

HERITAGE WALK 1

Leisurely stroll around the historic core of the village, taking in the listed buildings and visible remains of the medieval agricultural heart of the parish.

Distance: 2 miles, suitable for all ages, time between 1-1.5 hours.

Circular route, starting at the Village Green (Stevens Gutter) facing the Butchers.



The walk

Start from Steven's Gutter at the corner of Casthorpe Road, opposite Skinners butchers. Previously known as Steven Gutter, the origin of the name of the village green is unknown although 'gutter' as a name usually refers to a water channel. Until the 1940s it was enclosed by a stone wall, with cattle belonging to Mr Griffin the village butcher grazing inside! The trees were planted in the 1990s to replace large sycamore trees which had reached the end of their lives by the 1970s.

Facing the butchers, look left along Main Street. This used to be called Middle Street, and on the right-hand side was Barrowby's second pub, The Marquis of Granby, which closed in 1959 and is now a private house (Granby House). The house beyond this used to be the premises of the village tailor.

Walk along Casthorpe Road. Note the Ironstone wall (on your right-hand side) enclosing the grounds of Barrowby House – both the house and the walls are listed buildings.

At the end of Steven's Gutter, note The Old Smithy on your left. The current row of garages was the village blacksmith's workshop – in the 1820s it was the home of ironworker Richard Seaman and his apprentice, Richard Hornsby, who became a noted Grantham industrialist.

Beyond the Old Smithy, along Mill Row, was the site of a village windmill which was disused by 1916 and demolished by the Second World War. There is no trace of the windmill to be seen today, but there is a photograph in the Barrowby Reading Room. There was a second, earlier, windmill on the other side of the A52 at the top of Barrowby Hill, called Mill Hill on some maps.

Continue along Casthorpe Road, past the Old Bakery on your left. Barrowby used to have two bakeries, the second being off High Road near the current Post Office. Continue onto the White House on your left-hand side. This dates from about 1880, and the notable clock and cupola actually came from the Coach House at The Rectory and were taken by Canon Welby (Rector of Barrowby from 1849 to 1900) when he moved to the White House in the 1890s.

(Optional extra: continue along Casthorpe Road for 500m until you reach a seat on your right-hand side. This was the site of Barrowby's parish water pump – it was a force pump and led to an overhead pipe (similar to the one at Croxton Kerrial) so that carts and steam engines could get underneath to get a water supply. Return the way you came.)

Retrace your steps and turn left into The Posts opposite Mill Row. The wall on your right-hand side is also a listed structure.

Walk along the Posts and into Church Street towards the Church.

On your left, visible from the entrance to the drive, is Barrowby Old Hall which is a 16C house with some reused medieval masonry. Continue past Wheelwright's House on your right-hand side. For many years the 'false' window on the first floor was painted with window frames to mimic an actual window – 'false' windows like these were a result of the Window Tax which existed from 1695-1851.

Barrowby School dates from 1852 although an earlier 'free' school was known to have existed by 1842. When '11+' examinations began, boys who passed used to go to the Grammar School at Sedgebrook – either walking to school or by horseback. There was also a small private school in the grounds of the Old Hall, dating from about 1860.

A church was recorded in the Domesday Book (1086) but the current structure (All Saints Church) dates at the earliest from the early 13th Century, with considerable Victorian restoration of the late medieval fabric. It has a fine Lych Gate (where coffins and their bearers used to wait for the priest) and railings, which were given to the village in 1895 by Lady Dallas and Mrs Mostyn to commemorate the Golden Wedding Anniversary of the Rector, Canon Welby. The Church has a unique 14th century font, brasses, Saxon carved stones, notable grave markers (some of which are listed), Commonwealth War Graves, a wildlife area, a grand avenue of Yew trees and many other interesting features both inside and out. Well worth a visit when open!

Continue along Church Street from the church, passing the fine stone late 18th Century Caretaker's Cottage, now called Lych Cottage, on your right. This was formerly used to store the bier used in funerals.

Immediately opposite the cottage on the left is an old cast iron water pump used before mains water was available. There were many wells and water pumps in and around the village because there was no surface water in the village.

Continue down the track with a fine view of Barrowby Old Hall on your left and at the brow of the hill a widespread panorama unfolds over the Trent Vale and beyond Newark. Towards Sedgebrook there used to be a small abbey – Newbo Abbey – of which no trace can now be seen. You can also see the 'striations' of medieval 'ridge and furrow' ploughing in the field on your left over the stile. This resulted from the way the Medieval Open Fields were cultivated in strips called 'selions'. Try to spot the small hump-backed hill to the right (called Loveden Hill - the site of a major Saxon cemetery) and on a fine day Lincoln Cathedral can be seen beyond this on the horizon.

Retrace your steps past the church and turn left along Church Street. On your left-hand side you will see Highgate Cottage, one of a pair of fine 18thC stone cottages with pantile roofs and with a blocked-up doorway. An unusual feature of Old Barrowby was orchards – you can still see some remaining fruit trees as you walk around the village. Church Street was especially noted for its houses and cottages having orchards. Barrowby House, on your right-hand side, used to have a row of fig trees lining the inside of the wall opposite.

You then pass the unusual 3 storey Malting House on your left. This is early 17th Century, with a date marker of 1636 under the render (but which now cannot be seen). The pantile roof is steeply pitched, with stone windows and a 'rounded' protruding corner that hints of a hoist to raise sacks.

Next on the left is Brydon House, a fine late 18th Century detached stone house with a pantile roof and a notable boundary wall. Opposite, on the right-hand side of the road is Barrowby House, with a datestone of 1691, although little can be seen from Church Street.

At the White Swan crossroads stands the 'Reading Room', which dates from 1899 and was presented to the village by Canon Welby to commemorate his 51st year as Rector of the Parish. Note the clock tower on the roof, and the fine Parish sign alongside.

Turn left along Rectory Lane and note the Old Rectory ahead. This dates from 1588, although it has been much altered, reduced in size and rendered – the 'Gothick' windows are early 19th century.

Return to the crossroads where ahead you see the White Swan and the 'Old Saddlers', previously a saddlers workshop (another disappeared village industry) and then a village shop before becoming a bistro. Both these buildings are listed.

Turn left onto High Road. The first building on your left is Holly House, a former farmhouse which has fine windows, both wooden and stone. Note the old listed -building plaque on the wall.

Cross the road and turn right down Chapel Lane, which very unusually had two Non-Conformist chapels in the 19th century – a Wesleyan (Methodist) chapel and a United Reform Chapel. No trace of either remains. Note the blocked-up stone window on the side of the Post Office – this may have used to sell beer, as in 1848 the occupier, Elizabeth Walford, was licensed to use this property as an 'out-house' to produce and sell beer. Note also the OS datum point low down near the corner on High Road.

Walk down the lane to another fine water pump in a wooden case which still has its handle. Retrace your steps to High Road and turn right.

On the right-hand side opposite the Memorial Hall is the Counting House. This dates from 1850 and was probably linked to the administration of the Duke of Devonshire's estate in this area – at this time the Duke owned 50% of Barrowby, and also controlled the appointment of the Rector.

Note that Highways Cottage on your left is 'end on' to the road – this often reflects property prices where a higher value was attached to a street frontage than to land away from the street.

Turn right down the jitty (a Midlands term for a narrow passage) onto Manor Road. This jitty is in fact one of the last remaining parts of the original footpath that used to go across the fields to Grantham via Sheepwash Lane and then down Dysart Road. It is marked on the 1762 enclosure map and early Ordnance Survey maps and even today a public footpath exists from Reedings Close as far as the A1 - a good example of a 'lost footpath' as a result of modern development.

Continue along Manor Road, passing Old Orchard on your left – a place name reminder of a former use – and at the end look across the fields towards Low Road. This field also has traces of medieval 'ridge and furrow, the remains of the medieval field system, although this is not always easy to see from this point.

Retrace your steps and turn right into Pastures Road, through the 1960s to 1980s housing estate. This building development saw a substantive shift from Barrowby's traditional concentrated core towards

Grantham, a shift which continues to this day. Many of the road names that were used reflect the history of Barrowby – previous field names or the names of notable residents.

At the end of Pastures Road turn right into Reedings Road and continue to the end where you have a fine view across the fields towards Harlaxton, then retrace your steps before turning left into Adamstiles. This takes its name from Adam Stiles Field, one of the large former medieval fields enclosed by the Act of Parliament in 1762. Who or what Adam Stiles was no-one knows – perhaps a stile in the hedge of a field belonging to a man called Adam!

Go straight on through the jitty onto Hurst Crescent and turn left. Hurst Crescent is named after Dr Thomas Hurst, who lived from 1598-1672 and became Vicar of Barrowby in 1629. A staunch Royalist during the Civil War, he became Chaplain to King Charles 1 and was imprisoned and ejected from being Vicar. He didn't return to Barrowby after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 but moved to Grantham and became a friend of Isaac Newton.

Turn left onto Hedgefield Road. The Hedge Field was another of the remnants of the medieval Open Field System enclosed in 1762 and was located between Low Road and the parish boundary with Harlaxton (see HW2: Vistas, viewpoints and history). The name Hedge in fact indicates a boundary as well as a hedge, so this is logical.

Continue along Hedgefield Road and note Thorold Road to your left. The Thorold family owned about one-quarter of the land in the parish in the 19th century. At the end turn right onto Low Road and walk back towards Steven's Gutter.

On the left-hand side, where the jitty goes onto Lowfield (see Heritage Walk 2), was the location of the village pinfold – this was part of the way medieval agriculture was managed, where stray livestock were impounded until a fine was paid.

Continue on, noting The Cedars, a stone house dating from 1800 on the left-hand side, followed by the early 18th century Grange Cottages on the same side of the road. Note that the alignment of the cottages is slightly different to that of Low Road, suggesting that the road has moved its alignment since they were built.

Opposite the cottages is The Grange, a stone and brick house and stables, with a datestone of 1656 although little can be seen from the road. It is known there was a grange in Barrowby belonging to Newbo Abbey and it is possible this refers to an earlier house on this site.

From here Steven's Gutter can be seen ahead.

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