

Navenby

Heritage

Trail

Thank you for using this Trail to explore the historic village of Navenby.

Length: 2.5 miles

Duration: This leisurely stroll should take you approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours to complete. We hope you enjoy the experience.

Please park courteously in the village

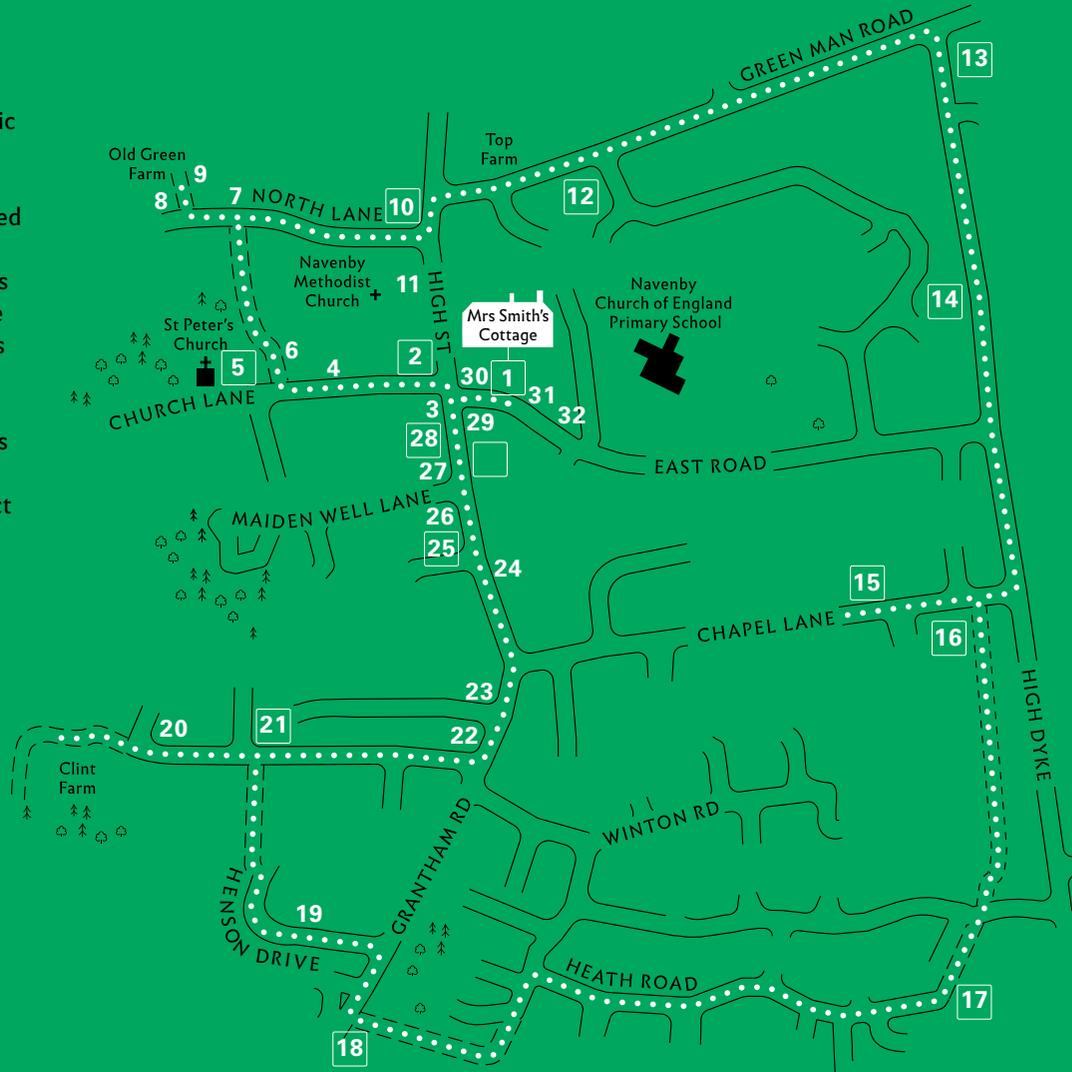
Practical notes:

- Remember to take care when crossing roads
- Some of the ground will be uneven and unpaved. The walk includes a grassy field and a short flight (descent) of steps.
- Please respect people's private property

... Trail Route

Look out for the ceramic Datestones by Nicki Jarvis in pavements along the route, installed as part of the Mrs Smith's Cottage Artist's Residency 2019-22. The Datestones project was created with funding from Arts Council England, Friends of Mrs Smith's Cottage and North Kesteven District Council.

Click on a number to go to a description



1 Mrs Smith's Cottage Navenby Trail start & end point. The Trail starts outside the Museum, situated on East Road (and near to the High Street).

This artisan's cottage is thought to date from around the 1830s. It may once have been two dwellings and was possibly built as part of the village poor relief provision. The large window suggests that at some time it may also have been used as a workshop or shop. Mrs Hilda Smith lived here for most of her 102 years and her cottage, now a museum, provides a rare insight into rural Lincolnshire life through an entire century.

1830

From the Cottage walk straight ahead to the High Street.

2 High Street

In 1221 King Henry III granted permission to Ranulph, Earl of Lincoln and Chester, to hold a market and a fair in the manor of Navenby.

A charter for another fair was granted to the Dean and Chapter of St Mary in Lincoln in 1374. The wide High Street suggests where these events may have been held and might also evidence farmers driving sheep to market.

When the market ceased to operate in the early 19th century, Navenby lost its status as a market town, but it has continued to function as an important local centre with a wide range of facilities that serve a growing population.

1300

Cross High Street with care, onto Church Lane. Pause for a moment.



Edwin T. Smith's shop, with Welbourne's Bakery beyond, 1908

3 Inns & Taverns

This thriving village has always offered a wide range of drinking establishments. This is likely due to its markets and fairs, location between smaller settlements and its agricultural prosperity in the 19th century.

From this vantage point at the junction of Church Lane with High Street, you can see the former Reindeer Inn to your immediate right. The former Butcher's Arms is set back to the left of Church Street. The King's Head (further down High Street) is believed to be the oldest public house still in operation in Navenby.

[Walk down Church Lane towards the church.](#)

4 Navenby Parish School & Old School Cottage

Built in 1816 on church land, the school was paid for by subscription. It taught poor children from the parish reading, writing and arithmetic plus sewing and knitting. The second storey was added in 1821, reached by external stone steps.

The school was built on the original village pinfold (an enclosure for stray animals). It relocated to East Road in 1975 and when the new primary school was built this was on the site of the "new" pinfold!

The land for Old School Cottage was made available through the village's Enclosure allotment in 1772. The house was lived in by the schoolmaster until 1975.

[Continue along Church Lane until you reach the church.](#)

5 St Peter's Church

This large Grade 1 Listed church, built between 1172-1180, retains a Norman pillar in the early English decorated style but most of the chancel and nave were rebuilt circa 1320. A highly decorated and rare Easter sepulchre for bread and wine and a double piscine for clerical handwashing are evidence of a prosperous parish.

A Queen Anne coat of arms is in the nave and the pulpit is Jacobean. The tower fell during a gale in 1797 and the roof was lowered, in 1875 Charles Kirk of Sleaford was employed to renovate the church and raised the roof to its original height. He also donated a pulley font, exhibited in the 1862 Great Exhibition. The death of a much-loved rector in 1907 inspired fundraising to create a stained glass window incorporating an early example of glass engraving, together with a Temple Moor roodscreen.

If you are outside the church, look for the carved gargoyles in animal and human form along the upper roof edge.

[Retrace your steps back to the church graveyard entrance, turn right into the narrow Cat Walk.](#)

6 Cat Walk

This cut-through is made up of two sections. Originally a route from North Lane to the churchyard (accessed through the metal gate) was called Cat Lane. In 1851 a new section of path was created to connect Church Lane to Cat Lane. This join (the dog leg) before the pathway widens is clear today and its narrowness is possibly the reason for it being named 'Cat Walk'.



Navenby school children, 1905

Reaching the end of Cat Walk, you are now on North Lane.

7 North Lane

Previously known as Newark Road, it was dangerously steep for horse-drawn vehicles, leading to numerous accidents. During the 19th century Church Lane replaced this road as the main thoroughfare towards Nottinghamshire.

If you wish, turn left and walk to the end of the lane, where it turns into a steep track. Turn right onto a public footpath and walk a few yards only.

8 View across the Witham Valley

Navenby is one of the 'Cliff Edge Villages', so called because it is situated on a ridge of Jurassic limestone which forms an escarpment 50 miles long, running from the Humber to the Leicestershire border near Grantham.

During the Jurassic period (135-180 million years ago) Lincolnshire was covered by the sea.

9 View to Navenby Railway Station (now private property) ½ mile distant

Between 1867 – 1965 Navenby benefited from direct access to the railway network, when the Great Northern Line (GNR) built a branch line from Lincoln to Grantham. London & North East Railways (LNER) took over the running from 1926 until the Beeching reforms in the 1960s.

Geology necessitated the line being located at the bottom of the cliff, so villagers had a steep climb after a day's shopping in Lincoln! The Great Northern Hotel was built near the station, along with goods yards, sidings and a signal box.

The line was busy, with goods freight and up to twelve passenger trains per day, until competition from road transport led to its decline.

Retrace your steps back onto North Lane and follow this road back towards the village centre. Pause as you reach the end, with Dial House on your left.

10 Dial House

This Grade 1 listed house was originally a 'hall house' and open to the rafters. It dates back in parts to the 1500s and, at the time of the English Civil Wars (1642-46 & 1648-51), it may have been a staging coach inn.

The name Dial House comes from a sundial that used to be located on the corner of the building.

1650



Church Lane, 1940

Reaching the High Street turn right, the chapel is a few metres away (on your right).

11 Methodist Chapel

Methodist activity in Navenby can be traced back to 1786. The Methodist Chapel opened in 1926, replacing an earlier chapel on Chapel Lane (built 1839) although the first chapel was built in 1802.

Mrs Smith, a lifelong Methodist, helped to raise funds for the construction of the Methodist chapel by selling her cottage to a close friend. She was able to buy the cottage back shortly afterwards. A foundation stone in her name (Miss Craven) which was laid to mark her contribution can still be seen.

Now diagonally cross High Street, heading north to Green Man Road on your right-hand side. Probably an ancient trackway across the heath, the historic former Green Man Inn sits at the far junction of this road with the A15. Walk along here.

12 Ermine Drive

You will pass a modern housing estate on the right-hand side. Built in a series of developments from the 1970s to around 2010, these homes expanded out from the historic linear village along High Street towards Twenty Row further down Green Man Road. The names of some of the roads (Roman Close, Centurion Close) commemorate Navenby's position alongside the historic Roman road Ermine Street.

1990

Cross over the turning for High Dyke and continue for a short way.

13 The Twenty Row Houses

The Twenty Row houses were built in 1929 as a result of the Housing and Town Planning Act (1919). This Act provided government subsidy to local councils to build houses in areas where there was high demand, recognising the acute shortage of homes after the First World War.

1929

Retrace your steps and turn left on to High Dyke (Ermine Street).

14 High Dyke (Ermine Street)

High Dyke is the local name for part of Roman Ermine Street, which ran from London (Londinium) to Lincoln (Lindum) and York (Eboracum). Evidence of houses and shops fronting Ermine Street and a possible Romano-British temple (along with graves, pottery and coins) have been found at Navenby, suggesting that the village was an important trading and rest stop for Roman armies marching between London and Lincoln.

AD
43

The naming of Navenby

Post-Roman, the present name is derived from the Old Norse Nafni+by, which may mean "village of a man called Nafni." In the Domesday Book of 1086, Navenby appears as Navenbi and Navenebi. Like many other Lincolnshire settlements ending '-by' this reflects the impact of Danish rule, or Danelaw, in England.



View of Navenby Railway Station before 1965

Continue down High Dyke then turn into Chapel Lane on your right.

15 Chapel Lane

Formerly known as Sleaford Road, this was the only route to Sleaford from the High Street. The 1830s Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (at the High Street end of the Lane), that gave this road its name, functioned until 1926, when a new chapel was built on the High Street.

1949

Temporary wooden searchlight buildings were erected on this lane during World War Two. Immediately post-war they were used as ad hoc accommodation by families but by 1949 the council replaced these with prefabricated Airey houses, designed by Sir Edwin Airey.

Retrace your steps then turn through the gate in the hedge on the right-hand side. This field is known as the Open Space.

16 Open Space (archaeology)

High Dyke probably pre-dates the Roman Ermine Street. There is archaeological evidence here of all periods from the Bronze Age (2200 -700 BC), through Roman (AD 43 - 410) to the Anglo-Saxon period (up to 1066). Cremations dated to the middle Saxon period have been discovered near the junction of High Dyke with Chapel Lane. You can find out more by looking at the information boards on the Open Space.

100
BC

Why is the village now based west of High Dyke? There is speculation that after Roman period the Romano-British

people may have stayed in place, whilst newly arriving Anglo-Saxons established a settlement on the ridge centred around the current church.

Walk the length of the Open Space, then follow the footpath which crosses Headland Way to reach Heath Road. Turn right onto this road.

17 Domesday Book

This 'Great Survey' was undertaken by order of William the Conqueror in 1086. It enabled him to assess the wealth of his subjects in order to raise taxes to pay for his army. The Domesday Book shows that Navenby was only small at this point. Held under the Lordship of Durand Malet, it consisted of two households with a small quantity of ploughlands, 2 ploughing teams and 8 acres of meadow.

1086

Village Expansion

Navenby has continued to expand in the space between Ermine Street and High Street. The creation of the Chapel Heath Estate in the 1990s (with continuous development since then) led to the discovery of early archaeology in Navenby. For the first time in 2,000 years High Dyke has become a busy thoroughfare once more.

Walk along Heath Road, turn left onto Doncaster Gardens. Ahead of you is a short footpath, follow this towards the playing field then continue on to The Venue.



Mrs Smith's Cottage, with Hilda and her friend Jenny at the gate, 1930s

18 The Venue

This large community centre includes the Navenby Parish office and volunteer-run library and provides multiple spaces for local activity. It was built on part of the John Cutforth Memorial Field after significant fund-raising by the local community. The Venue opened in 2012 and is now run on a charitable basis for the area.

2012

Look out for the large ceramic artwork on the wall of the Venue. 'Collective' was created by members of the community as part of the Datestones project during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

Continue past The Venue, back onto the main road (Grantham Road). Turn right and look for Henson Drive, second on your left. Please cross the road with care.

19 Henson Drive

Shown on the 1905 Ordnance Survey map as fields and 'allotment gardens', this area was farmed by Henson's of Boothby Graffoe and included a corn drier on the site. In 1989 planning permission allowed for the removal of farm buildings and the erection of dwellings, with some plots sold for self-build projects. The footpath to Clint Lane was retained but realigned to accommodate the new housing development.

Continue along Henson Drive to the end, then take the narrow footpath between houses. Please note that this path has a short flight of steps at the end. Emerge on Clint Lane.

To your left is a short spur to the end of Clint Lane continuing onto a public footpath.

20 The Smoots

The word 'smoot' describes a narrow passage, and a water smoot is designed to permit the passage of water. The Smoots may have enabled surface water runoff from Clint Lane, Maiden Well Lane and Church Lane.

The Viking Way

The Smoots is now part of the Viking Way. Created in 1976 as a long-distance trail, it is 147 miles long and runs from the Humber to Rutland Water.

You may wish to continue to the end of Clint Lane and onto the field path. From here, turn to look back up at the village where you can clearly see its strategic situation on the Lincoln Cliff edge.

Now walk along Clint Lane back towards Grantham Road.

21 Lion Head Hydrants

Notice the decorative water hydrant or 'standpost' nearby. Twelve of these were originally installed throughout Navenby around 1933, only a few years before mains water was supplied to the village in 1938. Manufactured by Glenfield and Kennedy Ltd, Kilmarnock, similar hydrants were installed in nearby villages. Only five now remain in Navenby, look out for the other four.

1933



Rummage Sale at the Church Garden Fete held in the rectory coach house, 1950

Continue to the end of Clint Lane onto Grantham Road, turn left and pass Gas Lane.

22 Gas Lane

Formerly known as Megs Lane. In 1857 the Provincial Gas Light and Coke Company began supplying gas lighting to the village on this site until 1926. A new 'Megs Lane' (in fact a cul-de-sac) has been created in the new housing estate opposite.

On the corner of Gas Lane is Odling Bros. butcher's shop.

23 Odling Bros

This well-established butchers has a 100 year history of shopkeeping in Navenby. William Odling (1871 - 1945) was originally a jeweller/clockmender known as 'Clocky' Odling. His son Charles purchased the butchery business and sold pies in Lincoln Market. Odlings celebrated their centenary in 2020.

Continue up what is now High Street, passing Chapel Lane on your right.

24 Village Pubs

In the 19th century there were countless taverns, inns and brewhouses in the village. Two public houses still remain in use, the Lion & Royal and the King's Head.

The most well-connected is the Lion & Royal, along here on your right. Formerly known as the Lion Hotel, it acquired the 'Royal' appellation in 1870 after the Prince of Wales changed his clothing there after a day's riding to hounds with the Blankney Hunt, which started and ended at the venue.

Continue up High Street.

25 Welbourne's Bakery

The village bakery was founded c.1890 by Cornelius Welbourne, trading as Farmer, Baker and Corn Merchant. The original shop stood at 71 High Street, before moving to the present position at 38 High Street in 1907.

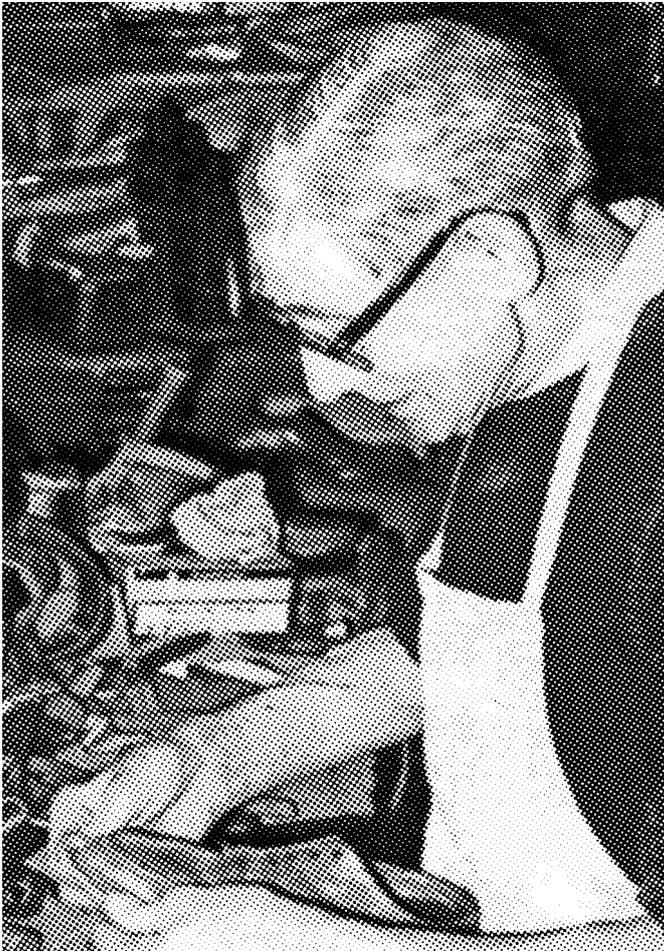
1890

The High Street has long been a thriving destination for shoppers, serving the needs of the wider rural community.

26 Police & Excise

Between 1890 – 1937 the police had a presence on the High Street until moving to a purpose-built house. Between 1784-1852 the Excise Officer was based close by. Based across the country, local officers were responsible for collecting duty on goods manufactured or processed in the UK.

Continue along High Street towards Maiden Well Lane.



Bill Bonner at his workbench, 1960s

27 Why Maiden Well?

Navenby is a 'spring-line' village, which describes a settlement formed around a line of springs created where a ridge of permeable rock lies over impermeable rock.

The name possibly relates to the location of a well. Water features much in ancient beliefs and customs and a spring issues from the hill here.

Continue along High Street and cross the road at the zebra crossing.

This datestone is a memorial to the shared sacrifice and community spirit of Navenby during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

2020

Continue towards East Road. On the approach, notice the red-brick-fronted house across the street.

28 Bonners' Saddlery (18 High Street)

For several generations the home and saddlery workshop of the Bonner family. From 1940 onwards the stock-in-trade of saddlery for draught horses declined due to the emergence of the motor-powered tractor, but Bill Bonner diversified into selling new and repaired bicycles, as well as shoes, boots, and binder canvas, as well as cutting gents' hair. The contents of the workshop were gifted to the Museum of Lincolnshire Life in Lincoln.

Continue to East Road

29 29 High Street

The building on the corner with East Road is believed to date to the 1500s and was the last property in the village to have a thatched roof (until 1929). The Rollitt family opened a grocery shop here in 1793 and the building continued in their ownership until 2003, although in this period it also operated as a Post Office, newsagent, tallow chandler, ironmongers, beer brewers and book and video library.

[Look across to the opposite corner of East Road.](#)

30 Fluck's Garage

Built c.1926, Fred Fluck & Son traded between 1926 – 1947. A showroom at the front and a workshop at the back, complete with a large diesel cylinder engine to drive all the machinery. Before World War Two they installed a self-service petrol pump which was open all night (the pump discharged a quantity of fuel per half crown). The current building continues to serve customers, but doesn't offer petrol any more!

[Now walk back onto East Road to return to your starting point at Mrs Smith's Cottage.](#)

[Just beyond the Cottage there are a few more local features.](#)

31 Village Blacksmith

East Road was known as Blacksmith's Lane until 1965. An agricultural village smithy was much in demand and stood on this site from at least 1841. No.1 East Road was the home of the Master Blacksmith (situated just before Mrs Smith's Cottage). The two-storey extension on the eastern end was a typical 'apprentice house'. The ground floor housed the communal kitchen and the apprentice lad slept in a bedroom above, accessed via a trap ladder.

32 Navenby Fire Service

Navenby Fire Brigade formed in 1844. The fire station housed a horse-drawn pump engine and stood next to the blacksmiths. This engine was replaced in 1943 by a lightweight powered trailer pump, when the National Fire Service came into being. The station also housed a wheeled funeral bier, gifted by Dr Campbell in 1924 which was stored there along with the grave diggers' spades for the village cemetery further down the road.

1844

[Thank you for completing the Navenby Heritage Trail.](#)



High Street towards the southern end of the village, c1900



Blacksmith Arthur Addison, 1930s

We would love to hear what you thought about this walk or any local history you would like to share. Just go to: www.mrssmithscottage.com

The creation of the Navenby Heritage Trail has depended on the support and advice of many people. We would particularly like to thank the Navenby Village Trail team and Navenby History Online, with special thanks to Liz East, Malcolm Ashpool & Peter Welbourne.

Photographs have been sourced from the Mrs Smith's Cottage Collection and the Navenby Parish Archive, which includes the Maurice Addison Archive.

This booklet was made possible with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and created by Nicki Jarvis whilst artist-in-residence at Mrs Smith's Cottage 2019-2022.



North Kesteven
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Mrs Smith's
Cottage



LOTTERY FUNDED

Supported using public funding by

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND



HEART OF Lincs

This village guide forms part of the Ridges & Furrows arts and heritage trail, which extends from the Hub in Sleaford to Millenium Green in North Hykeham, travelling along the Lincoln Edge, visiting numerous villages and places of interest.

Explore the Ridges & Furrows trail online at:
www.ridgesandfurrowstrail.org