

# SHAKESPEARE COUNTRY LEISURE DRIVES



## EDGEHILL TOUR

(Driving directions are shown in red)

### Tour details

Approximately 53 miles

Starting in Warwick, this tour crosses the Fosse Way - built by the Romans from Exeter to Lincoln - and takes you out to Edgehill - with some of the finest views over South Warwickshire.

*Leaving St. Nicholas' car park in Warwick, turn left onto the A425 towards Banbury and go straight over at the mini roundabout (second exit). After approximately one mile turn right, signed Barford. Travel over the M40 and into the village of Barford.*

In Barford look out for the tiny mustard yellow cottage on the right - home of Joseph Arch who began the first union of farm workers in the 19th century. His grave can also be seen in the churchyard close by.

*At the mini roundabout turn left onto the A429 signed Stow (Wellesbourne). After just over a mile turn right and follow the signs to Charlecote. Once in the village of Charlecote, turn right signed Hampton Lucy, and go over two little bridges, followed by two larger bridges. Turn left into Hampton Lucy. Park by the church or the Boars Head Pub if you would like to explore the village.*

The village of Hampton Lucy has an impressive Victorian church, one of England's oldest iron bridges (built 1776) and an 18th century watermill.

*On leaving the church retrace the route to Charlecote, following the signs back over the bridges (give way to oncoming vehicles). At the T-junction turn right signed Wellesbourne/Stratford. (Ignore signs saying Leisure Drive – this is not the same drive!). The car park for Charlecote Park is on the left after the Charlecote Pheasant Hotel and turning for Wellesbourne.*

The mellow brickwork and great chimneys of **Charlecote Park (I)** seem to sum up the essence of Tudor England. Charlecote Park has been the home of the Lucy family since 1247 although the present house was built in the 1550s with gardens landscaped by 'Capability' Brown. There are strong associations with Elizabeth I and Shakespeare. A herd of deer grazes in the park.

*To continue the tour, turn down by the Charlecote Pheasant Hotel, signed Wellesbourne. At the roundabout take the second exit onto the B4086 to Wellesbourne. In Wellesbourne, stay in the left-hand lane (the B4086) through the village, towards Kineton.*

In the heart of Wellesbourne village, a plaque on a chestnut tree in Chestnut Square describes how Joseph Arch held the inaugural meeting of the Agricultural Labourers Trade Union here in 1872.

*As you leave the village turn right to visit Wellesbourne Watermill.*

The award-winning **Wellesbourne Watermill (2)** is driven by one of the country's largest wooden waterwheels. See coracles on the millpond, experience how stone ground flour is milled, and haul a sack of flour to the top of the mill before stopping off in the tea rooms for some home made scones and cakes.

*From the Watermill continue on the B4086. At the roundabout take the second exit signed Kineton, Banbury and Compton Verney.*

The art museum at **Compton Verney (3)** is an 18th century mansion house, set in 'Capability' Brown parkland, and is a perfect setting for historic art and exhibitions.

*On leaving Compton Verney, turn left back onto the B4086. At the T-junction in Kineton, turn right onto the B4086 signed Banbury. Pass the war memorial on your right and the old village water pump.*

Kineton's market square is a reminder of days when it had its own regular cattle market. The village gained notoriety when the first battle of the English Civil War took place at nearby Edgehill.

*Take care over the railway crossing. Further along the road on the right, notice the small war memorial commemorating the Battle of Edgehill. Between here and the village of Radway the Battle of Edgehill was fought on Sunday 23 October 1642. Many of those who lost their lives in the battle are buried ¾ mile to the south of this stone. Take care going over the second railway line being aware of the automatic signal control. Ignore the first turning to Radway. At the bottom of the hill turn right, following the signs into the village of Radway.*

Pass the thatched cottages and Radway Church – the lychgate at the church was erected in remembrance of villagers who died in the Great War of 1914 – 1918.

*After the church, follow the road round to the right, then left. Look up to the left and you will see the tower of Edgehill. At the T-junction with the A422 turn left signed Banbury. However, if you wish to visit Redwings Horse Sanctuary turn right at the T-junction and drive for just over a mile where you will see the entrance on the left before the turning for Oxhill.*

**Redwings Horse Sanctuary (4)** provides a caring home for horses, ponies and donkeys on a beautiful 65 acre farm. The centre offers paddock walks, display and activities, shop and café as well as the chance to learn about the charity's work. To return to the tour turn right out of Redwings.

*Go up the hill (sharp bends and steep) and at the top of the hill follow the road round to the left staying on the A422.*

*Turn left signed Edgehill and Ratley. However, if you wish to visit Upton House, stay on the A422 for a few minutes and follow the signs.*

**Upton House (5)** is a late 17th century house, with magnificent art and porcelain collections. It was given to the National Trust by Walter Samuel, son of the founder of Shell, in 1927. The garden is spectacular in all seasons with wide lawns and colourful herbaceous terraces. The National Collection of Asters (Michaelmas daisies) gives stunning colour in late summer.

*Back on the tour, drive into Edgehill and past the Castle Inn.*

The Battle of Edgehill in 1642 marked the start of the English Civil War. It was here that Charles I fought the Parliamentarians in an inconclusive battle. The Castle Inn at Edgehill still has a collection of weapons dug up on the nearby battlefield. The Inn is also a good point to stop off for refreshments and the garden has fine views over the battlefield.

*Continue out of Edgehill and turn right onto the B4086, signed Banbury and continue on this road for approximately 2 miles. At the T-junction turn left onto the B4100, signed Gaydon. However, if you wish to visit The National Herb Centre turn right at the T-junction and then left, following the signs.*

In addition to its plant centre with over 500 varieties of herb, **The National Herb Centre (6)** also boasts display gardens, a nature trail, a Bistro and Deli, and a gift shop stocking a variety of herb-related products.

*After approximately 1 mile turn right at the crossroads signed Avon Dassett and Farnborough. Go over the M40 and enter Avon Dassett. Take the right turn towards Farnborough. Drive on for two miles passing the entrance to the National Trust property of Farnborough Hall on the right. Enter the village of Farnborough and follow the road round to the right. Turn left signed Farnborough. Give way and bear left.*

You will pass the Inn at Farnborough, which offers good food, fine wines and real ales – an excellent choice for a lunchtime break.

*Continue through Farnborough and at the T-junction turn left onto the A423 signed Southam – this is another fast road. Go over the canal. Turn left, just past the Wharf Inn, into Wharf Road, signed Fenny Compton and Avon Dassett. Go under the bridge and into Fenny Compton. At the T-junction at the war memorial turn right - signed Burton Dassett Country Park. At the next T-junction turn left signed Burton Dassett Country Park. Continue along the road uphill and then turn right signed Burton Dassett Country Park. Go over the cattle grid further along this road and into the park.*

**Burton Dassett Hills Country Park (7)**, a 100 acre park on a spur of rugged hills, offers stunning views in every direction. The Beacon Tower is an ancient monument and focal point.

*Continue through the park towards Warwick. Go over the M40. At the T-junction turn right onto the B4100 signed Gaydon.*

The Malt Shovel Inn at Gaydon offers a wide range of delicious home-cooked meals and lunchtime snacks.

*After you pass through Gaydon go straight on at the roundabout, following signs for the B4100. The Heritage Motor Centre is on your left as you travel along the B4100.*

The **Heritage Motor Centre (8)** is home to the largest collection of historic British cars in the world, all under one roof. There is also a café and gift shop.

*Go straight over the next two roundabouts staying on the B4100 and passing Lighthorne Heath. After approximately 2 miles you come to another roundabout. Take the fourth exit onto the B4455 signed Leicester (Chesterton). Go over the M40 and turn right, signed Chesterton into Windmill Hill Lane.*

Chesterton Windmill was built in 1634 and designed by Inigo Jones, a British architect and designer, who was also responsible for designing and building the Queen's House in London, which has become the National Maritime Museum.

