



# Rutland Discovery Trails

## 2. Bishop's Eye Trail

Have you been through the Bishop's Eye? If not then you should set out to follow the Bishop's Eye Trail in Rutland! **Start in Uppingham and go West to join Stockerston Road (B664) take a left onto this road.** Once out of town you will find yourself winding your way down King's Hill through Beaumont Chase.

Here you can savour excellent views into the *Eye Brook Valley* with the lesser known Rutland Eye Brook Reservoir below. To your left and right there are ancient woodlands – Wardley Woos and Stoke Great Wood. In the distance, beyond Stockerston, Park Wood, Bolt Wood, Great and Little Merrible Woods give the impression of a forested area. So it should be, since the Royal Forest of Leighfield once joined Rockingham Forest in this neighbourhood. Some of the many Lodges in the area would have been hunting lodges centuries ago and medieval deer parks are remembered by names such as Park Farm, Great Easton Park, Liddington Park Lodge.

**Hopping over the Rutland boarder briefly in to Stockerston, take the first left out of the village then left again back into Rutland and to the tip of the reservoir then up the hill to Stoke Dry,** a road which continues to delight with distant glimpses of Welland Valley villages. Go into Stoke Dry church to see the curious carvings, the wall paintings and the supposed Gunpowder Plot room over the north porch. Sir Everard Digby of Stoke Dry was executed in 1606 for his part in it.

**Continue through the village and turn right on to the main road, the A6003, and south to Caldecott** looking out to your left for wonderful views of the pastoral Welland Valley and glimpses of the Eye Brook Reservoir to your right, you may also spot Rockingham Castle in the hills ahead. Just before you reach Caldecott look out for the humps and bumps of the lost village of Snelston.



Now you reach the most southern village in Rutland – Caldecott. Once important as a guardian over the Welland crossing it still faces mighty Rockingham Castle. Look for cottage datestones and visit St John's Church, once the site of a Roman Temple. Can you find any of the red Roman tiles in the north face of the building? Part of the spire was shattered by lightning in 1797 and was replaced. The famous bells were cast by the Norris family of Stamford in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. **Retrace your route back through the village and take the first right onto the B672.**

**Take a left to Lyddington,** with one of England's finest rural streets studded with stone cottages of various ages. Visit the *Bede House*, once the Palace of the Bishop of Lincoln. It has an exquisite ceiling of panelled oak with rich carving, there is fine heraldic glass, remarkable fireplaces and heavily moulded doorways. What do you think the long hooked pole is for under the eaves outside?

Next door is St Andrew's church and the two buildings must comprise one of the most attractive groupings in the region. Inside there are numerous interesting features including paintings from 1420 AD. On foot, follow the lane alongside the precinct wall to go through the Bishop's Eye, the small turret at the corner. Can you see the date on the Priest's House opposite?

In the main street, the *Marquess of Exeter* is a reminder of the influence of the Cecils of Burghley House, Stamford. The sign once showed the famous Marquess of Exeter as an Olympic hurdler and Gold Medallist. Both village pubs, the other being The Old White Hart, offer excellent quality food.



**Continue north out of the village and take a right on a sharp bend towards *Bisbrooke***, look for the disused railway line in the little valley just before you reach the village. The railway came late in 1894 and went early in 1964. It had a short life but in its time conveyed many boys to and from Uppingham School. It was a problem to build having a gradient on 1 in 60 in some parts. **Then head left to return to Uppingham and so concluding your Bishop's Eye Trail**

#### **Useful Information:**

**Lyddington Bede House:** 01572 822438

Owned by English Heritage. [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

Open 1st April - 31st October, 10am - 5pm.

Closed Tuesdays & Wednesdays.

**Marquess of Exeter:** 01572 822477

Serving excellent quality, traditional English breakfast, lunch and dinner (closed Monday lunch & dinner).

4\* accommodation available. [www.marquessexeter.co.uk](http://www.marquessexeter.co.uk)

**The Old White Hart:** 01572 821703

Providing home-made British food, using lots of local produce. Open for lunch and dinner every day.

4\* accommodation available. [www.oldwhitehart.co.uk](http://www.oldwhitehart.co.uk)

