

The Harrogate Ringway Relay

Leg 1. Harrogate Sports and Fitness Centre to Beckwith Head Road 6 miles

From HSFC follow the cycle track behind the Scout hut. At the junction take the middle way slightly left and downhill through woods to a 5-bar gate. Then out in the open across Hookstone Beck and up a slight rise to another gate on the left at a junction. Turn RIGHT. You are now on the Ringway route.

Cross the top of Hornbeam Park, go over the railway bridge and follow the tarmac road around to the left to meet Fulwith Mill Lane. Turn RIGHT and continue to Leeds Road.

Cross the road with care and follow the Ringway sign, turning slightly to the left into Stone Rings Lane. Carry straight on and down a stony track to cross Stone Rings Beck by the wooden bridge. Climb up the other side, keeping to the left which leads into a narrow path descending with the beck on the left. At the bottom don't try to follow the Ringway sign into the brambles but turn right through the gate and cross the fields to Pannal Church.

Turn left into Main Street, across the Crimple Beck and cross the road to turn right into Mill Lane. The path continues at first with the mill pond on the left and further on with the beck on the right. Pass through a courtyard to the gate on the opposite side and follow the gravel lane, with the cricket field on your left, to Burn Bridge Road. Cross with care to the stone stile directly opposite.

On reaching Brackenthwaite Lane, cross with care and follow the path directly opposite which eventually climbs a steady gradient with a fenced wood on the right. At the top corner of the wood turn right and climb steeply up the grassy slope with a stone wall and the wood on your right. Go over the brow and through the gate into the wood, descending steeply at first and, after crossing Horn Beck, reach Brackenthwaite Lane. Turn right and then, after about 20m, left onto the footpath.

This path crosses Crimple Beck and then reaches Hill Foot Lane. Turn right and then left again after 20 m along a footpath between two garden fences. After crossing the stile keep straight ahead up the hill past the dead tree to the gate and then through 4 more field boundaries before turning LEFT. (The official route goes downhill with the hedgerow on the right but then turns sharp left at a signpost and back up the hill. Worth a reccie !)

This path will eventually bring you to Hill Top Lane near the junction by the Squinting Cat. Turn right along the road, passing the junction (Whinney Lane) and, after about 100m, take the footpath on the left which, after crossing fields, emerges by the drive to Beckwith Head Farm. Turn right onto the tarmac road and straight across at the crossroads into Beckwith Head Road.

<https://osmaps.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/route/4006728/Ringway-Relay-Leg-1>

The Harrogate Ringway Relay

Leg 2. Beckwith Head Road to Knox Lane

5 miles

Continue along Beckwith Head Road and cross Otley Road, turning left towards Beckwithshaw for about 300m. Take the footpath through the gate on the right.

At the end of this path turn right for about 100m then sharp left and down into the valley. On climbing out of the other side follow the path to the left over Birk Crag and staying high to reach Cornwall Road. Turn left down the hill and then right into Kent Road after 100m.

After about 400m and now running uphill take the footpath to the left between garden fences and descend to Oak Beck near the packhorse bridge. Turn right and follow the beck downstream, emerging by the golf club and turn left. After following the road around to the right, take the footpath on the left immediately after the golf club car park and then turn right along the beck again to the Academy. Cross the beck by the road bridge and turn left up Jennyfield Drive.

Pass the top of Harewood Drive on the right and, about 150m further on, turn right down the footpath to reach Skipton Road. Turn right and stay on the right hand side of the road until reaching the farm track on the other side. Cross the road and follow the track, which is diverted around Grange Farm, to Ripon Road. Cross the road and turn into Knox Mill Lane. Continue to and over the pack horse bridge to reach Knox Lane.

<https://osmaps.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/route/4007130/Ringway-Relay-Leg-2>

The Harrogate Ringway Relay

Leg 3. Knox Lane to Knaresborough High Bridge

4.8 miles

From Knox Lane turn into Old Trough Way. On reaching the junction with Old Barber turn left and continue out of the housing, taking the first path to the right in the park which leads into a path between the sewage works fence on the left and allotment gardens on the right.

Cross the road and go straight ahead until, after passing some garden fences on the right, turn left at the junction of paths. This path leads up a slight rise to a crossing of paths, at which point go straight over, continuing steadily uphill.

On leaving the woods, the Ringway footpath is signed to the left but this section is not much used and often overgrown. It is better to continue along the field edge until you see a clearly worn way down. This soon joins the official path which continues down steps beside a fence on the left and eventually reaches the Nidd just before the viaduct. (If you miss this way down into the gorge, simply continue along the field edge, crossing the Greenway by the end of the viaduct, and, in the far corner you will find a broad path down.)

From here it is simply a matter of following the path along the gorge with the river on your left. About half a mile after passing under the viaduct and after a short climb there is a junction with Milner's Lane and steps leading away to the right but keep left. The path splits but both branches lead to the same place back down by the river, though the right hand one is an easier decent to run.

A short distance (~400m) after passing Burgess bridge over the main river (do not cross!) the path climbs out of the gorge, steeply at first up steps, and eventually joins a track which leads to Bilton Lane. Turn left and, on reaching Bilton Hall Drive go straight across and along the cycle track (Beryl Burton Way) which leads down to the High Bridge.

<https://osmaps.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/route/4005853/Ringway-Relay-Leg-3>

The Harrogate Ringway Relay

Leg 4. Knaresborough High Bridge to Harrogate Sports and Fitness Centre 4.8 miles

Cross the bridge towards Knaresborough and cross the road to reach Waterside. (Use the pedestrian crossing at the far end of the bridge if the traffic is busy). Run all the way along Waterside to Low Bridge and turn right. There is no footpath on the right hand side of the bridge so it is best to cross immediately and then cross back on the other side of the river after passing the Mother Shipton pub. Take your time. It isn't a race!

About 50m after the pub turn sharp right up a narrow path and eventually over a stile into a rough meadow. Keep straight ahead, diverging slightly from the field boundary on your left, to find another stile around a little corner in the hedgerow ahead. After crossing the stile stay close to the field boundary on your left until, after crossing a further stile, the fence is on your right.

Follow this fence to the corner of the field then turn sharp left and, in the same field continue along parallel to the field edge on your right to a 5 bar gate leading out into a lane which will take you to Forest Moor Road. Turn right and run past the garden centre to where the Ringway is signposted on the opposite side of the road.

On reaching the first field boundary by a large oak, Rudfarlington Farm, your next destination, can be seen ahead. The path turns 45 degrees to the right across the field and, on reaching the hedgerow, turns left and, at the next corner, turns into a path between hedgerows eventually emerging onto a track leading to the farm. On reaching the tarmac farm road by the farmyard, turn right to the A661 Wetherby Road. Turn right again.

From here you have to follow the main road for about half a mile with no footpath so stay on the right hand side facing the traffic and preferably stay on the wide grass verge. After a sign for a footpath across the road on the left, the verge on that side broadens out so you can look for an opportunity to cross the traffic. At the crossroads you need to turn left into Rudding Lane.

In Rudding Lane take the turning to the right into Crimple Lane. Run past the Traveller's Rest then through the gate into the showground, leaving the Ringway route at this point. You now only have to run up the hill to join the main showground road which will take you back to the finish at HSFC!

<https://osmaps.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/route/4006715/Ringway-Relay-Leg-4>