

Ripon Canal Walk

This is a very level walk that would be OK for trainers unless wet and slippery. Be warned that there are very few lifebelts on the route, together with shallow water in the canal but deep water near the locks.

Start at the canal basin on Bondgate Green or at the carpark just off B'bridge Road - see maps.

Take a look at the canal basin area, which is quite an interesting area. There are useful information boards at various places along the route.

Walk south-east along the side of the canal and cross under the A61 Ripon bypass. After a short walk the path turns south and you pass a lock in the vicinity of the canal boat marina. Continuing along you pass the old sand and gravel workings which are now a nature reserve, with swans, geese, shags, herons, and other birds. To your left you see the Ripon Racecourse and you pass the Motor Launch marina on the right.

A little further along you find a new nature reserve with a pathway through it. There are various viewing hides along the way.

You are coming towards the confluence of the canal and the Ure, where just upstream there is a lock and picnic area. One of the benches is under a pretty arbour and is shady around midday. You can walk down towards the Ure and for the return walk you need to walk over the lock gates, which have a railing.

Now you walk back up the canal towards Ripon, but you turn west to follow the lanes to Dean's Wood and Littlethorpe, and you take a sharp right back to the canal in the vicinity of an attractive church on the corner. The church has a bench seat.

At Grange farm you cross the canal to the east side and continue your walk northwards and you get another view of the lakes and ponds on the old gravel pits.

Incidentally, this area had clay workings which enabled the production of bricks for many Ripon properties, and there is still a pottery, marked "POTTERY", on the map. It produces garden pots and suchlike for Harlow Carr and for direct sale at the Yorkshire Show, etc.