

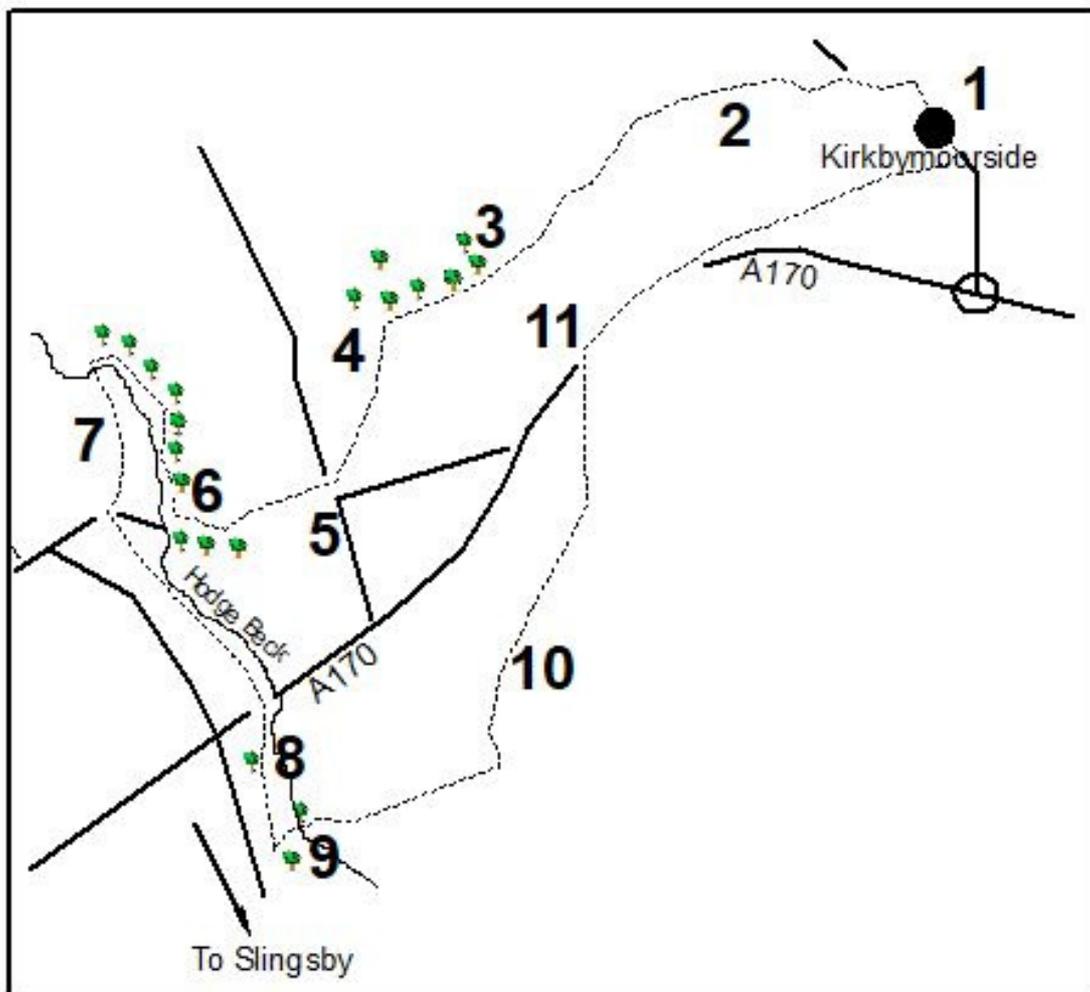
Walk for October 2020

## Kirkbymoorside and St Gregory's Minster

A walk that starts in Kirkbymoorside town centre, makes its way through the outskirts then passes mostly through open countryside. The exception is in the vicinity of the historic St Gregory's Minster where there is a chance to visit the Kirkdale Cave and the woodland bordering Hodge Beck. here are a number of stiles on the walk, in some cases without a gate alternative so bear this in mind.

The direct route to Kirkbymoorside is currently closed so head to Hovingham and follow the diversion signs. On reaching the A170 turn right and stay on that road until the roundabout at Kirkbymoorside. Turn left at the roundabout, go up the road until you have passed the Spar grocers on the right, then park anywhere on the roadside or in the signposted car park. There is a market on Wednesdays when street parking might be limited.

<b>Start</b> — Market Place, Kirkbymoorside	
<b>Distance</b> — 4½ miles	<b>Duration</b> - 2- 2½ hours



—— = Roads      - - - - - = Walk route

1. From your parking place walk uphill along Market Place to reach the mini roundabout at the top. Turn left here (signed to Farndale) and follow the pavement steadily downhill. At the bottom of the slope, turn left into Manor Close and just a few paces along turn right onto the wide tarmac footpath, Back Lane. Just before you reach a bench, turn left onto the side branch of this path and follow this between a house on your left and a hedge on your right. Simply keep ahead on this concrete path between houses and you will emerge to the T-junction at the end of this residential cul-de-sac, Sturdy Court. Cross over to the far pavement and turn right along this. Follow this road as it bears left and then continues ahead, ignoring all the side roads. Where the main residential road swings left, cross over to fork right into the small corner cul-de-sac and take the tarmac footpath (between houses 45 and 47). The path leads you to the edge of open fields. NOTE: You may come across sheep grazing in some of the fields from this point.
2. Cross the stile to enter the first field and walk directly ahead. For the next half mile simply follow the well trodden path through a series of fields which may or may not have defined boundaries. The reason for this is that the route passes through land currently being developed for housing. The path, however, will remain clearly defined, heading generally towards the west and eventually beside a field edge with a hedge on your left, leading to the corner of woodland seen ahead.
3. At the far side, pass through the gate and follow the path which leads you fairly steeply downhill along the edge of a woodland belt, known as Robin Hood's Howl. At the bottom of the slope you will come to a T-junction, with the woodland to your right and a kissing gate on your left.
4. Turn left through the kissing gate and continue straight ahead, following the line of the wire fence on your right. Stay with this fence-side path and it will lead you out of the pasture via a kissing gate (just to the right of a field gate). You will emerge to a staggered road junction.
5. Go straight ahead on the small lane signed to Helmsley taking care of any traffic. Further along, the lane begins to descend. Just a few metres before you reach the ford across the river, you will see a choice of two paths to the right. Initially you can take a small detour to visit Kirkdale Cave. Turn sharp right onto the first right path, a sunken track leading you through the trees. This short path leads you directly to the large rock face which is home to Kirkdale Cave. You will see the small cave opening about 3 or 4 metres above ground level (a short scramble enables you to reach this entrance where you can peer inside if you are so inclined. The small opening leads to an extensive cave system formed by underground streams thousands of years ago. When you have finished at the cave, retrace your steps back to the junction of paths alongside the ford.
6. At this point you have a choice because the next stretch follows a pretty but steep and uneven path through woodland as well as crossing the river via low stepping stones. This is not advisable unless the river is running low and the ground is fairly dry. To follow the full walk turn right onto the signed public footpath (immediately before the ford's footbridge). Follow this level woodland path with the river, Hodge Beck, running on your left. After passing the churchyard visible on the far bank (which we will be visiting shortly), the path climbs steeply to run high above the river (which is still down to your left). The banks are steep so take particular care. As soon as the river begins to bear left, at a fork in the path turn left down a steep slope and you will emerge to the corner of a riverside grass meadow. Keep ahead following the river on your left and continue just to the point where a vehicle track crosses the river via a ford. Use the low stepping stones alongside this ford to cross the

river and follow the track through the meadow, passing through a gate at the far side to reach St Gregory's Minster on your left.

If you choose to avoid the woodland walk and the stepping stones simply cross the river via the footbridge and keep ahead on the lane, climbing. Turn right into the access lane for St Gregory's Minster and follow it up to the church.

If the church is open (Depending on the pandemic) do take the opportunity to look inside. The manicured cemetery on the other side of the lane will be open and is an ideal place to stop and rest mid walk

7. When you have finished at the church, follow the tarmac access lane which leads you past a stone outbuilding on your right and out to a T-junction with the road (you are now on the far side of the ford crossing). Cross the road at 11 o'clock and take the stile to enter the sloping sheep pasture. Walk diagonally left, soon picking up and following a fenced section of trees on your left. Where the fence line on your left steps back for a few metres, pause a moment and glance to your left and right. You are now crossing the line of a dismantled railway and you will see old bridges both sides. The viaduct to the left (which once carried the railway over the river) is a particularly beautiful structure. Simply keep ahead, maintaining your direction and at the bottom field boundary you will find a small stile concealed in the hedgerow. Cross this to reach a grass verge alongside the A170 road. NOTE: This is a fast moving road but visibility is good in both directions so please take time to wait for a suitable gap before you cross. Cross over the road and take the stile ahead leading you into a paddock (which is likely to be holding horses). Walk directly ahead and at the far side cross the stone stile over the wall to reach a quiet lane.
8. Cross the quiet lane and take the path ahead into the trees. Don't take the path beside the river, but turn sharp right and cross a stile to enter the next pasture. Turn immediately left and follow the left-hand field boundary. At the far end, a stile (in front of a large tree) leads you out of the field. Take the path diagonally left through the woodland belt and you will emerge to the driveway for Welburn Hall School, with the school buildings visible to your right and a stone river bridge on your left.
9. Turn left along the driveway, crossing the stone river bridge. Immediately afterwards ignore the first path on the right (Beckside Footpath), instead continue on the driveway for just 10 more paces and then turn right onto the grass path. Follow this path to a gate at the edge of a large field and pass through the gate (or the adjacent kissing gate) to enter the field. Walk diagonally right to join the right-hand fence line and follow this along the length of the field. At the far side you will reach a T-junction with a tarmac access lane. Turn left and walk along this lane. As soon as the fence line on your right ends, fork diagonally right across the grass heading for the left-hand edge of the collection of buildings now visible. As you reach the far fence line, pass through the gate (to the right of the cattle grid) and join the tarmac drive ahead which leads you into the centre of the buildings of Howkeld Mill, a former watermill dating from the early 1800s.
10. Continue ahead to reach the gravel courtyard at the centre of the mill buildings. Keep ahead through this courtyard and exit via the narrow gate in the far right-hand corner. NOTE: Immediately beyond this gate you will cross the unfenced workings of the mill race on your right, so take particular care with children and dogs. Continue ahead, passing the buildings of the trout farm on your left, and then cross the sleeper bridge over Howkeld Beck to reach the edge of a large crop field. Go straight ahead on the grass track which leads you through the centre of this field (and can be boggy in parts). At the far side, a stile leads you into a sheep pasture. Walk diagonally left (at about 10 o'clock) crossing through the line of trees (now home to a shallow ditch but once the line of the dismantled railway that you saw earlier). Continue at 10 o'clock to reach a stile. Cross this (or walk round it if the boundary is

unfenced) and continue in the same direction to reach the top field corner (passing a stone barn across to your right). Cross a (final!) stile and turn left along the stone track for a few paces to reach a junction with the main A170 road. Cross the road (again taking care to wait for a suitable gap in the traffic).

11. Turn right along the far pavement. Just after passing the driveway for Broad View on your left, bear left at the fork and follow this as it becomes a pavement alongside West Fields, passing the primary school on your left. Keep ahead and, at the fork in the road, take the right-hand branch, passing the Quaker Meeting Room on your right. Stay with the road between a number of beautiful town houses and passing the 1861 Methodist Chapel on your left. You will emerge to a junction with Church Street and Market Place. Turn left along Market Place, heading steadily uphill, and this will lead you to the library on your left where your walk began.

Acknowledgment - I found the basis of this walk on the All Trails website which can be found on the following link <https://www.alltrails.com/explore/trail/england/north-yorkshire/kirkbymoorside-and-st-gregorys-minster> The web page description of the walk gives further details of the Minster and Cave.