TADCASTER TO NEWTON KYME CIRCULAR
An easy going 5.5 mile walk with no stiles and only one very short steep bit; along with a gradual ½ mile up hill road section.

Start point: Tadcaster Bus Station, behind Britannia Inn, Commercial Street, Tadcaster. LS24 8AA

Tadcaster is the last town on the River Wharfe before it joins the River Ouse about 10 miles (16 km) downstream and is twinned with Saint Chély d'Apcher in France. The town was founded by the Romans, who named it Calcaria from the Latin word for lime, reflecting the importance of the area's limestone geology as a natural resource for quarrying, an industry which continues today and has contributed to many notable buildings including York Minster. Calcaria was an important staging post on the road to Eboracum (York), which grew up at the river crossing. The suffix of the Anglo-Saxon name Tadcaster is derived from the borrowed Latin word castra meaning 'fort', although the Saxons used it for any walled Roman settlement. Tadcaster is mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as the place where King Harold assembled his army prior to entry into York and subsequently on to the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066. The original river crossing was probably a simple ford near the present site of St Mary's Church, soon followed by a wooden bridge. Around 1240, the first stone bridge was constructed close by, possibly from stone once again reclaimed from the castle. In 1642 the Battle of Tadcaster, an incident during the English Civil War, took place on and around Tadcaster Bridge between Sir Thomas Fairfax's Parliamentarian forces and the Earl of Newcastle's Royalist army. Tadcaster has long been associated with the brewing industry due to the quality and accessibility of the local water rich in lime sulphate. Today it is second in importance only to Burton upon Trent as an English brewing centre. Only three breweries have survived into the present day, The Tower Brewery (Coors, formerly Bass), John Smith's and Samuel Smith's Old Brewery, which is also the oldest brewery in Yorkshire and the only remaining independent brewery in Tadcaster.

Start of the walk: From the car park, turn right up the main road to cross at the first pelican crossing then turn left to walk down the road and over the river bridge. After crossing the bridge, turn right at Wharfe Bank Mews and a footpath sign to “Newton Kyme 2.3 miles”; to follow the river bank along Wharfe Bank Terrace, passing St Mary’s Parish Church on your left. Continue along the river passing a weir and under a viaduct for approximately one mile. Just after passing water pump station, continue ahead under a small stone arch into a small wood. As the river bears right, carry on up two stepping stones and turn right over a concrete small concrete bridge and through a metal gate to maintain the river bank. Now keep on the river bank and as you reach a further sharp right hand bend in the river, the church and village of Newton Kyme will come into view in the distance directly ahead of you. Continue following the river as it as it meanders right and then left, then right again and through two metal gates; and bearing right to continue following the river. Shortly the church will now be visible, very clearly, on your left. As once again, the river bears left, go through a wooden gate and bear left heading towards a wall and at the end of a small plantation, turn left up a short hill and at a tall stone pillar, bear right across the field heading towards the church. Continue to the left of the church through parkland passing Newton Kyme Hall on the right across an old dry moat and then bear right towards a metal gate opposite the Dower House.
Newton Kyme takes its name from being formerly in the possession of the "Barons de Kime" with reputed descent of Robin Hood from the lords of Kyme; though it has since long been in the ancient family of Fairfax. Newton Kyme Hall, long the seat of the Fairfax family, was new fronted, and embellished with a colonnade of the Corinthian order, by the late proprietor, Thomas L. Fairfax, Esq.; in the grounds are some remains of the ancient baronial residence of the Kymes, of whom the last baron died in 1338. Kyme Castle is located in the gardens of Newton Kyme Hall. The castle was originally a 13th century manor house, which was fortified in stone, in the 14th century. Sadly all that remains is a fragment of one rubble-built wall, which contains a pointed archway and two lancet windows. A Roman fort and minor settlement lies on the south bank of the River Wharfe nearby. Should time permit, the churchyard is worth a visit and headstones near the door date back to the 17th century.

Go through the metal gate and turn left up the lane and at the junction, carry forward straight ahead passing Main Street on your right, then Granary House also on the right and a converted Manor House on your left. Follow the lane as it bends left to emerge at the A659 Tadcaster to Boston Spa road. At this point, cross immediately over the road, taking the lane opposite straight ahead by the ‘Low Bridge’ road sign. Continue under an old railway bridge, passing a farm on your left and at the T junction, turn left. Now follow this road as it inclines uphill for approximately ¼ of a mile passing St Helen’s Farm on the right. Towards the top of the road by trees and a quarry, turn left at a Public Bridleway sign.

As you join the bridleway, look towards the left where you should be able to see Clifford Church and in front of you, in the distance, the buildings of Thorp Arch Trading Estate. As you survey the view (especially on a clear day), you should also be able to make out the town of Boston Spa, village of Bramham, as well as the A1 motorway. Continue along the bridleway heading towards a wood, ignoring the track as it bears off to the right progressing between two fields on to a path just above the wood. After passing metal barns on both the left and right, emerge at houses. At a further metal bar on your right, turn right at The Coach House and as the road then bears left, look out for possible helicopters in the front garden of the house. Turn left down this lane and on reaching The Granary continue on a short path over the grass and at Smaws House, turn left down the hill and at the bottom, bear right to follow a lane with wooden fencing on your left.

In about ¼ of a mile, you will once again reach the A659. On reaching the road, cross to the footpath on the other side and turn right towards Tadcaster. In 1/3rd of a mile, opposite Coors Brewery, turn left at a wooden gate to follow the Viaduct Walk. Now continue along the track and over the Viaduct to the far end turning right down some stone steps to arrive on to the opposite bank of the river. At the bottom of the steps, turn left back towards Tadcaster. Follow the path as it bears left and then right at Mill House to follow a road back to the town centre and your original starting point.