

Starting point: Mixenden Library

Distance: A circular walk of approximately 4 miles

The walk takes in a variety of habitats including rough grassland, plantation woodland and open water.

1. At Mixenden Library turn left up Mixenden Lane. After 200m turn left up Hollins Lane to its junction with Clough lane. Cross Clough Lane and turn right up Brow Bottom lane after 40m, just beyond the School. Follow Brow Bottom lane for approximately 200m and take the footpath to the right after the metal railings. The path runs alongside Mixenden Plantation to the right with rushy grassland on the right. After a further 200m take the footpath into the Plantation. The paths are not distinct and are muddy and wet in parts. In autumn look out for woodland fungi like the red and white fly agaric below the pine trees.
2. Head for the wall adjacent to the reservoir to your right and follow it for its length until reaching a post and wire fence perpendicular to the wall by a gate to the reservoir. The alien species Himalayan balsam has established here amongst the delicate whorls of wood horsetail – an ancient plant related to the ferns – growing along the wall. Follow the fence line to the other side of the wood where it emerges onto Hays Lane.
3. Turn left onto Hays Lane and then left again up a track that runs between rough grazing fields for 500m approximately. The fields on the left are a patchwork of unimproved acid grassland with wet rushy areas. Look out for the delicate white sprays of the heath bedstraw and small yellow flowers of tormentil in summer.

The path passes a number of springs emerging from the hillside. Follow the lane until reaching fork in the path. Bear left and continue for 180m until reaching a stile. The vegetation changes here from grass-dominated pasture to more heathy type with wet hollows. Continue along a narrow path through the heather and bilberry towards the golf course which can be seen on the slope ahead.

During the summer species that thrive in unimproved marshy grasslands, such as the lovely purple flowers of devil's bit scabious and the white umbels of Valerian are found in the wet hollows and ditch at the end of the path where it emerges on to a track. Turn right down the track for approximately 220m before reaching a farm yard.



4. Take the next footpath on the left which runs along the bottom of the golf course along a stream. After 230m approximately the path reaches a bridge over the brook to the club house follow the path to the left away from the footbridge and up hill, through the bracken and scattered shrubs. This area is a good place to look out for butterflies such as ringlet and the small heath in the summer.
Eventually the path leads to Ogden Water, where the path runs through an interesting mix of heather moorland and grassland with common spotted orchids. Stop awhile to admire the views over the reservoir and look out for waterfowl from the promenade.

Retrace your steps back towards the golf course. There are several different paths on this side of the course that lead back to Hays Lane.



5. On reaching the end of the golf course, turn left down Lane Head Lane for about 280m to its junction with Stod Fold. Bear right down Stod Fold for about 150m to a bridge over a brook. The trunks of the trees lining the track on the left as you walk down the lane are covered in various species of grey leafy and shrubby lichens. Many of these species are intolerant of air pollution and show that the air here is relatively clean.

At the bridge you can rest in the shade of an unusual mature wych elm tree growing by the brook. The tree can be recognised by its large oval leaves that are slightly longer on one side than the other. The path leads through some houses and through a metal gate on the left which in turn leads on to another lane. The lane passes between stone walls through paddocks and farmland. During the summer months look out for swallows nesting in the roof spaces of the barns and feeding over the fields. After about 300m the lane emerges onto Hays Lane.

6. At this point you can either go right up the lane to rejoin Mixenden Plantation and retrace your steps back to the Library or turn left and follow Hays Lane to its junction with Mill lane after about 250m. Turn left down Mill Lane for about 30m and carefully cross the road opposite the yellow metal barrier. Take the path through the woods. The path runs for half a kilometre through overgrown plantation with some old lime trees until reaching Mixenden Stones, which in turn leads to Mixenden Lane and the library 100m on the left.

