



**Starts:** Dewsbury Minster

**Ends:** Black Horse public house Thornhill

Walkers are urged not to park in the Minster grounds as this area is reserved for visitors to the Minster.

**Length:** Six and a half miles.

*Before setting off just have a look at the popular Minster Church. Christians have worshipped on the site of Dewsbury Minster since a visit from St Paulinus in AD627. Since that time there have been various churches on the site. At one time it was "mother church" to a massive area of over 400 square miles ranging from Wakefield to Burnley. There have been several buildings starting with a wooden church, another re-building and extension in the 1700s designed by notable designer John Carr from Horbury, further changes in the 1880s and in more recent years a revamp to allow more activity areas inside the building. Its tower houses a bell called Black Tom given to the church in the Middle Ages by local man Thomas de Soothill in partial atonement for killing a servant boy in a fit of rage. Each Christmas Eve the bell is tolled once for each year since Christ's birth, an operation which has to finish on the stroke of midnight.*

To start the walk leave the grounds of Dewsbury Minster via the rear gate from the car park, cross the road, turn briefly left and then right into Longcauseway and a little further on turn right again into Sands Lane to walk alongside the River Calder.

Head straight forward to pass under the old railway viaduct, continue on the path between playing fields and, at its end, turn left to pass a barrier and sharp left again to follow the tarmac track which heads uphill.

Half way up the hill turn right by the footpath sign, head up steps and path leading through woodland to Long Lane. Turn briefly right and then quickly left to join the Kirklees Way.

Proceed downhill, cross a stile, continue to bottom of field and over another stile before crossing a footbridge and following a winding path which eventually leads to a cart track. Continue until confronted by a silver metal barrier and a kissing gate.

 **Here the first short walk is completed by continuing past the**

### **Kissing gate, heading into Ossett Lane, turning left and climbing the hill to reach the top and bus services to surrounding towns.**

However to continue the walk bear right up the footpath nearest to, and in front of, the barrier, climb to the top of the field and follow it as it levels out with houses to the left and fields to the right.

Ignore a kissing gate and, later, a tarmac footpath which come from the left and continue straight ahead until, at the top of a slight rise, a group of metal covered grates is found in the ground. To the left is a gate ahead of a tarmac track. The selected route, however, is to turn to the right on a largely concealed path indicated by a marker post which is close to a concrete-covered grate.

Approach the post and take a sharp right turn to follow the path around the edge of the field which has a hedge and stream on the right.

Near the foot of the field join another path coming from the right and head straight ahead, with a tree plantation on the right, to the top of

the incline. Bear left and follow the track ahead and after crossing a well hidden stream in the dip (where there are many paths) continue forwards and upwards on the broad track.

At the end of this path do not enter the field but bear right. Climb to a T-junction. Go through the kissing gate then make a sharp turn to the right and downwards on the Kirklees Way keeping the remains of a stone wall on the right. Follow the path which snakes left and right and continues downhill to the filter beds where the route turns sharp left and approaches another metal kissing gate.

After passing through head straight forward to the large metal gates of an industrial unit. Pass through and then follow the footpath marked on the road all the way through the industrial unit.

On leaving the unit, marked by a barrier and control post and even a stone stile, turn sharp right to follow the Kirklees Way. Cross the river on a footbridge and then turn left to pass under a bridge plus two railway underpasses to reach another kissing gate.



Dewsbury Minster

Go through the kissing gate, move forward and then bear left to approach the canal.

Having done so, bear right along the towpath to reach and cross Lady Anne Bridge. Ignore side turnings, continue along the track for about a half mile before diverting to another track on the left. In a short distance it is joined by a track from the right. Follow this as it passes through two gateways and joins a metalled road which has a wall on the left. This is the boundary wall of the Rectory Park at Thornhill. Take the second gap in the wall to enter the park.

*It was in this parkland that Thornhill Hall was built many centuries ago. For a long time it was the home of the family called Thornhill but eventually, during the reign of Edward III, they intermarried with the Savile family who became predominant. During the English civil war the house was besieged and destroyed by Parliamentary forces. A few ruins still exist on what is called the island but the long underground passage which ran from the hall to Thornhill Parish Church was filled in during the 1990s for safety reasons.*

Turn right to walk up the tarmac path and then take the first left turn on a path leading to open land. Head diagonally right over the grassland towards some buildings – one house has a balcony with metal railings – to join a pebble path and boardwalk heading upwards towards the top of the park. Pass the children’s playground and car park and head out into Hostingley Lane.



Walk through spacious area of Rectory Park, Thornhill towards house with balcony.



Moat which surrounds ruins of Thornhill Hall in Rectory Park, Thornhill.

 **This is another point at which the walk can be left and buses caught to Dewsbury.**

To continue the walk cross Hostingley Lane, climb the steps immediately ahead and turn left into Valley Road. Eventually it narrows into a footpath which is followed downhill before turning right by a wooden barrier.

The footpath here enters the area known as The Tops which leads to Thornhill Edge. Whenever the path splits take the upper route to gain a point at which there is a wall on the right and a view across fields to Emley Moor mast on the left. The path continues until reaching the Flatt Top public house.

At this point cross the road, turn left and head down Albion Road for a few yards before taking a path (part of the Kirklees Way) diagonally right upwards.

Continue past the metal seat with the art-work back and, ignoring paths and steps to the right, continue straight ahead passing through four barriers to reach a road.

On doing so turn right to approach the Black Horse public house in Edge Top Road where this walk ends.

**The buses to Dewsbury are infrequent here. It may be worth walking a further ten minutes or so down the road to The Cross at Thornhill where bus services are more frequent.**

