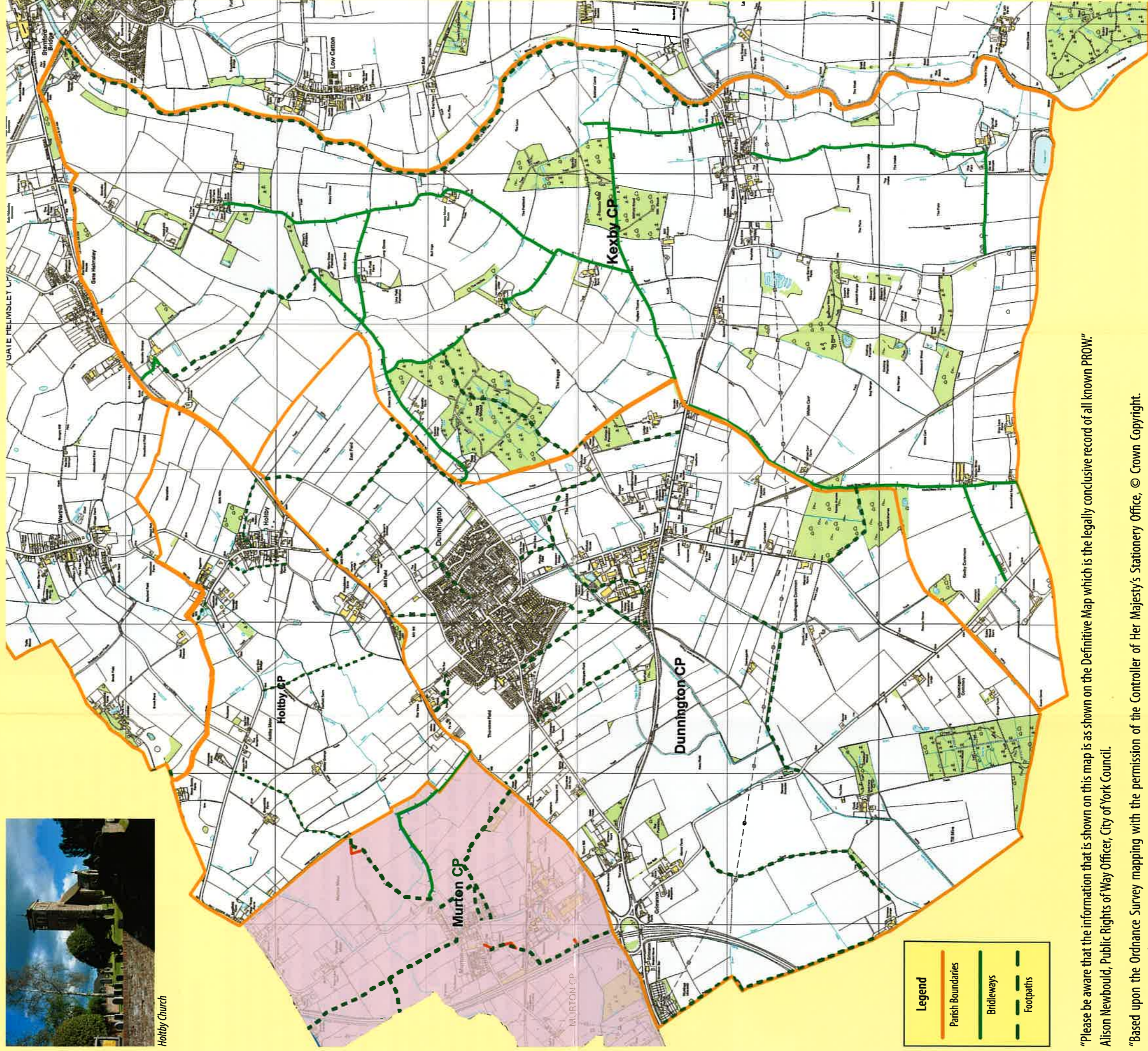


# Public Rights of Way in Dunnington, Holtby and Kexby



Holtby Church



**Legend**

- Parish Boundaries
- Bridleways
- Footpaths

"Please be aware that the information that is shown on this map is as shown on the Definitive Map which is the legally conclusive record of all known PROW."  
Alison Newbould, Public Rights of Way Officer, City of York Council.

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Hassacarr Pond

Tree Sparrow

Dragonfly

East of Millfield Wood

Rabbit Warren Wood





## Public Rights of Way in Dunnington, Holtby and Kexby

### INTRODUCTION

Dunnington, Holtby and Kexby are adjoining villages to the east of York. The A166 York to Stamford Bridge road runs along the top of the York moraine, formed by the retreat of the glacier after the last Ice Age. All three communities have roots firmly based in agriculture. Dunnington, with a population of over 3,000, has expanded significantly since the 1960s, whereas its neighbours, Holtby and Kexby, retain their small village character.

The parishes are served in total by 24 miles of footpath and bridleway. Most cross open fields but some go through woodland and there is a riverside path along the Derwent. Years ago, many of these paths linked farm with farm, and farm with village. Some paths now apparently come to a 'dead-end' – with hard work and dedication it may be possible to extend these in the future. Rights of Way are part of our precious national heritage and need to be preserved for future generations.

### DUNNINGTON



*Rabbit Warren Wood*

The land around the village has been occupied and cultivated for many thousands of years. Aerial photographs show evidence of settlement from the Bronze Age onwards and stone and flint tools have been found from earlier times. Iron Age and Roman pottery and coins have been discovered, two Roman altars on Dunnington Common and a Roman road to the north of the village. The name Dunnington is of Anglo-Saxon origin and is recorded in the Domesday Book. The Parish Church of St Nicholas dates from Norman times and may have even earlier origins.

Until recently, agriculture has been the main focus of activity for people living in the village. The Enclosure Acts, introduced to increase the efficiency of agriculture, brought about dramatic

change in the countryside. As the village prospered wooden houses were replaced by brick ones, many of which survive today around the central Village Cross. The strong connection with the land led to the development of rural crafts, culminating in the production of fine agricultural implements in the nineteenth century. The Hornshaw family, the wheelwrights, became famous for their ploughs, farm carts and wagons, still found in local museums. During the second half of the nineteenth century Dunnington was also famous for growing and processing chicory until it diminished in the face of foreign competition.

In 1913 the Derwent Valley Light Railway was opened, with a regular passenger service until 1926 and then goods only until its closure in the 1980s.

Although Dunnington has tripled in size since the 1960s, with the growth of York and the advent of the University, the new residents have built on the strong traditions and community spirit of the old, to create a lively village atmosphere.

### HOLTBY



*Stile in Holtby*

Holtby stands just below the ridge of the York terminal moraine, a feature used since prehistoric times as a route across the Vale of York. Westward from Holtby are excellent views of York Minster (especially towards sunset); to the north one can see the Howardian Hills and the North York Moors and to the east the Wolds.

Holtby has been settled for many centuries, probably since the Iron Age. Its Viking name "Holt-by" means "Coppice Village" and in the Domesday Book its name is given as "Boitbei". The church, rebuilt in 1881 on the original Norman foundations, stands on a raised site in the centre of the village and now features a new stained glass window, donated by villagers to commemorate the millennium.

Farming was the mainstay of the village until the 1960s when 30 houses were constructed in 3 cul-de-sacs off Main Street, along

### COUNTRYSIDE CODE

#### Advice for Land Managers:

- Know your rights, responsibilities and liabilities
- Make it easier for visitors to act responsibly
- Identify possible threats to visitors' safety

#### Advice for the Public:

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Alison Newbould, City of York Public Rights of Way Officer

Dunnington, Holtby and Kexby Parish Councils  
City of York Ward Committee

Photographs taken by Terry Weston, Warden of Hassacarr Nature Reserve and Chairman of Dunnington Conservation Group

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Front cover photograph: *Near White Carr Farm*



### WILDLIFE



The farmland around Dunnington, Holtby and Kexby is nationally important for declining species such as tree sparrow, with colonies of up to 30 birds being present throughout the year. Also the skylarks breed in good numbers in the summer and can be heard singing their delightful song until the end of July. In the winter months large flocks of skylark (175 individual birds) and the scarce corn bunting (150) have been seen in the winter stubble fields together with large flocks of finches.

Hassacarr Nature Reserve is nationally important for water beetles with 58 species being recorded, also 19 species of dragonfly, 90 bird species and 22 species of butterfly including the rare white-letter hairstreak. The pond also holds amphibians like the common frog, toad, smooth newt and the rare great crested newt. In the winter months kingfishers, grey herons, grey wagtails, siskins, finches and thrushes have all been seen.

### WOODLAND WALKING

There are public rights of way in three woods in the Derwent Ward – Hagg Wood, Scoreby/Millfield Wood (known locally as Low Wood) and Rabbit Warren Wood. The first is sometimes boggy in parts and Rabbit Warren Wood is almost always waterlogged along the eastern side, which has been laid with sections of robust decking. (Even so, for much of the year, wellington boots are essential for negotiating this route.)

### CYCLING

Route 66 of the National Cycle Network (look for the red and blue signs) enters Dunnington along York Road and exits along Intake Lane to Limefield Farm and Scoreby Lane to Stamford Bridge Road.

### KEXBY



*River Derwent near Kexby Bridge*

Kexby lies about five miles east of York, on the banks of the Derwent. The A1079 passes through the village crossing the river by a new bridge, built in the 1960s, replacing the old stone three-arch bridge. An inscription on the old bridge states that it was built in 1650. It now survives as a picturesque reminder of the past and contributes to the beauty of the river.

St Paul's Church was built in the early Gothic style by Lord Wenlock in 1852. The School House, which stands opposite, was built a few years later. At one time in the 1870s forty-nine children attended the school. It was closed in 1905 and the children transferred to other village schools.

Kexby Parish has 16 miles of footpaths and bridleways. One of the paths follows the Derwent through tranquil meadows on a route once used as a tow-path for horses pulling barges along the river.

Hagg Wood, which lies in the west of the Parish, was mentioned in the Domesday Book (wood pasture fitting its location). The 107 acre wood consists of coniferous and broadleaved trees and hosts a range of plant species that are closely associated with ancient woodland, many being very rare in the Vale of York. Walks in this wood have much to offer those who appreciate the wide variety of flora and fauna.