

The start of the trail...

This trail links seven churches that together make up the Hillside Parishes. It can be started from any church on the trail, however, the best way to see them all is to start from Thirsk and visit Felixkirk, Boltby, Kirby Knowle, Cowesby, Nether Silton, Over Silton and finally Leake, which is just off the A19 south, on the way back to Thirsk.

The traditional market town of Thirsk is accessible by both train and bus and offers a wide range of services for visitors, including regular markets in the cobbled market square on Mondays and Saturdays. St Mary's Church in Thirsk is well worth a visit and is open daily from April to October and Friday mornings from November to March.

Useful contacts

For more information about churches in North Yorkshire, including details of events, services, walks, trails and much more visit www.yorkshirechurches.com.

For information about things to do and places to stay in and around this area contact a Tourist Information Centre:

Sutton Bank	01845 597426	suttonbank@ytbtic.co.uk
Thirsk	01845 522755	thirsktic@hambleton.gov.uk

Or a Tourist Information Point:

Easingwold	01347 821530	(open Easter to end October)
Northallerton	01609 776864	

The North Yorkshire Church Tourism Initiative would like to acknowledge the support of the following organisations:

HAMBLETON
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Making life better



The Diocese of York

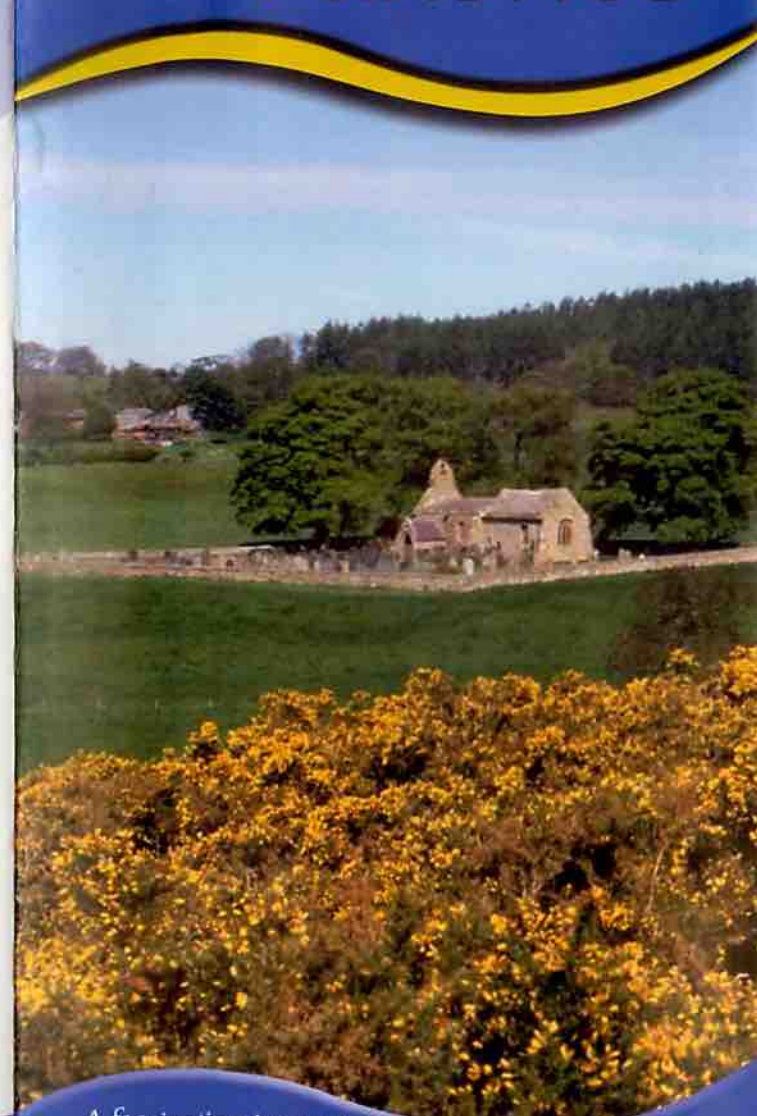
Yorkshire Tourist Board,
312 Tadcaster Road, York, YO24 1GS



The information in this guide is believed to be correct at the time of going to press. Yorkshire Tourist Board cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions. March 2005.

www.yorkshirechurches.com

Windows on the Hillside Parishes



A fascinating journey
of discovery around churches in
the Hambleton Hills

The Hillside Parishes ...

Geographically, the Hillside Parishes straddle the western boundary of the North York Moors National Park and run along the line of the Hambleton Hills, close to the route of the Cleveland Way.

It is an area that is particularly good for walking, or exploring at leisure by car, but one that is often missed by visitors travelling along the busy A19.

Located to the east of the A19, the Hillside Parishes cover an area of 75 square miles and boast seven fascinating churches that serve twelve local communities. Each of these has its own distinctive character and all are well worth visiting, so leave the busy main road and take the time to explore these traditional North Yorkshire villages.

This is an area that changes with the seasons and whether you are visiting in the springtime, when carpets of daffodils cover the churchyards, or summertime, when the sun streams through the stained-glass windows; autumn, when the churches are decorated for harvest, or winter, when Christmas celebrations take place, you will always find something here to delight you.

Please note that St Mary's Church at Over Silton can only be reached by a footpath over fields and this can become very muddy in wet weather.





The Church of St Mary the Virgin now stands alone beside the busy A19, but it was once at the centre of a thriving and populous village, which may have had as many as 1500 inhabitants, including the Bishop of Durham who had a palace opposite the church. St Mary's is essentially a Norman church on an older site, and a Saxon cross, possibly the original churchyard cross, can be seen built into the west face of the squat Norman tower. After the Norman period the church continued to grow and it contains work from every century up to the 15th. In the 14th century, however, something caused the village of Leake to disappear, leaving only the church as a reminder that it had ever existed. The Parish of Leake still exists and the church now serves the nearby villages of Knayton and Borrowby. Inside, the east window illustrates the Annunciation, while the Lady Chapel contains a relatively recent window, commissioned and installed in 1988 in memory of the wife and the father of the late Lt. Col. Peter Consett, sometime High Sheriff of North Yorkshire and churchwarden for 61 years, who started his military career in the navy but ended by leading the Yorkshire Hussars.



Open daily
 P Church car park
 OS SE 433906

01845 537277

A2 GT



Originally founded as a chapel of ease, All Saints was rebuilt in 1812 and enlarged in 1878. The church contains a Norman tub font and altar rails that are believed to be from H.M.S. Dreadnought. Outside, to the south of the churchyard, a cryptic stone stands in the field telling the history of the site:

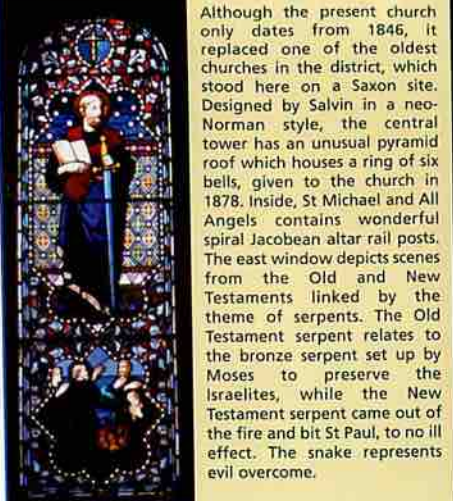
"Here The Grand Old Manor House Stood
 The Black Beams Were Oak, The Great Walls Were Good
 The Walls Of The East Wing Are Hidden Here
 A Thatched Cottage Like A Barn Was Here Erected Year A.D. 1765
 A Wide Porch Spans A Yard And Alcove"

A 20th century stained-glass window, designed by the priest-in-charge, commemorates the local Scaife family of Ox Bank Farm.

Open daily
 P On street
 OS SE 456922

01845 537277

A3 X



Although the present church only dates from 1846, it replaced one of the oldest churches in the district, which stood here on a Saxon site. Designed by Salvin in a neo-Norman style, the central tower has an unusual pyramid roof which houses a ring of six bells, given to the church in 1878. Inside, St Michael and All Angels contains wonderful spiral Jacobean altar rail posts. The east window depicts scenes from the Old and New Testaments linked by the theme of serpents. The Old Testament serpent relates to the bronze serpent set up by Moses to preserve the Israelites, while the New Testament serpent came out of the fire and bit St Paul, to no ill effect. The snake represents evil overcome.

Open daily
 P On street
 OS SE 464899

01845 537277

A3 GT



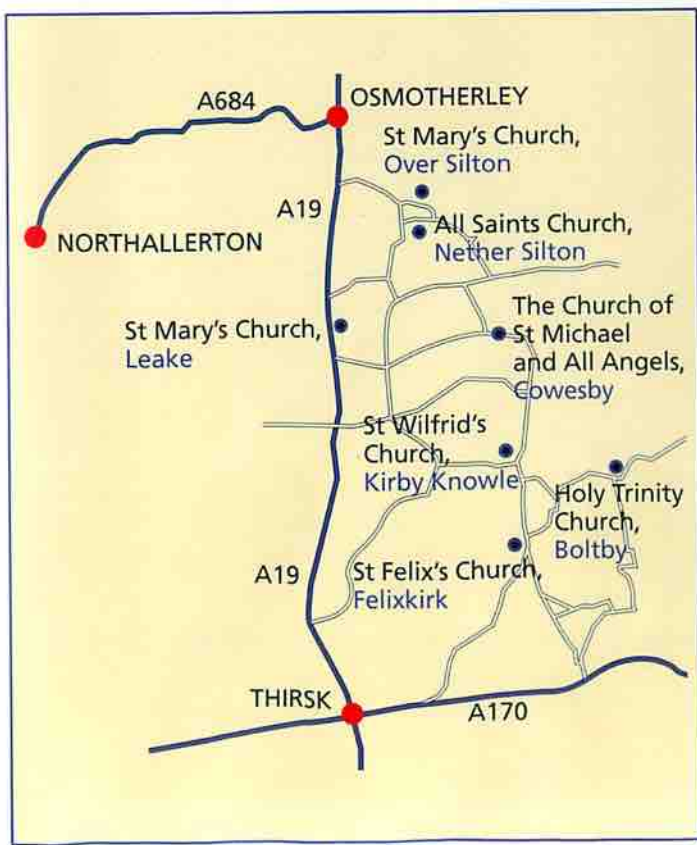
Built in 1873 by G. Fowler Jones at a cost of £1300, this very traditional building, with its tower over the porch, replaced a 17th century church that was only 12 feet wide. Inside, the remains of a 13th century chancel arch from the original church can be distinguished while the remains of an old boundary cross can be found in the churchyard. The east and west windows of this church were designed by renowned Victorian stained-glass artist, Charles Eamer Kempe (1837 - 1907). The west window depicts the Annunciation while the east window depicts the Crucifixion. Kempe's signature mark of a wheat-sheaf can be seen in the bottom left-hand corner of the west window.



Open daily
 P On street
 OS SE 468873

01845 537277

A3 GT



Key to symbols

- P** Where to park
- ♿** Accessible by bus
- 🚉** Nearest railway station
- OS** Ordnance Survey map reference
- WC** Toilets at church or nearby
- X** Refreshments nearby
- 🚐** Coach parties welcome by prior arrangement
- GT** Guided tours by prior arrangement

Accessibility

Please note that these gradings are for guidance only

- A1 Fully accessible to independent wheelchair users
- A2 Most of the church is accessible to independent wheelchair users
- A3 Accessible to wheelchair users travelling with assistance
- A4 Difficult for people with limited mobility/wheelchair users



Like the church at Leake, St Mary Magdalene's is now set apart from the village it serves. Accessible only by footpath, it lies 1/4 of a mile to the east of the village of Over Silton. Originally dedicated to All Saints, the church dates from the Norman period and has a typical Norman south doorway and Saxon font. With its unusual flagged chancel roof, this Grade I listed church contains roof beams made from old ships' timbers from the shipyards in Hartlepool. The churchyard contains many interesting gravestones, some dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. The east window of this church dates from the 15th century and takes as its subject St Mary Magdalene, to whom the church is now dedicated, although the Victorian studio that made the windows mistakenly presents her as the sister of Martha.

Open daily
 P Park in Over Silton village. St Mary's Church is 1/4 of a mile to the east of the village over fields.
 OS SE 455931

01845 537277

A4 GT

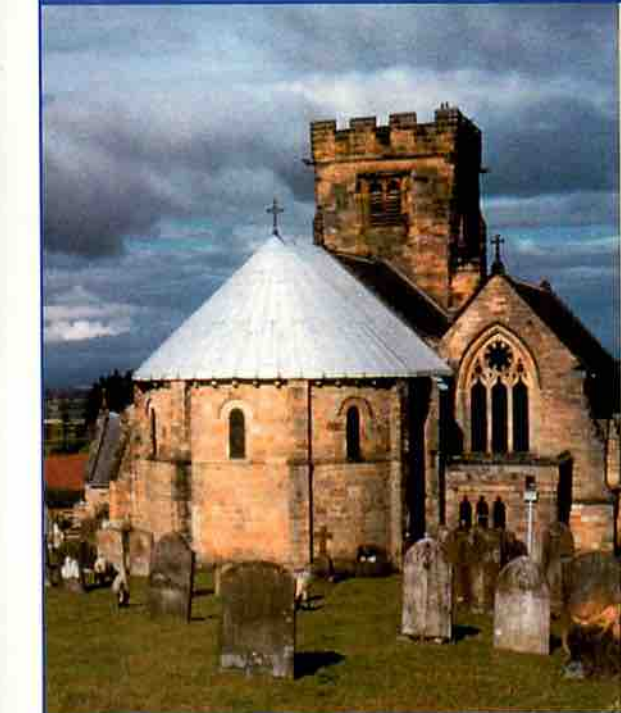


This is the daughter church of St Felix at Felixkirk. The first chapel, founded here in 1409, was rebuilt in 1802 and enlarged in 1859. The village is mentioned in the Domesday Book as Boltebi, revealing Danish origins. The east window is a memorial to the Walker family and depicts the Ascension in the central panel, the child retrieved from the temple in the left-hand panel and the Adoration in the right-hand panel.

Open daily
 P On street
 OS SE 490866

01845 537277

A3 GT



Felixkirk is recorded in the Domesday Book as Fridebi, meaning 'peace village'. Nearby Mount St John, beyond the church to the east, was the site of the local headquarters of the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem and from the 12th century to the Dissolution the Knights were patrons of the church and appointed the priest. Although substantially rebuilt by William Hey Dykes in 1860, elements of the original pre-1175 church can still be seen in the quoins of the south wall of the nave. In the north wall of the apse, a two light window, dating from pre-1300, contains elements of mediaeval glass. The window incorporates the arms of four prominent local families - Wakingham, Cantilupe, de Roos and Elsley, and a representation of the Trinity, dating from the 14th century, can be seen in the tracery. The brown arms and legs of God the Father can be seen behind the Son, crucified, while the 19th century red background represents the Holy Spirit. In the south aisle is a more recent window in memory of Brigadier Walker, and his widow Margaret, last of the three generations of Walkers at Mount St John and Ravensthorpe.



Open daily
 P On street
 OS SE 468847

01845 537277

A2 X GT