

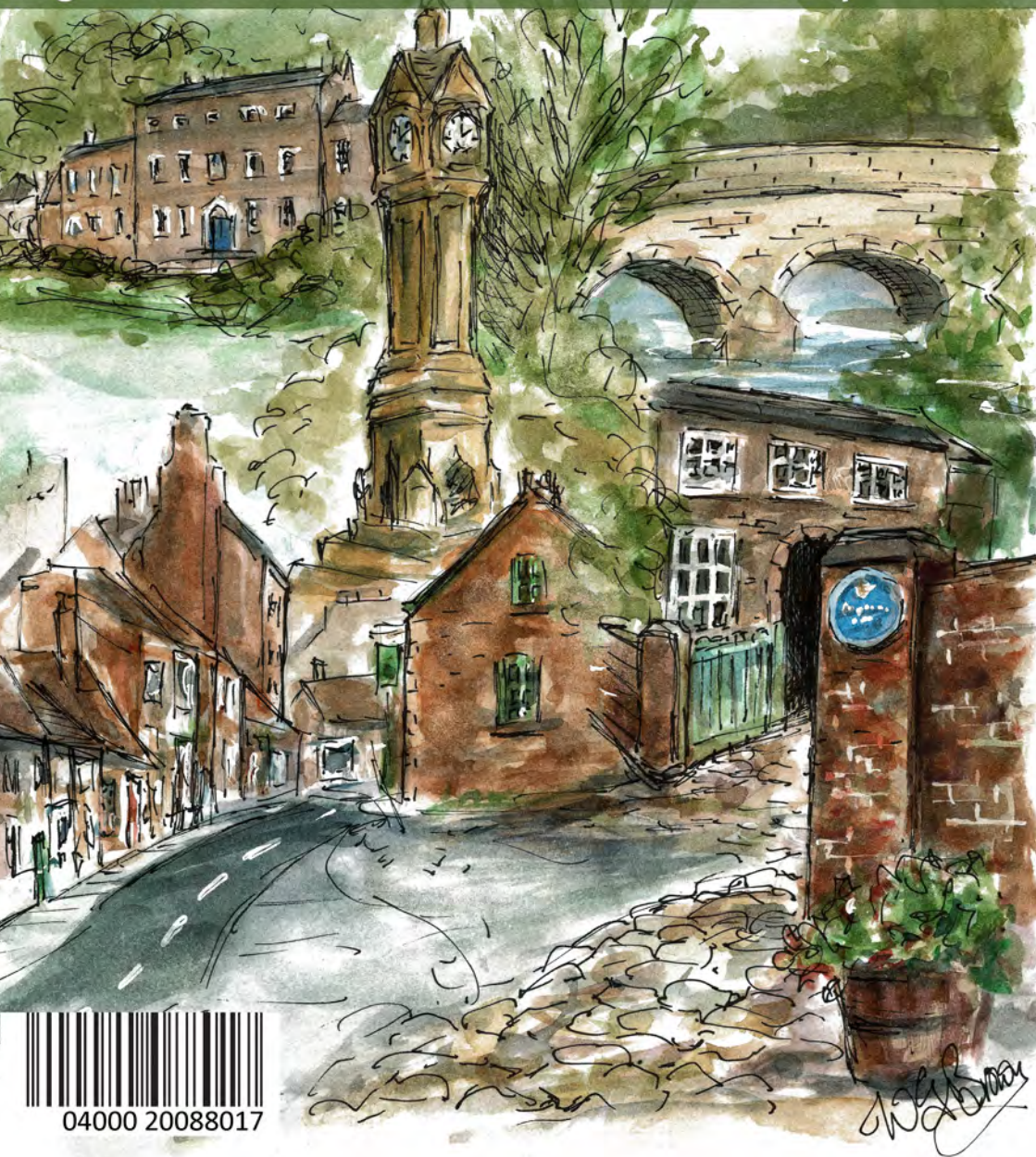


THIRSK WALKS

60p

Past and Present

A guided walk to historic sites in Thirsk and Sowerby



04000 20088017

Introduction

'Past and Present' is a walk around Thirsk and Sowerby to enjoy the town and countryside, but also to learn about local history. It takes in sites of historical and environmental interest. The route is circular, flat and approximately three miles long, but it may be shortened.

The 15 information boards extend from the centre of Thirsk. They include the site of Thirsk Castle and a prehistoric burial mound.

Along the route are Blue Plaques about buildings and people of influence who had connections with the area (see separate walk leaflet).

The walk

Thirsk Castle

To begin the walk go to the west of the Market Place (Ripon direction) and enter Castlegate.

Take the alley on the right of the butcher's shop which leads to the grassy area of Castle Garth, the site where Thirsk Castle once stood and where you will find **boards 1, 2 & 3**.

Go down the slope and turn sharp right onto the path that leads northwards to Pick's Lane, named after a Mr. Pick who had a farm opposite the kissing gate. Houses now occupy the site.



From board 13: *In medieval times the land would have been cultivated using a wooden plough and a team of oxen. The action of ploughing over the years left furrows where the earth was cut along the length of the land and ridges where the soil heaped up beside the furrows. Evidence of ridge and furrow farming can still be seen today.*

Kirkgate

To use the alternative route, which is quieter, but rather narrow in places, follow the public footpath through Croft View, opposite the kissing gate.

For the main route turn right and go down Pick's Lane, also known as Masonic Lane, to enter Kirkgate. Opposite the junction is the site of Rhodes Brewery, now converted into flats. It was one of two breweries that existed in the street. Thirsk Museum is to the right. Thomas Lord, famous for founding Lord's Cricket Ground in London, was born there.

Both routes lead into Kirkgate. At the northern end is the 15th century Parish Church built in the Perpendicular style and dedicated

to Saint Mary. Also of interest are the World of James Herriot museum where Alf Wight (his real name), the famous vet and author, had his surgery, and also Thirsk Hall, still the home of the Lord of the Manor. Walk towards the church, cross the main road and go to the Marage Road junction.

The Holmes

Take the footpath alongside the main road. Walk for about 275m to get to **board 4** positioned near the sluice gate and weir on the Cod Beck river.

Turn back and continue by the children's playground to **board 5** nearby on the Holmes and then left along Marage Road to find **board 6** near the Moated Site.



From board 15: *The development of turnpike roads in the mid-eighteenth century made coach travel much easier. Stagecoaches were a popular mode of transport and Thirsk derived great prosperity as a stopping place for coaches. There were three coaching houses of which two – The Golden Fleece and The Three Tuns – still stand today.*

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Past & Present

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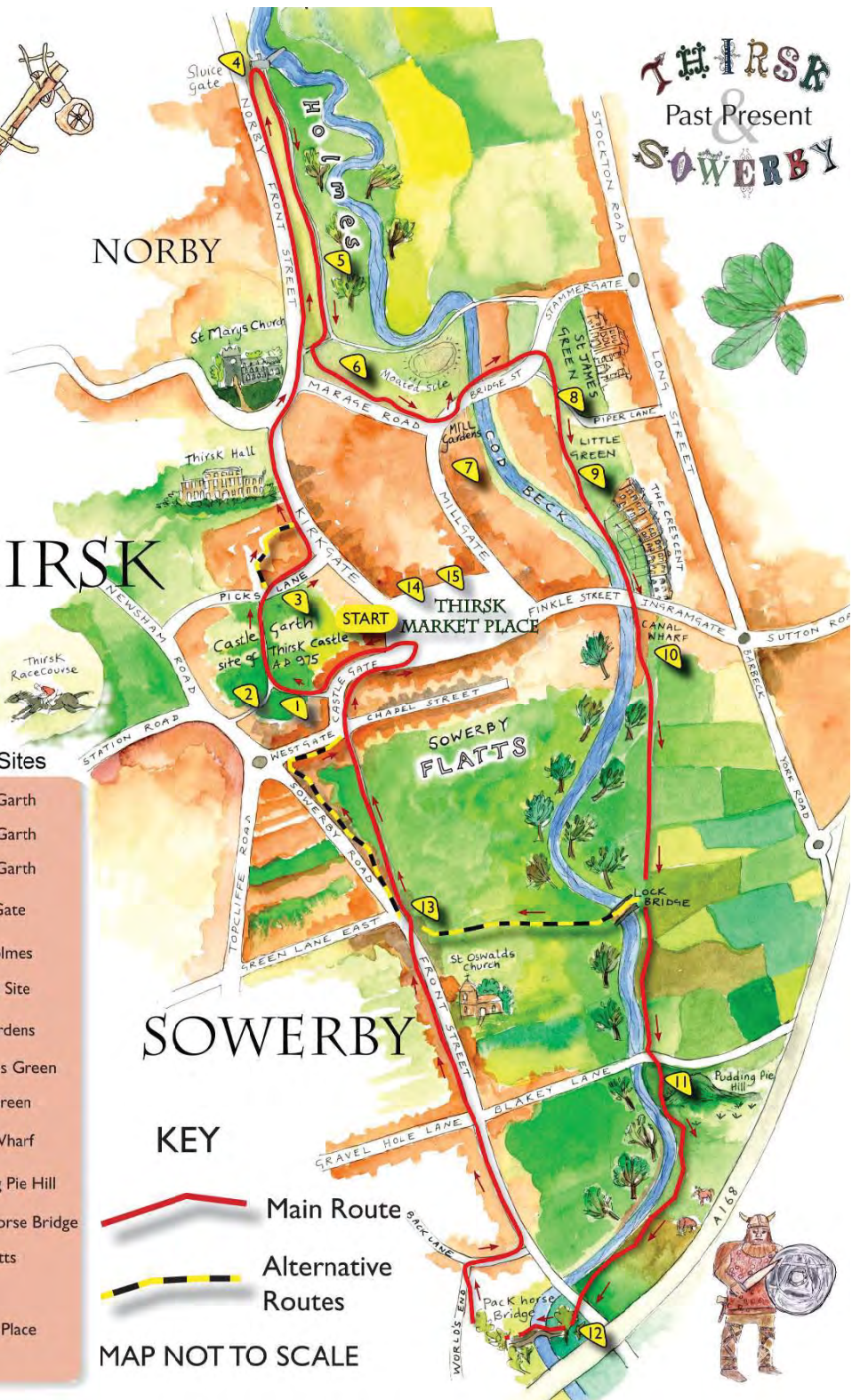
Heritage Sites

- 1 Castle Garth
- 2 Castle Garth
- 3 Castle Garth
- 4 Sluice Gate
- 5 The Holmes
- 6 Moated Site
- 7 Mill Gardens
- 8 St. James Green
- 9 Little Green
- 10 Canal Wharf
- 11 Pudding Pie Hill
- 12 Pack Horse Bridge
- 13 The Flatts
- 14 Market Place
- 15 Market Place

KEY

-  Main Route
-  Alternative Routes

MAP NOT TO SCALE



Millgate

Continue along Marage Road to reach Millgate. Cross the road and immediately to the left is **board 7** in Mill Gardens. It gives information about the workings and site of the former mill.

Old Thirsk

Cross the bridge to enter Bridge Street. This leads to Saint James' Green **board 8** and the adjoining Little Green **board 9** on the right. These areas are the original site of the old town of Thirsk.

Continue in the same direction southwards from the Little Green along the path that leads beside the

river. Note the Victorian houses of The Crescent on the left.

Sowerby Flatts

At Ingramgate cross the road and follow the footpath (it is public) to the rear of the new Williams Court apartments. **Board 10** is at the far end of the car park near Canal Wharf.

Follow the grass footpath across the field, through a gate, then fork right to rejoin the river. Note that part of the river was straightened in preparation for a canal system. See how the fields on the opposite side of the river show evidence of 'ridge and furrow' ploughing.

At Lock Bridge there is a choice of routes.



From board 6: *The moated site is situated near a possible crossing point, a ford. The site dates from either the 13th or 14th century and consists of a small level area which lies a few feet above water level and is surrounded by a ditch or moat which can still be seen in wet weather or flood. On it was a homestead or possibly a small manor house, occupied by a burgess or free landowner.*

To use the alternative and shorter route take the right hand footpath across the bridge to cross Sowerby Flatts to get to board 13.

For the main route continue southwards along paths on either side of the river (they might be rather muddy after rain). There is much wildlife in the area and kingfishers are often seen.

Bronze age burial mound

Cross the road at Blakey Bridge, go through the kissing gate and along the path for about 50m to **board 11** facing Pudding Pie Hill. This is an ancient burial mound, at least 2,500 years old, which is clearly visible from the bridge.



From board 12: *The Pack Horse Bridge formed part of the transport network, providing a link between the Drovers' Road and the larger towns to the west of Thirsk and Sowerby.*

World's End

Continue on the main path across pasture land alongside the river to reach a road near World's End Bridge. Cross over to **board 12** and go to the Pack Horse Bridge beyond it.

Walk over the bridge and take the right hand path which follows a green lane to join Back Lane. The house immediately on the right was once the notable World's End public house.

Sowerby

Turn right down the gentle slope to join Front Street, then left to walk under the canopy of the lime trees planted in 1890 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

Notice the timber-framed house on the left at the junction with Gravel Hole Lane and the large houses on either side of the street built by the prosperous business people of the town. Also note the three Regency houses on the right with steps up to the entrance over the basement.

To the right, just before the church, is an ancient house called Manor Farm. A building has been here since 1304. See the splendid dovecote in Manor Farm field. Now detour to St Oswald's Church, dating from about 1140, with its Norman door on the south side.

Continue up the street to find **board 13** on the right near the The Flatts play area. Opposite is Juliet House which was the home of the Misses Warner, one of whom became

Mrs Pumphrey with the spoilt Pekinese Tricky-Woo in the James Herriot books and films. There is a choice of routes from here.

Westgate

For the main route, follow the footpath to the left of the playground to reach Westgate. There, to the left, is the Ritz Cinema and the Town Hall. Further along in the former Courthouse is the Rural Arts Centre. Return to the cinema, turn left into Castlegate, walk along the street and re-enter the Market Place. Here **boards 14 & 15** are located near Thirsk Tourist Information.

Town End

The alternative route continues along Sowerby Road. On the left are several large detached houses built in the 19th century. Opposite is a row of terraced houses which was known as 'Blue Row', built by a local landowner who expected the tenants to support his political leanings.

At the end of the road is the junction of Town End. To the left was the site of Thirsk Town Maltings where work ceased in 1966. Tesco now stands on what was the end of the Leeds to Thirsk railway line, with a goods depot and coal yard. Next to it was Bamlett's, famous for its agricultural machinery, which closed in 1985.

Turn right into Westgate then Castlegate to enter the Market Place where you'll find boards 14 & 15.



A Free App for this walk

iPhone or Android phones

Open the App Store (iPhone) or Play Store (Android phones) to browse apps. Tap Search and enter **Trailtale** to find the app.

Select the Fast-Track Euro app – look for their logo shown above.

This third edition was produced by Thirsk Tourist Information, a group of about 30 volunteers who run the information centre in the middle of Thirsk Market Place.

It is based on the original work undertaken by the Signs, Plaques and Interpretation Boards Working Party in partnership with Rural Arts North Yorkshire and in conjunction with The Past and Present Writing Group, Cooper Harding and Thirsk Museum, Thirsk Clock, John Bell, children from Thirsk School and the Primary Schools of Thirsk, Sowerby, South Kilvington and Carlton Miniott. Thanks to English Heritage and Yorkshire Museum for their support and assistance.

Front cover by

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