

THE ROUTE OF AINSTY BOUNDS

44 miles

Warning: As this walk is largely riverbank do not attempt it at times of flood as much of it will be impassable.

The walk has traditionally started at the Wharfe Bridge in Tadcaster, but as the walk is circular, Wetherby and York are also ideal starting places with more accommodation options than Tadcaster. The hotel at Wetherby motorway service station is particularly close to the route.

Ainsty was a wapentake: a Viking governmental region of 100 farmsteads (similar to a Saxon Hundred.) This walk follows, as near as is possible, the boundaries of this ancient region.

The walk was developed as a series of linear walks by local ramblers, and compiled into a circular route by Simon Townson, long time keeper of this walk, so I put on record thanks to him.

TADCASTER TO WETHERBY

Take the footpath, Signposted "Wetherby, Ebor Way", at the Leeds (= west) end of the Wharfe bridge, by the side of the river, upstream past the churchyard and weir. Keep along the riverside until you get fairly close to Newton Kyme church, where you leave the river and pass the entrance to the churchyard. The path to the road goes in front of the garden to Newton Kyme Hall, associated with the Fairfax family from the seventeenth century.

Keep forward along the minor road, ignoring side turnings, to the A659 Otley-Tadcaster road where you turn right for 200m to reach the Rudgate crossing. Turn right (signed Ebor Way) onto Rudgate (Roman Road) which takes you to the riverside and site of the Roman St Helen's ford and fort. Turn left upstream

Along the riverside take care using the path beyond the old railway bridge which is narrow with drops to the river through a very attractive wooded section before returning to the flood plain continuing to Boston Spa.

Boston Spa

After going along the riverside path to look at the weir, return and cross over the narrow Thorp Arch bridge, and keep straight ahead passing the Pax Inn and village school and after half-a-mile turn left along a green track. This soon turns right and winds along to Flint Mill Grange

Past the Grange the tarmac-ed farm track turns right, but the path continues straight forward along the end of woodland towards Wetherby. If you do not wish to go into Wetherby itself, leave the Ebor Way here by taking the farm track to the road, turn left for 50m then turn right to Wetherby Racecourse.

WETHERBY TO MOOR MONKTON

Pass the turnstiles to the Racecourse and continue north. *(The original route was prepared before the building of the Racecourse-A1 access road, and then took you on farm tracks south of Ingmanthorpe Hall. These are now gated, and signed as no right of way)* Before exiting the racecourse to the B1224 veer right to a footpath gate in the hedge about 80m right of the main gate. Turn right down the B1224 for 100m, and where the wood on your left ends cross and turn left along a track. Where the track bends right, fork off left and follow the field edge (wood to your right) to meet the access road to Ingmanthorpe Hall. Turn left, and, where the access road veers left continue straight on along a field track (Sandbeck lane). Follow this track around field edges past Wetherby Motorway Service area to meet a metalled road near a man-made lake and bird sanctuary. Turn right and follow the road, soon bearing right into Ingmanthorpe House Farm. Follow the bridleways snaking around field edges, past Lincroft and Moor Side to the road between Cowthorpe and Tockwith. Turn right, then left at the crossroads towards Cattal. This is now a continuation of Rudgate

Follow the road to Cattal until you see Cattal Lodge on your right - do not go into Cattal Lodge drive. Continue along the road for a short while until you see a footpath sign pointing sharp right diagonally across a field. Here you will find a stile which goes onto a track; turn left, and continue along this for a short distance until a hard to see path leaves the track on the left and follows the bank of the Nidd. Continue along the river to Skewkirt Hall and New Farm. Take care here- the path is poorly signed and overgrown, and the river embankments have some hidden rabbit burrows. About 1km after New Farm the path leaves the river going right, with a hedge to your left to a red brick house. Follow the driveway to Wilstrop Hall and beyond.

After approaching the A59 road from Wilstrop Hall turn right for a short distance along the main road (Note there is an option to cut the corner here by taking a diagonal footpath across the field a few hundred yards after crossing the railway, but the author has been attacked by an Ostrich in this field!) The footpath leaves the A59 between two buildings. One of these buildings was a drovers' inn. The name Skip Bridge probably derives from Sheep Bridge. Through the farmyard keep forward along the hedge-side track to a gate, where you go through and turn right. Follow the hedge for several fields, passing a barn, until you reach a stile and bridge to the track on the other side. Keep forward parallel to the river which re-appears on your left. The track goes through a succession of gates and becomes a double-hedged lane before reaching a road, where you turn left and then right to the single street of Moor Monkton village.

MOOR MONKTON TO YORK

At the far end, where the road turns right, go through a gate and follow a track to the river. Avoid bearing right, away from the river, but keep forward and through a small gate to the confluence of the Nidd and Ouse. Follow the riverside path (now along the Ouse of course) through to Nether Poppleton, soon passing Red House where there is an old chapel.

Unfortunately the ferry to the riverside path on the opposite bank no longer operates. From the 'Pile of Stones' War memorial on the small green, turn left along the road. (For Upper Poppleton Green, the Maypole and the station, take a sign-posted footpath to the right, just along the road). At a road junction turn left past Manor Farm to the church (note the gallery inside). Turn back a few yards from the churchyard and take a signposted path ('Millfield Lane') through a gate at the bend in the road. Turn left at the end (sign posted 'Parish Church') and walk down the road going under the York Ring Road, and over a level crossing to reach the A59 where you turn left, passing the Ainsty Inn. Continue along the road until you come to traffic lights. Turn left to Clifton over the railway bridge; if you look to the left

you will see the River Ouse in all its glory. Continue onto Water End Bridge, Clifton commencing the walk through the ancient city of York.

YORK TO BISHOPTHORPE

Make your way to the bridge at Water End Clifton. Walk along the River Ouse (left side) for a short way till you reach the railway bridge on your right. You can see the Railway Museum which is worth a visit, but if you don't have the time continue along till you have gone under the bridge. You will see a flight of steps on your left; go up the steps on to the footbridge which goes alongside the railway bridge.

Cross over to the other side and continue along the river to Lendal Bridge - the Museum Gardens are on your left. When you have reached the bridge go under it and go along North Street. (If you don't want to do this, and would prefer to have a look at some gardens, there is a path through them which goes to Ouse Bridge). Turn left onto Ouse Bridge and go over to the other side. You will find some steps leading down to the river at this point; you will go past the King's Arms. (Known as "the pub that floods" This pub dates back to the 15th century. If you get a chance to have a drink take note of the chart on the wall which shows the flooding depths through the last century) Continue along the river and you will pass Cliffords Tower and the Castle Museum. Go up the steps to the next bridge (Skeldergate Bridge -which dates back to 1881). Cross over to the other side of the bridge to go down to the river and follow the road alongside. A little further along you will find the only campsite.

Keep to the riverside, passing the baths and a very pleasant park on your right, until the road turns right away to the right and your path continues along the river bank. For the next two miles there are no problems - a very pleasant riverside walk with a well-defined path and adequate stiles eventually goes under the new bridge serving York by-pass and continues to Bishopthorpe Palace, the home of the Archbishop of York. A lane leads between the crematorium and the Palace grounds. At the end of the lane turn left along the road passing the entrance to the Palace, then turn down the lane to the left to pass the well-preserved remains of the former village church.

BISHOPTHORPE TO TADCASTER

After you have reached the ruins of the former village church, you pass round it to the left, turning right onto the river bank. Follow the path which goes along the riverside. You will see now a splendid view of river boats eventually reaching railway swing bridge. Go under it on the riverside - do not wander off this section of the path as it is private property.

Continue along the river till you reach the track which leads into Acaster Malbis. Once you have reached the village you will note that there is a pub which serves light refreshments and food. Look for the footpath straight on where the road bends right around the pub and take it. Continue along the river bank, noting Naburn Lock which marks the start of the tidal Ouse, and ends the abundance of boats. Where you are adjacent to Acaster Selby village (to your right) you will see a hedge with a stile in it and a small bridge. Cross over both and walk towards the fence; climb over the stile, walk towards the road, turn right and continue along till you come to the main road which goes to Appleton Roebuck. Turn left and continue along this for about 1½ miles. Continue along the road which goes into the village passing the Appleton Roebuck pub.

Continue past the public house on the road which goes to Tadcaster and keep along the road for a short distance until you see a footpath sign. Turn left down the street till you come to Church Lane which is on your right. Follow Church Lane which goes to Bolton Percy, passing over the East Coast mainline. Continue along the lane until you meet a

road. Turn left, then right, and go along the road for a short distance and then turn left to pass the church which is very interesting and worth a look at inside. *(The original route took you south west on a footpath that lead to, and ended at, the site of the long defunct Ulleskelf ferry across the river, adjacent to the York-Leeds line railway bridge. The route then required you to climb two high wooden fences- with barbed wire- to cross under the railway bridge, and then walk a mile along the River Wharfe where there is no Right of Way)*

Retrace your steps to the main road and turn right (to Tadcaster). Follow the road over the railway, passing the entrances to Hornington Manor, and then Hornington Grange on your left. Here the road bends right. In about 100m take the footpath left, which passes Ouston Farm and then to Sewage works, becoming an access road before bending right alongside the A64. At the end of the road turn left, cross the A64, and in a few hundred yards look for a footpath left that leads to Tadcaster Bus Station with the Wharfe Bridge beyond. WELL DONE

Route Sheet:- **Please address all correspondence to:-**
Steph Carter
12 Kings Meadow Grove
Wetherby
West Yorkshire
LS22 7FR

Accommodation:- **York has abundant accommodation. The Hotel at Wetherby Service station is also just off the route**

Maps required **Explorer 289: Leeds, Harrogate, Wetherby and Pontefract**
Explorer 290: York Selby and Tadcaster

SORRY BUT THERE IS NO BADGE OR CERTIFICATE AVAILABLE FOR THIS WALK