

Walk of the month



Breathtaking views from Bentham

The walk: A 4.5-mile (7.5km) circular walk starting from Bentham along the Bentham Heritage Trail.

Difficulty rating: Easy. You will need OS Explorer Map No. OL41 (Forest of Bowland & Ribblesdale)

Parking: Car parking is available in Bentham.

Public transport info: Bentham is served by regular trains on the Leeds-Skipton-Lancaster line. There is also a two-hourly bus (Service 80, operated by Stagecoach) from Ingleton and Lancaster. Please check times by visiting www.northyorks.gov.uk/businfo or by telephoning traveline on 0871 200 22 33 (calls from landlines cost 10p per minute).



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Proceed out of Bentham down Station Road, passing Bentham Railway Station on the R. Pass through a gate next to the Bentham Heritage Trail information board at St Margaret's Church and head along the track passing below the church. Cross a field, through a gap and continue on to a kissing gate at the railway track.

1. Cross the railway track and head uphill with the field boundary on the L. Cross a stone step stile and turn R along an enclosed track. Turn R through a gate and cross the field to a metal gate, then bear R across another field to another metal gate. Continue across the next field to a gap in the wall and head towards a farm. Proceed through the farmyard to a gate and head uphill along a track to another gate. Cross the field diagonally to a stone step stile and across another field diagonally to another step stile. Continue, keeping the trees on the R and head down the track and cross two more fields and stone step stiles. Cross diagonally

past an old Oak tree towards Greystone Gill Bridge.

2. Turn R over the bridge and proceed along the road crossing the train track and continue heading uphill. At the junction turn R and then R again at a sign for High Bentham, keeping the field edge on the R. Head over a stone step stile and across a footbridge and proceed uphill to another stone step stile. Continue across the field and over yet another stone step stile.

3. Pass to the R of some old buildings and continue along the top of the field and through a gate, heading towards the trees on the R. Cross a stone step stile and proceed across the field towards the farm. On reaching the farm, pass through two metal gates and proceed through the farmyard and head diagonally across a field to a metal kissing gate. Continue on along the field edge. Bear L before a gate and continue, heading for the houses in the distance. Continue until reaching the road. Turn R and head back into Bentham.

Heritage notes

BENTHAM is entered in the Domesday Book in 1086 as Benetain which comes from beonet (bent-grass) and ham (homestead) - homestead among the bent-grass. We don't know much more of Bentham in this period except that William the Conqueror owned land there. Greystonegill has only changed its spelling since the early 13th century when it was Grastainegilbec, from the old English words grar (grey), stein (stone), gil (gill). Linghaw is another easy one - hill overgrown with heather (ling). Forest of Mewith is shown on the map, but doesn't mean the area was full of trees. Forest was a legal term introduced by the Normans to denote a hunting park, and since it was agricultural land, trees grew easily in these areas.

Ecology notes

THE footpath runs along the southern bank of the River Wenning through Staggarth Meadows Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Early in the year look out for the delicate feathery leaves and white flower clusters of pignut, the tiny purple bitter-vetch flowers and the taller common-spotted orchids. Later in the year look for buttercups, low-growing tormentil flowers, clumps of tall purple thistle-like heads of Lesser Knapweed, and deep crimson greater burnet heads. The footpath crosses Gill Brow Wood, an open woodland growing along the gill banks. This provides good sheltered habitat for butterflies, bees and nesting birds. Listen for blackbird, chaffinch and robin and look for foxgloves and ferns, with bluebell, wood anemone and wild garlic in spring.



Craven rights of way set out in new map

AN updated definitive map and statement of public rights of way has been issued for Craven (outside of the Yorkshire Dales National Park). This is the County Council's legal record of all public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic. The original map, based on information collected from parish councils, was produced in the early 1950s. Copies of the new map can be seen at Craven District Council and Skipton library.