

STEPPING OUT:

CULVERTHORPE PARKLAND AND FARMLAND



Moderate Terrain



3.5 Miles
Circular
2 hours

200519



A 3.5 mile (5.5km) circular walk close to the hamlet of Culverthorpe in Lincolnshire.

The walking route takes you around the parkland of Culverthorpe Hall and out into the surrounding farmland estate, with lovely far-reaching views and plenty of wildlife along the way. This walk is part of the Stepping Out network, published through a collaboration with North Kesteven District Council to inspire more people to enjoy the district's landscapes, ancient woodland, historic buildings and charming villages.

PLEASE NOTE: Whilst the bridges and stiles on this exact walking route are currently in good condition, on the alternative routes offered on the NKDC Stepping Out network from Culverthorpe some of the bridges and stiles are currently awaiting repair. Please take care if using these alternative routes.

If you are looking for refreshments, there are pubs in the villages of Silk Willoughby and Wilsford, just a short drive away.

Getting there

The hamlet of Culverthorpe is located 5 miles south-west of Sleaford, 9 miles north-east of Grantham and 3 miles south-east of Ancaster. The walk starts and finishes from the Stepping Out car park near to Culverthorpe Hall.

The nearest post code, which will take you to a road nearby, is **NG32 3NJ**.

From this point, continue on the lane south then west and you will see a brown sign on your left, pointing to the Culverthorpe Walks car park on your right. The car park is open every day from 8am and closes at 7.30pm (Apr-Oct) and at 5pm (Nov-Mar).

Walk Sections

Go → 1 Start to Farm Buildings

Standing in the car park with your back to the vehicle entrance, walk across the car park at about 10 o'clock to join the narrow public footpath marked with a yellow arrow. After just a few metres you will emerge through a fence gap to reach a T-junction with a driveway (with entrance gates to your left).

Turn right to follow the driveway, with hedgerows each

Access Notes

1. The walk includes several moderate gradients throughout and follows a mixture of parkland driveways, farm tracks and grass footpaths plus one path across an arable field and one short stretch of quiet lane.
2. Some stretches can be very muddy after rain and in winter. Most of the paths are through arable land or enclosed away from pastures, but you will cross two pastures (that are likely to be holding sheep or other livestock) and one paddock (that may be holding horses).
3. You will need to negotiate several footbridges and gates plus seven stiles (five of these have tight fence surrounds so all but the smallest dogs are likely to need a lift over).
4. Following the optional shortcut and the alternative ending described within the guide, will avoid the livestock and will reduce the stile count to one (which has an under-gate gap alongside, which dogs up to Labrador-size should squeeze through).
5. Dogs are welcome on these footpaths within the Culverthorpe estate, but you are asked to keep them on leads at all times. Please remember the Countryside Code.
6. Some paths are provided by kind permission of the landowner, please only use the waymarked paths. Where young stock may be present, please make sure your dog is under firm control in these areas.
7. OS Map Explorer 248.



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side, as it leads you between the two large lakes within the parkland. Culverthorpe Hall is surrounded by 3,000 acres of parkland which includes these two lakes and rolling pastureland.

Follow the driveway as it bends left then right, climbing steadily to reach a wide metal gate ahead. Cross the stile alongside this (most dogs will probably squeeze under the gate) then keep ahead, passing some farm buildings on your right.

1 → 2 Farm Buildings to Parkland Stile



Immediately after these buildings, do NOT follow the main driveway which swings right through a gateway, instead turn left across a concrete hardstanding area and join the unmade farm track with a ditch and hedgerow on your right and an open crop field on your left. If you look in the distance at about 11 o'clock, you should be able to see the spire of the church at Heydour, which we will be passing later.

Continue for just one field length to reach a waymarker post ahead. Turn left here to join a wide green avenue, heading downhill between a hedgerow and a fence. At the bottom of the slope you will see another waymarker post ahead, at which point you have two choices. If you wish to take a shortcut at this point (which avoids three of the stiles), turn right here, follow the field edge path for one field length and pass through the hedgerow tunnel ahead to reach a crossroads of paths. (Then pick up the directions from the walk section called Crossroads to Parkland Corner).

For the full route, follow the main track which swings left and then right. A few paces later, as the track swings left again, fork right through a wide hedge gap, passing another waymarker post and continuing with a tall hedgerow on your right. Follow this field edge path as it swings right and you will reach a stile ahead, at the edge of open parkland.

2 → 3 Parkland Stile to Church Fence



Cross the stile (which has a wildlife and dog swing gate alongside) to enter the parkland (which will probably be holding sheep), with a lake visible down to your left. Walk straight ahead, keeping the fence line on your right. At the far side, cross the stile and keep ahead, crossing a stone track and footbridge and going through a metal gate to join a woodland path.

Pass through the next small metal gate to continue on the narrow path through trees and scrub. Continue just until you reach a fence ahead, with Heydour Church clearly visible ahead and to your left. This is as close as we get to the church on this walking route, but if you wish to visit it you can turn left here and return to this point when you are ready to continue.

3 → 4 Church Fence to Crossroads



To continue the main walking route, turn sharp right at this junction for a few paces to reach a stile. Cross this to enter a pasture (which may be holding livestock) and, with your back to the stile, walk directly ahead to reach the top field corner. Pass through the small metal gate here (or use the stile alongside) and you will emerge to a junction with a tarmac track.

Cross directly over the track, cross the wooden footbridge ahead and follow the fenced footpath which swings right and then left. The path continues between a fence and a hedgerow. The fenced pasture on your left is sometimes holding beautiful Highland Cattle, whilst the ancient hedgerow on your right is normally teeming with birds and other wildlife.

At the end of this first enclosed stretch, cross the next footbridge ahead and you will emerge to a waymarker post which marks a crossroads of paths.



4 ➔ 5 Crossroads to Parkland Corner



(NOTE: If you have followed the short-cut, turn right at this crossroads to re-join the main route and follow the rest of the directions from this point). If you are following the full route, go straight ahead at this crossroads, continuing with the hedgerow on your right and a fenced pasture on your left. As you climb, you should be able to see the church spire at Kelby in the distance at about 11 o'clock. The path leads you over the crest of the rise and down towards the bottom field corner.

Follow the waymarker here, turning right through a tunnel in the hedgerow and emerging to the corner of a crop field. Ignore the footbridge on your left, instead keep straight ahead on the grass track with a hedgerow on your left and an open crop field on your right. Follow the grass track winding ahead, eventually passing under two small sets of power lines. About 90 metres later, cross the sleeper bridge ahead to enter a second crop field and continue ahead on the grass track.

After about 300 metres, ignore a footbridge on your left, instead keep ahead for a further 100 metres to reach a waymarker post on your left. Turn right here to join a wide grass path leading you uphill through the crop field. At the top of the hill, follow the waymarker arrows to dog-leg right and then left through a hedge gap and then continue ahead on the grass track.

This high ground is the perfect place to explore the geology of the area. Dominated by the limestone hills where the Kesteven Uplands meet Lincoln Cliff, Culverthorpe and its neighbouring villages nestle on their northernmost slopes. Cut by an ice age tributary of the River Trent (as melt water flowed east from the Vale of Belvoir), this prehistoric river created this gently rolling landscape. On a clear day, it is possible to count ten local church spires from the high vantage points.

Continue on the winding grass track until you come to a waymarker post ahead, with a sign showing that the continuation of the grass track is private. At this junction you will see the corner of the fenced parkland of Culverthorpe Hall ahead to your left.

5 ➔ 6 Parkland Corner to Park Gates

Turn left here, as directed by the waymarker, with the fenced parkland now on your right and a crop field on your left. Just before the end of the field, turn right to cross a waymarked footbridge leading you into a small section of woodland. This woodland has a lovely display of snowdrops and bluebells in the spring.

Cross a second footbridge and you will emerge to the corner of a crop field. Maintain your direction, crossing this field diagonally to reach the far corner. (NOTE: If the field is



impassable due to crops or ploughing, you can follow the right-hand field boundary around two sides instead). At the far side you will emerge to a quiet lane. Turn right to join this (ignoring the footpath signed off to the left) and continue down to the T-junction. Turn right (signed as a no through road) and this short stretch of lane leads you directly to the ornate entrance gates for Culverthorpe Park.

6 ➔ 7 Park Gates to End



Pass through the pedestrian gate (to the right of the vehicle gates) and walk ahead on the driveway for about 70 metres to reach a stile on your left. At this point you have two choices for the final stretch:

If you would like a closer view of Culverthorpe Hall (and would like to avoid three more stiles), keep ahead on the driveway and this will lead you past the hall (on your right) before swinging left to reach the farm buildings you passed on the outward leg (Waypoint 1). Keep ahead to re-cross the stile alongside the wide metal gate and then retrace your steps back to the car park.

For the main route, which gives lovely views of the parkland lake, turn left over the stile to enter a horse paddock. Walk directly ahead, staying close to the fence on your right, and exit via the stile at the far side to join a grass path enclosed between fences. This enclosed path leads you past a woodland on your left. About 50 metres after the woodland, you will come to a choice of two enclosed paths. Turn right here, continuing between metal fences.

Further along, lovely views open up across the lake on your left, and you should be able to glimpse the rooftops of Culverthorpe Hall across to your right. Simply keep ahead on the enclosed grass path, crossing a further stile along the way and emerging via a kissing gate to reach a junction with the driveway (which you should recognise from the outward leg). Turn left to pass between the two lakes and, just before you reach the gates ahead, turn left through a fence gap to reach the car park where the walk began.

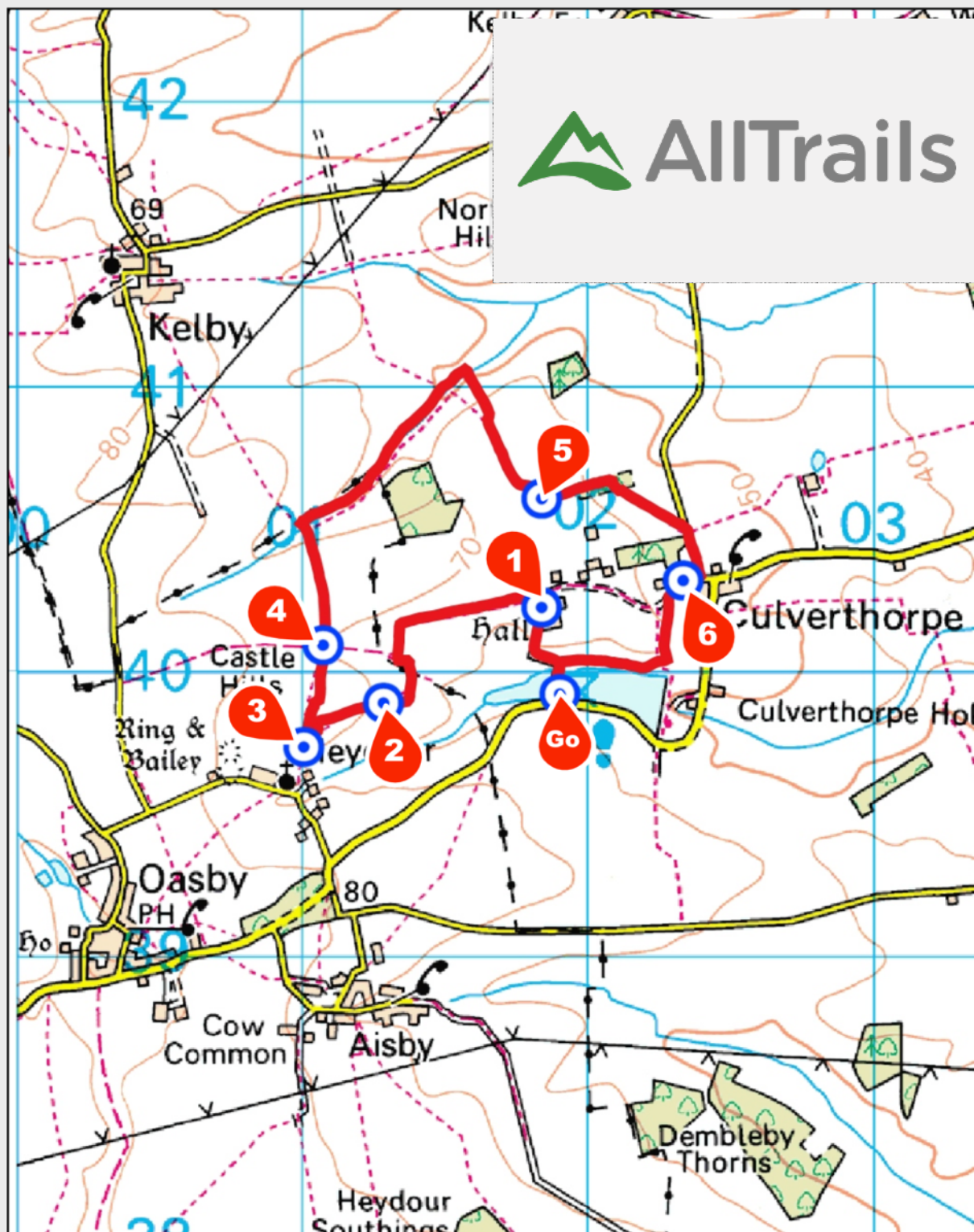


Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and a map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.



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