



Ted's walk 2

A 4 mile flat field walk west of Thirsk and through Sowerby

Introduction

This is a circular field walk from Thirsk Town Centre, behind racecourse to Thirsk Station and return via Green Lane to Sowerby Village and back to Thirsk. It starts from Marage Long Stay car park, national grid reference 429823 (satnav YO7 1AA).

The distance is 3.7 miles (5.9km). Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 302, Northallerton & Thirsk, covers the walk but a map is included here. The walk grade is Easy – flat with a few kissing gates and no stiles. Allow up to 2 hours from start to finish.

The walk

Leaving the Marage car and coach park, head towards Thirsk Church passing Thirsk 'Past and Present' Board No. 6 about the Moated Site on your right. (A walks leaflet describing all 15 Boards is available at 50p in the Information centre). Go to the 15th Century St. Mary's Church, taking care crossing the busy road, and walk around it clockwise entering Cemetery Road.

The church is opened by volunteers most days from 10am till 4pm and is well worth a visit in its own right. On your left is the attractive Georgian



Thirsk Hall



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Thirsk Hall occupied by our Lord of the Manor, Mr John Bell.

Behind Thirsk racecourse

Walk around the church and along Cemetery Road passing the gates to the Cemetery after an S-bend in the Lane. The lane straightens out for about 150 metres before reaching Newsham Road which you cross going right for 50 metres before turning left onto a farm track.

This track goes behind Thirsk Racecourse for about half a mile before zig-zagging left then right to go in front of a stand of trees. Whilst on the lane you have views of the Hambleton Hills behind you and in the distance the hills of the Yorkshire Dales can be seen on a clear day.

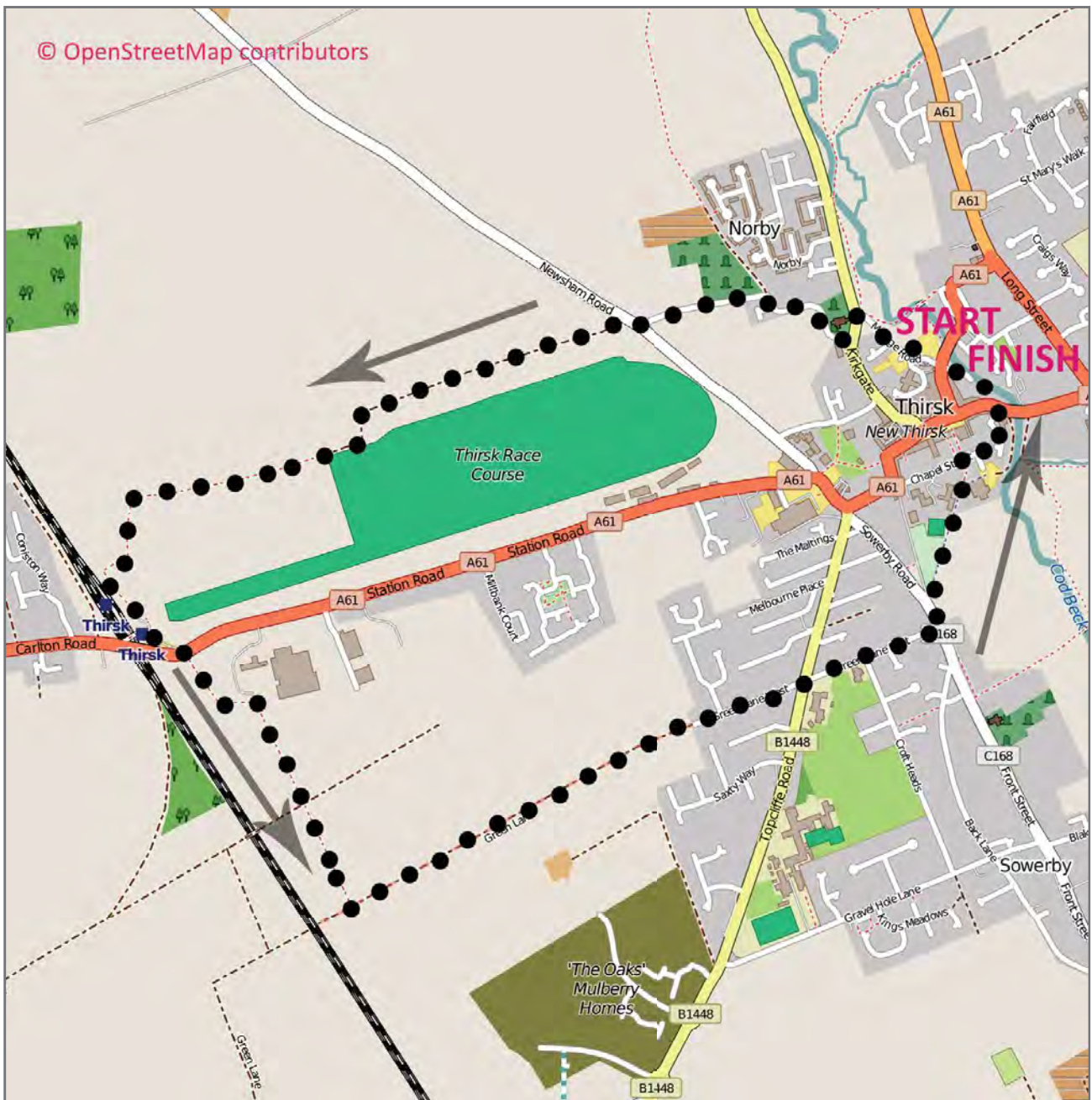
East Coast mainline

After the trees walk straight ahead with a field hedge on your right for about 250 metres and then go

slightly right then quickly left onto a field path now parallel with the East Coast mainline railway for about 100 metres before turning right towards the railway. In the corner turn left into the path through a long narrow copse parallel to the railway station for about 100 metres emerging onto the station car park.

Turn left to the car park entrance and with care cross the very busy A61 Thirsk to Ripon road, to The Old Red House pub (now interesting grey and gold colours!) The pub is good for a refreshment, lunch and/or toilet break and, in good weather, has a pleasant beer garden with picnic tables to the rear where you can hear but not see the frequent passing trains in the adjacent cutting.

Leave the car park at the side of the pub via a metal kissing gate going clockwise round the field edge to another kissing gate diagonally opposite. Follow the field edge up to



and over the old Harrogate to Thirsk railway track, now a farmer's field access (no trespassing). This railway finally closed in the 50's and used to terminate near the centre of Thirsk where the Tesco Supermarket now stands.

Green Lane, Sowerby

Continue along the edge of a further large field to another metal kissing gate turning left into the rural end of

the very straight Green Lane West. This wide track, edged by high trees and hedges either side, continues for half a mile till you get to the tarmac street part of the Lane with housing either side till you reach the busy Topcliffe Road.

Go straight over using the pedestrian crossing, into Green Lane East passing two primary schools and arriving at a T junction which is Sowerby Road.



'Mrs Pumphrey'

On the left hand corner notice Thorpe House which was the home of the Misses Warner, one of whom became Mrs Pumphrey with her spoilt Pekinese dog Tricky-Woo in the James Herriot books and films. Opposite the house is an open field which the Warner sisters bought to ensure they kept their views of the Hambleton Hills and the Whitestone cliffs in the distance; it was bequeathed to a local charity to look after in perpetuity.

Cross over to the higher pavement on the other side of Sowerby Road and go left. You will soon find another 'Past and Present' History Board No. 13 on your right just before the cycle way and footpath across Sowerby Flatts. The History Board refers to the Mrs Pumphrey connection and also the ridge and furrow profile of the field on the right of the cycle way which can still be seen except where it has been levelled for the football pitches.

Riverside and Mill

At the far end of the cycle path, go through the passageway between the two terraces of houses and onto

Chapel St. Turn right and take care as there is no footpath, and cars come quickly down Chapel Street and from round the corner. You will see, straight ahead between two blocks of apartments, a footway into the Nursery Gardens long stay public car park. Go through it to the entrance of the car park and cross the main road (Finkle Street) to the 'Little 3' pub and bistro. Go through its archway and beer garden (a public footpath), to the Cod Beck and turn left.

This is Riverside Mews and takes you to the site of the old mill at the corner of Millgate and the river bridge. Another History Board No. 7 explains the history of the old mill site now called Mill Gardens. Cross the busy one-way road, go past the public toilets and then right into the Marage car park where you will be back to your starting point.

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