

Gainsborough

Start:	<i>Gainsborough Lea Road station, Knaith or Knaith Park (see route description)</i>
Refreshments	<i>Pubs in Knaith Park and Upton.</i>
Getting there:	<i>Stagecoach services 100 & 107.</i>
Distance:	<i>7 miles / 11.3 km. or 6 miles / 9.6 km</i>
Route Description:	<i>This is a linear walk with two options: The 7-mile version requires the use of the Stagecoach 100 service Lincoln–Gainsborough–Scunthorpe. The 6-mile option requires catching the less-frequent Stagecoach 107 service Lincoln to Gainsborough. Neither service operates on Sunday. The walk ends at Gainsborough Lea Road station where both buses can be caught. The better option is to arrive by public transport or car and catch the chosen bus from Gainsborough Lea Road to the start of the walk – alight at Knaith Hill (service 100, 7-mile route) or The Stag’s Head, Knaith Park (service 107, 6-mile route). Either option requires walking back to Lea Road.</i>

This walk, which crosses typical northwest Lincolnshire countryside, follows footpaths, tracks and some stretches of road. The cross-field paths are likely to be muddy in winter.

The Walk

The 7-mile walk starts at the bus stop on the Gainsborough-Lincoln road at Knaith [A]. (What3Words: jiffy.deflate.slugs) The name ‘Knaith’ comes from the Anglo-Saxon ‘cneothythe’, ‘the landing place by the river bend’

Take the turning signed Knaith Park and follow the road until a sharp left bend is reached and here, take the track right, then in a short distance go left on a signed path following the edge of the woodland.

This pleasant path eventually leads to a railway crossing, beyond which you continue ahead initially through trees, then along a field edge with a stream to your left to arrive at paddocks. The path is well marked and directs you right, then with fences either side leads you to a road. Go left, walking with care to enter the village of Knaith Park, then take the first turning right, signed Upton (unless visiting the Stag’s Head pub a short distance further). The Stag’s Head is also the starting point for the 6-mile option for walkers arriving on the Stagecoach 107 service [B]. (What3Words: germinate.laminated.veered).

Follow Upton Road to a left bend, and here, go ahead into a field, walking with a ditch to your right. In the far corner, climb a stile, then continue in the same direction, over another stile, and on, to cross a ditch into the third field. At the far corner of this field, do a right-left dogleg [C] and walk now with the boundary left.

Before reaching the field corner, look for a waymark directing you half-right, over the field to a footbridge that you cross. Ahead, you will see two long barns. The path heads out across the field and passes between them – choose your own route to reach the gap if the path hasn’t been reinstated. Passing between the barns you reach the farmyard. It’s likely that a high metal gate will block your passage – the latch is on the left, halfway up. Cross the yard and go straight ahead passing barns on your right, then a house left. Finally, a narrow, sloping path brings you to a road, where you turn left.

Walk into the village of Upton, passing the Rose & Crown on the left and church on the right. Beyond a left turn, a building of interest is the chip shop!

No ordinary ‘chippie’, this is one of only two coal-fired frying range still operational in the country. The range was made by Frank Ford of Halifax in 1948. In those days, a coal-fired range was the only option available with which to cook. Every village in England would have its village fish and chip shop, each cooking using coal and beef dripping. Very restricted opening hours – Friday 5pm – 9pm. Saturday 11am – 1.30 pm.

Continue to a right bend where you go ahead on Cade Lane and take a footpath on the left. Pass through the gate, cross the field and go through another gate, then head out diagonally across the next field, veering left to a kissing gate [D].

In the next field, cut diagonally across the corner. If the path is unclear, look for the row of electricity poles following the field edge – there are six of them, aim to the third one, where a few yards beyond, you’ll find a footbridge that you cross. Note the direction the waymark arrow is pointing and cross the field to a gap in the hedge, then cross the next field in the same direction, crossing a footbridge to a road.

Go right along the road as far as the gates of Walk Farm, then cross to the finger post and follow its direction diagonally across the field to a footbridge. Beyond, cross the next field diagonally left, aiming just right of the red-roofed cottage in the distance. Before you reach it, there is another footbridge to cross [E] then a further field where you continue in the same direction, keeping to the right of the lone tree. At the far side, pass through a gate then continue a short distance to another and a driveway beyond.

Cross to another field, then turn left, walking the field boundary with the hedge on the left. A finger post directs you left into a further field where you follow the field edge with a ditch to your right. In the next field, continue along the edge to the corner of the woodland [F] and here, strike out across the field in the same direction, keeping an eye out for a finger post on the far side by a broad gap in the hedge. Turn right in the next field and walk to the corner and another waymark. Now strike out across the field, aiming for the far end of a row of trees along the opposite boundary, (a waymark becomes evident as you reach the high point of the field). The waymark directs you along a grass track to a further marker, then ahead along the field edge, boundary right. At a driveway [G] turn right and follow it to a road.

Cross to the pavement and go left. You have about a mile of road walking to the end of the route, so follow the pavement and over a roundabout until the road bears right and runs downhill. On reaching a care home on the right, look across the road to a grassed area. Here, there is a memorial stone that commemorates the battle of Gainsborough

Also called the Battle of Lea, it was fought on 28 July 1643. The people of Gainsborough wished to remain neutral during the Civil War, but the town was seized for the King in 1642. A force of Parliamentarians attacked the town in 1643, with Cromwell leading the attacking force. The site of the battle was Foxby Hill, near to your present location, and The Royalists held the top of the hill. The Parliamentarians attacked up the hill from the south, driving the Royalists down the other side into the marshy area next to the Trent. This Parliamentary holding of Gainsborough was short-lived, as, the town was recaptured the next day after Cromwell had retreated to Lincoln. However, on 20th December 1643, a large Parliamentary force stormed the town and for the remainder of the Civil War, Gainsborough was under Parliamentary control.

At a junction with garage ahead, go left, then cross the road at the lights. Continue on the pavement, to reach Lea Road railway station.

