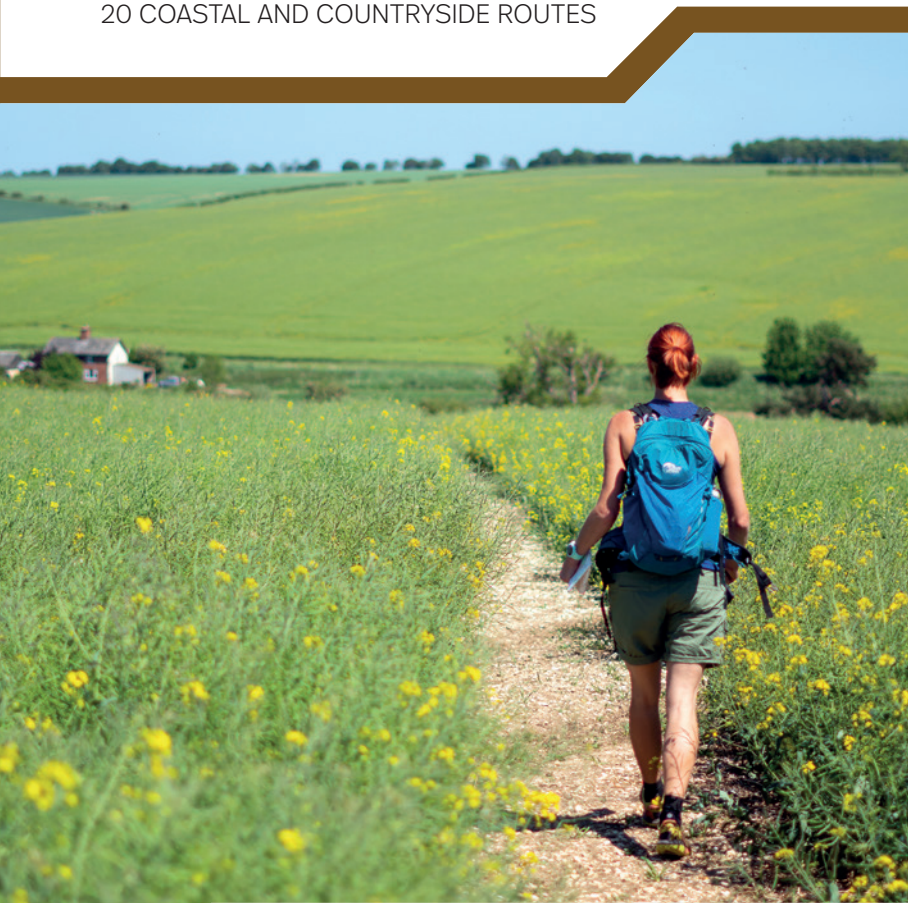


Day Walks in Lincolnshire

20 COASTAL AND COUNTRYSIDE ROUTES



Anna Paxton



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Front cover: **Rolling through the Lincolnshire Wolds** (route 8).

Back cover: **River Witham from the Water Rail Way at Southrey** (route 14).

Photography by Anna Paxton.



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Day Walks in Lincolnshire

AREA MAP & ROUTE FINDER



PEACEFUL COUNTRYSIDE IN THE LINCOLNSHIRE WOLDS, NETTLETON WOLD



Introduction

Located in the East Midlands, Lincolnshire is the UK's second largest county by area but isn't very densely populated. With rich, fertile soil and relatively flat land, this spacious county provides Britain with much of our locally grown food. The routes in this book offer peaceful walks in rural landscapes shaped by agriculture, punctuated by pretty villages and historic market towns. Navigating crops, cattle, woodland and waterways, they focus on the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, the estuaries and unspoilt beaches of the coast, visit the environs of historic market towns, and radiate along the canals and rivers of the cathedral city of Lincoln.

Lincoln's magnificent Gothic cathedral reveals the past wealth and importance of the county, which has been home to Roman, Viking and Norman invaders, and once rivalled London in economic and military significance. Today's landscape gives hints of the past, from a mysterious mediaeval turf maze at Alkborough, the buried Benedictine monastery at Bardney and the remains of arrow-straight Roman roads.

Home to the International Bomber Command Centre and the RAF Red Arrows, Lincolnshire is a centre for aviation. In World War I aircraft were produced and tanks designed in Lincoln. In World War II a number of squadrons were based in the flat countryside of the 'Bomber County', including the famous Dambusters. Evidence of military activity can be seen at one of the county's highest points in the curious abandoned satellite dishes of RAF Stenigot, the Haile Sand Fort at Cleethorpes and the rusting tank submerged in Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes.

The Wolds is the hilliest area of the county, where the valleys of Nettleton Wold and Hubbard's Hills were shaped by glacial meltwater and rare chalk streams. Rivers and canals gave access for trade, establishing prosperous market towns, and routes along the River Slea at Sleaford and the Grantham Canal now form the basis for walks rich with wildlife.

On the surface Lincolnshire's open countryside may appear quiet, but this landscape has a story to tell, and I have chosen routes that attempt to dig a little deeper. Whether these are places you know and love, or you're just beginning to explore, I hope you enjoy the walks.

Anna Paxton



Section

1

The coast

Lincolnshire's 80 kilometres of coastline stretches from the Humber in the north to The Wash in the south. The popular seaside towns of Cleethorpes, Mablethorpe and Skegness are known for their award-winning beaches and expanses of sand, fringed with grassy dunes, while the estuaries offer salt marshes, mudflats and nature reserves.





ROUND AND ROUND HOUSE VIEWING TOWER, ANDERBY CREEK





01 Alkborough & the Humber Estuary

21km/13 miles

Explore Lincolnshire's northernmost reaches, following a ridgeline above the Trent before descending past wildfowl refuges to the southern bank of the mighty Humber Estuary and on through gentler farmland.

Burton upon Stather picnic area » Julian's Bower » Alkborough Flats » Whitton » Winteringham » West Halton » Coleby » Burton upon Stather picnic area

Start

Burton upon Stather picnic area and car park. GR: SE 869187.

The Walk

Our route takes us first along The Cliff, a ridge with expansive views of the River Trent and its floodplain, then past a mysterious turf maze positioned above the point where the Ouse and Trent meet to form the Humber Estuary. As the rivers complete their journey to the North Sea, we turn inland, passing wildfowl refuges and tidal flats, then traversing classic Lincolnshire farmland and quiet hamlets.

The first section of our walk takes us along the South Humber Heritage Trail. This area has historically been important for settlement, trade and industry; a series of information boards explain more about the brickyards, shipyards and wharves that used to populate the riverside.

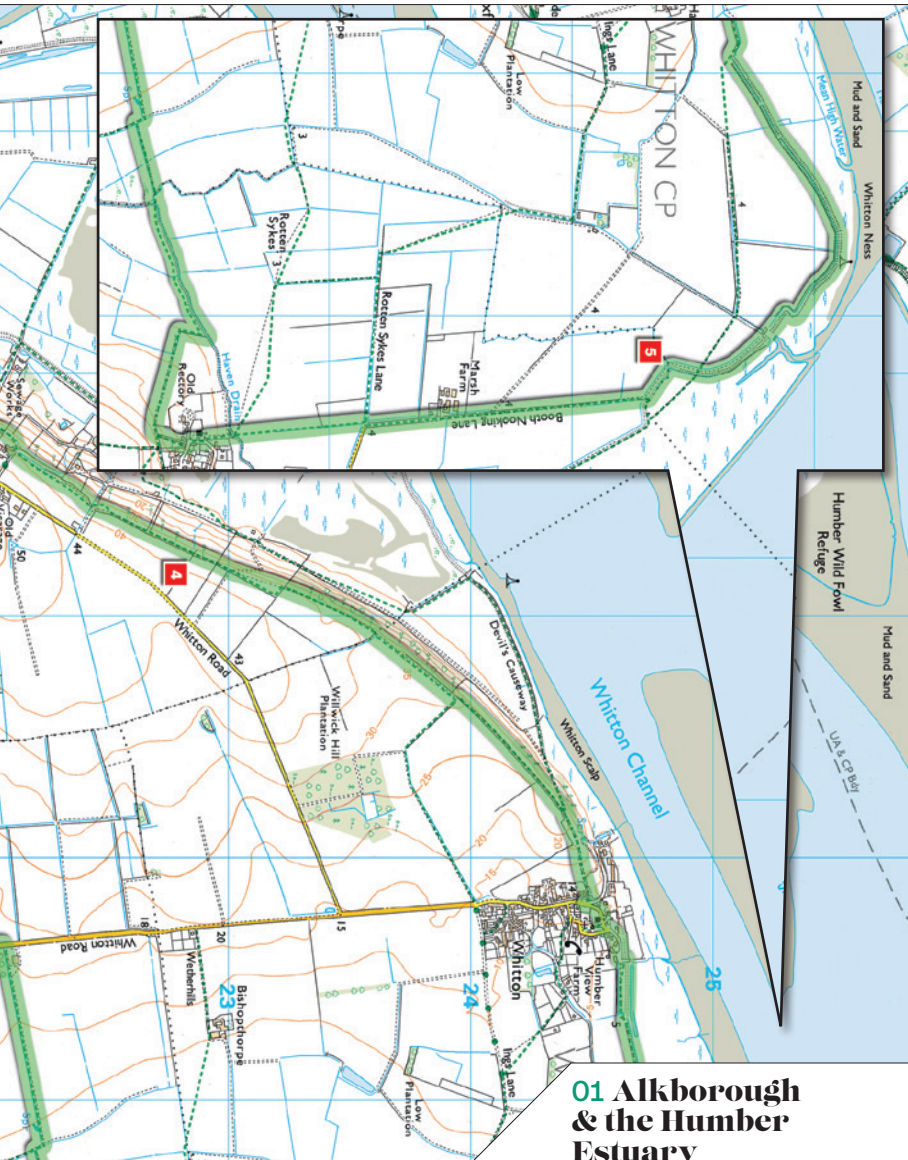
Carved into the hillside at Alkborough we pass Julian's Bower turf maze. First recorded in 1697, the original purpose and meaning of the maze have been lost in time, but it is thought to be mediaeval in origin. From here we head over Alkborough Flats, a wetland area used as a practice bombing range during World War II. An old observation shelter overlooking the Flats provides a viewpoint across the Humber Wild Fowl Refuge and Whitton Island, whose migrating visitors include marsh harriers, curlew and ringed plover.

We then drop down to walk among the reed beds between the villages of Whitton and Winteringham, and on across farmland through the hamlets of West Halton and Coleby. Bronze Age, Anglo Saxon and mediaeval archaeology has been excavated throughout this area, although there is little to be seen above ground as we cross today's peaceful fields to return to our starting point at Burton upon Stather.

ALKBOROUGH & THE HUMBER ESTUARY

DISTANCE: 21KM/13 MILES » **TOTAL ASCENT:** 100M/330FT » **START GRID REF:** SE 869187 » **TIME:** ALLOW 4.5 HOURS » **SATNAV:** DN15 9WA » **OS MAP:** OS EXPLORER 281, ANCHOLME VALLEY, 1:25,000 » **REFRESHMENTS:** THE PADDOCKS TEA ROOM, ALKBOROUGH; THE SHEFFIELD ARMS, BURTON UPON STATHER » **NAVIGATION:** STRAIGHTFORWARD.





01 Alkborough & the Humber Estuary

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Directions – Alkborough & the Humber Estuary



- 1** From the road and entrance, continue **straight on** to the bottom of the picnic area which leads to a grassy path. Take the **right fork** following a public bridleway past an information board about Burton upon Stather.
- 2** Continue **straight on** along The Cliff, a ridge running above the River Trent which is part of the South Humber Heritage Trail. The trail passes a series of viewpoints where wildlife, heritage and archaeology can be seen across the estuary. Stay on the tree-lined trail all the way to Alkborough.
- 3** The path opens out at Julian's Bower turf maze.* Continue on at the maze, then **turn left** along Back Street past Alkborough Coronation Club. Keeping the church on your right, continue **straight on** over a grassy area, cross a narrow road and continue **straight on** along the public footpath to Whitton. Cross a private road and **turn left** on to a footpath around the edge of a field. Follow the footpath, signposted *Alkborough Flats* and *Whitton* over a wooden footbridge and steeply down then up some steps.
- OR** *To take a shorter route to West Halton: from Julian's Bower, **turn left** on to Back Street then **turn right** on to Church View. **Turn left** along Whitton Road then **turn right** along Huteson Lane. The lane becomes a footpath which leads straight on across fields to Whitton Road. **Turn right** here to rejoin the route at **6**.



QUIET FARMLAND NEAR COLEBY

- 4** Continue along the ridge, where there are views of Alkborough Flats wetlands and bird hides. **Go left** through a wooden kissing gate, then continue along a grassy track which leads down into Whitton. Go through a wooden gate on to the top of Station Road, then **turn left** on to Church Hill. With Whitton Village Hall on your left, continue down past the church and go **straight on** at a no through road sign. As the road becomes a track take a **slight left** to follow a public footpath on a raised bank through the marshes and wetlands of Whitton and Winteringham.
- 5** A track eventually runs parallel to the right of the bank, join it and follow it as it loops around to the right, then heads in a straight line towards Marsh Farm. After the farm, leave the road as it bends to the left and continue **straight on** along a public footpath through fields towards the church at Winteringham. Cross a small wooden bridge and follow the public footpath to the church, then **turn right**, following the road round to the left and take the public footpath on the **right**. At the top of the path, **turn right** again, signposted *footpath 17* and follow the path as it runs alongside a small watercourse. Cross a wooden bridge to your **right** and continue on until the path becomes a track heading towards a large barn. After the barn **turn left** along the road into West Halton.
- 6** Continue **straight on** along the road and at the far end of the village **turn right** to follow a public footpath across fields, then go **straight on** along the road into Coleby. Follow the road through Coleby, then take the public bridleway on the **right** shortly after East Dale Farm. Follow this grassy track, which is bordered by hedgerows, through and around fields until it emerges on a road. **Turn right** and follow the road back to the picnic area and start.



SOUTH HUMBER HERITAGE TRAIL OVERLOOKING THE RIVER TRENT