

Please remember the countryside is a place where people live and work and where wildlife makes its home. To protect the Lincolnshire countryside for other visitors please respect it and on every visit follow the Countryside Code. Thank you.

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Most of all enjoy your visit to the Lincolnshire countryside

This leaflet is one in a series of walk leaflets produced by Lincolnshire County Council's Countryside Access Team to help you explore and enjoy the County's countryside. If you have enjoyed these walks and would like information on other walking routes in Lincolnshire then please visit our website.

If you encounter any problems whilst on these walks, such as an overgrown path or a broken sign post, please let us know so they can be corrected.

We would also welcome your comments and suggestions on the walk and leaflet to help improve future editions.

If you would like this leaflet in an alternative format or language please contact us.

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Countryside Access Team**

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Walk location: Stainfield is located 9 miles (14 ½ km) east of Lincoln.

Starting point: Stainfield and Apley Village Hall, LN8 5JJ. Grid reference: TF 108 732.

Parking: Village Hall (as above), by kind permission of the Village Hall Trustees.

Public Transport: For times and more information call the Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/busrailtravel or www.lincsbus.info

Ordnance Survey maps for the area: Explorer 273 Lincolnshire Wolds South, Landranger 121 Lincoln & Newark.

Walk length: Hardy Gang Wood walk: longer route: 8 ¾ km (5 ½ miles) which will take approximately 2 ¾ hours to complete at a leisurely pace. Shorter route: 7 km (4 ½ miles). 2 ¼ hours to complete. Foxhall Wood walk: 2 ½ km (1 ½ miles). ¾ of an hour to complete.

Type of walks: The walks use quiet roads, field paths and woodland paths. The walks are level but may be uneven and muddy in places especially through the woodland. You may encounter stiles on the Hardy Gang Wood walk but there are no stiles on the Foxhall Wood walk.



The Limewoods Project aims to protect, enhance and promote the Lincolnshire Limewoods area through the Limewoods Partnership.
www.limewoods.co.uk
email: limewoods@lincolnshire.gov.uk
The Limewoods Project is funded by :



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Stainfield & Apley



3 circular walks of 8¾, 7 or 2½ km (5½, 4 ½ or 1 ½ miles)

The Lincolnshire Limewoods is an area between Wragby, Bardney and Woodhall Spa. It is a fantastic place to explore with ancient woodland, medieval religious ruins and a wealth of wildlife.

This walk leaflet is one in a series where you can experience all this!

The Lincolnshire Limewoods are the most important examples of small-leaved lime woodland remaining in Britain and several have been collectively designated as the Bardney Limewoods National Nature Reserve. The woods provide a range of habitats for a variety of wildlife.

Keep your eyes open – you never know what you might see!

The walks start from the small village of Stainfield where there was once a medieval village and priory. The Hardy Gang walk passes close by the remains of Barlings Abbey before going through a woodland and across arable farmland to the village of Apley, again the site of a medieval settlement. As well as going through mature woodland the walk also passes through several areas of recently planted native woodland.



Hardy Gang Wood walk

- 1 Leave the car park and turn left along the road.
- 2 Follow the road as it bends to the left (signed Langworth). After approximately 900m turn left off the road and onto a bridleway. Walk across the fields by bearing right towards the right hand corner of the copse.
- 3 Cross the bridge and go through the gate. Turn left and follow the field edge for approximately 150m to a waymarker. Bear right across the field towards a wooden fingerpost in the distance.

The remains of Barlings Abbey can be seen ahead.

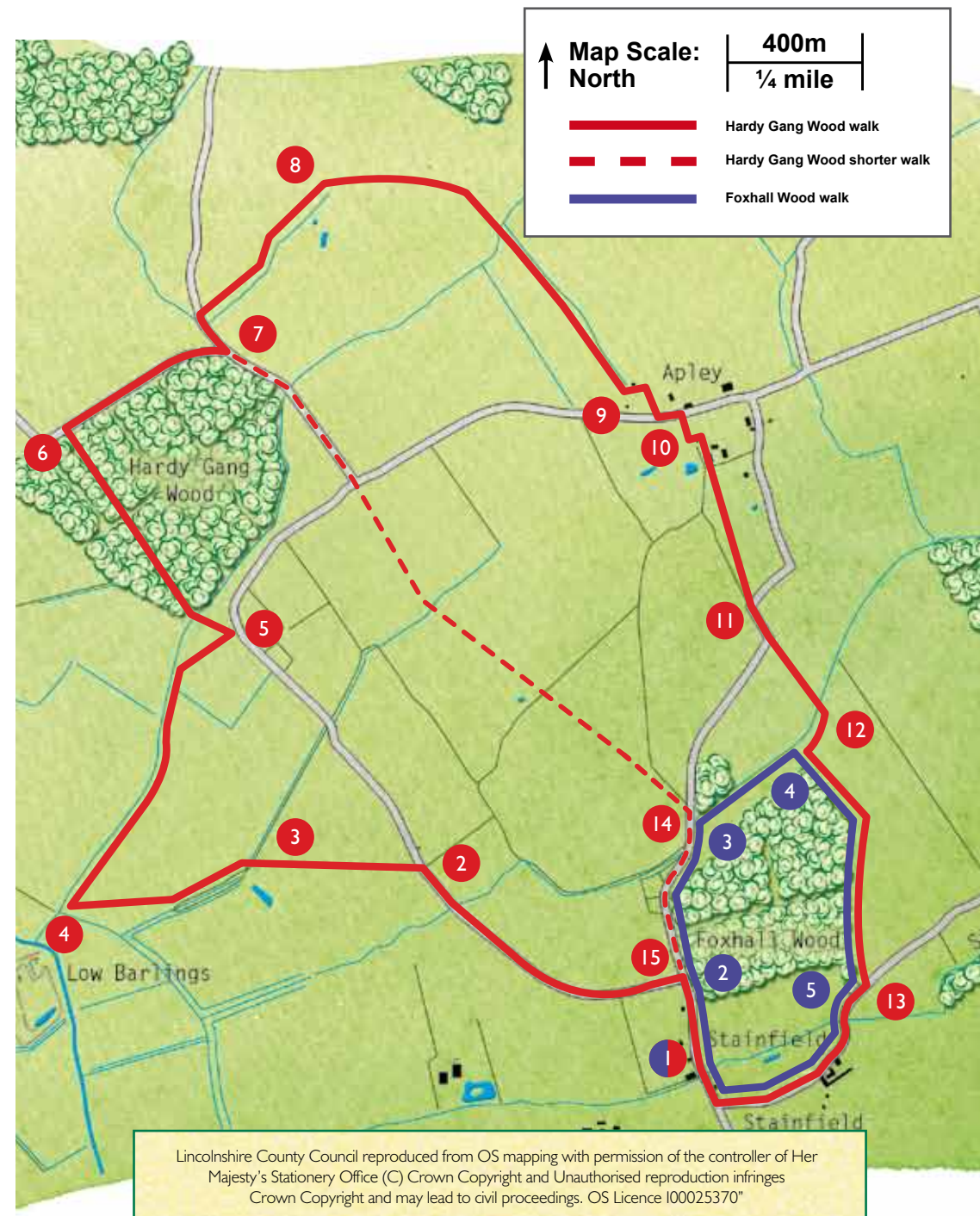
Part of the church nave and tower is all that remains above ground of the medieval Barlings Abbey. Earthworks around the wall indicate other buildings of the monastery. The abbey was founded in 1154 by the Premonstratensians (named after Prémontré in France where the first house was founded). The abbey was closed in 1537 after the abbot and four canons were implicated in a rebellion against the closure of monasteries by Henry VIII, and hanged. Information boards at the ruins and at the road entrance to the abbey have further information.

- 4 At the fingerpost turn left to visit Barlings Abbey and follow the bridleway over the bridge. To continue the walk turn right (along the Viking Way). As the track bends to the right continue straight ahead for a few metres before bearing right across the field to a gate half way along the field edge.
- 5 Don't go through the gate but turn around and bear right across the field to a gate and bridge on the edge of the woodland.

Enter the woodland and follow the bridleway straight ahead through the wood.

Hardy Gang Wood is part of the Bardney Limewoods National Nature Reserve and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Look out for small-leaved lime, ash, hazel and pedunculate oak as well as a variety of wild flowers in the spring including the common spotted orchid.

The wood is also linked with the legend of the wild man of Stainfield. Various stories about the wild man exist including one that states that he was a local nobleman who returned from fighting in the crusades to find his land had been given to others. He failed to reclaim his estates and took to living wild in the local woods. He became so dangerous that Francis Tyrwhitt-Drake killed him and in return was given the wild man's former estates. Another version of the tale tells how the wild man was killed in woodland by a group of farmers, known as The Hardy Gang, who were fed up with him stealing their livestock.



The route through the wood can get very wet and muddy. If you want to avoid the wood go through the gate at point 5, turn left and follow the road for approximately 500m to a junction. Turn left and at the next junction bear right and rejoin the directions at point 7.

- 6 At the road turn right and walk 500m to a road junction.



For the longer route:

- 7 Turn left (signed Bullington) and after 70m turn right onto a footpath. Follow the path along the edge of an area of planted trees.
- 8 At the edge of the arable field bear right to a bridge and fingerpost that will come into view. Cross the bridge and walk straight ahead along the right hand side of the drain. At the end of the drain walk straight across the field ahead and then along the fence line.
- 9 At the end of the field turn left and after 50m, and before the gate, turn right along a footpath around the edge of a garden to a road.

- 10 At the road turn left and after approximately 80m turn right onto a footpath.

Follow the track for approximately 90m before turning right into a field and following the field edge straight ahead. At the field corner turn left over a stile and immediately turn right and walk along the field edge to a road.



The mounds and hollows in the fields you have just crossed are remains of the medieval settlement of Apley. It was established in the 11th century and was granted to Stainfield Priory in the mid 12th century as a monastic manor or grange. The medieval church at Apley remained standing until the early 18th century. The current church of St Andrew was built in 1871 on a site north of the original church.

On a clear day you will be able to see Lincoln cathedral on the right.

- 11 At the road turn right and after approximately 100m turn left onto a footpath across the field, through some trees and across a bridge.

- 12 Turn right and walk alongside the drain. After 150m turn left onto a footpath beside a woodland, Foxhall Wood.

The young trees alongside the woodland were planted with assistance from the Forestry Commission's JIGSAW scheme (Joining and Increasing Grant Scheme for Ancient Woodlands). As woodlands get smaller and more isolated they become less valuable for a variety of wildlife. The JIGSAW scheme has enabled landowners to plant new woodlands adjoining existing ones. Over the past 10 years over 160 hectares of new woodland has been planted across the Lincolnshire Limewoods area.

- 13 At the road turn right, walk past the church, and at the T-junction turn right to return to the starting point.

The brick church of St Andrew in Stainfield was built in 1711 on a north-south orientation. The lumps and bumps in the fields either side of the road are remnants of Stainfield deserted medieval village, the last remains of the village being cleared by Sir Philip Tyrwhitt to create formal gardens in the early 17th century.

For the shorter route:

- 7 Follow the road to the right and at the next junction bear right and then turn immediately left onto a bridleway (part of the Viking Way).

Cross the fields, go through a gate and over a bridge and continue straight on across the fields and along a field edge to a road.

- 14 Turn right and follow the road to a junction.
- 15 Turn left and follow the road back to the village hall and starting point.

Foxhall Wood walk

- 1 Leave the car park and turn left.
- 2 At the junction turn right (signed Apley).
- 3 After approximately 500m turn right onto a footpath (part of the Viking Way) beside a drain.
- 4 After approximately 350m turn right onto another footpath. Follow the path along the wood edge to a road.
- 5 At the road turn right, walk past the church to a T-junction. Turn right to return to the starting point.

