



CASTLE HOWARD and CONEYSTHORPE

FROM WELBURN 7 MILES (11.3KM)

Starting from the attractive village of Welburn, this walk undertakes a circuit of the Castle Howard Estate. The scenery is stunning with beautiful parkland, ancient woodland and inspiring monuments to savour.

Welburn's church, dedicated to St John the Evangelist, stands on the hillside at the southern edge of the village. Although consecrated in 1865, St John's remained a 'Chapel of Ease' within the parish of Bulmer until 1986 when it became a separate parish.

The village has many Grade II listed buildings, including the former reading room which dates from the eighteenth century. Above the old doorway is a working First World War memorial clock with the dedication inscription on the key-stone underneath. The bell-cote to the right of the centre stack houses the clock bell. The village's red telephone box is also Grade II listed. The box is a type K6, designed by Sir

Giles Gilbert Scott in 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V; subsequently known as the Jubilee kiosk.

From the church, we ascend to the hilltop and the piers of the Exclamation Gates. The piers frame a spectacular view of Castle Howard. Their name derives from the cries of astonishment by visitors, including Queen Victoria, as they approached the great house from this direction. Leaving Welburn, the route leads through the fields to the grounds of Castle Howard.

In 1699, Charles Howard, 3rd Earl of Carlisle, commissioned Sir John Vanbrugh to design and build a luxurious country mansion. Remarkably, Vanbrugh was a playwright and had no previous architectural experience. To assist him with the design, Vanbrugh engaged Nicholas Hawksmoor, former deputy to Sir Christopher Wren. The building of Castle Howard spanned the lifetimes of three successive earls and took more than 100 years to complete. The resulting

magnificence certainly merits its reputation and the prestige of being one of the world's most beautiful buildings. The mansion played the role of 'Brideshead' in the 1981 adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's novel *Brideshead Revisited* and a subsequent movie in 2008. Some of its other film appearances include *Barry Lyndon* 1975, *Garfield: A Tale of Two Kitties* 2006 and more recently the ITV series *Victoria* 2016.

The eye-catching mock fortifications along the estate wall are the first of many follies and monuments scattered throughout the grounds. To the right is the Pyramid designed and built in 1728 by Hawksmoor, whose fondness for pagan symbols such as pyramids and obelisks led to his nickname as 'the Devil's Architect'. At the main road is the gatehouse, built by Vanbrugh in c.1718 as a pyramid arch. Sir Thomas Robinson added the wings in 1756-8.

From the gatehouse, a delightful avenue lined with lime trees leads to the Obelisk which stands at the entrance to Castle Howard. The Obelisk is 79 feet (24m) high and commemorates the Duke of Marlborough's campaign victories in the War of the Spanish Succession 1701-14. The route continues to Coneysthorpe passing the Obelisk Ponds, and there are also views of the Great Lake.

The picturesque village of Coneysthorpe has a large green, lined with stone cottages. Standing at the top of the green is the 1835 chapel of ease, refurbished in 1894 by Temple

Moore; it has a large bell-cote housing one bell. The former schoolhouse and reading room built in 1852 now serves as the village hall, and the War Memorial sits at the bottom of the green near the road.

Leaving the village, we re-enter the estate grounds and continue to the boundary of Ray Wood, a walled garden containing an impressive collection of trees, shrubs and flowers gathered from exotic places around the world. The pavilion on the south-east corner of Ray Wood is the Temple of the Four Winds, designed by Vanbrugh in 1724. However, the building was not completed until 1738.

Further on, we cross an impressive Italianate bridge spanning the New River Pond. From the centre of the bridge there are views of the mansion and the temple, but the Mausoleum is the most conspicuous. Built from 1728-42, the Mausoleum stands 90 feet (27.4m) in height and it has twenty Doric columns to support it. Inside, the chapel ceiling rises 70 feet (21.3m), and the crypt beneath the chapel has sixty-three recesses for coffins.

Before entering the woodland at East Moor Banks, look back for views of the Pyramid, the mansion and the Mausoleum. The path through the wood leads to an enigmatic statue with Four Faces, another of Hawksmoor's designs c.1727, restored 1997-2003. From the Four Faces, we follow the Centenary Way footpath to the main road and then return to Welburn.

Start/Parking:

Welburn, parking available adjacent to St John the Evangelist Church at the top of Church Lane. Parking is also available at Coneysthorpe.

Location:

Welburn is located about 14 miles (22.5km) north-east of York and 6 miles (9.6km) south-west of Malton, just off the A64 main road.

Grid Ref:

SE 721 678. Postcode: Church Lane - YO60 7EG.

Distance:

7 miles (11.3km) circular. Allow 3½ hrs walking time.

Total Ascent:

580 feet (177m). Maximum Elevation: 302 feet (92m).

OS Maps:

Explorer 300 (1:25,000) *Howardian Hills and Malton* or Landranger 100 (1:50,000) *Malton and Pickering*.

Refreshments:

Welburn: The Crown and Cushion (*dog-friendly*), and The Leaf and Loaf, bakery and cafe.
Castle Howard: The Courtyard Cafe.

Public Toilets:

Welburn Village Hall and Castle Howard.

Other:

Telephones at Welburn and Coneysthorpe, bus service, bakery.

CASTLE HOWARD AND CONEYSTHORPE



- 1 **GR: 721 678** Locate the footpath above the church (*SP Whitwell*). Ascend between two large fields to the Exclamation Gates, turn right and follow a forest track to a memorial bench.
- 2 **GR: 718 677** Turn right (*SP Public Footpath*) and descend across the field. Go through a gate and follow a fenced path, leading passed the school. Turn left and follow the lane which leads to the main road. **CAUTION: busy road!**
- 3 **GR: 717 680** Cross the road and continue down the farm lane opposite (*SP Castle Howard*). The right of way crosses a step-stile and then returns to the farm lane. Go through the farmyard and pass Riddlers Plantation. Continue ahead and follow the right hedge through the next field.
- 4 **GR: 717 685** Turn right (*SP Public Footpath*) and follow the farm track for about 120 yards (110m). Turn left and head directly across the field. Follow the hedge round to the right and cross a step-stile. Go through a kissing gate and follow the left boundary, ascending slightly. Continue through two gates.
- 5 **GR: 717 690** Follow the left boundary and go through two kissing gates, passing the farm buildings. Bear right and go through another kissing gate. Now follow the left boundary, go through a kissing gate and ascend towards the tower. Pass to the right of the tower and follow a clear track leading onto a tarmac lane.
- 6 **GR: 716 694** Turn left (*SP Public Footpath*) and follow the tarmac lane to the main road. Turn right and follow the road to the crossroads near Coneysthorpe **CAUTION: busy road!** (*The footpath is off the road on wide verges or between the lime trees for much of the way*).
- 7 **GR: 707 713** Turn right, (*Sign Coneysthorpe ¼*) and follow the road through the village, passing the entrance to Lakeside Holiday Park and the village green.
- 8 **GR: 713 713** Leave the road via a white gate in the right wall, (*SP Welburn*) and join a broad estate lane. Follow the lane for about ½ mile (800m).
- 9 **GR: 717 707** Bear half left across the field (*Waymark*). Cross the estate lane and continue into the woodland opposite (*SP Public Footpath*). Keep to the left of the estate wall and follow a narrow track which eventually merges with a broader forest track. Continue along the forest track and pass through a kissing gate. At the wall corner continue straight ahead, descending towards a fenced area.
- 10 **GR: 724 703** On reaching the fenced area bear right (*SP Welburn*) and climb over the ridge between the Temple of the Four Winds and Mount Sion Wood. Descend to the New river Bridge, go through a kissing gate and cross the bridge. Now follow a broad track leading onto a tarmac lane.
- 11 **GR: 722 693** Turn left (*SP Huttons Ambo*) and after about 15 yards (14m) turn right (*SP Welburn ¾*). (*Both of these SP are on the same post*). Follow the track into the woodland of East Moor Banks.
- 12 **GR: 722 690** Turn left (*SP Crambeck*) and follow a broad forest track through the wood to the Four Faces statue. Turn right (*SP Centenary Way*) and descend on a narrow path through the wood.
- 13 **GR: 731 685** Cross Moorhouse Beck and go over a step-stile (*dog-friendly*). Follow the beckside and at a junction of tracks continue straight ahead (*SP Welburn*) crossing a boggy area. Ascend through the wood, leaving via a gate. Continue along left boundary and go through a gate.
- 14 **GR: 731 681** Turn right and follow the fence to its corner. Continue straight ahead (*SP Centenary Way - Chestnut Avenue ¼*) and descend onto a broad farm track. Follow the track to the main road at Chestnut Avenue.
- 15 **GR: 727 677** Turn right and follow the road back to Welburn. **CAUTION: busy road!** Turn left into Church Lane and ascend passed the Village Hall, returning to the parking place.

RICHARD SPRUCE - THE FEARLESS EXPLORER

A plaque on one of the cottages at Coneysthorpe commemorates 'Richard Spruce, 1817-1893 of Ganthorpe, Welburn and Coneysthorpe, a distinguished botanist, fearless explorer, humble man, lived here 1876-1893'. Spruce travelled extensively in South America and sent more than 7,000 plant specimens back to England. Furthermore, he gathered seeds of the cinchona tree from the slopes of the Andes. The bark of the cinchona contains quinine, a medicine used as a treatment for malaria.