



### St Morrell's Round (from Hallaton Museum)

- Start point: The Tin Tab, Churchgate, Hallaton, Market Harborough LE16 8TY
- Distance: about 28km with 500m of ascent.
- Route: Circular

*Always follow current UK government guidelines for COVID-19 ([www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)) when enjoying these walks and check the most up to date advice before setting off. Please plan ahead as sites, public transport links and facilities (public houses, car parks, ect.) may be closed or have restrictions.*

St Morrell's Round begins in Hallaton at the Museum on Churchgate. As the walk is circular it is also possible to start in any of the villages on the Round. The walk is achievable in one day or it can be split into two days with accommodation being available around the route. There are bus stops for the 747 route from Leicester in Tugby and Belton in Rutland (just across the A47 from Allextion) for walkers preferring public transport.

The St Morrell's Round has been created as way of sharing the beautiful countryside of high Leicestershire and was inspired by the rediscovery of the Chapel of St Morrel near Hallaton in 2014 and the revival of the British tradition of Pilgrimage. The route passes through points of historic significance to the period of the original pilgrimages to Hallaton (~AD.1250 to ~AD.1550) where walkers can see things that the original pilgrims could have seen. The circular walk can be walked in one (long) day or in sections and can be started in any of the settlements along the route. There are bus stops for the 747 route from Leicester in Tugby and Belton in Rutland for walkers preferring public transport.

Information regarding St Morrell, his Pilgrimage and all the sites on the round is available in the museum and on [www.stmorrellsround.com](http://www.stmorrellsround.com).

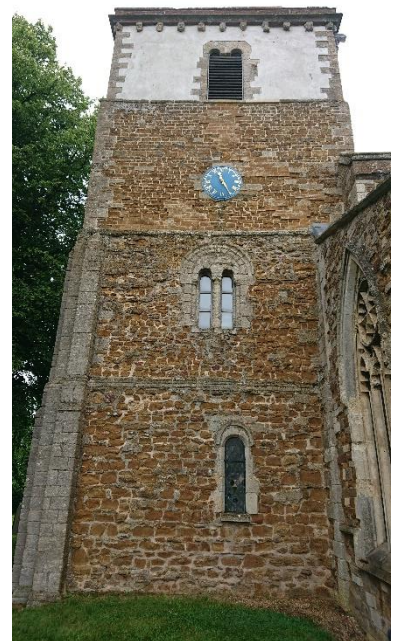


St Morrell's Round begins in Hallaton which retains much of its medieval layout and buildings. The whole village was shaped by the long period of pilgrimage. There are fishponds beside the Hallaton brook and St Michael's Church has a staircase leading to an external pulpit for addressing the overflow congregation as well as seats for eight priests.

1. You can check in to start your pilgrimage at the museum. From the museum go back along Churchgate to the front of St Michaels and All Angels church where you will find a St Morrell marker in the porch. This church has an absolute wealth of Norman features including the carving of St Michael in the porch, internal arches supporting the north side of the aisle, and the font with four carved heads, two human and two demons. The church is normally open and there are tour guides available in the church. There is also free Gigaclear WiFi available in both the church and museum.



2. Turn up Hunts Lane and left again at the top on to Goadby Road and after ~700m as you begin to descend you can see the motte and bailey earthworks of Hallaton's Norman castle. You are now on the old medieval road to Leicester Drop down to the ford and then begin the ascent when the slope levels out continue to ~3km and turn right on to the Midshires way. The next kilometre can be muddy in winter but continue to re-join the roadway. The road continues to climb and just before the summit you will pass Keythorpe Trig Point concealed in the hedge to your left.



3. Follow the road down and then back up to Tugby ~6.5km. Pass the Fox and Hounds pub on your right to arrive at St Thomas à Beckett Church where you can see a Norman window in the tower. There is a "Pilgrim's Station" in the church. After the church cross the A47. There is a bus stop where you could catch the bus back to Belton/Allextion. As you leave Tugby the Café Ventoux which is popular with cyclists is on your right.



4. Follow the aptly named Wood Road which leads toward Tugby Wood and Loddington Reddish which are remnants of the Leighfield hunting forest. About 400m after the café turn right on to a well-maintained farm track. Continue past the farm and just as you enter a small wood called Hardy's Gungel fork left and descend across a field to cross the Eye Brook before going into another wood and then crossing open fields to a big green gate. Continue into the next wood find a footpath on your left just after the abandoned railway embankment at ~9.7km. Cross the field to St Michaels and All Angels Church where there is a St Morrell marker in the porch. The Church is outside the settlement and has no electricity so all lighting is by candle and the organ must be hand pumped during hymns. The church is often closed but can be visited by arrangement with the Church Warden



5. Find a footpath behind the Church, "The Avenue" and follow it to the edge of the wood and then take the footpath to join a small road just outside Loddington Village. Turn left along the road, then left at the T-junction and continue along a quiet lane until you reach a footpath on your right ~11.5km. go into the field and follow the path around the edge to climb to Launde Big Wood. This is an accessible remnant of the ancient Leighfield Forest. You have the option to detour through the wood and see the landscape experienced by Pilgrims.



6. After the wood, descend then climb to reach a road at where you turn left to descent steeply across parkland to Launde Abbey ~13.5km where there is a very welcome café at Launde Abbey. On arrival and as you reach the halfway before your lunch, you may choose to reflect on your pilgrimage and the Norman history of this area from the time when pilgrims travelled to the



Chapel of St Morrell in Hallaton. Launde Augustine Priory was seized from the Church as a personal possession by Thomas Cromwell in 1540. Cromwell worked for King Henry VIII and together they outlawed pilgrimage in Britain, bringing to an abrupt end 300 years of travel to Hallaton. Thus, Launde Abbey represents not only the turning point of your personal journey today but also the end of all medieval pilgrimages to Hallaton.

7. As you leave the Abbey return to the road and continue across a cattle grid, following the road to a finger post sign on the right, where you join the Leicester Round. Follow the well-marked route for 2km along the Charter Valley. This stretch can be muddy because it is often used by horses from the nearby racing stables. The Leicester round turns right at a junction with a waymarker pole and badges~15.5km, but you should continue straight on, more-or-less horizontally following the river, initially on a path and then a roadway to Leigh Lodge at ~17.3km.



8. This house was previously called Leighfield Lodge and was a hunting lodge in the Leighfield Forest that covered High Leicestershire, through which pilgrims would have travelled. Here you join the Rutland Round and the MacMillan Way and follow the road right round the Lodge to begin the ascent of an impressive driveway where looking back you can gain glimpses of the house with Prior's Copse, a remnant of the ancient forest, behind it. As you achieve the ridge ~19km dogleg left and right to drop down a footpath and then road towards Belton.



9. Climb steeply on tired legs to St Peters church at ~20.5km where there is a St Morrel marker in the porch. The name Belton, may mean "settlement in a clearing" and there was a Norman church here in a clearing in the Leighfield Forest which pilgrims may have passed, but the current church is largely a Victorian restoration following a fire.





10. . Continue past the church and down to a tee junction where you turn left to find the Sun Inn. There is also a bus stop in Belton. Here you leave the Rutland Round and re-join the Leicester round to drop down to the A47. There is a café called Hungry Hogs a short distance up the A47 from the crossing point. Otherwise cross the main road and continue to St Peters in Allestree ~22km. where you will find a St Morrell marker outside the church. St Peters church Allestree is maintained by the Churches Conservation Trust. It is usually unlocked and well worth going inside to view its exquisitely detailed Norman arches.



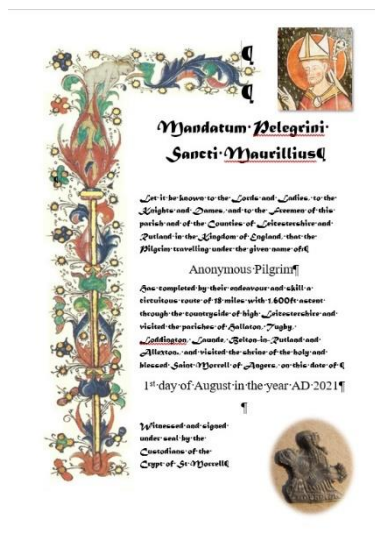
11. After leaving St Peters turn left and follow the road up the hill. After ~0.4km take a footpath to join the well-marked Leicester Round. Turn right into a field, then at a pole with a McMillan Way marker climb diagonally to a gap in the hedge. Cross two open fields diagonally, before following the footpath round the edges of the field and below a wood. Climb steeply to the ridge and then continue to ~24.3km before passing the White Farm, turn left and then right, beginning a long straight gentle descent towards Hallaton crossing open fields, a stream on a recently repaired bridge and the railway embankment.
12. Enter Hallaton on the road passing Hacluit's Pond. 50m after passing (or stopping in) the Fox Inn ~27km, turn right onto High Street and carry on down to the Butter Cross where dairy products were traded in the Middle Ages. The Bewicke Arms is on your left.



13. To visit the site of St Morrell's Chapel (1km round trip), find a small narrow alleyway between houses on the far corner of the green – Chapel Way – and descend to the brook before climbing Hare Pie bank to reach a stand of three Chestnut trees on the left of the path at the top of the ridge. Here you can make out the rectangular base of the chapel built ~AD.1250, destination of Pilgrims throughout the Middle Ages, and rediscovered in 2014. Re-trace your steps back to the village green and turn left to return to the Museum.



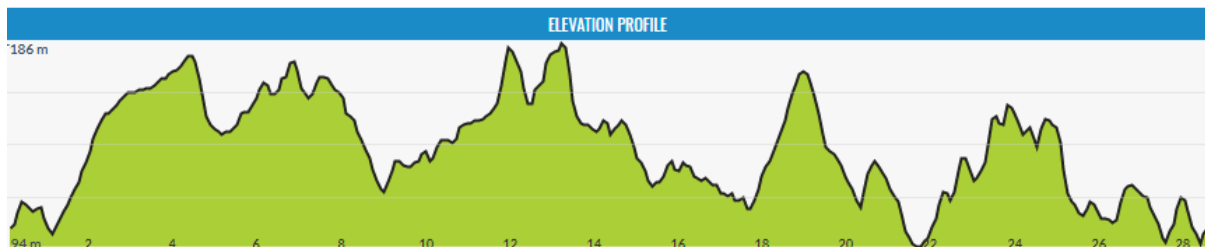
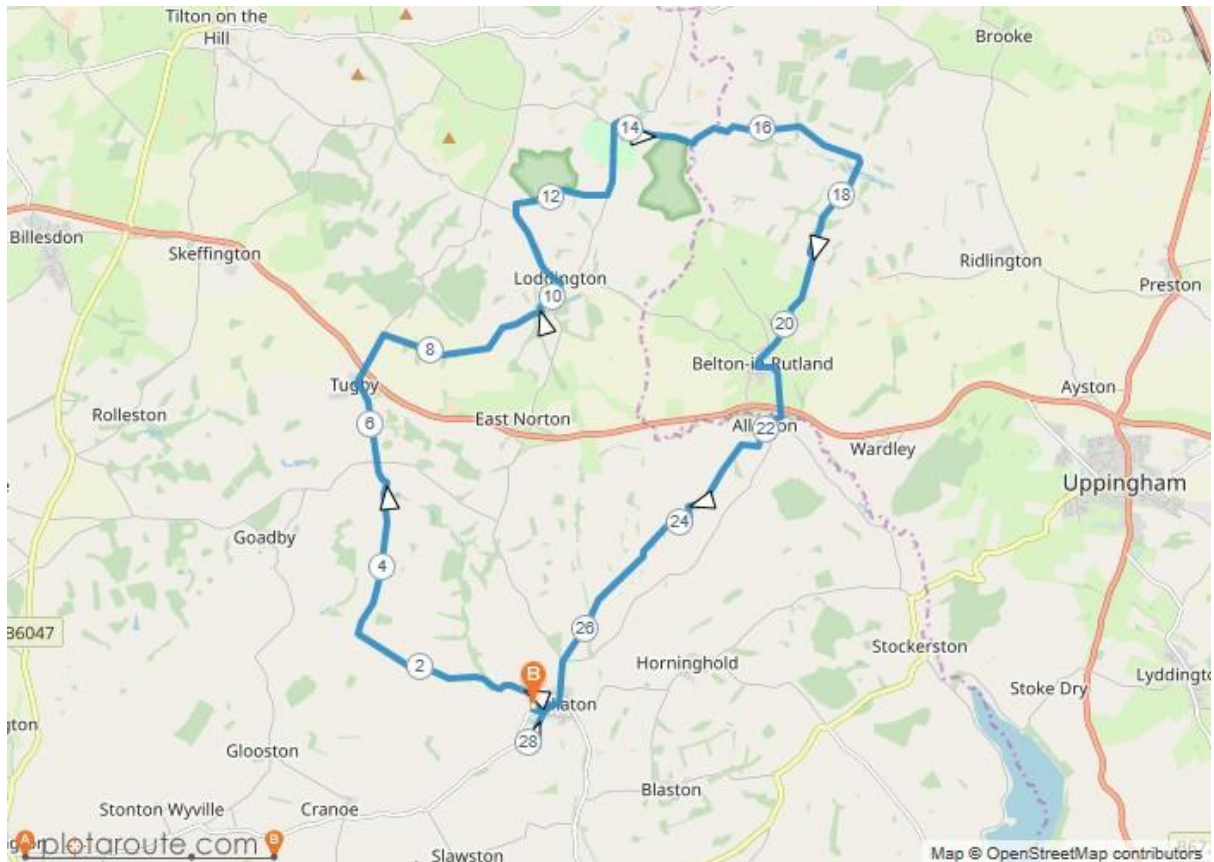
14. As you walked up Hare Pie bank you may have noticed the wooden box tree guards. They are protecting the “Hallaton Sentinels”; one hundred oak trees planted in Hallaton parish. Each oak tree is dedicated to a named soldier from Hallaton who died in the two great wars.
15. If you want a certificate of completion of your walk “Mandatum Pelegrini” you can request one from the pilgrimage website <http://www.stmorrellsround.com> or by email from [museumhallaton@gmail.com](mailto:museumhallaton@gmail.com).



## Route Map:

If you prefer OS maps the walk is mainly on OS Explorer 233 with a small part from Leigh Lodge to Belton on 244.

For a detailed route map, go to: <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/1574751>



If you are more technically minded you can use the pilgrimage gpx file in an app on your phone.

You can download this along with instructions on how to use it from the pilgrimage website [www.stmorrellsround.com](http://www.stmorrellsround.com) and as we are on the British Pilgrimage Trust website [www.britishpilgrimage.org/portfolio/st-morrells-round/](http://www.britishpilgrimage.org/portfolio/st-morrells-round/)

The photo to the right shows the round loaded into the “Guru Maps” app. Once you have installed the software and loaded the map, the app continues to work and show you where to go without the need for WiFi or any mobile phone signal.

