

Built to give the appearance of a Grecian temple when viewed from Well Vale Hall, St Margaret's Church is thought to have been modelled on St Paul's Church, Covent Garden, in the spirit of the Palladian. Consecrated in 1735, the altar has, most unusually, been placed at the western end.

27 Turn left through a gap in the hedgerow, then right to follow the signposted footpath along a grassy track. Where the tracks meet, bear left to walk through a long, narrow belt of woodland known as Handkerchief Piece Lane. Notice the plants growing beneath the trees. Some, such as woodruff and dog's mercury, suggest that this is very old woodland. At the bottom of the hill turn right to climb up the path beside Badger Hill wood, crossing the next stile into parkland and following the fence-line, past the graveyard, to the front of Well St Margaret's Church.



St Margaret's Church

28 Pause awhile to enjoy this peaceful place, with its views of Well Vale Hall and lake, before passing in front of the Church to walk directly downhill, following the waymarked path to the valley floor. This steep descent can be slippery when wet, so do take care. Carry on to the signpost adjacent to the double field gate ahead. There, turn right to continue along the edge of Hop Gardens wood, walking between fences to cross two stiles to the right of the large stock pen above Well Vale Hall lake. Turning left, follow the woodland edge to another stile and the road beyond.

29 Turn right to walk along low lane through Well village, noticing the variety of species in the roadside hedges as you go, including dogwood, wild privet, elm and hazel. Crossing the route of the former East Lincolnshire railway, follow the lane to its end.

30 At the T-junction carefully cross the B196 road, turning left along the opposite pavement towards Alford. Immediately before the bridge above the deep drain, turn right over a stile to join the Mill Rundle Walk, a permissive walk around Alford following the Mill Rundle drain. Continue along this bankside path to the field corner, turning first left and then right to cross two stiles onto Farlesthorpe Road. There, turn left to follow the Road to its next junction with Back Lane. From here there are two alternative endings to this walk.



Wild privet

30a If you are accompanied by a dog, then please turn left to follow the pavement alongside Farlesthorpe Road. Just past the main entrance to Alford Cemetery, turn right onto a narrow tarmac path to the rear of house gardens. Carry on as this path widens into Hanby Lane, passing Alford Primary School on your left and John Spendluffe Technology College to your right. Follow this lane as it bends left into Caroline Street, turning right at the next T-junction to reach Alford Market Place, your journey's end.

30b If you are not accompanied by a dog, then continue ahead across the stile by this junction to follow the Mill Rundle Walk along the bankside of three grass fields. Crossing the next stile, carry on with the bank of the sewage treatment works to your left. Just opposite the double electricity pole turn left up some steps, following the path as it continues along an earth track. Where the tracks meet, bear right, continuing past a car park to emerge onto Hanby Lane. From there, turn right into Caroline Street, turning right again at the next T-junction to reach Alford Market Place, your journey's end.



St Wilfrid's Church, Alford

Nestling at the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds, Alford is an historic market town boasting fourteenth century St Wilfrid's Church, reputedly the largest thatched Manor House in the county and a fully restored working Five-Sailed Windmill. A thriving community, it hosts weekly outdoor markets, nationally renowned craft markets and music festivals.



Alford Market Place

WALK INFORMATION

DISTANCE 18½ miles, 30 km
TIME Approx. 9 - 10 hours at a leisurely pace.
MAPS OS Landranger 122 and OS Explorer 274.
PARKING Free car parking is available in Wainfleet Market Place (Grid Ref: TF 498 589).

Free car parking is also available in Burgh le Marsh Market Place (Grid Ref: TF 501 651) and in Alford off Millers Way, opposite the Anchor Inn on East Street (Grid Ref: TF 456 762). There are also pay and display car parks in Alford Market Place and South Market Place.

TERRAIN Along footpaths which can be muddy at times. Roadside walking, including crossing the A158 and A1028. Parts of the route by kind permission of the landowners. Generally level at first, then gentle hills, with occasional short steep climbs and descents.

REFRESHMENTS Tearooms, restaurants, pubs and shops in Wainfleet, Burgh le Marsh and Alford. Also, The Royal Oak pub at Candlesby.

TOILETS Public toilets in Brook's Walk, off Wainfleet Market Place, next to the Red Lion Hotel Garage. Also in Burgh le Marsh Market Place and behind Alford Library in South Market Place car park.

STILES Numerous. Some are stock proof and therefore may be difficult for some dogs.

Acknowledgements:

Routes walked and compiled by Fiona M Anderson
 Photos by kind permission of Fiona M Anderson; John Byford; Rod Edwards
 Produced by Economic Development, East Lindsey District Council, Tel 01507 601111
 Designed by City Graphics, Tealby, Lincolnshire © 2008

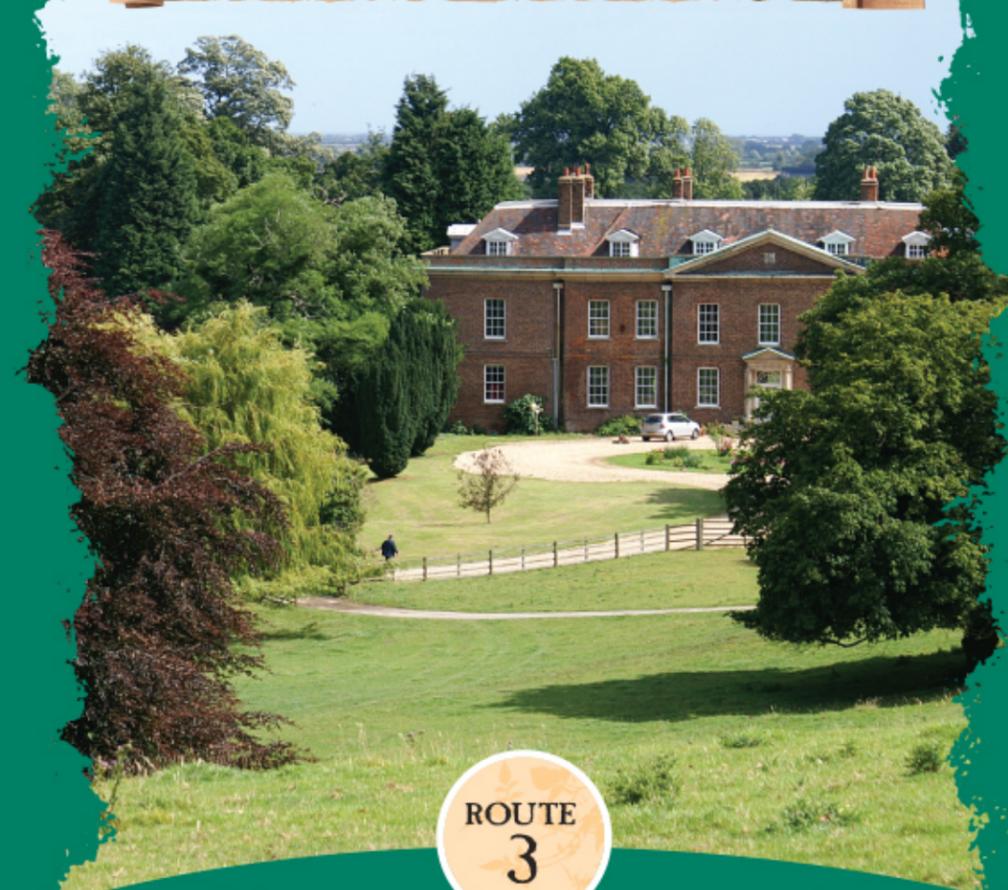
To find out the nearest attractions, places to eat, events and where to stay
www.visitlincolnshire.com or text DISCOVER to 84118



HISTORY MATTERS

THREE TOWNS WALKS WAINFLEET ALL SAINTS TO ALFORD

A remarkable walk through fenland, marsh and wold, rich in history and character.



LINCOLNSHIRE



Lincolnshire

One of England's biggest counties, Lincolnshire offers plenty of space to enjoy big skies and contrasting, diverse landscapes. The district of East Lindsey on the eastern side of the County has compiled a series of walks around some of its delightful towns and rich heritage for you to enjoy.

ROUTE
 3

LINEAR WALK - 18½ MILES



Considered as the safest harbour on the Lincolnshire coast, Wainfleet became a flourishing fenland port in medieval times trading locally produced salt and other valuable cargoes in and out of Europe. By the fifteenth century, however, the Steeping River had begun to silt up and Wainfleet's pre-eminence as a port declined.



Wainfleet Market Place

1 Walk north along High Street, passing the Woolpack Hotel to your left and pausing at the end of remarkable Barkham Street on your right. Carry on as the road bends into Spilby Road, turning next right into Northolme, then left to follow Croft Lane. Notice the memorial archway through the cemetery on your left. This was erected in 1920 to honour those local men lost in the World War I. To your right, topped with trees, is Wainfleet's 'Green Hill'. Although suggestions of Viking burials, harbour beacons and decorative garden earthworks have all been made, its origins remain uncertain.

2 In the eighteenth century much land in the area was owned by Edward Barkham. On his death, he left this estate to Bethlem Hospital in London. Wainfleet's astonishing Barkham Street, built in 1847 by Bethlem's architect - Sydney Smirke to an urban terraced design used in Southwark, was named after their benefactor.

3 Continue ahead, passing the castellated remains of Moody's Mill on your left. Cross over the Wainfleet Relief Channel to walk beside The Lynn, turning next right along Croft Road. Notice the discs on the overhead electricity lines, used to increase their visibility to help prevent bird strike, injury and death.

4 As the road bends right, turn left to follow the next signposted footpath along a gravel drive, then beside a line of trees and through a conifer hedge into the field beyond. Carefully cross the airstrip to walk across field, heading for the footbridge visible at the next boundary. With the two wind turbines at Croft End before you, continue beside the drainage ditch over a second footbridge, turning right to cross a third.

4 Carry on along the edge of old grassland to turn left over the next stile and footbridge, making out the corrugations of remnant ridge and furrow ploughland as you go. There, bear right to follow the waymarked path across the next field, heading for the outward corner of the hedge around the brick house in front of you and listening for the plaintive *cour-leee* call of curlew. Turn right to carry on along the field edge, arriving beside Church Lane in Croft.

6 Believed to date from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, All Saints' Parish Church is one of the major marshland churches. Built of greenstone, except for the tower top that was rebuilt in grey stone in 1656, All Saints' holds a very early brass of a knight in chain mail and tunic.



All Saints' Parish Church

6 Turn left to follow the next signposted footpath across a footbridge and stile into old pasture, continuing over a second footbridge into more grassland. After crossing a third, carry on beside the drainage ditch to Low Road.



Long-tailed Tit

9 Crossing a stone track, walk diagonally right over the corner of the next field, rejoining the same track a little further on. Pause to appreciate fine views of St Peter and St Paul's Church and Dobson's Mill, two of Burgh le Marsh's finest buildings, before turning first left to follow the track, then right to cross a footbridge into a grass field. Carry on to the next footbridge and stile into a small horse grazed paddock. There, continue beside the drainage ditch, turning left to cross a double stile and footbridge into more grassland. Looking out for long tailed tits flitting in the hedges, continue ahead towards the gates to the left of the red brick barn, exiting through metal and wooden gates onto the track beyond.



Grazing marsh, Bratoff

8 Turn left along the lane, then quickly right to cross a footbridge onto another signposted footpath. Carry on across this first field to the footbridge visible at the next boundary, turning left to walk along the field edge. At the field corner, continue diagonally right across the next field towards a signpost. There, turn left to follow the field edge to another.



Across field

Burgh le Marsh is referred to as 'Burch' and 'Burg' in the Domesday Book and as 'de Burgo in Marisco' (ie. 'in the marsh') in documents dating from 1275. Granted a market charter in 1401, the town's first mayor was elected in 1992. This early settlement once lay close to the Roman shoreline.

12 Follow this lane to its end, noticing the two wind turbines at Croft to your left and glancing back towards Burgh to see the flat windowed top of the town's other mill. Turn right at the T-junction towards Bratoff. Then, as the road bends sharply to the right, continue ahead, past the blue 'Unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles' sign, to walk along Summergates Lane. Follow this through a series of bends into Bratoff village, passing remnants of old grassland, Lincolnshire's grazing marsh, as you go.

10 Turn right to follow the stone track to the road, then left to walk along historic High Street through the town. Pause beneath Burgh's impressive windmill, a working tower mill built in 1815 by Sam Oxley of Alford and named 'Dobson's Mill' after the last miller. Opposite The Bell Hotel, turn left along Church Street, the town's library and museum in the old school buildings to your right. Then, bearing right through the churchyard, with St Peter and St Paul's Church on your left, continue past the main lychgate to leave through a smaller gate in the corner.



Bratoff Medieval Village

13 Ignoring the left turn down Oxlands Lane, carry on towards Gunby, passing Bratoff Church up on your left. Indeed, a visit to this beautiful church, with its stunning allegorical painting of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, is highly recommended. To do this simply turn left opposite the red telephone kiosk and Victorian postbox, entering the churchyard through a gate on your right. Retrace your steps to continue ahead.



Moated remains of Bratoff Hall

14 At the T-junction turn left onto North Road towards Gunby, passing prominent earthworks of the former village site to your right and pausing to study one of the route's interpretation boards on your left. Opposite the end of Brambleberry Lane, turn right to follow the signposted footpath along the length of a grassy track. From there, turn right to cross a stile, continuing briefly ahead and then left around the outer perimeter of the moated remains of Bratoff Hall. Carry straight on to another stile, walking along the edge of the next field to the disused railway line.

15 Continue over the track bed of the former East Lincolnshire railway, following the waymarked path across field towards an attractive green lane between stands of coniferous and broadleaved woodland. Look for the down hoof prints of deer as you walk. Keep with this ancient lane as it crosses another track, continuing with a belt of woodland to your right. Notice the spikes of early-purple orchids along here in spring, before following the lane first left, then right to a stile into grazed parkland.

16 Carry on, with the woodland on your right and corrugations of remnant ridge and furrow ploughland to your left, enjoying the beauty of this special place. As another fence starts, leave the woods to walk with this new fence on your right to find two stiles. Crossing these, turn left along a grassy track to a third. From there, climb steadily towards Gunby St Peter's Church.

17 On reaching the churchyard, turn left to follow the fence line past a plantation, then the magnificent Gunby Hall. Where the fence bends away to your right, continue ahead towards the metal gate in the boundary before you. From there, follow the waymarked path straight over the next old pasture, walking between two fenced clumps of trees, towards a signpost and stile in the distant hedgerow. Carry on through a narrow belt of woodland to another stile and Gunby Lane beyond.



Gunby Hall

Much of the land around you is part of the National Trust's Gunby estate. Gunby Hall, reputedly Alfred Lord Tennyson's 'haunt of ancient peace', was given by Field-Marshal Sir Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd and his wife in 1944. Built in the style of Sir Christopher Wren, the Hall has remained substantially unaltered.

25 Turn right at the T-junction, passing the clear waters of Claxby Spring Nature Reserve on your left. Then, turn next left to follow Balter Road through a valley towards Ulsoby. Deep dry valleys, such as this, were cut by meltwaters during the last glaciation and are a characteristic of the Lincolnshire Wolds' landscape. Notice the two elongated stands of scrub up on the valley slopes to your right. These are Deadman's Graves long barrows, a pair of multiple burial monuments constructed by our Neolithic ancestors.



View towards the Coast

26 Opposite Balter Farm, turn right to follow the next signposted footpath up out of the valley, turning first left, then right to continue along the hedgerow. Walking with Fordington Wood on your left and more magnificent views to your right, carry on ahead. Then, ignoring the short section of track through a gateway, turn right to continue along the field edge away from the Wood.

St Peter's Church

18 Cross the road to follow the signposted footpath opposite along the field edge to a footbridge. Then, bearing right, continue across the next field to a second footbridge in the hedge gap. With fine views of the Old Rectory ahead of you, carry on 'uphill' to a third footbridge and stile. From there, continue over a narrow band of grassland to a wooden gate beside a cattle grid, before turning quickly right to follow the narrow shaded path into Candlesby churchyard. Walking to the right of St Benedict's Church, leave by the main gate onto Church Lane.

19 Turn left to follow this lane to its end, turning right onto Monkthorpe Lane to arrive at the crossroads opposite The Royal Oak pub. There, turn left to walk along the pavement beside the A158 towards Scremby. Notice the interesting cactus topiary outside Candlesby House. Then, immediately after Toad Hall Trout Fishery, turn right to carefully cross the road to the start of the next signposted footpath.

20 Emerging through the gap in the roadside hedge, ignore the footpath heading diagonally left across field towards Scremby Park. Instead, continue straight ahead, along the field edge, to turn right over the next footbridge. This section of the walk is permissive, agreed with the kind permission of the landowner and is only available to walkers.

21 From there, follow the signposted footpath across the next field, walking uphill towards a signpost and the ancient Bluestone Heath Road beyond. Notice the flint in the soil at your feet. This hard, silica-rich rock can be worked to form a sharp, tough edge and was used by our prehistoric ancestors for both tools and weapons. With extreme care cross the A1028, one of the main routes to Skegness and Lincolnshire's holiday coast, turning left to walk along the opposite roadside verge to the next road junction.

22 There, turn right to continue along Mill Lane, noticing the marked 'Protected Roadside Verges' to left and right. Since 1960 the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and local highway authority have operated a scheme for the protection and management of verges of particular conservation importance, such as these.

Today's pattern of woodland distribution was already established at Domesday in 1086. This eastern Wolds' edge supports one of Lincolnshire's three historic concentrations of woodland. Welton High Wood and Welton Low Wood are part of the so-called 'Middle Marsh Woods', a series of oak/ash woodlands stretching from here towards Louth.

23 After passing Anglian Water's treatment works on your right, turn quickly left to follow a wide stone track. This section of the walk is permissive, agreed with the kind permission of the landowner and is only available to walkers. Stay with the main track as it bears left, pausing to admire fine panoramic views of the coastline to your right. Then, keeping Welton High Wood on your right, continue past the fenced chalk quarry to your left, going straight ahead where the track divides. You are now walking the route of an important Roman road which connected Lincoln with the northern shore of the Wash.

KEY

- ROUTE
- ROUTE WITH DOGS
- REFRESHMENTS

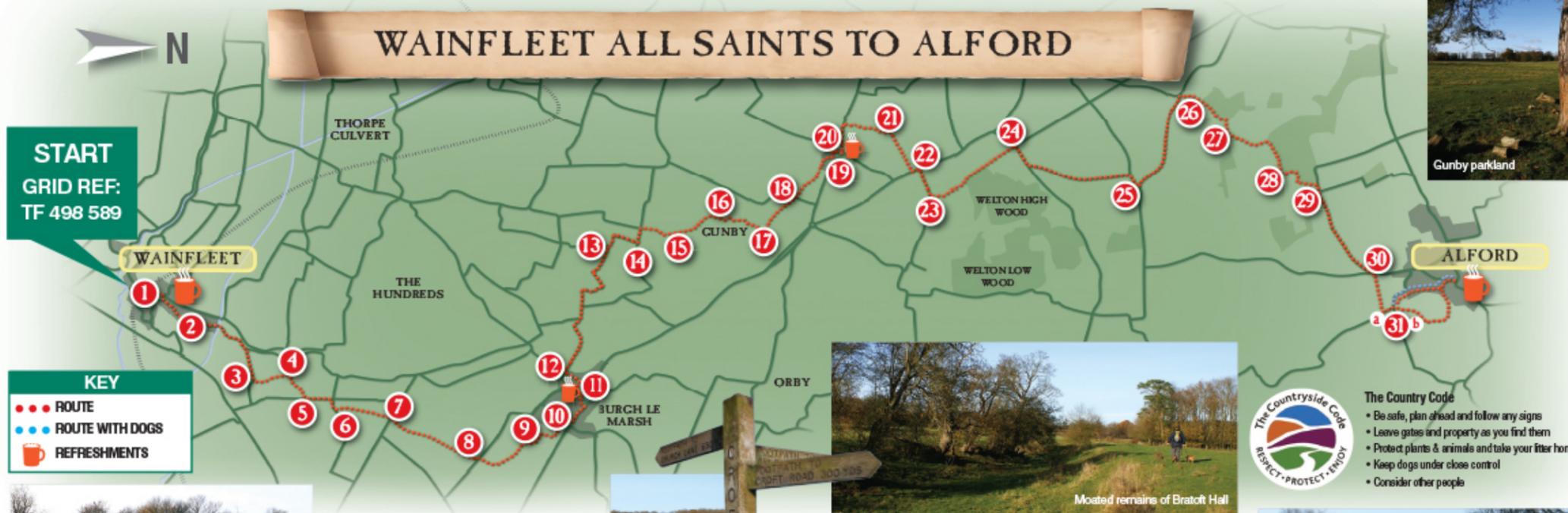


The Countryside Code

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants & animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

WAINFLEET ALL SAINTS TO ALFORD

START
GRID REF:
TF 498 589



Gunby parkland



Towards Croft