

Alford & Rigsby

Start:	<i>Millers Way car park, off East Street (free parking).</i>
Nearest Post Code:	<i>LN13 9EG</i>
Grid Ref	<i>TF456761</i>
what3words	<i>indicate.refrained.risking</i>
Refreshments	<i>Various options in Alford, nothing en-route.</i>
Getting there:	<i>If approaching from the A16, Millers Way car park is on the far side of town, on the right, just beyond the Co-Op.</i>
Distance:	<i>8 miles / 13km</i>
Route Description:	<i>An easy walk from the ancient market town of Alford, (markets are held every Tuesday), out into the countryside with a gentle climb through woodland onto the Wolds. There are fine views as the route descends to the tiny village of Rigsby, then pleasant paths and tracks on the return leg. Allow about four hours.</i>

The Walk

The walk starts from the car park. Turn left into East Street, passing the Church and later the Manor House on the right.

The Manor House is Grade II listed, thought to be one of England's largest thatched Manor Houses. Recent research has dated the House to 1611.

Continue past the Half Moon pub on the left, then left into Chantry Road [A]. Stay on this road almost to its end, and where you have views of open fields ahead, take the signed footpath right. Pass a metal kissing gate and follow the field edge, crossing a ditch to reach a path junction where you turn left, signed 'Mill Rundle Walk'. At the next footpath sign climb right, onto a disused railway embankment, route of the East Lincolnshire Railway [B].

The East Lincolnshire Railway was a main line railway linking the towns of Grimsby, Louth and Boston, thence on to London. It opened in 1848 and became part of the London and North Eastern Railway during the grouping of 1923, passing on to the Eastern Region of British Railways during the nationalisation of 1948. The line was closed to passengers in 1970.

Walk left for a few yards, then descend right, through a kissing gate and follow the broad path to a road. Turn right and walk into the village of Well.

Pass through the village and continue to a sharp right bend in the road. Here, go ahead through a kissing gate and follow the waymarked track beneath trees, ignoring all turnings. The track descends into Well Vale [C], then climbs and bears left. Look now for a waymark directing you right, over a cross-field path to join a track. Follow this, heading towards farm buildings. This is Ulceby Grange, home to Lincolnshire Poacher cheese, milk, etc. At a t-junction with the farmyard ahead, turn right, walking with a hedge left. Where this stops, continue a little further then climb a stile in the fence on the left [D]. Cross the field, aiming slightly right, to climb a further stile by a field gate at the edge of a wood. In the wood, take the waymarked boundary path left and follow it to reach a road that you cross with care.

Walk down the driveway ahead, with the property boundary on the right, climb the stile then follow the field-edge path, hedge left. At a corner, a dogleg left and right will see you continuing in the same direction, hedge left. At the far end of the field, go right, then immediately left, [E] the path again keeping to the left hedge. As the path descends, you have the unusual view of three distant wind farms – right to left, Skegness (offshore), Trusthorpe and Conisholm.

When you reach the road at Rigsby (an early Danish settlement – the village on the ridge), turn right and follow the road, passing a couple of houses before taking a driveway left, and passing the small church to the right. In a few yards climb a stile on the right, then head down the meadow, slightly left, to a stile at the bottom. Climb this and continue down to the bottom of the field, where, ignoring stiles left and right, climb the one ahead to reach a field edge in a few yards [F]. Now strike out on a cross-field path to reach a footbridge, cross, then follow the path left, towards the wood then going right, with the woodland to your left. In the field corner you reach a lane, turn right and follow the lane to a road, with garden centre left. Just before this, your route crosses for the second time, the course of the East Lincolnshire Railway [G].

Cross the road and climb the stile opposite, then follow the field path, ditch left, for just a few yards, before crossing a bridge (easy to miss if the grass is high) and continuing, ditch right, to the bottom of the field. Go left for a short distance, cross the bridge at the footpath sign and turn left, following the field edge path, ditch left. Continue into the next field [H] with Tothby Manor visible half-right.

Tothby Manor is a Grade II listed farmhouse, built on the site of an earlier, 14th C moated house. The present house is 17th C, with some 18th and 19th C alterations.

When you reach the field corner a waymark post directs you right, across the field towards the manor. At the far side, you reach a moat, go left, then cross the moat to a gate. Beyond, go half-right to a further gate. then walk through an old orchard, soon going half-left to another gate with the farm drive beyond [I].

Walk right, down the farm drive, looking left for a kissing gate where the drive makes a bend. Go through, then walk diagonally across the field passing through another gate and onwards to the far side where a third gate gives access to the next field. Walk, boundary left, to a gate in the bottom corner, beyond which, turn left and walk, boundary right, to a metal kissing gate [J]. Continue diagonally across the field to go through another kissing gate and over a bridge. Ignore the footbridge left, but keep on in the same direction to the far corner of the field and through a kissing gate. Walk ahead now, boundary right, to a gate with road beyond.

Walk down this road to reach West Street. Turn left and retrace your steps to the car park.

