



We suggest three routes for walking or cycling between The Copt Oak Public House and Narborough Railway Station.

These are:

- Blue Route** – 1.46km (1993 steps)
- Red Route** – 1.63km (2225 steps)
- Yellow Route** – 2.17 km (2962 steps)



3. Copt Oak House. The House was on the other side of Copt Oak Road from Red Hill Field School. This started as a well-appointed Victorian

house being built after 1886 but residents appearing on the 1901 Census when it was the home of a farmer, Jonathan Brown. A further farm, occupied by the Brewster family was just beyond. By the time of the 1921 census, Copt Oak House was occupied by Louis Pierpoint, a prosperous Wine & Spirit Merchant of Humberstone and Gallowtree Gates in Leicester. By 1939, Louis is shown as retired and no longer living in Narborough. The Smith family were living there when the estate, including the Brewster Farm beyond it, were purchased by Grants Builders who demolished both and built the small close of houses present there in 2025. Just a short length of original house walling remains as the close boundary, inside and on the right.



4. The Woodlands. This substantial property is listed in the 1871 census but not in 1861. It is shown, physically, on the

ordnance survey map of 1886. It spent time in private ownership with its first owner being Henry Hale, a manufacturer of hosiery with his wife Annie and two servants. He was followed by Arthur Green a boot manufacturer. Carlton Hayes Hospital on the other side of Forest Road opened in 1907, run by 'The Charity of the Leicestershire and Rutland Asylum'. In 1940, the charity purchased 'The Woodlands'. In 1948, Carlton Hayes became part of the new National

Health Service, and, by 1958, the Woodlands was the centre for mental health day care services for the Carlton Hayes Mental Health Charity. Carlton Hayes Hospital closed in 1996, but the charity continued to use The Woodlands as offices and accommodation for NHS staff. By 2011, it stood empty, and it was sold to Taylor Wimpey to be included in the development of the estate entered by Bradgate Close. The Woodlands building was retained within the development being converted into 13 apartments. The charity continues to exist and makes substantial donations each year.



5. Knoll/Forest House/Sketchley School. Originally, 'The Knoll' was built at the same time as Carlton Hayes

Hospital as a house for the Clerk & Steward. It was later taken over by the NHS, called Forest House and occupied by the Community Rehabilitation Team within the Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust under the name Sylvia Reid House as a residence for young patients and with the purpose of developing the skills of individuals suffering from mental health problems. From September 2024, its name changed to Sketchley School, part of a number of schools in the ASPIS group. It now takes young people from Year 9 (13-15 years) up to school leaving age.



6. The Black Pad. This is the path that travelled from All Saints Church in the village up to Forest Road (then Forest Lane) before branching to Enderby. Its name allegedly came from being the route along which coal was carried up to Carlton Hayes Hospital but an alternative suggestion is that the ash from its hospital boiler house was scattered there as a walking surface. Before the arrival of the railway in the village in 1846, heating would have been by burning locally cut wood. After arrival, coal came in from regional coalfields by rail to the merchant by Narborough Station. The building of Forest House caused the path to join Forest Road for the length north of the house and, of course, now it is effectively Forest Road's pavement. The Black Pad gives us a pleasant, direct path over the bypass, and we remember its history in its name.



7. King Edward Avenue (The Fosse Way).

Fosse Way was a Roman Road that started in Exeter (Isca Dumnoniorum) and ran to Lincoln (Lindum Colonia) travelling through Leicester (Ratae Corieltavorum) among several other cities. Our A46 follows this route over much of its length. The addition of '-cester' to a place name comes from the Latin 'castra' meaning a camp. Leicester itself was a stopping point and centre of Roman activity. There is an excellent display at the Enderby Park & Ride waiting room showing how Roman Roads were constructed. They were generally largely in straight lines, still obvious on maps, because bonfires were used to project direction. Around 1700, the road diverted through the village to use its services to the crossing point of the River Soar. In 1937, a bypass was opened following the old Fosse Way route to relieve traffic in the centre of the village and the main road reverted to its original track. As time has gone on and traffic has built up, the centre of the village is still very busy. The pedestrian cross on the Black Pad is a safe way to cross the Bypass.



8. Carlton Hayes Graves. At the bypass end of the All

Saints Cemetery and in the centre, is a brown marble memorial to the burial of Carlton Hayes Hospital patients. This hospital was built in 1907 on a 184-acre site off Forest Road and to the east of the Costcutter convenience store. The hospital was owned by a charity, Carlton Hayes Mental Health Charity was given the name 'The Leicestershire & Rutland County Asylum'. It went through a couple of changes of name becoming 'Carlton Hayes Hospital' in 1939. It joined the National Health Service in 1948 but was demolished in 1996 to become a building society HQ. 1,150 patients passed away in the time the hospital existed, and they were brought here to our Cemetery. Their graves were unmarked, and some were buried up to six deep, but all their names are recorded in the original Cemetery records held in the Parish Centre.