

Leighton Buzzard Walk

approx 1½ miles - allow 1½ hours

P Begin at town centre multi-storey car park.

1 Leave car park and head into Waterborne Walk shopping centre. Take path on right at information board, cross over road and turn right. At the last thatched building in the town centre, The Black Horse Public House, turn left, on to North Street and head towards the Friends' Meeting House, a place of worship for Quakers since 1789, and the Almshouses.



Almshouses

2 Cross over road and retrace steps, taking in rear and side views of the Black Horse, and turn left at roundabout. Continue to next roundabout and the White House.

3 Retrace your steps. Cross road at pedestrian crossing and walk down Hockliffe Street almost immediately opposite. Note Baptist Church and black and white timber buildings on right. Take alleyway on left to Peacock Mews, a shopping area of Mews style shops, whose name derives from The Peacock Inn, originally dating back to before 1645 and now a restaurant. Take time to browse through the Mews.



White House

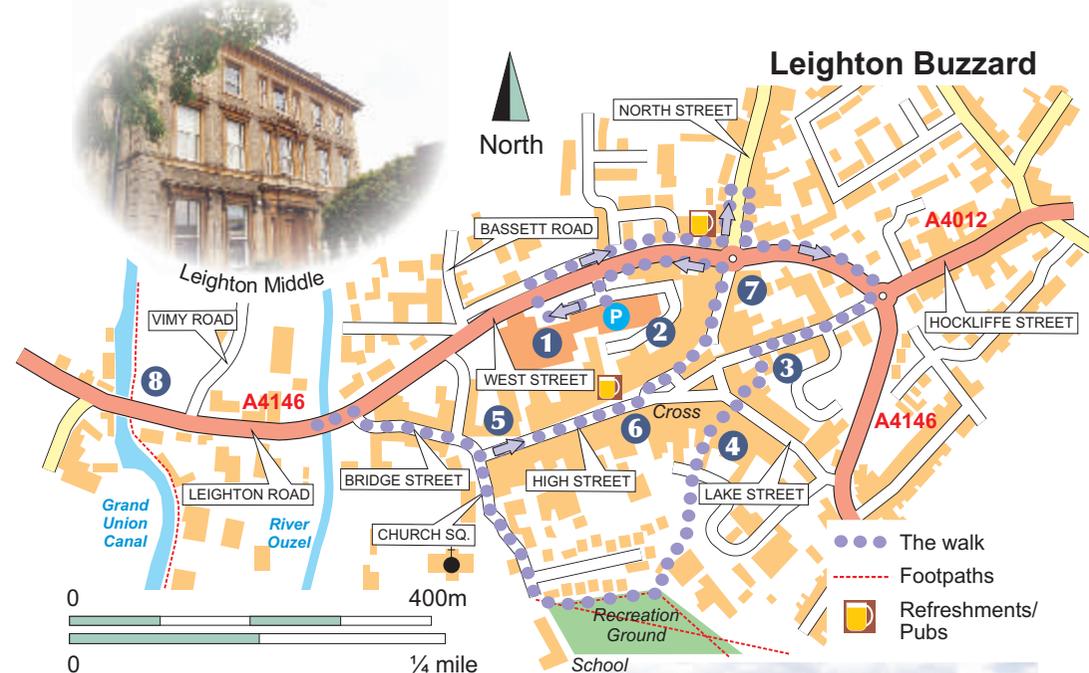
4 Continue through Mews to wrought iron fence and gate, turning left on to Lake Street. Cross Road and turn into Rylands Mews. Proceed through Mews, through car park and to footpath to left of houses. Follow footpath along right hand edge of recreation ground, past Pulford School. The original Pulford School was in what is now the General Post Office. The school relocated in the late nineteenth century, with the original building becoming a General Post Office in 1884. Take road to right of school and follow past thirteenth century All Saints Church into Church Square, noting Leighton Buzzard Middle School and the General Post Office, built in 1790.



Market Cross

5 (the longer walk starts at this point - see **8**)

Turn right on to the High Street, a designated conservation area that includes several buildings of historic interest. These include Barclays Bank, located on the site of the Leighton Buzzard Bank founded by five of the town's Quakers in 1812 and rebuilt in 1866; the National Westminster Bank which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the Red Lion Inn; the Swan Hotel an 18th century Post House and Coaching Inn; and the Black Lion pub which can trace its roots back to the eighteenth century as the Sow and Pigs Inn.



6 At top of High Street note the Market Cross, dating from the late 14th/early 15th century, and Market Hall/Old Fire Station – the current building dates back to 1853 but reference to a market hall can be found as early as the fifteenth century. Take left hand path at Old Fire Station, then left on to North Street. Proceed along North Street, noting the mixture of older buildings, the tiny Red Lion Pub, and interesting archways and tiles.



High Street

7 At end of North Street, turn left, continue down road to path back into shopping centre on left, close to crossing.

8 A good way to extend this walk is to include a walk along the Grand Union Canal. To do so, turn left off Church Square into Bridge Street and turn left on to Leighton Road. Continue along to Tesco (located where Vimy Bomber flyplanes were once built) and cross road just after supermarket. At bridge, take path down to canal and continue to the right.

The Grand Union Canal opened in 1806 to provide a direct route between the River Thames and the Oxford Canal at Braunston. Whilst canals themselves are an example of incredible engineering during the Industrial Revolution, many of the buildings that developed along them, and the bridges, tunnels and aqueducts, are recognised as important historic features. For example, the Globe Public House in Linslade first licensed as a beer shop in 1830, served jugs of beer to passing boats. The early nineteenth century lock cottage, built for the Grand Junction Canal Company, and the Grand Union or Canal House on Leighton Road, are listed buildings. It is also worth a detour to the church at Old Linslade which overlooks the canal.