

## **Burton Agnes, Harpham, Lowthorpe and Ruston Parva**

This circuit of four churches east of Driffield provides an interesting contrast, taking you from the wealth of a prominent local family to the simple environment of a small rural community. In between there is a church with a strong connection to Beverley Minster and a remnant of former glories.

Starting off at **Burton Agnes (20 miles)**: *From Hunter's Hall head north through Lairgate one way system and straight on through North Bar to roundabout. Turn right to next roundabout and turn left (signed Leconfield & Driffield.- A164). After six miles turn left at first roundabout (A614 signed to Market Weighton and Bridlington), then right at next roundabout (signed Bridlington). Straight over three roundabouts, then on main road (7.5 miles) until left turn into Sandy Lane (signed Burton Agnes). Follow sharp right then turn left for Burton Agnes Hall and St Martin's church (YO25 4NB).*



13th century origins with later additions the building is finely decorated, as befits the church endowed by the local, very wealthy landowners. Fine 15th century tomb of 'The Dark Knight'; who had an interesting history. Many other fine memorials to the families who owned the manor are to be found. The lawn overlooking the duck pond is a fine place to spend some relaxing time in on a sunny day.

Then on to **St John of Beverley, Harpham (YO25 4QT)**. *Return to main road and turn right back to Driffield and first left (0.9miles) into Butt Balk. Half mile to Cross Gates and keep to right - park on verge.* Reputedly the birthplace of the founder of Beverley Minster. Every year the choir of the Minster come to sing at a unique 'well-dressing' ceremony followed by Choral Evensong on the Thursday nearest to May 7th (St John's Feast Day). The church dates from 14th century and has a fine collection of monuments honouring the St Quinten family and the holy well is also worth a visit, although the route is muddy .



**St Martin's Church, Lowthorpe (YO25 4AS)** needs careful navigation to find, It's as lost in space as it has been in time. A former minster in its own right, there's an atmospheric roofless section attached to the 14th century nave and the churchyard has the parish cross from Kilham - brought here for safety after the population was all but wiped out by the Black Death. Also very unusual tomb monument in nave.

*Back up Cross Gates and 1st left into Main Street. First left onto Station Road then turn right to stay on Station Road. Then third of a mile to left right (Mill Lane) - there will be signs to 'Church and Monastery'. Follow road at farm to left then first right - keep eyes peeled for church which may be concealed behind trees. (Total journey distance 2 miles).*

The final stop is the parish church at **St Nicholas', Ruston Parva - (YO25 4DG)**- a true exemplar of the Victorian ideal to provide solid churches for everyone. *Continue on road and turn right (towards A614). Cross main road (take care as traffic can be quite fast) - total journey distance 1.2 miles. When road separates around an open green with house in middle park byverge, then look for signs to church (on left side of green). Follow path upwards - may be muddy underfoot.* Tucked up behind houses, the small, simple church dating from 1832 sits on a hilltop reached by climbing a steep path. A sign "To the Church" points up the gated lane to the path which is steep and not wheelchair friendly.

Sparsely ornamented on an exposed hilltop the tower is supported by four cast iron pillars and the whole building is an exercise in minimalism - and it's in excellent condition. For comforting solitude it is hard to find a better location - ideal for some contemplation at the end of the tour.



Depending on time of day you might choose to go on to **Bridlington Priory (9 miles left at A614 - see separate sheet for details)**, or return to **Hunter's Hall (HU17 8LG)** (the way you came, turning right at A614), possibly stopping at Driffield for various *divertissements* en-route. For food locals have recommended the **St Quintin Arms** in **Harpham** near the church which is nice, very pubby and serves good food. Or a little further afield is the **Manor Court** at **Carnaby YO16 4UJ (6 miles, turn left towards Bridlington)** which caters for all tastes.