

ABOUT THE WALK

History of Downham

Downham is owned by the Assheton family and means Dune Ham, or the "dwelling place among the little hills". The village of Downham is untouched and preserved, with no modern street lighting, road markings or satellite dishes on buildings. Many of the buildings were built in the 18th century with 20 of them being listed.

Richard Assheton bought the original manor of Downham in 1558, after he had already bought the Malham estate and Whalley Abbey. The current Downham Hall was built in 1835 and the church was built in 1910 although it has a 15th century tower.

Why are the fields that shape?

The field shapes along this walk change from small and irregular ones close to the village which are Ancient enclosures, to large rectangular fields which were enclosed in the 18th and 19th century.

Interesting Traditional Boundaries

Hedgerows and dry stone walls are used to split fields up into pastures and to delineate ownership of land. Walls tend to be on higher ground or moorland and hedgerows tend to be on the lower lying land.

Downham has really good examples of traditional field boundaries, look out for the mixture of hedgerows and dry stone walls on this walk.

Part way around the walk you will notice the change from gritstone to limestone in the walls, which reflects the local geology. Look out for this just after point 5 on this walk as the walls here are made from both stones.

Laying hedgerows is a traditional way of managing the trees and to keep them as a stock proof barrier. In the past, hedgerows were laid in both directions to fill in the gaps, however now they are always laid up hill.



Contact us on

www.pendlehillproject.com
Pendlehill.lp@lancashire.gov.uk
01200 420 420

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Assheton
ARMS



TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES WALK AROUND DOWNHAM — CIRCULAR WALK —



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Distance: Approx. 4 miles

Walkers are advised to carry OS Explorer map OL41.



Surface: Tracks, fields and roads. Kissing gates and stiles. Can be wet underfoot.



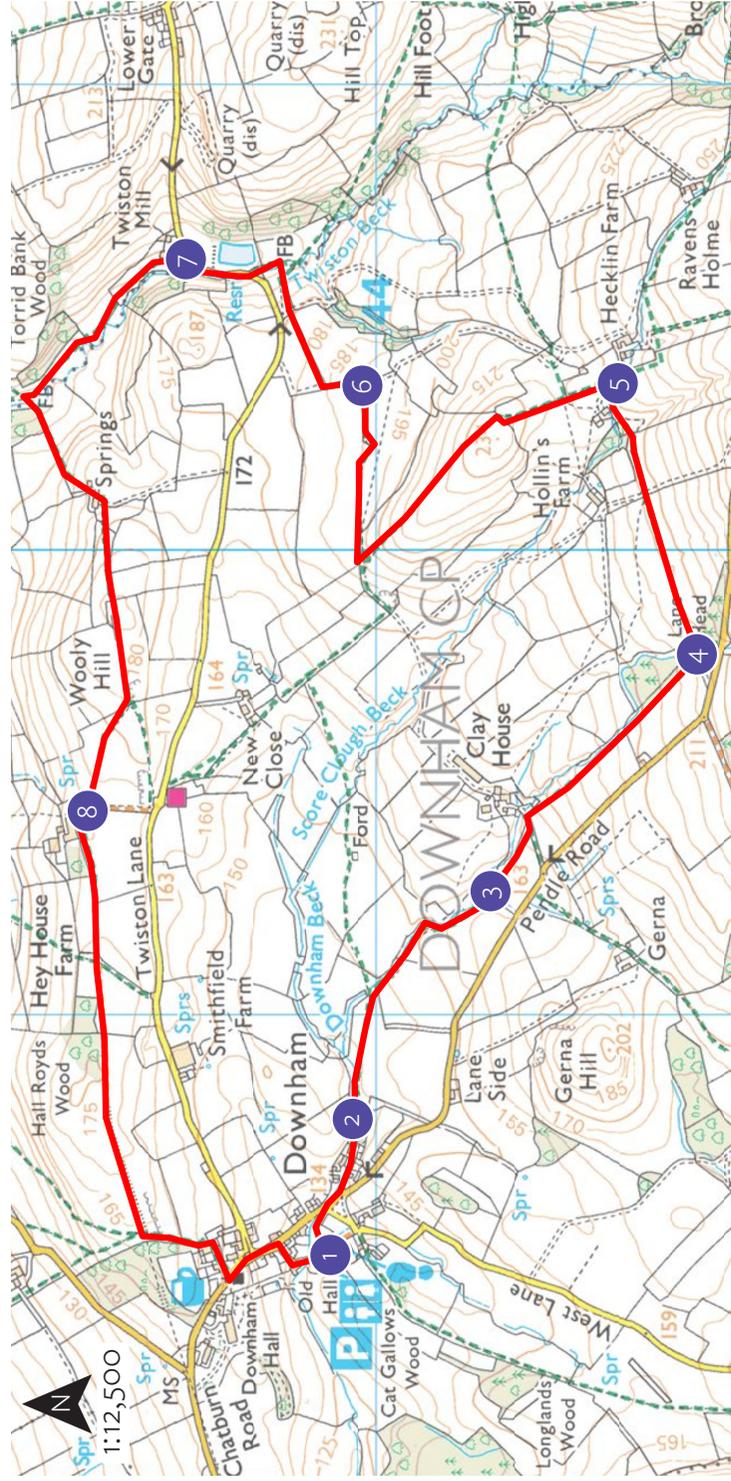
Transport: Bus 66 & 67 (Mon–Sat)



Dogs on a Lead: Must be able to get over wooden and stone stiles.



Parking and Toilets: Downham car park



- 1** Leave the car park through the kissing gate near the toilets and bear right off the tarmac passing over a narrow bridge over a small stream and through two kissing gates. Continue on 100m, do not cross the stone road bridge and take the road forking left following Downham Beck upstream. Go through the kissing gate at the end of the road.
- 2** Follow the beck up stream passing the two waymarker posts. Continue straight across the field and go through the kissing gate in the fence line, keeping the beck on your left. After 200m go through the kissing gate into the field. Follow the waymarker posts up the fence line and cross over the wooden footbridge.
- 3** Keeping to the left hand edge of the field, cross over a stone stile and head up the hill crossing over the stone stile ahead. From this stile follow the faint line of the ancient cart track across Hayset Hill, waymarked with small limestone boulders. On reaching the dry stone wall at the foot of the hill turn sharp right and cross the stile next to the field gate. Keeping to the edge of the field follow the fence line till the end of the field and cross the stile on your left onto old "green lane".
- 4** Follow this track for approximately 100m and go through the gate. Turn sharp right in the meadow keeping to the edge and follow the hedge downhill and cross the stile. Head down the hill towards Twiston Beck and turn right just before it, crossing over the wooden footbridge. Turn sharp left following the fence line and stream. Pass through the kissing gate into a small coppice woodland, (the old Mill pond is behind the hedge on your right) continuing 50m until reaching the road. Turn right and follow the road downhill 200m until a kissing gate is reached on the left, just before the farm buildings (the old Twiston Mill).
- 5** Go through the gate and walk parallel to the stream along the field keeping to the fence line on the left. Pass through the kissing gate and continue with the fence line on the left, passing through another kissing gate. Continue straight, pass through the gate and cross over the footbridge on your left (avoid using the wider cattle bridge adjoining). Head uphill, keeping the wall on your right, then bear left to cross the stile in the fence behind Springs Farmhouse. Pass between the house and stone barn on the main track and then turn immediately right into the field next to the black metal barn. Continue up the field crossing a stile and bearing slightly left uphill towards a group of mature trees and the wall, crossing over the stone stile. Continue along the line of the old trackway on the ridge until you reach a wall. Cross the stone stile and bear gently right across the field aiming for the stile next to the metal gate about 200m away. Cross over, turn right immediately and cross over the stone stile on the left.
- 6** Continue straight ahead passing over two stone stiles. After the second stile, continue straight on, along the ridge until you reach the woodland edge and after 50m, a kissing gate. Pass through keeping the wood on your right. When the wood ends continue to follow the contours heading for the large wood straight ahead. Upon reaching the walled boundary of the wood, turn left and go through the kissing gate, keep to the right and go through another kissing gate turning immediately right into the village. Follow the road downhill past the Assheton Arms on your left and take the road on the right opposite Downham Pre School, this will lead back to the car park.
- 7** Go through the gate and walk parallel to the stream along the field keeping to the fence line on the left. Pass through the kissing gate and continue with the fence line on the left, passing through another kissing gate. Continue straight, pass through the gate and cross over the footbridge on your left (avoid using the wider cattle bridge adjoining). Head uphill, keeping the wall on your right, then bear left to cross the stile in the fence behind Springs Farmhouse. Pass between the house and stone barn on the main track and then turn immediately right into the field next to the black metal barn. Continue up the field crossing a stile and bearing slightly left uphill towards a group of mature trees and the wall, crossing over the stone stile. Continue along the line of the old trackway on the ridge until you reach a wall. Cross the
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- 3** The path runs along the fence, just inside the wood. Go through the kissing gate, cross the farm track and through the kissing gate on the other side into the sloping field. Continue uphill keeping to the edge of the field crossing two stone stiles to the barn.
- 4** Turn left, cross a small gully and continue across the field signposted Hecklin (Do not bear right into the wood or you will head up pendle!). Follow the waymarkers across this large pasture and cross over the stone stile and the track, continuing straight along the fence line until another stone stile next to a wood. Cross and continue following the fence line passing Nutshaw barn on your left. Follow the waymarker heading towards Hecklin Farm, but just before it turn left at the wall and cross the stone stile (Do not go into the farm yard).
- 6** Follow this track for approximately 100m and go through the gate. Turn sharp right in the meadow keeping to the edge and follow the hedge downhill and cross the stile. Head down the hill towards Twiston Beck and turn right just before it, crossing over the wooden footbridge. Turn sharp left following the fence line and stream. Pass through the kissing gate into a small coppice woodland, (the old Mill pond is behind the hedge on your right) continuing 50m until reaching the road. Turn right and follow the road downhill 200m until a kissing gate is reached on the left, just before the farm buildings (the old Twiston Mill).

