

**Bracebridge**



A circular walk of 5 km (3 miles)

# Introduction

Explore the ancient parish of Bracebridge on this walk through town and country on the edge of Lincoln.

Once a small parish, Bracebridge started to expand with the industrial revolution and developed into a suburb of Lincoln. The city's only tramline terminated in Bracebridge and operated between 1883 and 1929, initially drawn by horses until 1905 when it was electrified.

One of the country's oldest garden nurseries, Pennells, was started in Bracebridge by Richard Pennell in 1780 and is still a family run business today. Pennell Street marks the original site of

the nursery which has since expanded and moved. The nursery is famous for developing clematis varieties, including Bracebridge Star in the 1950s.

Another link between Bracebridge and horticulture is Ellisons orange apple. It was raised in 1904 by the Revd Ellison and Mr Wipf, the gardener at Mr Ellison's brother-in-law's Hartsholme Hall, by crossing Cox's orange pippin and Calville Blanc. It has a distinctive aniseed flavour and soft juicy flesh.

For information on the history of the area visit the local history section of Bracebridge Library on Newark Road.



# The Walk

- 1 Leave the Priory Centre and turn right along St Catherine's (the main road).

Built on the site of St Catherine's, a Gilbertine monastery, the Priory Centre is now a community centre. In the past it has also been a place of worship and more recently a DIY store. The Lady Chapel within the complex remains and regular services take place.

- 2 After approximately 150m cross the main road, at the pedestrian crossing, and walk up Cross O' Cliff Hill.

You will walk over the bridge that crosses the old Honington railway line.

The Honington line opened in 1867 to quicken the journey between Lincoln and London and to serve the villages between Lincoln and Grantham. Use of the line declined from the 1930s due to competition from the buses and in 1965 the line was closed, except for the section serving Bracebridge gasworks until production ceased in 1971.

The open area on the left is South Common, one of three urban commons in Lincoln.

Archaeological surveys have revealed a number of features on the commons including the line of the Roman road from Lincoln to London, medieval water reservoirs serving St Catherine's Priory and training trenches for First World War soldiers. South Common covers approximately 80 hectares.

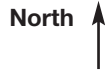
Continue up Cross O' Cliff Hill past the Priory Academy entrance. It is worth taking a short detour into Cross O' Cliff Orchard (its entrance is marked by an information board), a Local Nature Reserve and old orchard.

The orchard was established by William Best in the latter part of the 19th century and at that time covered approximately 2 hectares. The fruit was picked and sold commercially until the mid 1940s. The orchard contains apple, pear and plum trees, some of which are rarely seen today and have wonderful romantic names like Bolingbroke Beauty and LouiseBonne de Jersey. It is also home to a variety of wildlife and in 2005 was declared a Local Nature Reserve. Owned by the County Council, much of the practical management work is undertaken by local volunteers.

Continue up the hill for approximately 100m past the orchard.



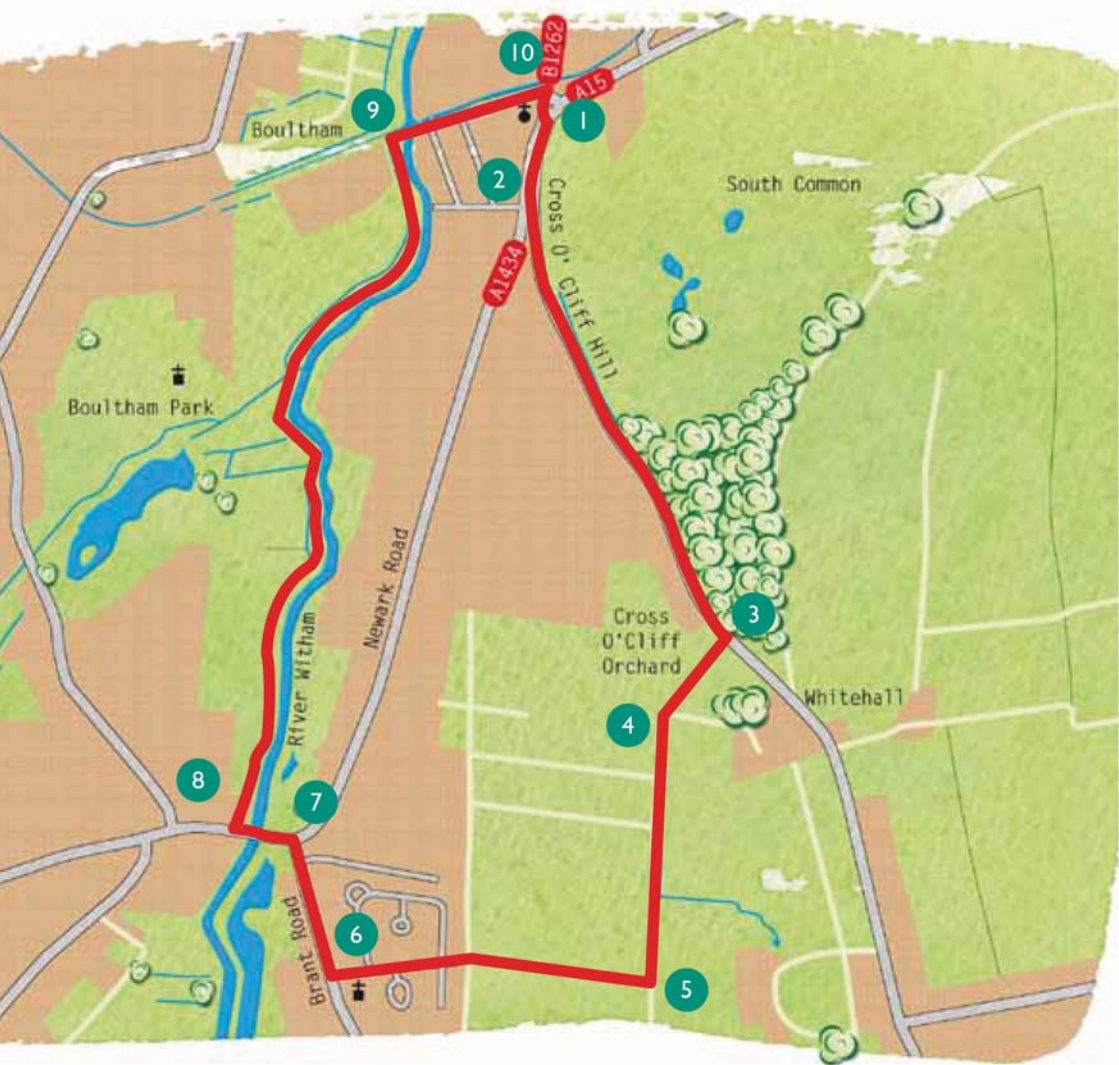
# Map



Map Scale:

400m

1/4 mile



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# The Walk

- 3 Turn right along a public footpath, beside Orchard Walk. Follow the path straight ahead and through a copse.

The chimney and old clay pits are evidence of a brickworks established during the Lincoln building boom of the 1870s and 1880s. This works amalgamated with three others in the area to form the Lincoln Brick Company. It closed in the early 20th century because of competition from the Peterborough brick works. The old clay pits have been taken over by hawthorn, hazel, elder and dogrose and provide an area ideal for birds and wildlife.

- 4 At the end of the copse continue straight ahead along the bottom of the field for approximately 200m to the second junction of paths (ignoring the first path on the right). Turn right and immediately left along the field edge, keeping the hedge on your left.

You are now walking along the base of the Lincolnshire Edge, the limestone backbone of the county. The village of Bracebridge Heath sits on top of the edge, or cliff, here. Until 1908, when St John The Evangelist was built as a mission church, villagers had to walk down to All Saints church at Bracebridge to worship.

- 5 After approximately 300m, at the second footpath sign turn right, downhill, towards the houses and church tower. Look out for the cathedral and castle on the skyline to your right.

As you approach the houses you will cross the old railway line again. Follow the road straight on past a line of mature trees, including horse chestnut and lime, to a junction with Brant Road, with All Saints church on the left.

This lovely little church was originally built in the 11th century and the nave you see today dates from this time. It was enlarged in the 13th century and the pillars in the south aisle are copies of those in the cathedral. At the same time the chancel was lengthened making it difficult to see the altar from the nave. To overcome this, two windows (one rectangular and one arched) were cut through the chancel wall, making a unique feature of the building. The church was restored in 1875 and the north aisle, vestry and porch added. A look at the outside of the church will show a number of carved stones set into the wall. These are fragments of coffin lids dug up and used when the south aisle was built.

# The Walk

- 6 At the junction turn right and continue to the traffic lights at the junction with Newark Road.
- 7 Using the pedestrian crossings, cross Newark Road. Turn left and cross the river.
- 8 At the end of the pub car park turn right onto the public footpath and cycleway and after approximately 50m turn right to follow the path along the banks of the River Witham. As you follow the river enjoy the changing views of Lincoln cathedral and castle on the skyline.

Old maps of the area show the original building on the site of The Plough was called Eel Pie House and was situated on an island in the river. The building has since been replaced but there has been an inn on the site since the early 1800s. The River Witham rises in South Witham south of Grantham and passes through Lincoln before turning southeast to drain into The Wash at Boston. The river and its banks provide excellent habitats and a corridor for wildlife in a busy city. Look out for mallards, moorhens, coots, swans, herons and Canada geese.

Continue along the riverside path. At the first bridge you can take a detour into Boultham Park by turning left.

This attractive bridge, known as Russell Street Bridge, originally carried a private road to Boultham Hall. It was no longer needed when a bridge was built to take the extended Dixon Street and in 1924 was moved to its present location where it is used as a pedestrian bridge.

- 9 Continue to follow the riverside path to the second bridge. Turn right to cross the river.

Continue past Bargate Sluice and walk straight ahead in front of the houses to join the main Newark Road.

- 10 Turn right along Newark Road to return to the Priory Centre.



# Be a responsible walker

Please remember the countryside is a place where people live and work and where wildlife makes its home. To protect the Lincolnshire countryside for other visitors please respect it and on every visit follow the Countryside Code. Thank you.

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

## Most of all enjoy your visit to the Lincolnshire countryside

This leaflet is one in a series of walk leaflets produced by Lincolnshire County Council's Countryside Access Team to help you explore and enjoy the County's countryside. If you have enjoyed these walks and would like information on other walking routes in Lincolnshire then please visit our website.

If you encounter any problems whilst on these walks, such as an overgrown path or a broken sign post, please let us know so they can be corrected.

We would also welcome your comments and suggestions on the walk and leaflet to help improve future editions.

If you would like this leaflet in an alternative format or language please contact us.

Lincolnshire County Council  
Countryside Access Team

**Tel:** 01522 782070 **Minicom:** 01522 552055

**Email:** [countryside\\_access@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:countryside_access@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

**Web:** [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/countryside)



# Useful information

**Walk Location:** Bracebridge is situated 1.6 km (1 mile) south of Lincoln city centre.

**Starting point::** The Priory Centre, at the junction of St Catherine's and Colegrave Street, LN5 8DW. Grid reference : SK 971 694.

**Parking:** Please park responsibly near the Priory Centre.

**Public Transport:** Buses run regularly from the City Centre. For further information and times call the Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit [www.lincsbus.info](http://www.lincsbus.info)



**Ordnance Survey maps for the area:** Explorer 272 Lincoln. Landranger 121 Lincoln & Newark on Trent.

**Walk length:** 5 km (3 miles).

At a leisurely pace the walk will take approximately 1 ½ hours to complete.

**Type of walk:** This mostly level walk uses roadside paths, field paths and tracks and may be muddy in places. There are no stiles or livestock.

**Refreshments:** There is a selection of shops and pubs along the walk route including a cafe in the Priory Centre and The Plough.



These walks and leaflet have been put together with assistance from Mrs J L Smith and other Bracebridge residents.

**Lincolnshire**  
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