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Spilsby to Old Bolingbroke

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Spilsby – Pay and display car park on Post Office Lane.
Ordnance Survey map	OS Explorer 273, Lincolnshire Wolds South – Horncastle and Woodhall Spa
Distance	9 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This walk from Spilsby to Old Bolingbroke, gives you an opportunity to look round Bolingbroke Castle. This hexagonal castle was built by a Norman baron, Ranulph de Blundevil in the 13th century and was the birthplace of Henry IV in 1366. It is in the custody of English Heritage and entry is free. As you might expect therefore, this means not a huge amount of it is left but there are information boards which tell you about it and give you some idea of how it used to look. During the 15th and 16th centuries, it was an administrative centre for the estates of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Because this walk is on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, you get far reaching views over the surrounding plains. There is a mile and a quarter of walking along a road into Old Bolingbroke but this is a very quiet road with little traffic. Less pleasant is the mile or so along the B1195 at the end but at least there is pavement here.

Old Bolingbroke is a very attractive village with the bonus of refreshment opportunities at the Black Horse Inn! There is a bench nearby, towards St Peter and St Paul's church.

The walk starts from the market town of Spilsby which has a variety of shops. To get there, turn south off the A158 at Partney on to the A16 if coming from Lincoln. Turn left on to the B1195 after one and a quarter miles into Spilsby. When the road turns sharp right at the Market Cross, turn left then first right along Post Office Lane. There is a large pay and display car park on the right.

Start: From the car park, walk back the way you arrived, along Post Office Lane. At the junction with Queen Street, turn left and on reaching the corner of the main road by the market cross, keep straight ahead, to walk along Halton Road, passing the Methodist church, in the direction of the fingerpost for the Franklin Hall Heritage Centre.

You come to Franklin Hall as the road bends left and your route is along the footpath down its right hand side, indicated by a fingerpost. At the end of this section of footpath, turn left then immediately right, following another fingerpost.

On reaching Vale Road, bear left along it. As it bends right, go left and immediately right between the factory units following the fingerpost and a "Three Towns Walk"

sign. Once past the factory units, keep straight ahead across the next two fields, following the obvious path, arriving at a three way fingerpost. The Three Towns Walk veers off to the left but you keep straight ahead, to the right of the hedge.

At the end of the next field, go through a kissing gate and go left. I found the yellow arrows here a little misleading and I recommend following the left hand field boundary. As you near the end of the field, you see a kissing gate. Go through this and over one footbridge, across a broad track and over a second footbridge.

Follow the obvious footpath until it emerges into a broad track. There is a left pointing fingerpost for a public bridleway but you go right along the track. The track becomes a tarmac lane which you follow to the road through Toynton All Saints. Turn left.

After 150 yards or so, turn right along Watermill Lane, opposite the brick built church.

Follow Watermill Lane to its end and then follow the fingerpost for a public bridleway, ignoring the public footpath sign pointing left. Cross a cattle grid. A blue bridleway arrow confirms the route.

As you approach a farm, turn left across two footbridges.

At the top of the short rise, go over the stile by a gate and keep straight ahead following the public bridleway fingerpost, heading towards a five bar gate, where you join a tarmac lane by The Old Rectory at East Keal.

Follow the lane, passing St James Church, to the main road (A16) by the village store and post office. Turn left.

Walk along the main road until it bends left. You turn right to take the footpath to the left of the War Memorial. After a few yards at a three way fingerpost, keep straight ahead following the drive to some houses then turn left over the stile.

Follow the clear path up and over Mardon Hill. There are some fine views from here. I could make out Boston Stump (church) in Boston some 12/13 miles to the south.

The path comes out at a road 'T' junction. Keep straight ahead following the road sign for Old Bolingbroke. You now have about 1¼ miles to walk along the road but it is easy, slightly downhill with little traffic to bother you. The views are also quite pleasant. At the road junction at High Barn, turn right.

At Old Bolingbroke, follow the road in the direction of Mavis Enderby. Look out for a road on the left marked "Unsuitable for Coaches and Heavy Goods Vehicles" on a blue sign. Take this road to pass Bolingbroke Castle. A few yards further on, on the right, is the Black Horse Inn. At the junction after the pub, turn right.

Continue out of the village, passing the road sign to Spilsby (B1195) 3 miles and Mavis Enderby 1 mile.

