

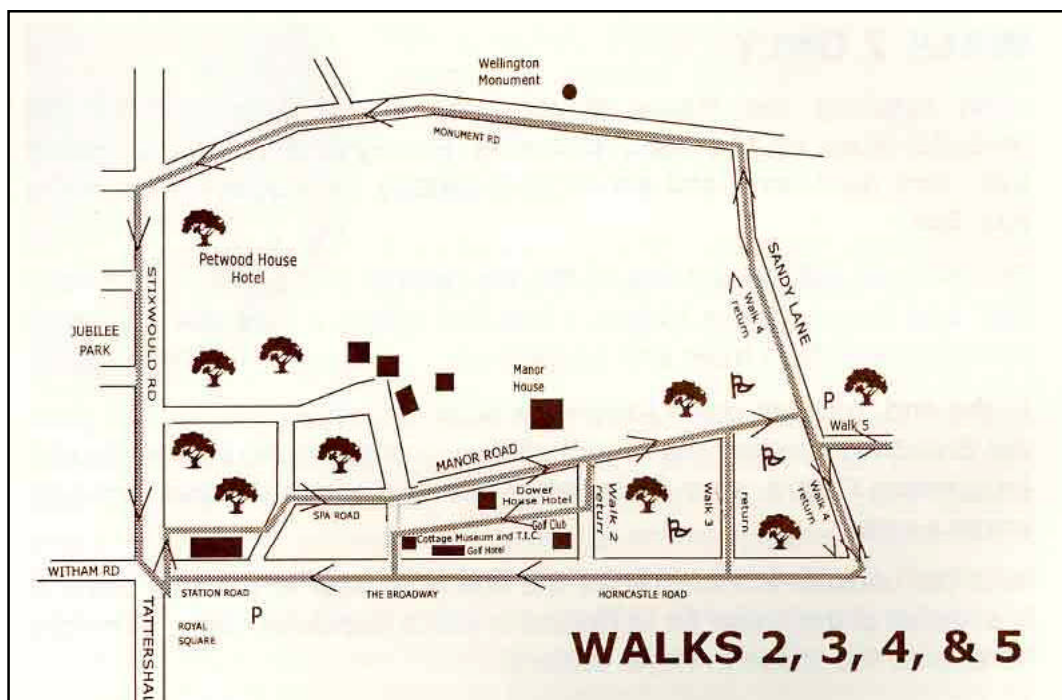
Village, Woods & Fields

Start from Royal Square - Grid Reference: TF 193631

These four walks all start along the same route, following part of the Viking Way long distance footpath that passes through Woodhall. The walker may branch off at any of the four suggested points, according to preference. These walks pass through some of Woodhall's most beautiful scenery. From Royal Square, cross the road and take the path to Stixwold Road that goes behind the Station Road shops. Note the shop on the corner (Estate Agent's), in 2006 the brick, stone and timber balustrade and fascia was reinstated and the roof re-covered.

You are now on Church Walk, so named because Edwardian visitors to the Victoria Hotel used it to walk to St Andrew's church. This stood in the churchyard in the centre of the village until it was demolished after the last war, when it was feared that the bombing had made it unsafe. At the end of Church Walk, carry straight on along Spa Road, with the pinewoods and Coronation Hall on the left. When the road bends sharp left to the Spa Baths, go straight ahead along Manor Road, past the Dower House Hotel.

The road is lined with lime trees on the left, beyond which the Bracken golf course and woods can be seen. This was originally parkland belonging to the Manor House. The Manor is once again privately owned after serving for several years as the headquarters of the National Farmers Union in Lincolnshire. Shortly before the house is reached, a standing of tall pines flanks the road on the right.



You can opt for Walk 2 at this point

Walks 3, 4 & 5 only Carry on past the Manor House, with its walled garden, and the gardener's cottage on the right. Note the huge spreading mature oaks on the left. In the early summer the rhododendrons in these private woods are a spectacular multi-coloured mass of flowers. A rhododendron hedge flanks the path as it runs alongside an enclosed field - this spot is a real suntrap in warm weather. At the end of the field, the path carries on through the famous championship golf course. Walk 3 leaves at this point and follows the branch to the right, walks 4 and 5 continue straight on.

You can opt for Walk 3 at this point

Walks 4 & 5 only Please keep your dogs on a lead now and have consideration for golfers as you follow the Viking Way through one of Britain's loveliest (some say THE loveliest) golf courses. Colonel Hotchkin who lived in the Manor House laid out the course. The path goes through copses of trees, havens for wildlife, and across fairways.

The sandy soil in this part of the Spa is evident in the patches of heather, gorse and broom that add their own colourful fragrance to this delightful walk.

Across to the right you will see the Tower on the Moor, the Woodhall Spa emblem. It is believed to date from the 15th century as a lookout tower and hunting lodge for nearby Tattershall Castle. Originally a pond, or lake was created near it. There was also a secret passage - long lost - to Tattershall Castle. Unfortunately, it is not possible to walk up to the Tower unless you are playing golf. Near the end of the course, by an impressive group of Scots Pine, the path finishes in a piece of woodland and the walker leaves the golf course over a stile to Sandy Lane.

For a direct route back to the centre of Woodhall Spa, turn right upon leaving the golf course. A short distance down the lane, it joins the Horncastle Road. Turn right again here and take the path straight back into Woodhall Spa village centre, about a mile and a half.

You can opt for Walk 4 or 5 at this point

Lovers of country lanes will wish you to turn left on Walk 4. **Go to Walk 4**

If the walk through the golf links has left you interested in going further, then you are ideally placed to continue along the Viking Way. **Go to Walk 5**

Walk 2 - Cottage Museum

40 minutes

Upon reaching the Manor House, take the tarmac footpath on the right, just before a magnificent horse chestnut tree. Almost immediately turn right again onto the Spa Trail.

The footpath follows the track bed of the old railway and passes behind the Golf and Dower House Hotels. The Trail offers a pleasant sheltered stroll between high trees and hedgerows.

At the end, turn left down Iddesleigh Road for a few yards until it joins the Broadway passing the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum and Tourist Information Centre. The Museum is open from Easter until the end of October, and well worth a visit.



Note the unusual architecture of the house on the corner. It is supposedly a replica of the house on St Helena in which Napoleon died. Turn right here, past the shops to Royal Square.

Walk 3 - The Manor House



1 hour

Follow the path across the width of the golf course, passing between the 17th green and 18th tee, before crossing the 2nd fairway. The private track leading off to the left is the track bed of the former Woodhall Spa to Horncastle branch line. Remember to consider and give way to golfers and ensure your dog is on a lead here. This path joins Horncastle Road – a road lined with trees like many of the avenues in Woodhall Spa. There is a surfaced path all the way back to

the village centre, about a mile away. The flowering cherries make this particularly attractive in the spring. Soon after you join Horncastle Road it becomes 'The Broadway', and you will pass the Golf Hotel and shops on the way back.

Walk 4 - Links & Lanes

1 - 1.5 hours

Follow the lane to its end, just over half a mile, to a charming group of cottages. Turn left, down Monument Road. (The road to the right leads to Old Woodhall, from which the more recent Spa borrowed its name). Soon after you turn, you will see the Wellington Monument on the right. The Monument stands in front of Waterloo Wood, an oak wood grown from acorns sown after the famous battle in 1815. Built in 1844 by Colonel Richard Elmhirst, the monument faces West Ashby, where he lived.

Though neither Sandy Lane nor Monument Road has footpaths, the verges, particularly down Monument Road, are wide enough to walk on and avoid the traffic, though both are generally quiet roads. Upon reaching Stixwold Road turn left and follow the footpath back to Royal Square. On your left you will pass the Petwood Hotel, and on the right, Jubilee Park with its gardens and varied recreational facilities.



Walk 5 - Spa Trail to Horncastle

When you leave the Golf Course, turn right along Sandy Lane, and then left along the signed Spa Trail (& Viking Way) which from here follows the trackbed of the old railway line from Woodhall Spa to Horncastle, the nearest Market town. There is a small car park here, and a board indicates some of the birds and wild plants you can expect to see along it. You can follow this for as far as you wish. About a mile further down there is a picnic place and small car park which can also be reached from the main Horncastle Road. This quiet route sometimes lies above the surrounding countryside - woods and fields - and sometimes sinks below it, but it is possible to detect the early undulations that mark the very beginnings of the hillier wold country beyond Horncastle.

The first wood on the left, Highall and the later White Hall forestry plantation, are both named after moated halls that once stood there. Nature quickly reclaimed the old trackbed and it is now a sanctuary for all types of wild flowers and plants that are becoming rarer in our country lanes - from meadow sweet, and wild roses to willowherb. Spring is particularly colourful with celandines, primroses and wood anemones bordering the track.

After 1 3/4 miles the route passes under the Woodhall Spa to Horncastle road bridge to meet up with disused Horncastle Canal. Horncastle station and the end of track have long since disappeared to make way for a housing estate, however the trail ends pleasantly on the banks of the Horncastle Canal and River Bain.



The track is certainly a more direct route to Horncastle than the main road. If you decide to return along the Viking Way, an interesting diversion is possible once you have passed under the old railway bridge. Look for the track up to the road on the left, cross the bridge, walk along the road for three hundred yards and then turn left for the 'village' of Martin. The road ends just beyond St Michael's, the little church with a colourful mix of stone and brickwork. Continue straight ahead and take the bridleway heading west for Thornton, White Hall and Highall Woods. The bridleway

rejoins the Spa Trail approximately half a mile before reaching Sandy Lane. At Sandy Lane the walker can take one of the routes suggested for walk 4.

A feasibility study has been carried out with a view to upgrading the Spa Trail to make it accessible for all abilities and to link it to the Water Rail Way. For more information visit the Spa Trail page