



Burley in Wharfedale

information

[HOME](#) | [Information](#) | [Community](#) | [Parish Council](#) | [History](#) | [Gallery](#) | [Village Diary](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Links](#) | [iBurley](#) | [Businesses](#) |

[Forum](#)

Ramble 4

Burley - Menston - Hag Farm - Burley (Circular)

Approximate total distance: 5 miles / 8 kilometres

Walking time: 2½ to 3 hours, depending on your pace



Maps

The accompanying BCC sketch map gives a general indication of the walk – just click on this small image to display a larger, printable version.

Ordnance Survey maps Explorer 27 (Lower Wharfedale – Washburn Valley, 2½" to 1 mile) for good detail of paths, and Landranger 104 (Leeds, Bradford – Harrogate Area, 1¼" to 1 mile) for general landmarks etc., are recommended in addition.

We hope this walk will encourage you to explore the extensive network of footpaths around our village.

A SUGGESTED LOCAL RAMBLE – by Colin Newton

This walk starts at the A65 roundabout outside Burley House at the east end of the village (walk along Main Street from the village centre).

Walk down Otley Old Road and through the first set of wooden access gates. This was the original route to Otley and was used by all traffic. It is now a public bridleway and is open to cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles requiring local access. This is now a nice saunter down a quiet country lane, and so difficult to believe that at one time – not so long ago – it was heaving with traffic. There are nice views across to the Chevin on your right.

Further down, there are views on your left across meadow-land through which the Burley Bypass now runs. It is still an attractive aspect, even with the Bypass there, with the steeple of the Parish Church to the left. It is easy to appreciate what a really superb view this was pre-Bypass!

The right-hand side of the road has now been grassed over. The road and footpath originally occupied the full space between the hedges. Unfortunately, one section along here is now being used as a convenient dumping ground for road repair material. A barely discernable faded message on the road surface reads SLOW! No doubt about it, this is a good firm surface for walking.

Through a kissing gate on the left-hand side of access gates, passing the entrance to Green Gate House and Cottage on the right. On the left are the ruins of an old building - difficult now to make out just what it was – possibly the remains of a farm building.

It is a nice view from here over the Bypass to the winding River Wharfe as it meanders its way down towards Otley. Across the river are the lovely meadows on the edge of Weston Hall.

Head now for a footpath sign on the right (away from the Bypass), pointing the way through a gate. Just beyond the gate, go over the stile on the right and walk up a field

path which snakes its way towards a farm house on the left. There is a notice near this stile stating "Landowner requests that all dogs be kept on leads". When near the farm, head towards a gate and you will see a way-marking sign ahead. Keep to the left and walk alongside a wall and farm building to your left.

The path then veers left and seems to be quite well used, thus being clear on the ground. It is now some two or three yards away from a wall on your left. There are nice views on your right across Burley and to the Moor beyond. Go through a kissing gate at the left-hand side of a field gate and follow the well way-marked route. There is now some barbed wire in front of the wall on your left. You are now within sight of Otley Golf Course.

On approaching a stream, look to the left and go through the stile that you see there. Head towards a bridge which crosses the stream. You are now on the golf course, so take great care and make sure that the way is clear for you at every stage.

Cross the bridge and head straight towards a small copse – on the edge of which you will see a blue marker post. As you emerge from the thicket (where there is another blue marker on your left) make for another blue marker post straight ahead. You are now crossing an open part of the golf course, so just do a double-check to see that there are no golf balls heading your way!

Keep going in the same direction, but veering slightly left and soon reaching a few more sparsely-spaced trees. Near the second tree from the left is another blue marker post. When you reach this, look across to the woodland ahead where you will see the next blue marker post that you have to aim for – showing access to the woodland.

Whilst crossing, you will probably notice some more posts on your left. These indicate where another path from the Otley side comes in and joins this route. Even if you are not a golfer, and you believe with George Bernard Shaw that "golf is a good walk spoiled", as you walk you will no doubt appreciate that this is a very nice golf course indeed and in a magnificent situation. Just before the post is reached, there is a little bridge across a stream. It can be a bit muddy here, so just watch how you do at this point. The path up into the wood is quite clear on the ground.

Soon you reach the old railway cutting that linked Burley and Otley as part of the old Otley and Ilkley Joint Railway – a co-operative venture between the Midland and North Eastern Railway Companies – which opened in 1865. This route was lost as part of the "Beeching Axe" one hundred years later in 1965. There are long-terms plans to reconnect Otley to Menston using one arm of the old route but this will be very dependent on national policy and local funding.

Many trees have grown up along the route in the 40 years since closure and there is precious little left to indicate that there was ever a railway here. However, looking to your right as the woodland path joins the old railway, you can see some chunks of concrete which are all that remains of the old signalbox that stood here.

On reaching the old track, veer slightly right and then left – up the hill. At the time of writing (January 2005) there were a few fallen trees around here, so be extra careful – especially if you have young children with you. Continue on the clear, well used track – which can be very muddy after rain! Go over a way-marked stile, then on – with a midden on your left and a corrugated barn-like structure on your right. Through a gate (which at the time of writing needed a really good tug!) and then as indicated by a way-marking sign, veer slightly right and straight on.

A footpath signpost is reached which indicates that you turn right and go through car parking space: veer to the left towards a way-marked metal field gate, to the right of which there is a stile. When over the stile, head towards a very clear green arrow on a yellow board. Climb over the stile at that point, and then make your way down hill. The path goes down steps and then veers to the right across a stone lintel bridge over a stream where there is a sign indicating that work has been done by the Leeds Voluntary Footpath Rangers. The path turns right here and on your left is corrugated sheeting which is on the edge of a small industrial site.

On reaching the main road at Ellar Ghyll, cross the road and turn right and walk up towards Menston. Take the greatest care crossing this busy road. At the roundabout, cross to the Fox and Hounds Restaurant. A public footpath sign indicates the way to the station. Menston cricket field is on the left of the path and a housing estate is on the right. Where the path leads into the estate road, turn left.

Continue on past Brooklands Close on your left and then turn up the railway station path, which is just past number 86 on your left. Cross the railway footbridge then turn right and go on the path (Westbourne Drive) which follows the side of the railway until you reach St. Johns Park road on your left. Go up this road.

Keep straight on up the hill and turn right on joining Fairfax Road, then left on joining Burley Lane. The Church of St. John the Divine is on your right-hand side. Turn right at the junction of Burley Lane and Menston Main Street. On the other side of the road is the Malt Shovel public house, and just a little further on is the Menston Arms.

Notice that the illustrious name of Fairfax occurs again on a cottage to your right, and further on is the entrance to Fairfax Hall, which was the Menston home of the Fairfax family. Sir Thomas Fairfax, who was born at Denton Hall in 1612, became Commander of Cromwell's Model Army in 1645.

Where the road turns sharp left (Moor Lane), go down Bleach Mill Lane on your right. On the left as you enter this lane, you will see a sign indicating that this is the Public Footpath to Burley Woodhead and also on the wall is a wooden sign stating that this is the "Dalesway Link Ilkley and Ebor Way". Look over the wall to your right as you go down the lane to see a very attractive old house with mullioned windows. This is Menston Grange, with the date 1672 carved in stone above the porch door. Originally one house, this is now two homes.

Down the lane, you are soon walking in lovely countryside. One imagines that the houses on the right-hand side must attract an extra premium when up for sale because of their stunning views down onto the Wharfe Valley. Just beyond a house (Southpiece Cottage) that you can see across a meadow to your right is some raised ground. This is the site of a Bronze Age settlement. A closer view of this is obtained when further down the lane. This is a very attractive route with some delightful views. There are glimpses down to Burley through the trees on the right, and down the valley to Otley and the Chevin. Further down the valley, looking somewhat like an enlarged back tooth – can be seen the dominant Almscliffe Crag.

A pond now comes into view on the left, and this usually has a flock of attendant geese round and about. A nice sight which is particularly appreciated by children. The well-marked path passes to the left of Bleach Mill Farm, where there is normally a variety of poultry scratching about in the yard.

Cross over the stile and keep straight on when a junction of paths is reached. The path over a stile to the right leads back to Burley whilst the path to the left goes up the glen to Burley Woodhead. After rain, this section can be particularly muddy – so be warned! Looking across the field on the right, you can see the remains of an old weekend retreat from the 1930s. There used to be others down the side of the field, and this attractive site was a much sought-after location.

Go through another stile to the right of a metal field gate and head towards the farm that you can see ahead (Hag Farm), skirting a collection of old vehicles and farm implements on the right. The footpath passes below the farm buildings, but for our walk, turn right and continue down Hag Farm Road. There are splendid panoramic views on both sides as you go down the lane.

Just past a fallen tree trunk on your left is a footpath stile on which is a notice stating that the stile was repaired by members of the Ramblers Association Lower Wharfedale Footpath Group – just one example of the work done locally by the Ramblers.

Attractive villas and gardens are passed on the way down to join the road at Moor Lane adjacent to Burley Station. Cross the road and turn right and thus back to Burley village