

STEPPING OUT:

MARTIN AND METHERINGHAM BARFF



Moderate Terrain



A circular walk of just over 6 miles (10km) from the village of Martin in Lincolnshire.

The route explores the surrounding peaceful countryside, a patchwork of woodlands and open fields with far-reaching views throughout. Along the way you will discover the former site of RAF Metheringham, including the old runway and a poignant memorial, plus a stretch of Car Dyke, a ditch first constructed by the Romans running along the western edge of the Fens. This walk is part of the Stepping Out network, published through a collaboration between iFootpath and North Kesteven District Council to inspire more people to enjoy the district's landscapes, ancient woodland, historic buildings and charming villages.

Nearby attractions include the Metheringham Airfield Visitor Centre on Martin Moor. If you are looking for refreshments, the village of Martin is home to the Royal Oak (this was looking for new owners in early 2018, so check the current situation if you want to visit).

Getting there

The village of Martin is located about 5 miles west of Woodhall Spa and 3 miles east of Metheringham. The walk starts and finishes at the dedicated Stepping Out parking area, located at the eastern end of the High Street, with parking provided for a few cars along the edge of a stone farm track.

The nearest post code is **LN4 3QX** (for a point at the eastern end of the High Street).

Continue east out of the village and, immediately before the national speed limit signs, turn right on to the stone farm track to park. If this area is full, there is also roadside parking within the village, but please park with respect for residents. If you are coming by public transport, there are several bus stops along Martin High Street. For information on bus transport, call Traveline on 0871 2002233 or visit www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/busrailtravel.

Walk Sections

Go 1 Start to North Moor Lane

From the stone track parking area, return to the road and turn left along Martin High Street. Continue along the left-hand pavement, passing the tell-tale signs of former businesses (including Blacksmith Cottage, The Old Brewhouse and the former Post Office) on your left and then the village hall on your right.

Get the iFootpath App for a smarter walking experience. Hundreds of walking guides in the palm of your hand with live maps that show your progress as you walk. Say goodbye to wrong turns!

get iFOOTPATH



Access Notes



1. The walk includes only a couple of steady gradients and follows a mixture of village roads, farm tracks, country lanes and grass tracks.
2. The surfaces are firm for the most part, but some stretches can be muddy after periods of rain.
3. For the majority of the route there are no obstacles, but on the final stretch you will need to negotiate a gate plus four stiles (the last two of which dogs may need a lift over, if the adjacent gates are locked).
4. Most of the route is free from livestock, but you will cross two pastures that may be holding cattle towards the end.
5. Please remember the Countryside Code. 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.
6. OS Map Explorer 272.



180918





Eventually, you will pass Holy Trinity Church on your right. Swap to the right-hand pavement (with care) at this point and, just a few metres later, turn right into Linwood Road, passing the village school on your left. Continue on the lane beyond the school. Ignore the first footpath signed to the right and, a few metres later, turn left onto a narrow lane, North Moor Lane (signed as a restricted byway).

1 → 2 North Moor Lane to RAF Metheringham



Follow this tarmac lane which passes the village playing fields on your left and then ends alongside the entrance drive for North Moor Farm. At this point, keep ahead on the grass track with a beautiful row of oak trees on your left. Follow the grass track as it meanders ahead, passing a fenced copse on your right and then a derelict brick barn on your left.

Beyond this brick barn, keep straight ahead on the grass path which leads you to a sleeper footbridge on your right. Turn right to cross the bridge and keep ahead along the left-hand edge of the crop field, with an ancient hedgerow running on your left. At the end of the field you will reach a T-junction with a grass track. Turn left, passing alongside a metal gate, and keep ahead on the concrete track for 140 metres to reach a T-junction with the former runway of RAF Metheringham.

2 → 3 RAF Metheringham to Blankney Wood

The main route continues to the right shortly, but first we take a quick detour to visit a memorial. Turn left along the runway for 100 metres and you will see the brick memorial on your left. This is the perfect spot to pause and understand the history of the airfield. RAF Metheringham opened in October 1943 and



was soon home to the 106 Squadron, formerly commanded by Guy Gibson. Operational flying started in November in time for the Battle of Berlin. By VE Day in May 1945, the squadron had flown more than 200 sorties from the airfield, losing 57 Lancasters.

When you have finished at the memorial, turn around and retrace your steps back along the runway, soon passing the track from which you emerged on your right. You will have noticed the vast arable fields alongside the runway, a reminder that this area was also home to a famous potato pioneer, Alderman G Flintham OBE JP. Flintham was an influential figure in the development of potato fertilisers. More than 100 years ago, his great innovation of early potatoes meant the crop could be harvested in June. Once lifted from the ground, the crop was rushed in wicker baskets to Metheringham station for distribution to markets as far away as Sheffield. By annually rotating his potatoes with mustard crops, Flintham was able to keep producing without exhausting the soil.

At the end of the runway, you will come to a T-junction with a minor road. At this point you have two choices:

If you wish to follow a shorter route (of just 4 miles) turn right along the minor road for half a mile to reach the point where the road crosses Car Dyke and then swings right. Now skip to the point marked within the section called Blankney North Drove to End.

For the full route, cross over the minor road and go straight ahead past the metal vehicle barrier to join the concrete track. Stay with the track as it bears left and left again, now running between open fields with the large woodland belt, known as Blankney Wood, running across to your right.

3 → 4 Blankney Wood to Car Dyke



At the end of this long straight stretch of track, follow the track as it bears left again and, a few paces later, you will reach a waymarker post. Fork right here, leaving the concrete track and joining a grass track which leads towards woodland. As you



approach the woods, you will reach a fork in the grass track. Take the right-hand branch to reach the woodland corner and then join the enclosed grass path, with a fence running on your right and the edge of the woodland running immediately on your left.

At the end of the wood, you will emerge to a T-junction with a tarmac track. Turn right to join this track and follow it as it bends left, continuing to reach the buildings of Metheringham Barff Farm across to your right. Immediately after passing the farmhouse, you will reach a fingerpost marking a junction in the track.

Turn right to join the side track (signed as a public bridleway), passing the side of the farmhouse on your right. Beyond the farm buildings, keep ahead on the track now with beautiful far-reaching views ahead. Across to your left, you should be able to see a pretty reservoir surrounded by reeds. The track leads you steadily downhill and, at the bottom, keep ahead to cross a wide drainage ditch, Car Dyke.

4 → 5 Car Dyke to Blankney North Drove



Immediately after crossing the dyke, turn right to stay with the main track which continues with a hedgerow running on your left and the dyke running to your right. Car Dyke runs for 76 miles from the River Witham near Washingborough to Waterbeach in Cambridge. Archaeologists believe that the dyke formed part of a Roman ringvaart (a ring canal) constructed at the beginning of the second Century. The system controlled freshwater and tidal flows, allowing the fens to be drained. Its purpose would have been to service Roman industry including salt, iron and ceramics.

We will be staying alongside Car Dyke for the remainder of our walk. The track leads you past Middle Fen Farm on your left and then Delph End Farm also on your left. Beyond the farms, continue ahead on the dyke-side track, now with woodland each side. About 400 metres along this woodland stretch (and before you reach the brick property ahead), look for a wooden post on your left which marks a set of steps leading down to a sculptural bench. This carved seat celebrates the heritage and history of the local land.

When you have finished at the bench, continue your journey on the concrete track, with Car Dyke still on your right, passing another property (Moonacre House) on your left. Just beyond this house, you will reach a junction with a quiet lane, Blankney North Drove (with Willow Tree Bungalow just to your right).

5 → 6 Blankney North Drove to End



Go straight ahead on the lane, still following the line of the dyke on your right. The lane leads you between a handful of houses to reach a staggered junction with a minor road. Your route will continue ahead here.

NOTE: If you are following the shortcut, pick up the directions from this point.

Follow the lane, signed to Blankney Lane and Kirkstead Bridge, with Car Dyke running on your right. You will reach a crossroads with the beautiful farmhouse and converted barns of Carr Dyke Farm on your right. Go straight ahead onto the stone track (signed as a restricted byway), passing Tramps Cottage on your right. Pass a further property on your right and you will reach a wooden gate ahead. Go through this and follow the grass track leading ahead.

You will reach a wide metal gate ahead, which marks the start of two dyke-side pastures, which may be holding cattle. Cross the stile to enter the first pasture and walk straight ahead on the grass bank. At the far side, cross two stiles in quick succession to enter the second pasture. Follow the grass bank path which leads you ahead and then swings left (ignoring a footbridge). At the far corner, cross the final stile to join a grass track with a hedgerow on your left.

A little way along, ignore the concrete footbridge over the dyke on your right, instead keep ahead on the main bridleway with the dyke running on your right. At the end of the grass bank, keep ahead to merge with a minor road and follow this to a junction with the B1191. If you look to your left at this junction, you will notice a mosaic artwork which depicts the Roman origins of Car Dyke. Cross over the B1191 with care and you will reach the parking area ahead 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 an Ordnance Survey 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.



Remember...the best way of following our walking guides is to use the iFootpath App (iOS and Android) where you will have all the information in the palm of your hand and see your exact location on the live map as you travel



© Crown Copyright and database right 07 March 2018. Ordnance Survey 100017926.

