are also 41,000 Hindus and 12,000 Sikhs. Leicester also hosts the largest celebration of Diwali outside India and among the 70 languages spoken in the city some of the most popular are Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu.

Country links - Finland, France, India

Directions 8 - Continue along the walkway through the park. At the large war memorial turn right down Peace Path. Note the memorials on either side to Leicester and Commonwealth people who fought and died in a variety of conflicts. Stop by the ornamental gates at the bottom of the path.

9. Learning in Leicester

Leicester University

Another reason Leicester is a very multicultural city is that it is home to two universities. Students come to study in Leicester from all over the world. This is Leicester University, one of the top 20 universities in Britain.

There are around 23,000 students here from over 70 countries. Each year over 450 visiting students come to Leicester as part of Study Abroad exchange agreements with 50 overseas universities in 11 countries. Students also come here from Erasmus exchange partners in another 22 European countries.



The sign and crest at one of the University buildings
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

In 1996 Leicester University started an important link with Ethiopia. Health professionals in Leicester set up a link with The College of Medical Sciences in Gondar. In 2004 this College developed into the University of Gondar and now has over 10,000 students. Over the years, the Leicester and Gondar Universities have worked together on many projects including a fully independent Master's degree in Public Health that trains health workers from all over Ethiopia.

Many famous people from around the world have studied at Leicester University. They include British novelist Michael Cordy, who was born in Ghana and spent much of his childhood in Africa, India and Cyprus. Others include Italian fashion model Massimiliano Neri, Pakistani diplomat Malik Zahoor Ahmad and Atifete Jahjaga the first female President of Kosovo.

Country links - Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United States of America

Directions 9 - Use the pedestrian crossing to cross University Road and go straight down Lancaster Road. Pass the fire station and go under the railway bridge. At the junction use the pedestrian crossing to go straight across Tigers Way and into Nelson Mandela Park. Keep to the footpath along the right hand side of the park with Lancaster Road on the right hand side. About three-quarters of the way across the park look for a large rock to the right of the path. Stop beside it.

10. Walking to freedom

Nelson Mandela Park

This park was created in 1986 and named after the South African activist and statesman, Nelson Mandela. Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC) political party in 1944 and took part in the resistance against the National Party's apartheid policies. He was arrested along with a number of fellow leaders of the ANC in 1962 for sabotage and plotting to overthrow the government. He was found guilty and sent to prison for 28 years.

During his imprisonment Mandela became the most significant black leader in South Africa and a symbol of the anti-apartheid movement.

People from around the world campaigned for his release from prison which eventually came in February 1990. Four years later Mandela became the first democratically-elected President of South Africa. Nelson Mandela Park features signs that quote Mandela's speeches including one that says "There is no easy walk to freedom anywhere".



Nelson Mandela in 2008
Wikimedia Commons via
South Africa The Good News / www.sagoodnews.co.za

Mandela's imprisonment and freedom has inspired countless others. He has received over 250 awards and there are monuments to him worldwide. As well as this park in Leicester there is a Nelson Mandela Park in Kingston in Jamaica, the Mandela Parkway road in California and a Nelson Mandela Park Public School in Toronto in Canada.

Country links - Canada, Jamaica, South Africa

Directions 10 - Continue along the path across Nelson Mandela Park to exit beside the public toilets. Turn right on Welford Road. Stop by the enormous red brick wall. Look back across the roads and car park to the stadium.

11. A team of tigers

Welford Road Stadium

So far we have heard about people who have migrated to Leicester. People have also come here from overseas to play sport. Leicester is home to football, rugby and cricket teams that have attracted players from around the world. Across Nelson Mandela Park is the Welford Road Stadium, the home of the Leicester Tigers rugby union club.

Leicester Tigers are England's most successful rugby club, winning a record nine championships. The Tigers were founded in 1880 as Leicester Football Club after three local teams merged.



Tigers players Martin Johnson and Graham Rowntree, 2007
© Patrick Khachfe via Wikimedia Commons

They played rugby from the start but only became known as the Tigers around five years later. The origins of the name are uncertain. One possibility is that members of the club were former soldiers of the Leicestershire Regiment. This regiment became known as the Tigers for serving in India and they even wore caps with tiger badges.

In 1980, Leicester Tigers marked their centenary by becoming the first English club to tour in the southern hemisphere. They played six games in Australia and Fiji. Like many rugby teams in Britain the Tigers attract players from abroad. The current team includes players from Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa and Tonga.

Country links - Argentina, Australia, Fiji, India, New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga

Directions 11 - Continue along Welford Road with the high wall on your right. After about 100 metres stop by the prison entrance.

12. Crime and punishment

HM Prison Leicester

Her Majesty's Prison Leicester was built by local architect William Parsons in 1828 at a cost of almost £65,000. People often wonder whether this is Leicester Castle because of its turrets, battlemented walls and entrance. In fact the walls of Leicester Prison are the highest in the country.

The journalist William Cobbett, who wrote about his journeys around England in the 19th century, criticised the people of Leicester for being proud of the prison. He felt it would be more praiseworthy to have an absence of crime!

The word 'prison' comes from Old French *prisoun*. Prisons as we know them today developed in Victorian England. Before prisons were built Britain exiled criminals to penal colonies – other countries where people were forced to live and work. Australia and America were used as British penal colonies up until the 1860s.

Leicester Prison currently has a capacity of 392. Famous former inmates of this prison include the R&B singer Mark Morrison. His parents were from Barbados, although he was born in Germany before they moved to Leicester.



HM Prison Leicester is often mistaken for a castle
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Country links - Australia, Barbados, France, Germany, United States of America

Directions 12 - Continue along the pavement on the right hand side of Welford Road. When you reach The Bricklayer's Arms pub turn left along Carlton Street. At the end of Carlton Street turn right onto Oxford Street. Stay on the right hand pavement. Pass a junction with traffic lights and then York Road. Stop outside the next building on the right which is a white marble temple.

13. A centre of change

Jain Centre

We have already heard about the city's Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities. This building is home to yet another religious community. The building dates from 1865 and it was originally a Congregational church. Since 1980 it has been used as a temple for the followers of the Jain faith.

The religion of Jainism originated in India and is followed by a sizeable number of people in India as well as migrants in Europe, East Africa and North America. The first followers of Jainism in Leicester arrived from India and Kenya then in greater numbers from Uganda. There are currently about 1,000 Jains in the city.

Jains believe that time rotates in a cosmic circle and Jain texts describe the universe and its constituents as eternal. The Jain temple in Leicester is the first in the world to bring together in one building all the main sects of Jains. Inside are forty-four beautifully carved pillars showing scenes from Jain legends.



The Jain Centre, complete with its incredible carved marble
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

The Jain Centre is a good example of how Leicester's population has changed over time, with buildings being used by different religious and cultural groups throughout the city's history. The Jain Centre is not unique – many Muslim mosques and Sikh gurdwaras are based in buildings that were used by other communities, such as former churches or synagogues.

Country links - India, Kenya, Uganda

Directions 13 - The temple is open to visitors from Monday to Friday between 2pm and 5pm and is well worth a visit. Ask the people at reception if you can visit the temple upstairs. To go into the temple you will need to remove your shoes. When you are ready, continue along Oxford Street. Cross over at the first pedestrian crossing and go past the Leicester Business School. Go behind the old stone gateway and stop in the plaza outside De Montfort University.

14. A father of democracy

De Montfort University

We are now at the other of Leicester's universities. Like the De Montfort Hall this university is named after Simon de Montfort, the Sixth Earl of Leicester. He lived from 1208 to 1265 and had connections on both sides of his family to the English and French royal families. His father (also called Simon) was a French nobleman and crusader but it was through his paternal grandmother that he inherited the Earldom of Leicester.

De Montfort is known for leading the barons' rebellion against King Henry III of England during the Second Barons' War of 1263-4. He subsequently became de facto ruler of England.

During his rule he called the first directly-elected parliament in medieval Europe. For this reason de Montfort is regarded today as one of the fathers of modern democracy. Napoleon Bonaparte described Simon de Montfort as "one of the greatest Englishmen".

After a rule of just over a year he was killed by forces loyal to the king in the Battle of Evesham. Various local honours in Leicester were dedicated to his memory. There is also a statue of him on the Haymarket Memorial Clock Tower. A relief of de Montfort also features on the wall of the Chamber of the United States House of Representatives.



Simon de Montfort depicted in a stained glass window at Chartres Cathedral in France
Wikimedia Commons

Country links - France, United States of America

Directions 14 - From the back of the stone Magazine Gateway walk past the 'Welcome to De Montfort University' sign on the wall. Use the pedestrian crossing to go across the dual carriageway and then go straight into Friar Lane. Take the first left into New Street and follow it towards the spire of the cathedral. Cross Peacock Lane and stop outside the cathedral entrance.

15. Spires and soldiers

Leicester Cathedral

Leicester Cathedral was built by the Normans in 1086, twenty years after they invaded Britain from Normandy in France. The building has been added to over time including the spire which was added in the nineteenth century by architect Raphael Brandon. Fittingly, Brandon studied architecture in Normandy.

The cathedral has many other links with France. For example, the east window was installed as a monument to those who died in the First World War in France and Belgium. The window shows various saints including Joan of Arc.



Leicester Cathedral spire
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Another saint in the window is St Martin of Tours. The cathedral is dedicated to him; in fact the building's full name is The Cathedral Church of St Martin, Leicester. St Martin is the patron Saint of Soldiers and was born in Hungary in AD 316. Legend has it that at the age of ten St Martin wanted to be a monk. His father wanted him to be a soldier and aged 15 Martin was sent to France. There he is said to have met a beggar in a snowstorm. St Martin impulsively cut his own cloak in half and shared it with the beggar. St Martin then had a dream which convinced him to become baptised as a Christian. So he left the army and became a monk.

St Martin's Day is in November and it is celebrated in many countries of Europe. In Austria, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands children carry paper lanterns through the streets.

Country links - Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands

Directions 15 - The cathedral is worth a visit and is open to visitors daily. When you are ready leave the cathedral by the main entrance and turn left onto St Martin's. Take the second right into Hotel Street. At the next crossroads turn left into Market Place South. Pass several entrances to the indoor market and instead go into the outdoor market on the left. Stop in the market at a convenient place.

16. Exotic fruit

Leicester Market

This bustling vibrant part of the city is Leicester Market which is the largest covered outdoor market in Europe. It has been on this site for around 700 years and is protected by a Royal Grant issued by Henry III in 1229. The grant means that no other markets can be set up in the city centre.

Stalls here sell a large variety of fruit, vegetables and flowers from all over the world. Many of the foods for sale here reflect modern Leicester's international population.

We found pomegranates from India, Pakistan and Africa, strawberries from France and North America, bananas from South East Asia, kiwis from New Zealand, star fruit from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh and watermelon from South Africa. See what you can spot! The traders are more than happy to provide advice on making exotic dishes with such ingredients.



Some of the produce for sale at Leicester Market
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Country links - Bangladesh, France, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, United States of America

Directions 16 - When you have finished exploring the market make your way back to Market Place South and go through the archway. Turn right into Horsefair Street and then immediately left into Town Hall Square. Stop in the square.

17. War, grief and peace

Town Hall Square

We are now in Town Hall Square. Leicester Town Hall was built in 1874 on the site of a former cattle market. The architect was Francis Hames, who designed the building in Queen Anne style. Leicester Town Hall was the first public building in Britain to use this style, which became very popular across Britain and then worldwide, including in America and Australia.

Also in Town Hall Square is the Boer War Memorial. The Boer Wars were fought between 1899 and 1902 between the British Empire and the two Dutch Boer republics in South Africa. The monument takes the form of a wall with bronze panels. On top are three sculptures called "War", "Grief" and "Peace".

It was unveiled on the 1st July 1909. There are 315 names listed on the memorial, which records those from Leicestershire Regiments who lost their lives in the conflicts.



The 'War' and 'Peace' sculptures of the Boer War memorial
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Country links - Australia, Barbados, France, Germany, United States of America

Directions 17 - Remain in Town Hall Square.

18. A multicultural journey

Town Hall Square

This is a fitting place to end our walk. Recently Leicester's register office has relocated to the Town Hall. As the place where all births, deaths and marriages are registered it contains all the records that tell the story of this multicultural city.

On this walk we have heard about migrants who have come to Leicester from all over the world. From the Norman conquerors who built the Cathedral and French noblemen such as Simon De Montfort; to Jews from Eastern Europe in the nineteenth century; South Asians and Afro-Caribbeans who came after Independence to fill labour shortages; East African Asians fleeing persecution in the 1970s; to more recent groups of migrants from Asia, Africa and Europe; as well as the hundreds of international students who come to the city each year.

Each migrant community has brought their languages, beliefs, customs and foods and we have seen evidence of this in various places of worship, shops and markets around the city. This diversity has made Leicester one of Britain's most vibrant and multicultural cities.

While exploring the city of Leicester we have found evidence of links to over 60 different countries. Maybe you spotted more. If you did, please let us know. And if you enjoyed this walk, look on the Walk the World website and you will find more in different parts of Britain that you can try. Why not think about creating a walk of your own?



The Town Hall Square fountain
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Directions 18 - From Town Hall Square you may wish to explore more of the city centre or do some shopping. To return to the railway station where the walk started, with the Town Hall on your right exit the square by square via Bishop Street. At the end turn right into Granby Street. This road leads back to the station, which will be across London Road.

Credits

The RGS-IBG would like to thank the following people and organisations for their assistance in producing this Walk the World walk:

- **Year 8 students from Moat Community College** and **Year 9 students from Soar Valley College** for researching the stopping points on the walk
- **Amy Atkins, Amita Bhakta, Chris Bonham, Samuel James, Tanith Ludlam, Rebecca Selves, Cerise Watson, Natalie Weatherill** and **Emma Wilding**, students from Department of Geography, University of Leicester for compiling the walk script
- **Dr Gavin Brown** (Department of Geography, University of Leicester) and **Alex Lund** (Widening Participation Officer, University of Leicester) for coordinating the walk
- **Jenny Lunn** for editing the walk materials
- **Rory Walsh** for additional research and taking photographs
- **Dr Gavin Brown, Tanith Ludlam, Rebecca Selves** and **Natalie Weatherill** for recording the audio commentary
- **Caroline Millar** for editing the audio files
- **William Sitwell** and **Mike Jackson** for additional research
- **Steve Cadman, Patrick Khachfe, Stephen Lamb** and **Matt Neale** for additional photographs
- **Olivia Antrobus, William Dyson** and **Christine McKenna** for additional assistance with compiling walk resources

Walk the World is part of Discovering Places, the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad campaign to inspire the UK to discover their local environment. Walk the World is delivered in partnership by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) with Discovering Places (The Heritage Alliance) and is principally funded by the National Lottery through the Olympic Lottery Distributor. The digital and print maps used for Walk the World are licensed to RGS-IBG from Ordnance Survey.



The
Heritage
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The UK is an island nation but we are by no means isolated - we are a hub of worldwide connections.

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