



Ted's pushchair walk

Pushchairs, Passages, Pathways and a Playground

Introduction

This is a circular walk around Thirsk centre suitable for pushchairs and most wheelchairs. The walk grade is Easy on public footpaths. Allow 1 to 2 hours depending on how long you stop at the Playground.

It starts from Marage long stay car park, national grid reference 429823 (satnav YO7 1AA). The distance is 1.5 miles (2.5km). OS Explorer Map 302, Northallerton & Thirsk, covers the walk but a map is included here.

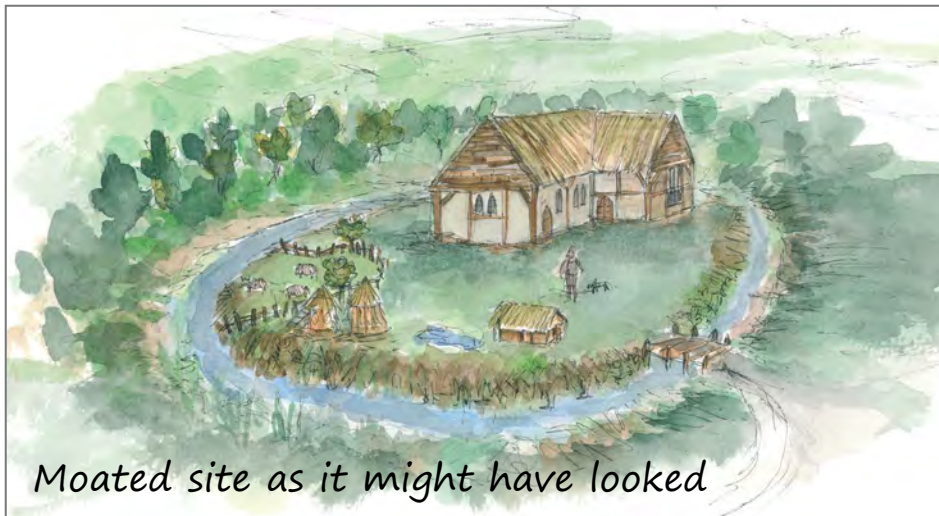
The walk

Church and Thirsk Hall

Leaving the Marage car and coach park, get onto the footpath by the road heading towards Thirsk Church passing Thirsk 'Past and Present' Board (no. 6) describing the Moated Site on your right. (A walks leaflet describing all 15 Boards is available for sale in the Information Centre).

We are not visiting the Church today but the 15th Century St. Mary's





Church is opened by volunteers most days from 10am till 4pm and is well worth a visit in its own right.

Cross over, when safe, to the opposite footpath on your left and walk round left into Kirkgate with the attractive Georgian Thirsk Hall, across the road from you, occupied by our Lord of the Manor, Mr John Bell.

Walk along Kirkgate away from the

church and Thirsk Hall, in a southerly direction towards the town centre and again, when safe to do so, cross over to the right hand side footpath.

On your right, just after the Kirkgate Hotel and between the Kirkgate Dental Practice and house no. 31, you will find a passageway, alleyway or ginnel (depending on where you hail from!) This **IS** a public footpath,





as shown by the sign high on the right hand wall, even though you may feel you are trespassing onto private property.

After going through the passage you will find yourself walking on a slightly rougher path, past some older houses on your right for about 50 metres then turn left into a small new estate of mews houses called Croft View. Turn right after 20 metres, then left again and go straight ahead till you see, across the road (which is called Pick's Lane or Masonic Lane) a pedestrian gate into Castle Garth.

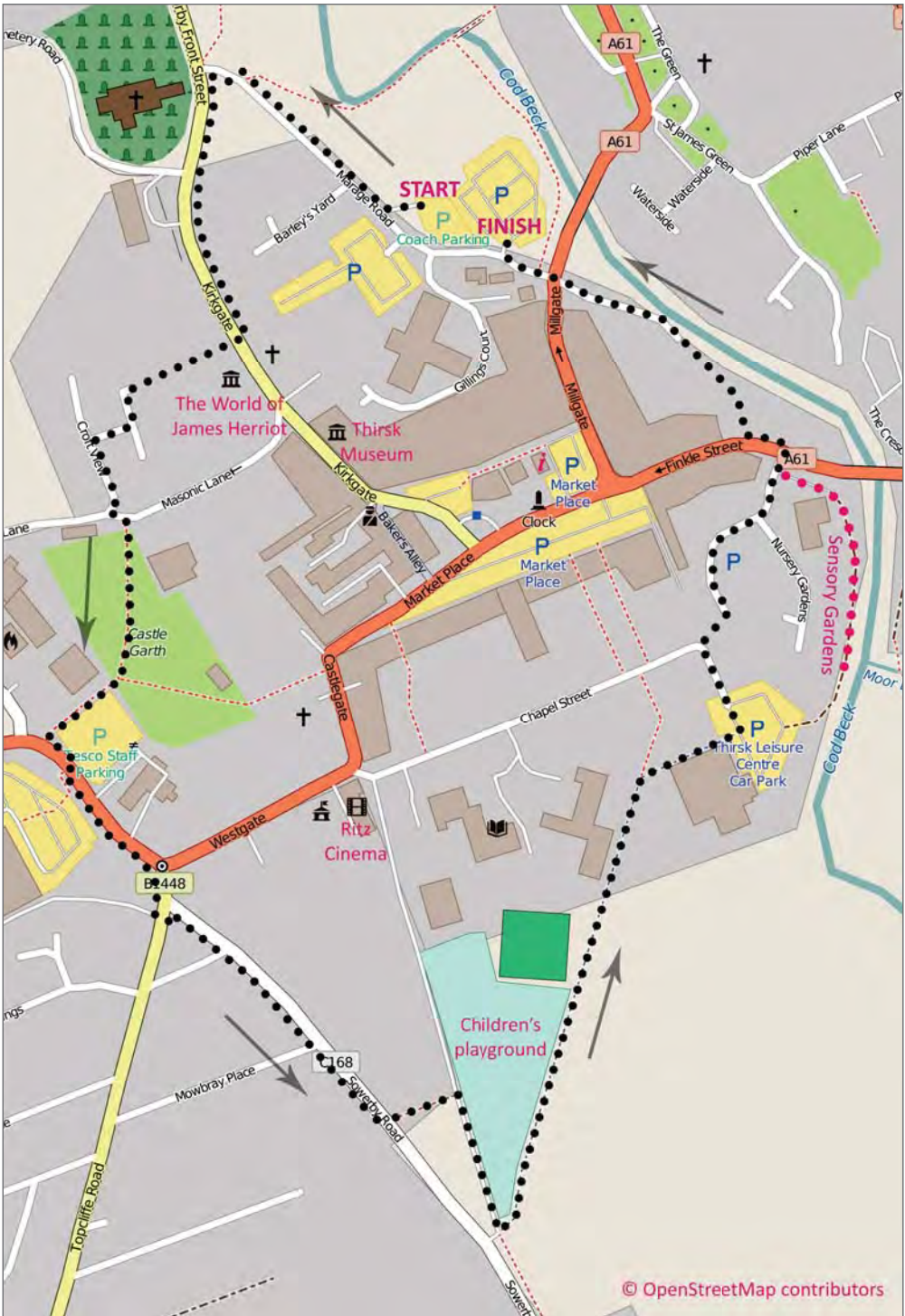
Castle Garth

The Masonic Lodge is the tall building on your right with boarded up windows. Go through the pedestrian gate into Castle Garth and you will find another History Board (no. 1) about the mediaeval castle which stood on this site till the 12th Century.

All that remains is the castle mound higher up on the left with a large house, Castle Villa, built on top of it which can be seen as you follow the path diagonally across the field to another History Board (no. 2) also about the Castle Garth area.

Bearing right, enter a footpath between the Tesco petrol station and the Thirsk Decorating Centre. At the end, and slightly to the left, is a controlled pedestrian crossing over this busy road. Cross over towards the Tesco supermarket but keep left on the pavement going away from Tesco towards the Fourways Guesthouse. Go past the guesthouse and a postbox on your right and head for the yellow flashing beacons of the zebra crossing. Cross over, turn left then immediately right into Sowerby Road.

Keep on this right hand footpath until it is safe to cross over to the terrace





Ridges & furrows

of houses opposite. These houses were built for workers on the branch line railway which used to terminate in a station now demolished and occupied by the Tesco supermarket you have just passed.

Beyond the end of the row of houses is a large detached house. Turn left after this into a footpath alongside a small, sunken green area on your right and leading to another footpath.

Playground

Facing you behind the fence is the Sowerby Parish Council's children's playground which is open every day till dusk. This has a variety of play equipment suitable for children of all ages and is entered by one of two gates in the fencing facing you – one immediately to your right. You now have the difficult choice of carrying on with the walk or heeding the pleadings of your pushchair's occupant to go into the playground!

When you are ready, continue the walk, with the playground on your

left, until you reach a sharp left turn along the other side of the playground. Before you turn left, you may wish to look at yet another History Board (no.13) in front of you, describing the ridge and furrow feature of the playing fields area to your left. It also makes reference to Thorpe House across the road where the real life Miss Warner lived. In the James Herriot veterinary novels and TV series for which Thirsk is famous this was the lady upon whom the 'Mrs Pumphrey' character with her pampered Pekinese dog was based.

Back to Town

Continue now for about 200 metres alongside the playground fencing on your left and the new three storey Meadowfields older person's development, being careful not to stray onto the parallel red tarmac cycle track. Cyclists have right of way on this track and can approach silently from behind you.

At the far end of the cycle path, turn



right across the front of the Leisure Centre and swimming pool building, then left across to the car park entrance. Get over to the right hand side and take care here as there is no footpath and cars come quickly down Chapel Street and round the corner on your left. You will see, on the right after the block of apartments, a footway into the Nursery Gardens long stay public car park.

For an interesting small diversion, if you have time, see **Sensory Garden** below.

Otherwise go through to the exit of the car park and cross the main one-way road (Finkle Street), to the 'Little 3' pub and bistro. Go through its archway and beer garden, which **IS** a public footpath, to Cod Beck (river) 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.

Diversion: Sensory Garden

Just before reaching Finkle Street, turn right across the front and round the side of the former Thirsk Library (in an old primary school building), through its car park to the front of the apartments which face onto the Cod Beck. Between the apartments and the Cod Beck, is a recently created sensory garden for blind and partially sighted people. This is located on the site of the old Salem Chapel and its graveyard which is why the road to the Leisure Centre is called



Sensory Gardens

Chapel Street. There is a memorial to all those buried here as well as some of the old gravestones. The large square black planters have quotations on brass plaques related to the four seasons and the specially created metal railings have animal and bird sculptures in them which will be of interest to children. The shrubs have been specially chosen for their strong scents and tactile nature.

Return to your starting point as above through the Little Three car park and along Riverside Mews.



www.VisitThirsk.org.uk
has everything you want to
know about Thirsk

*What's On, Webcam,
Weather, Taxis, James Herriot,
Local attractions, Maps, History,
Walks, Accessible places,
Children welcome, Dogs welcome,
Clubs & societies and more.*

Accommodation – Coaching
inns, Cosy Bed & Breakfasts,
Self-catering cottages, Lodges,
Caravan & camping sites, Country
pubs and restaurants with rooms.