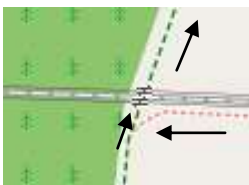


Bedale – Crakehall Lollipop

4.2 miles, mainly well trodden paths with some road walking, up to 6 stiles.

This is a lollipop walk – out and back along the same road, but with a circular bit on the end. The stick on this lollipop is about 500 metres, so the majority of the walk is round the sweet bit on the end!

Starting from Bedale Hall, walk out along the main road, following the pavement on the left. After about 500 metres the road bends to the left and crosses Rand Beck, and the footpath is finger-posted on the other side. Cross the road with care as visibility is limited by the bend and take the path on the right leading off along the side of the field. It is not clear on the ground which side of the hedge you should be on, but the footpath is actually along the edge of the sports ground with the hedge on your right – but you will need to go back through the ‘hedge’ before reaching the far end. At the end of this field, head straight on across the next field then bear left beside the railway line.



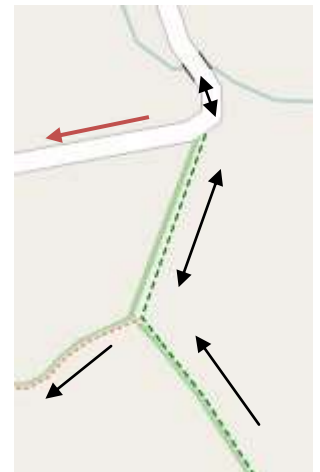
At the corner of the field follow round to the left and then double back to cross the railway (watch out for the train) and follow the track across the next two fields. Bear right and out of the gate, to have a short break on the bridge, watching the river for a few minutes

before heading back.

Here there are choices. The slightly longer track (marked in red) goes along the road into Crakehall, turns left between the cricket square and the church and left again



through the houses before returning to the fields. This is not waymarked until the end, but be assured it is a right of way and you are not trespassing.



The shorter route goes back through the gate and bears right to follow the field edges back to join up near the village. The public right of way crosses this last field diagonally to the stile near the wall; the

path marked with a blue arrow is not a right of way but is used by many people to avoid the two stiles.

Overall, there is little to choose between these routes. The road is very quiet but you do need to watch out for traffic while the field route may be muddy and probably takes the same time as it has a couple more stiles – and we’re going to find more on the way back to the road. (If you want to avoid stiles altogether, follow the road out to the church then return via the main road – there is a pavement all the way, but it is fairly busy.)

There is a third choice from the bridge – go over the bridge, follow the road as it bends left, then where it bends right go straight on through the gate. Follow round this field and bear left to follow the track to Green Gate Farm, then straight down the drive. If you can work out where the footpath goes off on the left, that’s the proper way to go – but if you get to the end of the drive without spotting it, just turn left and walk down the road. At the end, go over the bridge, round the bend and across the grass to rejoin the main route.

Having arrived in the field south of Crakehall, set off south and look out for the stile in the hedge on your left. Cross this and turn immediately right to follow the field edges till we arrive back over the last stile onto the main road. The road has wide margins and a footpath here, so keep on the left till the bridge before crossing over and taking the road on the right.

Just before the bridge, look out for the remains of the White Cross on the other side of the road. This marked where the road crossed the parish boundary and would have been blessed every year when the priest 'beat the bounds' of his parish. The road you are about to go down marks the boundary, and at one time the junction would have been at the cross but it was moved when the railway went in – the Victorians having no great respect for history and tradition.

This next bit is just a detour to add some extra time – if you are short of time, just head down the main road, but otherwise enjoy the more peaceful stroll around the other two sides of the triangle before rejoining the main road for the walk back into town.

The main road has a pavement all the way out to Crakehall, but it does switch sides occasionally, so cross with care when this happens. As you get into town, you can detour through the park to get away from the traffic a little.

Maps

<http://www.walk4life.info/walk/bedale-crakehall>