



Blyth is a village situated on the old Great North Road, six miles north of Worksop. The River Ryton flows through the village. Park where you can in the village and head towards the church on the northern edge of the village to start the walk.

This walk is two miles long and takes up to two hours at a very leisurely pace with good paths throughout. The area is fairly flat overall with one gentle uphill incline.



On a beautiful spring afternoon, we started our walk around the neighbourhood of Blyth at the main gates of St Mary and St Martin's church. This is a Norman church, built for use as part of a Benedictine priory which was founded in 1088 by Roger de Busli, who fought at Hastings with William the Conqueror. The side gate beside the vehicular gate is open for access to the churchyard. The church has a very interesting history and interior, so we recommend a visit if it is open. There is a giant mural of the Last Judgement (Doom Painting), only rediscovered in 1885 and properly conserved in 1987. It is considered to be one of the largest and most complete medieval murals in the country.

With your back to the church gates follow the path round to the right and continue heading right. On your right-hand side the red brick houses with a cupola and weathervane date from 1740 and belonged to Blyth Hall. At one time they housed the estate office, groom and stable-boy. As you near the left-hand bend, look down to your right to the impressive gates of Blyth Hall. The hall was built at the end of the seventeenth century and became the principal seat of the Mellish family. The gates are now the only remaining feature of the hall which was demolished in 1973.



Continue straight on along Sheffield Road past the old milestone – very difficult to read! Many of the houses' names here reflect the history of this part of Blyth, which was part of the hall's parkland. Very carefully cross this busy road by the turning to the cricket ground to take the public footpath signposted opposite.

At the start of this footpath, known locally as the Ridings, is Park Lodge built in 1840.

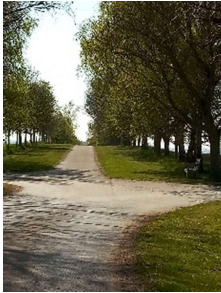
Keep straight on this path until you reach the road.



When you reach the main road, cross over and turn right past Spital Farm and out of the village. Despite the stretch of busy road, we were lucky enough to hear and see a skylark overhead on our walk.

After a fairly short distance downhill, take the public footpath on your left up the hill to Spital Farm.

(If you would like a longer walk to Hodsock Priory continue on the main road until you come to the sign on the right.)



An avenue of mixed deciduous trees, including silver birch and whitebeam, line the route up the incline. Looking to your left, you will again see Blyth church and behind it the landscape, now transformed, created by the former coal mine at Harworth. There are several benches along the way to sit and enjoy the views here.



The public footpath leads you through the heart of the very tidy farmyard. Turn left at the end of the footpath back into Blyth village. As you walk down the hill, the church is clearly visible in the distance and on your left, you pass the cemetery with the war memorial to those village men lost in both world wars.

Cross the road by Lower Spital farmhouse and as you approach the centre of the village follow the side road, Spital Road, round to the right (no pavement, but usually quiet) towards the village green.

The village green with its benches and seats is a nice place for a picnic or drink. It's also worth noting that Blyth has several pubs for those wanting a drink or a meal after the walk, including former coaching inns. You will see a memorial on the green, which commemorates two events from World War II. One memorial is to the Royal Canadian Airforce crew who died in a crash at Hodsock in August 1944 and the other is in memory of members of the OTU RAF Worksop who crashed in Blyth in March 1944.



The cream-coloured house opposite the village green was the old vicarage. The stone house at the south end of the green is the site of the former leper hospital of St John the Evangelist. A leper hospital was founded at nearby Hodsock after 1199 but it was moved to Blyth in 1446 as it was derelict and there were no lepers remaining. It was refounded in Blyth as a hospital for poor strangers and pregnant women.

Continue past the green and cross the main road at the zebra crossing. Turn right along the High Street (B6045) passing the old Methodist church, now a private residence, and the Barnby Memorial Hall, where many village activities are held.



You are now approaching the church again with a lovely avenue of acacia trees on the driveway leading up to it.

We hope you have enjoyed your walk around historic Blyth. We found the villagers who we spoke to along the way friendly and also proud and knowledgeable about their village's long history.

The Arts Society Dukeries Trails of Discovery Team 2021.