

# 8

## Dallam Circular

This is one of a series of short walks around the villages of Heversham and Leasgill, near Milnthorpe, Cumbria.

**Disclaimer:** Walkers are responsible for their own safety, particularly when on public roads, and are asked to observe the country code when crossing farmland.

**Starting Point:** The Athenaeum village hall on the main village street Leasgill LA7 7ET. The hall has a car park, but this is intended for users of the hall. There is free parking on the surrounding roads.

**Terrain:** 8 km / 5 miles.  
Bus journey, then mix of tarmac and pasture, gentle inclines.

**1** Catch the 555 bus towards Lancaster from the stop across road from the Athenaeum. This goes every hour around the half hour, but check with the operator [stagecoachbus.com](http://stagecoachbus.com)

Get off at **Milnthorpe Market Square**.

Alternatively you can walk to Milnthorpe; head due south from the Athenaeum and continue down the A6. Turn left at the lights. (adds 1.5 miles to the walk)



**2 Market Square.** Milnthorpe was granted a market by Edward III in 1334. Friday is market day. The market pillar is Grade II listed, with a base thought to be 18th century and the top repaired or replaced in the 19th century. For a while, around 1845, a lock-up was built on the site to contain rioters during construction of the railway locally, but the lock-up was demolished and the cross restored in the 1860s.

**Vine House**, just behind the cross, is thought to date from the 18th century but has been much rebuilt and until recently was a Spar shop. Originally it was the premises of a wine merchant, at the time when Milnthorpe boasted a small port at the mouth of the River Bela, importing wine, coal and guano, and exporting gunpowder and wool.



**St Thomas's Church** was built in 1837 as a chapel of ease linked to St Peter's Church, Heversham, and since extended and modified. The hiring of farm labourers, which traditionally took place on Sundays on the green in front of the church, was stopped by the first vicar, who complained of noise and drunkenness disturbing his services.

**3** Walk past the right side to the church to find a footpath fingerpost in the far corner to your right signed "Paradise Lane 3/4". This quiet path continues due south in pretty much a straight line, through a variety of stiles. You will be passing to the left of the small rounded hill with a clump of trees on the top.



As you come closer to Paradise Lane on your left, look for a squeeze stile beside a gate with a footpath sign. Enter the narrow lane and turn right.



The lane drops gently down to the A6, opposite the Pelta Medical Papers mill.

**4** . Cross the A6 and continue south on the tarmac footpath past the mill to find a path dropping down to your right with a brown sign "**Heron Corn Mill**". There are explanatory boards telling the story of the mills and the local wildlife. This path will take you along the bank of the River Bela to a wooden footbridge leading into the Heron Corn Mill car park.





**Heron Corn Mill.** There has been a mill on this site since 1096. The present mill on the west side of the River Bela was built in 1750. There was another mill on the far bank, which later became a paper mill run by Henry Cooke Ltd, who bought the Heron Corn Mill and restored it, opening to the public in 1975.

It's generally open from Wednesday to Sunday; there are milling demonstrations and a shop where you can buy flour.

In the 21st century, the paper mill, which specialised in confectionery packaging, was bought by the Swedish company BillerudKorsnäs AB and now trades as Pelta Medical Papers.

From the car park by the Heron Corn Mill take the path signed Dallam and Milnthorpe, taking you straight ahead up a slope between an avenue of trees. Pass through the gate at the top of the rise and follow the way markers in a straight line through the park.



Dallam Deer Park extends to 190 acres and is home to a herd of fallow deer. There is an 18th century deer shelter, which you will see to your right.

**5**. Further on, to the left, is **Dallam Tower** itself. This is a largely 18th century house, not open to the public. It is the home of the Wilson family, whose members include Daniel and his son Edward Wilson, who were both MPs for Westmorland in the 18th century. Beyond Dallam Tower you will see the River Bela snaking into the Kent Estuary and the top of Morecambe Bay.

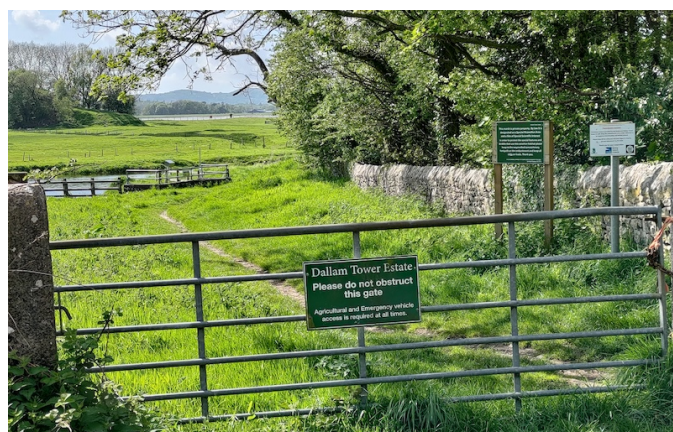
The bridge exiting Dallam park was built in 1730 and is Grade II listed. It was originally a road bridge but was replaced by the new turnpike, which is now the B5282 leading to Sandside and Arnside.

After crossing the bridge on to B5282, turn left and follow the road for 400 yards until you see Milnthorpe Bridge. Just before the bridge, take the lane, Marsh Road, leading off to the right.

**Milnthorpe Bridge** is Grade II listed and was built in 1813 to take the new turnpike road across the River Bela.



**6** After 50 yards on Marsh Road there is a permissive access to the estuary embankment provided by the Dallam Tower Estate. This is worth a diversion for the views across the estuary. Unfortunately this is the only access point, so once you have taken in the view and had a stroll along the bank, you will have to return to this point. There is no other exit.







On Marsh Road, just before reaching the turning to the waste water treatment works, you pass the remains of a railway embankment. There was once a very fine viaduct crossing the River Bela, carrying the line from Hincaster to Arnside. The line was built to carry coke from the Durham coalfields to the iron and steel works of west Cumbria. (See *Walk 3: Hincaster Trailway*)



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Continue along Marsh Road and take the right turn opposite Marsh Farm. **7**  
You will pass Moss Side Farm and then, on your right, **Heversham Hall**, before reaching the A6 by the Heversham Hotel. Cross the A6, continue ahead to **St Peter's Church**. **8**  
Then turn left along the village street to reach the Athenaeum.

**Heversham Hall** is set back among the set of farm buildings on the right of the lane, this grade II\* stone house was built in the 14th century and extended in the 16th. Not open to the public.



**St Peter's church.** Grade II\* This has been a religious site since the 7th century; part of a cross from that time is in the church porch. The present church dates from the 11th century and has been expanded and remodelled many times, particularly in the 19th century, when the tower was rebuilt and the interior restored by Lancaster architects Paley & Austin.

**St Mary's Well:** set in the wall on the right of the road as you pass the churchyard. The name refers St Mary's Abbey in York, which came to own much of the village in the 11th century.



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