

Route Information

Kirkham Priors

Total Distance

4.6 mi (7.4 km)

Elevation

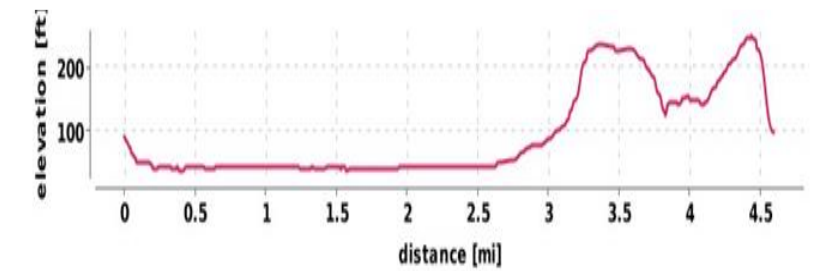
37 ft at lowest point

249 ft at highest point

Total Ascent

334 ft

Elevation Profile



Start From: YO60 7JS ///relished.watched.fact

You can either park outside Kirkham Priory (over the railway crossing) or by the end of this route next to Oak Cliff Wood before the railway crossing, where there is signpost into the woods and is your route back.

1. The start is over the railway crossing and just before the bridge on your right (or left if coming from the Priory), where you will see a signpost to Howsham Bridge 3 miles. Take this path and head across the field. You can enjoy some lovely views across the river to the ruins of Kirkham Priory and also you may want to have a look at the weir, before heading to the top side of the field and through the swing gate into Kirkham Wood.
2. The wood is a nature reserve so you need to keep dogs on a lead for this bit. Just watch your footing if it is muddy as it can be a bit slippery but when we were there was an abundance of wild garlic which was beautiful (but it can be poisonous to dogs if eaten in large quantities). Wend your way through the woods enjoying the peace and quiet and views over the river as they are revealed to you. At the end of this section, cross over the wooden footbridge and round the edge of the field where the path opens up to the river bank on your left.
3. All you have to do now is follow the path along the river for about 2 miles. It was so lovely and peaceful on this bit of the walk and I am sure that you will take lots of breaks to enjoy the scenery and some tasty snacks.
4. You will pass over another wooden bridge - which you have to step up and down onto another step to cross over - it's not too high and Bill managed to easily jump it.
5. You then cross some wooden duck boarding - Bill did not like this much as there were some gaps in between the planks (not wide ones) which was enough to make him walk in a peculiar way!
6. After the duck board (which you will be grateful for if it is muddy) the path continues to follow the river with fields to your right, and then over another wooden bridge. We spotted some wild irises on this stretch which were not yet in bloom but will be lovely when they are.
7. There's then more duck boarding (cue funny walk from Bill), more twisty turny path along the river and another wooden bridge. Over the other side of the river is Howsham Wood. Just keep following the path.
8. You will come to a wooden gate, which you go through and soon you will come to a part of the path with a wire fence on your right. Follow this along for a short distance and you will come to a wooden swing gate in the fence on your right and a broken signpost. The path is way-marked the way you have just come, straight ahead and through the gate.
9. Go through the gate and cross straight over the field. Be warned this is where I went up to almost my knees in water - it is deceptive!
10. At the other side of the field there is a wooden bridge with a swing gate at the other end - again you have to step up to cross this bridge.
11. After the bridge cross straight over the field ahead of you - you will see another gate in the fence line ahead. Go through this next gate into a ploughed field - this is where it gets interesting!
12. The path is supposed to go straight across this ploughed field - but it has been ploughed!! Instead turn left through the gate and just follow the field edge along. It turns right at the corner and then you will come to a quiet road.
13. Turn right on the road and walk up it to Rider Lane Farm. You will see a sign to put dogs on leads (but they probably already will be as you are on a road).
14. Turn left into Rider lane Farm driveway and walk up it.
15. Just before the farm buildings the path heads along the outside of the farm yard - this is where I came a cropper as I missed the sign and walked straight ahead to end up at a dead end and then had to scramble through nettles. Avoid this by not going through the farm yard but continue straight ahead along the side of a field with the farmyard hedge to your right.
16. The path emerges onto another field. Turn right and then left at the large trees to head down to the railway crossing (you will see a no entry sign into the farm yard as you pass and this is where I came out - Oops).
17. You now come to the first stile. There is no way for dogs to go through but Bill just managed to scramble underneath it. Any larger dog would struggle. BUT BE VERY CAREFUL as on the other side is the railway line - so make sure that during any manoeuvres your dog is kept on a lead.

18. Take great care crossing the railway line and wait to go through the first stile until you can see and hear that the way is clear. At the other side of the line is another stile, which is just as difficult as the first for dogs. Again I managed to get Bill to go under it by moving a metal cylinder out of the way.

19. Once you come through the stile the path heads along the side of a field (on your right) with the hedge on your left. At the top of this stretch you come to a swing gate, with the footpath indicated straight ahead up the hill. Plus a 'Bull in Field' sign!

20. Luckily there was no bull but there were sheep - so for all of this part I kept Bill on his lead. Head straight ahead up to the top of the field, which is Crambe Bank, and then turn left along the fence line.

21. There are some fabulous views here over to your left, so enjoy these after this last eventful part of your walk. As you pass into the next field you will see a sign that talks about the 'rigg and furrow' ploughing that took place in this area and that you can see evidence of in the fields all around you:

Ridge and furrow is an archaeological pattern of ridges and troughs created by a system of ploughing during the Middle Ages, typical of the open-field system. It is also known as rig (or rigg) and furrow, mostly in the North East of England and in Scotland. Ridge and furrow topography is a result of ploughing with non-reversible ploughs on the same strip of land each year. It is visible on land which has not been ploughed since medieval times. No actively ploughed ridge and furrow survives.

22. At the end of this field you come to a wooden gate, with a green track on the other side. Turn right.

23. Walk along the green track, passing the public bridleway sign to Whitwell on the Hill. Keep on straight ahead along a muddy, rutted wide path. You come to a junction at a wire fence and metal gate. Go straight ahead with the fence on your left and the hedge on your right. The path comes to a large metal gate in front of you and a smaller metal gate on the right side off it down a separated path at the side. Go through this small metal swing gate into the field.

24. The wider farm track bends away down the slope to your left, but you need to go straight ahead in front of you (you will pass a wooden signpost to Crambe 1/2 mile). Follow this way down the right-hand side of this field to the bottom right-hand corner, where there is a wooden swing gate marked with a white footpath way-marker.

25. Go through the gate and down to the small bridge over the spring. Cross over and go through the next wooden swing gate into a very boggy field!

26. Pick your way through the bog and walk straight ahead up the grassy slope and down the other side heading towards the large wooden swing gate and the buildings. Go through the gate (I squeezed through as I could not move it) and down the side of the house with their vegetable plot on your right - nice rhubarb! At the road there is a very interesting gate and latch system. Go through the gate and turn right into Crambe.

27. Walk into Crambe following the road. The road passes the lovely church of St Michael on your right. Bill and I called in here for a quick banana break and to shelter from the rain which had just started. It really is lovely though and worth a visit.

St Michael's was originally built in the 11th century with some later additions. Interestingly a fragment of a 10th century hogsback is built into the southern wall. One of the most famous hogbacks in Yorkshire is in Brompton Church near Northallerton, which depicts carved bears guarding the hogback. These recumbent stone monuments are usually dated to the 10th/early 11th centuries and hence are often regarded as Viking grave-covers or tombs.

28. After a short break, continue up the road to the T junction and turn left. Follow the road uphill for about 1/3 mile.

29. You will come to a first public footpath sign on your right next to a metal gate. Walk past this and almost immediately you will find another public footpath sign pointing right to Kirkham 1/2 mile. Take this path into the woods.

30. This my final instance of coming a cropper as part way down I slipped and fell down - so just take it steady. Just follow the path downhill though, to the wooden swing gate, where it emerges back where you started on the road into Kirkham.