

RICHMOND WALK

Riverside Circuit via Applegarth and Easby Abbey

Visit my website for full details: <https://www.paulbeal.com/richmond-walk>

Introduction to the Walk

This varied circular walk from Richmond combines open countryside, riverside scenery, woodland paths and some of the town's finest historic landmarks. The route follows part of the Coast to Coast Path through Applegarth before descending to the River Swale, returning through Hudswell Woods and Richmond, then completing a final loop to Easby Abbey.

Highlights of the Walk

The first half of the walk climbs gently out of Richmond along the Coast to Coast Path, passing High Leases and Whitecliffe Wood before reaching open countryside beneath Whitcliffe Scar. Fine views stretch across the Swale valley towards Hudswell, before the route leaves the higher ground at Low Applegarth and descends through meadows to the River Swale.

Following the river back towards Richmond, the route passes through woodland and Round Howe before crossing Green Bridge beneath Richmond Castle. Richmond Falls, The Batts and the restored Victorian Station follow, before the Easby Loop leads along the old railway line to St Agatha's Church and the atmospheric ruins of Easby Abbey.

Additional Information

Distance: 9¼ miles (14¾ kilometres)

Duration: Approximately 4¼ hours (excluding stops and breaks)

Difficulty: Moderate. The route is fairly long at 9¼ miles, with 835 feet of ascent, but there are no particularly severe climbs or sustained steep sections.

Trail Conditions: A varied mixture of tarmac lanes, gravel and stony tracks, grassy field paths, woodland trails and riverside paths, with some steps and potentially muddy sections.

Recommended Map: OS Explorer 304 Darlington & Richmond Area

Parking: Nuns Close Car Park in Richmond town centre is a convenient starting point for the walk. It is a pay and display car park with toilet facilities.

• **Google Maps Link:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/QjcEEC14mBTMNFdT7>

• **What3Words:** ///sprinting.condense.unsightly

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STEP-BY-STEP DIRECTIONS

Start your Richmond walk in the town centre, parking in **Nuns Close Car Park (1)**, a pay and display car park with toilet facilities. Leave by the car park's main exit for vehicles, which brings you out onto Hurgill Road with Richmondshire Cricket Club opposite. Turn right and walk down Hurgill Road to reach Victoria Road, the A6108. Turn right onto Victoria Road and follow it to the roundabout, then turn right again, signposted to Leyburn and Reeth. As the main road bends to the left and becomes Reeth Road, turn right onto Westfields and begin walking uphill.

Westfields also forms part of the Coast to Coast Path, and you'll see several signposts confirming the route as you climb. After the last of the houses the road narrows, so keep heading straight ahead along the tarmac lane. You'll soon reach a signpost, where you continue straight on, signposted Coast to Coast Path and public bridleway to Applegarth. Keep following the track ahead past **Whitcliffe Farm (2)**, ignoring any side paths to the left and right. At High Leases the tarmac lane gives way to a stony track, and you simply carry straight on, continuing through **Whitecliffe Wood (3)** for half a mile.

You'll emerge from the trees into open countryside, with Whitcliffe Scar rising above you on the right. Continue through the meadowland beneath the scar. As you approach the farm at East Applegarth, a signpost confirms you're still on the Coast to Coast Path and public bridleway to Applegarth. After the farm you'll reach a narrow tarmac lane, which you cross before continuing on the same route.

At Low Applegarth you'll meet another narrow tarmac lane, which you again cross straight over, still following Wainwright's Coast to Coast Path. Shortly afterwards you'll reach a further signpost. This is where you **leave the Coast to Coast Path (4)**, turning left onto the public footpath that drops down towards the River Swale.

Follow the grassy path downhill, then bear left, effectively making a U-turn around the farm at Low Applegarth. Continue across the fields down towards the river, where yellow public footpath waymarker arrows guide you. When you reach the **banks of the Swale (5)**, follow the grassy path across a broad open field, veering slightly away from the water. Return to the river and follow the riverside path for a short while, then cross another broad open meadow as the path again moves away from the bank. Reach the river one final time, pass through a gate and **enter the woodland (6)**.

Follow the stony track uphill through the trees. At **Lownethwaite Farm (7)**, just before the entrance to the private property, look out for the footpath on the left through a metal kissing gate. This path bypasses the farm to join a concrete lane, where you turn left. Follow the concrete lane all the way down to the main road, which is **Reeth Road (8)**, the A6108. Reeth Road marks the halfway point of your Richmond walk.

Cross the road to pick up the public footpath directly opposite and follow it through the woods. Keep left here to reach a picnic area and Round Howe Car Park. At the far end of the car park, turn right and use the footbridge to cross the River Swale. On the other side, turn left and follow the path through Hudswell Woods.

When the path splits (9), take the right-hand fork, which is a public footpath. Follow it along the right-hand side of a large grassy meadow, with the edge of the woodland on your right. As you leave the meadow and start to enter a smaller field, the path veers right through some gates and back into the woods.

Follow this woodland path uphill through the trees. The River Swale is now on your left, down in the valley below. Continue for half a mile, crossing a footbridge and then descending some steps, to reach the **main road at Green Bridge (10)**. Turn left here to cross Green Bridge over the River Swale.

Immediately after the bridge, take the road on the right, Riverside Road, and follow it beside the River Swale, beneath the walls of Richmond Castle, all the way to the car park at Richmond Falls. At the far end of the car park, in the right-hand corner, follow the path signposted to The Station. Walk through the Richmond Falls picnic area and keep to the tarmac path, which leads across a large grassy parkland known as The Batts to reach the main road at the northern end of **Mercury Bridge (11)**. Turn right and cross the bridge, signposted to The Station, then turn left and walk into The Station.

Walk past the front of the restored Victorian station buildings and continue straight ahead. Follow a paved path down to a small cobbled road, cross it and pick up the path directly opposite, signposted Easby and Catterick Garrison. This is a wide, well-defined gravel path through the woodland, following the route of a disused railway line, and it's the start of the Easby Loop, which forms the final part of the Richmond walk.

Continue along the old railway with the trees arching overhead for just under a mile, then use the **footbridge to cross the River Swale (12)**. On the other side, turn left, signposted to Easby, and follow the wide gravel path with the dry stone wall on your right and the River Swale on your left. Continue for about a quarter of a mile to reach St Agatha's Church ahead of you.

Turn left and follow the tarmac path to **Easby Abbey (13)**. Carry on past the abbey on your right, then continue through the grounds of a property called Abbey Mill. Cross a small pebbled car park and, on the far side, pick up the footpath beside the dry stone wall. Follow it along the edge of a large meadow, then take the footpath as it bends left back into the woodland.

Continue beside the dry stone wall, avoiding the steps that drop down into the River Swale valley on the left. **Follow this path (14)** for about half a mile, passing the Drummer Boy's Stone, then carry straight on along the widening track. Keep following it all the way to the high wall of the church graveyard, then turn left to reach the main road, back at the northern end of Mercury Bridge where you crossed earlier.

At the main road, turn right and head uphill, signposted to Market Place. Keep to the main road, Station Road, and continue uphill, passing the church of St Mary the Virgin on your right and North Yorkshire Council's Mercury House on your left. A little further up, turn left onto Frenchgate, signposted to Market Place. When you reach the cobbled area of Market Place, keep right and follow the path in front of the shops. Continue along the right-hand side of Market Place almost to the top, then turn right onto Finkle Street. Walk along Finkle Street and, at the end, turn right onto Rosemary Lane. At the bottom you'll reach the main road, the A6108, where a left turn takes you back to Nuns Close Car Park, ending your Richmond walk.

