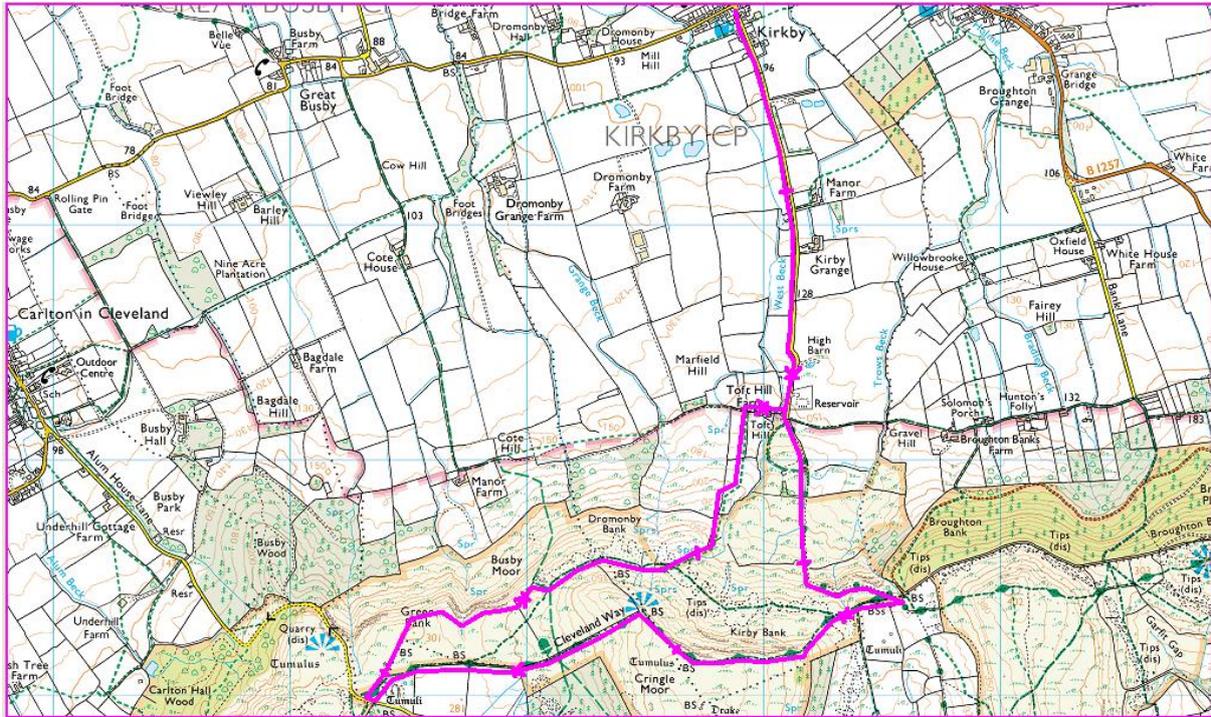


A Walk over Cringle Moor



Distance 6 miles. Ascent 430m. Time 3 hours

Grade - Moderate

Path is metalled road then good hill tracks and paved section of Cleveland Way, long distance footpath

The Walk starts from The Black Swan at Kirkby cross roads. A fine spot to finish for drinks and something to eat - highly recommended.

There is the possibility of food or a drink at the Lord Stones café, where the path turns back on itself at the western end of Cringle Moor. Sadly opening hours are now somewhat erratic and it can no longer be relied on.

The first mile of the walk from The Black Swan towards the hills is on metalled road. This is the ancient route from Stokesley to Bilsdale and incorporates the early footpath and bridleway which continue on to the moors. For this reason there are no other "footpaths" or "bridleways" leading from Kirkby to the Hills. This road is shared equally by all users whether on foot, horse or vehicle.

At the end of the road, go through the gate or over the stile into the Pybus Scout camp Area. Follow the track which goes up the hill straight ahead. (You will see the ancient track in the sunken hollow to your left). At the top of the slope is the former dwelling now used by the scouts.

Follow the track straight ahead, climbing steadily towards the hills and look out for the stone slabs which are part of the monks trod to Bilsdale and Rievaulx Abbey. When you reach the gate, turn and look back at the view, if you haven't done already. You can see the ridge and furrows of old fields on the other side of the track from the scout centre. The views of the Cleveland Hills and the changing agricultural landscape of the Cleveland Vale are superb..

Having rested follow the stone track up the slope. Soon you reach a small stream and pretty waterfall as it crosses the track. There is evidence of all tramways in the slopes, remnants of the area's industrial past when the banks were mined for jet and alum shale. Follow the track to the top where you reach a cross roads marked by a recently broken stone gate post. (Believed to be the victim of an "off road" hit and run accident - having survived hundreds of years of pedestrian and equine traffic without hurt.)

We now turn right to follow the main track along the crest of the col. This is part of The Coast to Coast Walk, the Cleveland Way, the Lyke Wake Walk and the White Rose Walk. The first two walks are national trails; the LWW created in the 1960s is a challenge to traverse the North York Moors within 24 hours; the White Rose Walk was devised by the Yorkshire Rambling club and is another challenge to walk the Cleveland and Hambleton Hills escarpments between The White Horse (Sutton bank) and Roseberry Topping within the hours of daylight.

While you are wondering which these walks to go for, follow the track over a boggy stream and follow the paved path which climbs the end of Cringle Moor.

Just before the track starts to climb a clear path branches to the right through and over hillocks of shale. These are the remains of former alum works and together with the remains of jet workings can be seen all around the edges of the escarpment. The path is known as the jet miner's trod which forms part of the return route).

Ascend Cringle Moor slowly. At the top follow the crest until you reach a trig point and stone shelter at the far end. There are superb views all round as far as the Pennines, County Durham and the Cleveland Vale.

From the shelter descend towards a group of trees in the distance - the path leads you there. At the trees you will see the Lord Stones café built into the hill side. After a pause turn back and head across a wide closely cropped sward which rises gently to the edge of the col. This is a favourite spot for hang gliders. A large boulder is the original Lords Stone where the boundaries of 3 estates met.

Take care and walk along the track at the top of the cliff back towards Cringle Moor. You will come to an artificial pond created in a gully - now a favourite for wild fowl. Follow the path round and when you see a parallel track above you climb up to join it. This is a wide track, originally formed by Jet Miners who worked these cliffs.

In geological terms you are walking along rocks which form the junction of the Upper Lias and Middle Lias stratas within the Lower Jurassic. The sandstone which outcrops below your feet is typical of the Cleveland Ironstone Series, the rock to which Middlesbrough owes its development. The path tends to lead you through the Grey Shales above the Iron Stone. In the cliffs on your right you may make out a change in colour marking the Bituminous Shales, also known as the Jet Rock series, the top 10 feet of which was extensively quarried for the jet reaching its peak during the Victorian period. Jet itself is the fossilised wood of the Monkey puzzle tree and was worked by Bronze Age peoples and in Roman times. Above the Jet Rock are the Alum Shale Series. These were mined from the beginning of the 17th century until nearly the end of the 19th century, when discoveries that alum could be extracted from carbonaceous shales resulted in the industry rapidly migrating to the coalfields.

As you follow the track which maintains pretty much the same level round the side of Cringle Moor, you will come to a foot path sign which points diagonally down slope. Follow the direction indicated, initially with a wire fence on your left. As you descend you enter pasture land with an obvious track winding down towards the farm buildings below.

When you reach the farm, you have to negotiate an often wet and muddy area, turning right across the front of the buildings, staying in the field and NOT going on to the private drive.

As you approach a caravan site ahead, you will find a stile over the fence on your right. This leads you on to the farm access road. Follow this to Hill Road where you turn left and return, after a mile, to the Black Swan.