

## **The Lincolnshire Countryside**

Lincolnshire is well known for its flatness and incredible agriculture. Yes, as England's fourth-largest county, there's plenty of space and not too many people, but there is much more to the incredible countryside of Lincolnshire than mere stereotyping.

The county's landscapes offer great contrast, as can be seen by the divide used by the county's tourism authorities – the county has been divided into 6 defining 'character' areas – Lincoln City, the Fens, the Vales, the Wolds, the Coast .....and the Countryside.

The Lincolnshire Countryside (subdivided into North and South Countryside, with the City of Lincoln as the dividing line) is bounded by Gainsborough to the North West, Sleaford to the South and Woodhall Spa to the East, with the Lincolnshire Wolds and Fens delimiting the eastern boundary and Nottinghamshire the western.

Surprisingly, in this modern age of east transport and access, the Lincolnshire countryside still remains relatively undiscovered. There is the opportunity for wanting a break from the everyday hustle and bustle to find relaxation and seclusion in a rural hideaway.

There are country walks a plenty, horse riding, cycling and quaint villages with welcoming local pubs where friendly and hospitable local Lincolnshire residents are always ready to greet you with a smile. One of the most famous ways, the Viking Way, cuts its path for 147 miles (north to south) through the magnificent countryside.

The Lincolnshire Countryside is an area frequented by kings and poets. It's an area full of ancient and beautiful churches, fine country houses, and possibly the best farmlands in England. There are small, infrequently visited hamlets waiting for you to visit, unexplored woodlands to explore and paths to either walk or cycle.

The Lincolnshire Countryside also boasts a fine heritage and plenty of tradition. People from all over the world come to learn more about the county's aviation heritage, and you'll never be far from either a world-renowned RAF base or site of historical aviation history. The sight of some of the fabulous aircraft from the past and present are never far away - from Spitfires and Lancasters to the magnificent Red Arrows.

## Famous people of Lincolnshire

There is an exceptionally long and impressive list of well-known people from all walks of life - historical, literature, science, entertainment, journalism and sport - who were born, or resided in Lincolnshire. The following list is by no means exhaustive.

**Alfred Lord Tennyson**, the Poet Laureate after William Wordsworth, was born 6 miles from Horncastle in the Wolds village of Somersby. According to local legend, Tennyson seemed to have quite a dislike for the town, and he said: "Of all horrors, a little country town seems to me to be the greatest." **James Fenton**, poet, journalist and literary critic, was born in Lincoln.

Grantham, was the birthplace of celebrities as diverse as scientist and discoverer, **Sir Isaac Newton**, former Prime Minister **Margaret Thatcher** and radio and television star **Nicholas Parsons**.

**George Boole** who was the pioneer of the eponymous Boolean algebra and binary notation was born in Lincoln in 1815. It was his discovery that would, many decades after his death, make the modern-day computers possible.

The actor **Eric Thompson**, who was perhaps best known for being narrator of the childrens' 1960s TV series "The Magic Roundabout", was born in Sleaford in 1929. He was the father of award-winning actress Emma Thompson. **Jennifer Saunders**, the actress, comedienne and writer (French and Saunders, Absolutely Fabulous) was also born in Sleaford while **Jim Broadbent**, the Oscar-winning actor was born in Wickenby in 1949. **Bernie Taupin**, Elton John's songwriter, was born at Anwick on the road to Horncastle. One of the UK's finest actors, **John Hurt**, went to Lincoln School. **Jonathan Kerrigan**, of ITV drama, Heartbeat fame, is from Lincoln, as is **Jason Bradbury**, stand-up comic and TV presenter.

Some well-known people who attended Lincoln School include, **Mark Byford**, a BBC Deputy Director-General, **Peter Day**, BBC broadcaster, **Steve Race**, radio broadcaster and host of the Radio 4 programme My Music, **Alex Henshaw**, Spitfire chief test pilot and **Sir Neville Marriner**, the conductor who arranged and conducted the music for the film Amadeus.

**Sir John Franklin**, the sea captain, explorer and later, governor of Tasmania, was born in Spilsby, while **George Bass** who helped to map the coast of Australia in 1797, was born at Aswarby. **Cecil Rhodes**, the famous explorer and entrepreneur spent part of his boyhood in The Manor House, in Sleaford.

Sportsmen and women from Lincolnshire include footballers **Joe Baker**, **Lee Chapman** (Lincoln), **Gary Crosby** and **Mark Wallington** (Sleaford). Tennis star **Daniel Cox**, international cricket umpire **Darrell Hair**, equestrian and writer **Marion Rose Halpenny** and Olympic Swimming Medalist **Paul Palmer** all hail from Lincoln.

Some other notable Horncastle residents include **Peter "Biff" Byford**, lead singer of heavy rock band Saxon, **Henry Simpson Lunn**, religious leader and founder of one-half of the Lunn Poly chain of travel agents and **William Marwood**, public hangman.

## **The Lincolnshire Show**

The annual Lincolnshire Show, usually held in June at the Lincolnshire Showground just north of Lincoln, continues to attract over 600 businesses and organizations, and tens of thousands of visitors each year. 2009 marks the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this iconic Lincolnshire event.

It's very much a "something for everyone" show, featuring exhilarating attractions and entertainment, traditional livestock classes and events and trade stands, complemented by wonderful Main Ring events. This annual agricultural event continues to bring together some of the finest examples of rare breed animals, rural crafts and finest Lincolnshire farming and food.

The Lincolnshire Show is perhaps most famous for the Grand Parade of prize winning livestock, one of the best such displays in the country. The Parade takes place in the main ring and demonstrates the exceptionally high standard of animals reared and the hard work and dedication put in all year round by the stock attendants. It is often followed by an unusual specialist display team or exhibition from, for example, an Army motorcycle display team, or specialist group of horse riders.

The keen gardener will be right at home in the Lincolnshire Horticultural Zone. There are dazzling displays of plants and flowers and usually a colourful Floral Decoration Competition. There is everything to do with gardening for the enthusiast – advice, techniques, equipment, plants and flowers - in the Horticultural Zone.

The Food Court has become a buzz of activity over the years with visitors treated to a multitude of culinary delights. The demonstrations of fine local recipes, sometimes by celebrity chefs, always prove extremely popular, generating great interest from a very appreciative crowd of visitors.

And there's always guaranteed to be some very unusual and highly entertaining events being held in the popular Countryside Area, which has seen birds of prey and sheep racing, to name but two of the extraordinary events held there.

## **Family Holidays in Lincolnshire**

Lincolnshire may be thought of as rural and remote, yet you'll find everything you need there for a great family holiday. Sand, sea and 100% enjoyment for all the family. the "Fun Coast", as it is called, is home to some of the finest seaside resorts in the UK, and stretches from Skegness in the south, one of the UK's top and most famous seaside destinations, through Chapel St. Leonards, to Mablethorpe and on to Cleethorpes in the north.

The coast is a complete mixture of the traditional and the modern, offering something for everyone, with plenty of guaranteed fun for all the family. There are some of the finest, award-winning beaches in the entire country, with seaside amusements galore, from traditional bucket and spade castle-building to adrenalin-filled roller-coaster rides and water sport activities. All these resorts have something for everyone - fun, sun, sea, sand, excitement and laughs, as well as tranquility, calm, peace and fabulous fresh air.

All of these family resorts are famous for their welcome, outstanding value, friendly service and excellent choice of accommodation, whether you are looking for a serviced break or the complete independence afforded by self-catering. There really is an incredible variety of accommodation options open to the family visiting Lincolnshire - lively coastal holiday parks, formal hotels, working farms, self-contained cottages, family-orientated guesthouses - the list is endless, and the accommodation all of the highest quality and standard.

But it's not just about popular beach resorts for a family holiday to remember. The tranquil "Rural Coast" of Saltfleetby, Gibraltar Point, Moggs Eye and Crook Bank are some of Lincolnshire's greatest natural assets, and offer a wild and natural coastline, a haven for the conservationists, nature lovers and birdwatchers of the older family. The Wolds - one of England's 37 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - is unspoilt and may be even termed by some as 'old-fashioned' - but this just adds to the incredible charm and beauty. How nice it is to accompany your family to somewhere as yet untouched by huge conglomerate tourist operations with their credit card mentality. Our survival in conflicts past owes so much to the many RAF stations in the area, most of which are open to the public and well worth a visit.

There are ample opportunities throughout the county for walking, cycling, boat trips and fishing.

You can discover Lincolnshire's beautiful and unspoilt villages and towns, visiting local markets, farmers' markets and more. And with Lincolnshire producing a fifth of all Britain's food, much of that served in hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, cafés, pubs, shops, and more is from fresh, locally-sourced ingredients. There is also an abundance of farm shops across the county selling fresh produce, from humble roadside vendors to the most superior of delicatessens.

## **Antiques in Lincolnshire**

Lincolnshire has established itself over the past couple of decades as the centre for antiques in the UK. Whether you're a professional dealer, antique hunter, collector or just simply someone who likes having a rummage around for something old and different, then this county is for you!

The interest in antiques has boomed over the past 30 years with the growth of popular television programmes devoted to the subject. People are no longer clearing their attics of 'old stuff', but checking rather more carefully to see if there's an heirloom or two hiding away under the dustsheets. In fact the extremely popular BBC "Antiques Roadshow" valuation programme has visited Lincolnshire several times, the most recent being a return visit to Lincoln in 2009.

Regardless of whether you are looking for something Victorian, Art Deco, Edwardian or Victorian, or perhaps an antique clock or some fine antique jewellery, or maybe even a specific collectors piece made by Spode, Belleek, Clarice Cliffe, a Goss Cottage, or even Fabergé, there's the distinct chance you may find exactly what you are looking for in one of the myriad of antique establishments dotted around Lincolnshire. But be warned, there's so much to choose from.

By far the most exciting venue, and currently the largest antiques centre in Europe, the old airfield at Hemswell, is home to over 300 dealers displaying thousands of items. Here, you can spend hours and hours exploring the three buildings on site housing three hundred display areas packed with everything and anything old you could possibly think of - antiques, collectables, furniture, curios. Enjoy hours of browsing through treasures from a bygone age, all in one convenient location.

Both Horncastle - once dubbed the 'Best Town for Antiques' - and Stamford, also renowned for its antique establishments, have some interesting places to visit. There are also other Lincolnshire towns that have also become popular over the years for antique shopping, and they include Boston, Market Rasen, Sutton Bridge and Louth - you'll have no difficulty in finding some fascinating showrooms displaying some fine pieces from every era.

There are also regular auctions held throughout the county - and of course some fantastic antique fairs. There is an ongoing programme in the county during the summer - Swinderby, Lincoln Showground, Stamford, Grimsthorpe and more - there's bound to be one near where you are staying, so for the best information and advice, check locally when you arrive.

Who knows, you may just grab the unusual bargain of the century that will have you running to the Antiques Roadshow with your find?

## **Weekend breaks in Lincolnshire**

If you fancy taking a weekend break away from it all, yet not too far from home, Lincolnshire is the perfect destination. A mere few hours from most parts of the country, and you'll be in the county offering spectacular countryside, traditional seaside towns, incredible history and heritage and fabulous leisure activities.

Lincolnshire remains one of the most unspoilt parts of rural England, with its open rolling hills and deep-sided valleys. The east coast and its coastal plain offers marshland and miles of sandy beaches, while the south of the county sees the Fens with wide open countryside and magnificent churches. The county is immersed in history from the medieval city of Lincoln and the port of Boston to the traditional seaside resorts of Cleethorpes and Skegness.

There is a vast choice of weekend break accommodation, from serviced four-star hotels and luxurious rooms in listed buildings, to bed and breakfasts and guesthouses. Or, if you prefer to maintain a more independent, there's an unparalleled range of self-catering, caravan parks, or for the more hardy outdoor life fanciers, campsites. And as a county with agriculture at the forefront of its commercial life and heritage, you might even prefer to opt for a traditional farmhouse break, where the welcome, accommodation and food leaves nothing to be desired.

On a weekend break and looking for somewhere to eat? Renowned for its locally produced food, Lincolnshire offers a culinary delight to even the most selective of palates. Whatever your preferences, the country offers excellent cuisine. There are excellent restaurants, cafés and coffee shops offering everything from a splendid four-course gastronomic delight to fast-food for those in a hurry. And all prepared from fresh, locally-produced ingredients.

You can also avail of specially-themed weekends available throughout the year. Whether it's relaxation, romanticism or adventure you are after, Lincolnshire can provide the lot! There are adventure weekends (how about driving a tank, bulldozer or rally car?), golf breaks at one of the many golf hotels, specialist heritage weekends taking in the culture and history of the county, or even culture weekends offering the best in Shakespeare or modern theatre.

Whatever your interests are and however active or relaxed you want your weekend stay to be Lincolnshire will have it for you.