

Walking with a Common purpose

This gentle five miles stroll starts from the heart of Beverley and takes in both open and wooded sections of the Beverley Westwood common land to the west of the town.

Words and photographs: Paul Heaton (Fotocraft Images)



There are several features that can enthuse the winter walker. Plenty of contrasts and interest along the route help, a route which can be comfortably completed within the short winter days is vital, and the prospect of a welcome cup of tea and cake at the end of the walk is a great incentive to get up and go. This walk around Beverley definitely ticks all the boxes.

Beverley is an attractive and bustling market town. Its most famous building is undoubtedly the Minster, which

has been described as one of Europe's finest gothic churches, and is one of the largest parish churches in England – bigger than a third of the country's cathedrals. Beverley's markets, shops and racecourse are also a draw, and are all visited on this walk.

The route starts from the North door of the Minster (the visitor entrance). Cross the road in front of the entrance and walk along Highgate, a pleasant cobbled road, to reach a zebra crossing. Carry on over the road and past one of the distinctive cream phone boxes of Kingston Communications. The road

becomes Butcher Row, and leads to a fork. Take the left fork, along Toll Gavel, leading up to Beverley's market square. Pass to the left of the ornate market cross which is festooned with lights during the Christmas period. Continue in the same direction along North Bar Within, past St. Mary's Church to North Bar.

At first glance this brick built gateway appears relatively recent. It was however built in 1409-10, and is considered to be the best surviving example of a brick built town gate in England. Pass through the gate and turn left along York Road.

A little further along on the left hand side is a building that has five boards detailing the Pasture Masters' 'rules, by-laws and orders' for the use of the Westwood common land. Continue past a road sign for the Westwood, cross York Road, and turn right immediately after the last house along a drive, then pass through a metal gate on the left hand side onto the Westwood.

Turn right through the gate, and walk along the boundary of the Westwood. After passing the running rails of the end of the straight course of Beverley racecourse, head diagonally across

to two small wooden gates in the racecourse bend. Pass through the gates, under the running rail and onto the course. Walk round the course in an anticlockwise direction.

An annual race meeting was established in Beverley as long ago as 1767, and there are now 19 days of racing scheduled each year between April and September. At the end of the back straight, bear left around the turn towards the grandstands. Leave the course to the right at a gap in the running rail just before a wooden building. Turn left after this building and walk to a set

of black metal gates. Pass through a pedestrian gate on the right hand side of the main gates and turn right.

Walk past a cattle grid, cross the road and through a kissing gate which is next to a farm gate. Walk ahead across the pasture towards the woodland of Burton Bushes. A gate and stile and information board mark the entrance to this pleasant area of broadleaf woodland. Burton Bushes is an SSSI, and gives an indication of what the whole of the Westwood might have looked like

Above: Bright sunlight picks out Beverley Minster in this view from the Westwood



before tree clearance and grazing altered the landscape. Follow the main path through the woods, which keeps quite close to the right hand edge of the trees to reach a similar gate and stile on the other side. A broad but faint path heads across the pasture passing to the right on a clump of trees.

The route now follows the boundary hedge of the Westwood, passing one of the greens of Beverley Golf Club to reach a road near a cattle grid. Cross the road and continue in the same direction, passing more golf course greens on the left of the route to reach a second road. Again cross the road, and follow the path on the other side which bends round to the left. The route continues round to reach the clubhouse of Beverley Golf Club, which has the lowest part of a windmill as part of the structure. Walk round the car park to the left, and along the entrance drive towards a road. There are great views across the Westwood towards the cream towers of the West front of Beverley Minster from this area.

Turn right out of the golf club drive onto the road, and then left where the



road forks. The Black Mill is a clear landmark on the left across the pasture. Walk across to the mill, which is the most impressive of the mill buildings on the Westwood. Turn right after reaching the mill. There is no distinct path at this point, but the route heads slightly to the right of the direction of Beverley Minster. Cross the road and continue in the same direction, skirting to the right of a wooded hollow to reach a road.

Turn left along this road, Cartwright Lane, and head directly towards Beverley Minster. Carry on straight across

Top: Westwood Black Mill **Above:** These five boards detail the rules and by-laws for use of the Westwood



Top: Path through Burton Bushes
Above: The lower part of Union Mill now forms part of Beverley Golf Club's clubhouse



Left: Pass through the 15th century North Bar and turn left

a road junction with two mini roundabouts and continue towards the Minster. Turn left, along St. John Street, and then right to return to the starting point.

It is well worth walking around to the west side of the Minster to look at the superb carved figures on the facade, and

going inside to see many interesting features, including a Saxon sanctuary chair, and the largest collection of medieval carved musicians in the world. Alternatively, there are plenty of cafes, pubs and restaurants in Beverley to provide refreshments after the exertion of the walk. ■

Fact file

Walk length: 5 miles.

Maps: OS Explorer 293 (Kingston upon Hull and Beverley), OS Landranger 107 (Kingston upon Hull, Beverley and Driffield).

Going: No steep climbs or stiles. It is necessary to duck under the running rails of the racecourse at one point.

Start and finish: The north entrance to Beverley Minster. There are several pay and display car parks in Beverley.

Refreshments: There are many cafes, restaurants and pubs in Beverley.

Toilets: Public toilets are available on Dyer Lane, Sow Hill and Station Square in Beverley.

Public transport: Beverley railway station is on the Hull – Scarborough line. There are bus services from to Beverley from Hull, York and Scarborough.

GPX file: If you would like a free gpx file of the route for this walk, for your walking GPS unit, e-mail paul@fotocraftimages.co.uk



Above: 1:50,000 OS walk map with the route in red
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