



ramblers
at the heart of walking



THE HARROGATE LINK

A walk from Harrogate to join the Dales Way at Ilkley

The 16 mile route (26.5 km) can be enjoyed as a whole or in sections.
Public transport options are available.



Prepared by members of the Harrogate Group of The Ram-

History of 'The Link'

The Harrogate Dalesway is a long established, linear route from Harrogate to Bolton Abbey forming a link to the 80 mile-long Dales Way, long distance path, to Bowness on Windermere. The Harrogate Dalesway path includes a long section of permissive route which is subject to closure and is not easily by-passed without walking on the busy A59 road. Whilst the original route is still available, subject to this restriction, the Harrogate Group of The Ramblers has promoted an alternative route to the start of the Dales Way which minimises the possibilities of closure. The route, to be known as the 'Harrogate Link' is shorter but utilises the first 8.5miles (14km) of the Harrogate Dalesway path to connect two of Yorkshires finest spa towns, Harrogate and Ilkley, passing through glorious countryside of great variety.

Maps

It is recommended that walkers are equipped with Explorer Map No. 297 '*Lower Wharfedale*' which contains the whole route at 1:25000 scale. All Grid references (GR) used here refer to block SE. Walkers should be suitably equipped for possible changes in weather conditions. The whole of the Dales Way including the links to Bradford, Leeds and Harrogate is available on a Harveys map at 1:40000 scale.

Bus Access

The Harrogate to Skipton Service (X59) enables shorter sections of the route to be enjoyed. Suitable joining or exit points are at Blubberhouses (GR 169553) or The Milestones Restaurant (GR 223562). The service, provided by Harrogate and District Transport, runs every two hours Monday to Saturday. Harrogate Coach Travel provides a two hourly service (X52) between Harrogate and Ilkley on Monday to Saturday.

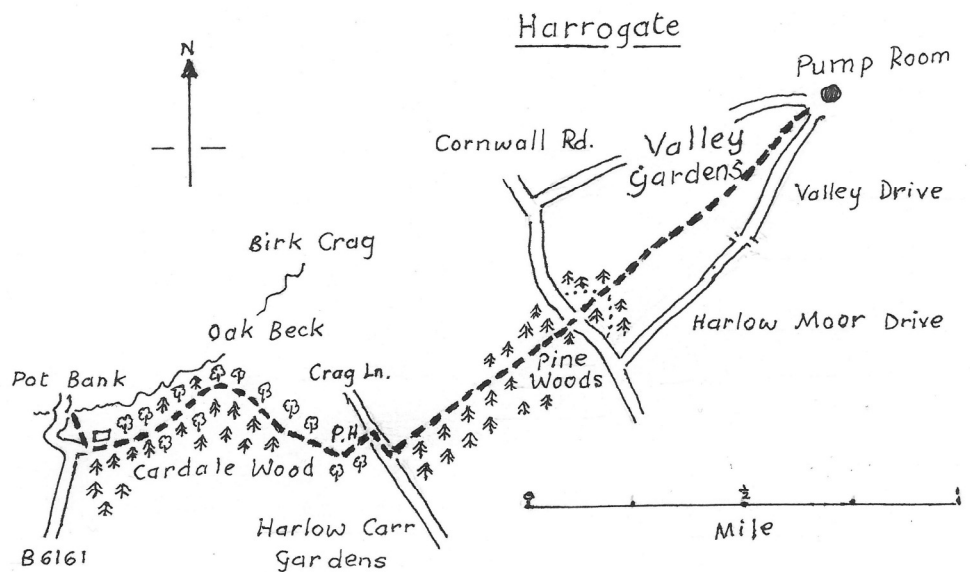
To Access the Start from Harrogate Rail and Bus Stations

Cross Station Parade and walk westwards along Cambridge Street or James Street to the War Memorial. Cross Parliament Street (one way), keep Betty's Cafe on your right and descend Montpellier Parade. At the roundabout walk past the front of The Crown Hotel and turn right along Royal Parade. Cross the road by the Pump Room Museum and enter the Valley Gardens.

The Route

Harrogate to Pot Bank 2.2miles (3.5km)

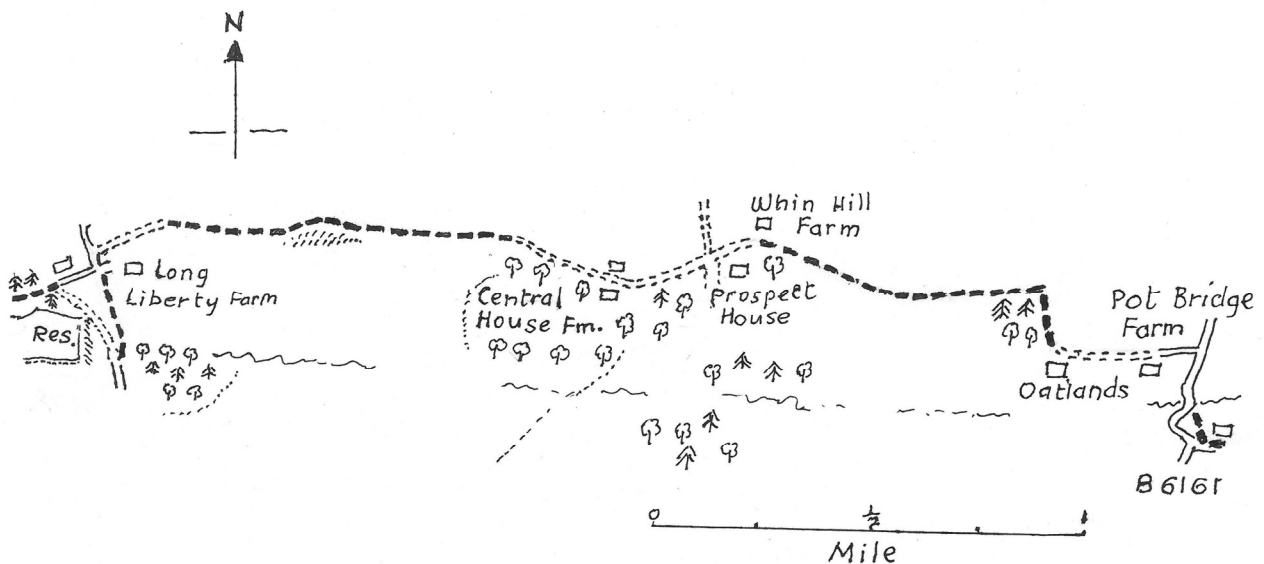
Our route commences at the northern entrance to the Valley Gardens opposite The Pump Room Museum (GR 297553). Take the main path to the Magnesia Well Cafe and on to the circular bed to ascend the tarmac path with Tennis Courts on your left. You will find a fine display board detailing the route of the Dales Way path on the corner of a wall to the right. Continue up the hill to reach a war memorial with tracks to the right.



Take the middle one (signed Harlow Carr Gardens) through the Pine Woods. Cross Harlow Moor Road and continue up the other side of the road still in woodland. You reach an open grass area. Continue on to join a tarmac path going slightly downhill towards Harlow Carr Gardens with lovely views towards the north on your right.

You join a tarmac road, Crag Lane, site of Harlow Carr Gardens. Turn right and left after 100m to walk past the Harrogate Arms on your right. Follow the boundary fence of Harlow Carr Gardens and Cardale Woods on your left for 0.6mile (1km) ignoring signed junctions with the Harrogate Ringway trail. This lovely woodland walk brings you to Pot Bank Cottage. Disregard the permissive path on the left and carry on through the gates to reach the Killinghall-Beckwithshaw road (B6161).

From Pot Bank to cross Haverah Park 4.2 miles (7km)

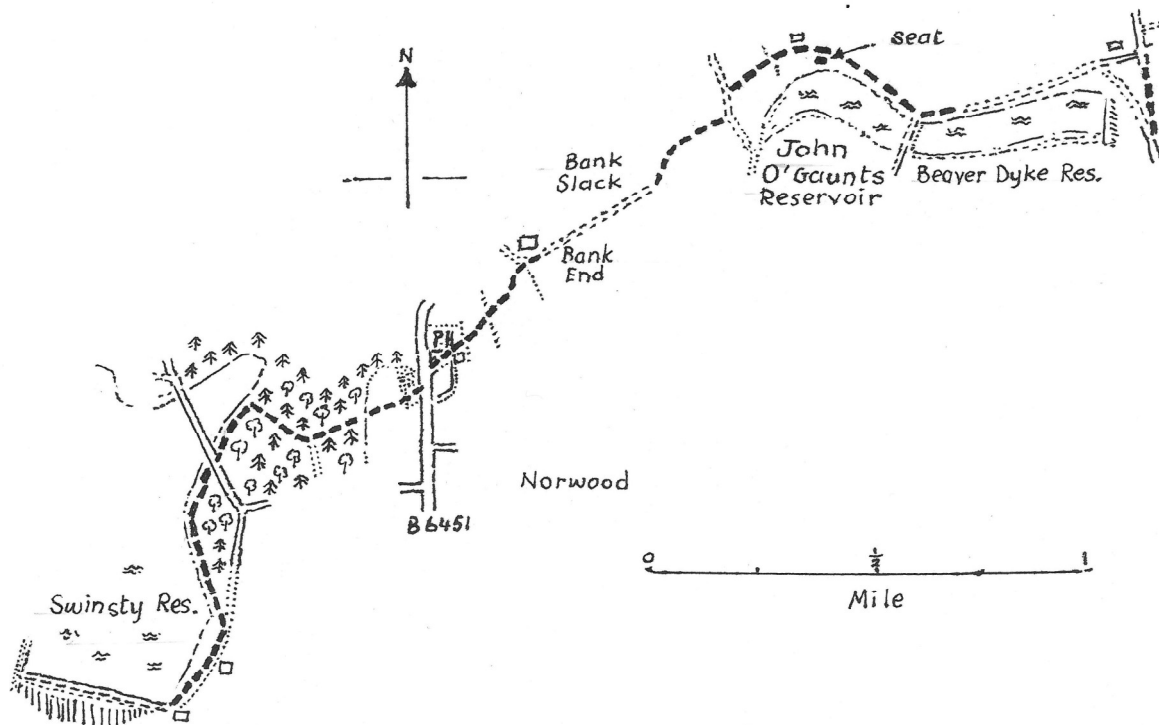


Immediately to the right of pot Bank Cottage is a low wall stile. Step over this to descend steeply to a stile just to the left of the bridge over Oak Beck. Cross this bridge and proceed up the hill. Take great care to avoid fast moving vehicles for the next 200m. At the top of the hill turn left to join the track to Pot Bridge Farm.

You are now starting to traverse Haverah Park. Pass through the buildings of Pot Bridge Farm and bear right around Oatlands Farm. At the end of a small plantation turn left, heading west on the well marked path. Follow the track through several fields with the wall on your right. Continue to pass Whin-Hill Farm, Prospect House and Central House Farm. You also follow a section of walled lane. At the next gate keep straight ahead. At a left fork keep heading west towards Long Liberty Farm. This latter section can be very muddy. You pass through a series of metal gates to arrive at the access road to the Farm. Turn left here then right after 70m to follow a tarmac road. This continues as an unsurfaced lane along the north side of Beaver Dyke Reservoir.

Continue along the track past the reservoirs and climb uphill to the Harrogate R.A. Group's 1985 memorial seat. Pause to enjoy the splendid view of John of Gaunt's Castle and the tranquil beauty of this isolated spot which can be an ornithologist's delight. Suitably refreshed, carry on the track heading west to arrive at a green lane. *(A right turn along this lane brings the walker to Penny Pot Lane from which it is a short walk to the Millstones Restaurant on the A59 where the Harrogate-Skipton service X59 bus can be caught. A total of 7.5miles(12km) from Harrogate)* To follow the next stage of the Link, turn left, then, almost immediately, right to follow the ancient way called Bank Slack. You are on this track for some 750m and pass in front of Bank Top House. You are now in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Haverah Park to Swinsty Reservoir 1.9miles (3km)



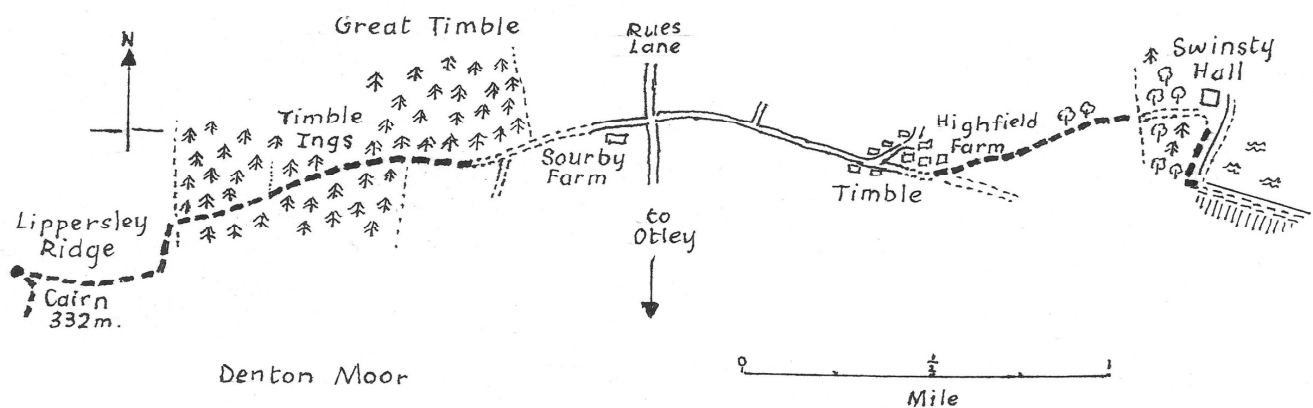
Passing bank top House, drop down to the left to cross some boggy fields with a small stream in the middle. Continue through a gate to a stile and bear left to a third stile heading south west. Follow the path upwards with the buildings of the Sun Inn (01943-880220) visible ahead. The Inn is approached by a short tarmac lane.

The Inn is on the Otley to Pateley Bridge Road (B6451). Cross the road and turn left, towards Otley and after 30m follow the sign indicating 'Public Footpath' by the blue Yorkshire Water sign for Swinsty. Follow the wide track for 100m into a field. After a second gate with a stile, bear left across a second field to a wall stile leading into woodland. Descend westwards for 250m and bear right on the well used track. Ignore the path joining from the left and continue on a further 200m with a small stream on your right to reach the eastern branch of Swinsty Reservoir. You are now in The Washburn Valley. Turn left and follow the wall (could be boggy) for 200m to a stile and the road bordering the eastern shore of the main reservoir.

Cross the road and join the permissive way alongside the reservoir with good seats and great views in a mature woodland environment at the eastern side of the reservoir. Follow the path to the dam and turn right to cross it.

At the western end of the embankment it is possible to follow well marked permissive trails alongside Swinsty and Fewston Reservoirs to Blubberhouses where you can catch the Harrogate –Skipton service X59 bus. (11miles (18km) from the start of 'The Link').

Swinsty to Lippersley Ridge 3.6miles (6km)



Having crossed the dam, leave the track by a stile on the left hand side to access a permissive, Yorkshire Water, path going up the bank. Pause to enjoy the view along the Washburn Valley and perhaps the sight of the red kites that have made The Washburn their home. After a short ascent turn right along the fence into the woods and follow the waymarked trail to turn left at the back of Swinsty Hall. Follow this track to a gate and stile with a large board indicating Yorkshire Water's boundary. Cross over the bridleway by a stile into pasture land. Follow the path through several fields in a westerly direction to reach the delightful hamlet of Timble. Join a metalled road to pass High Field Farm and walk on the road, still heading west. Ignore the right turn off to Swinsty and carry on to cross Rues Lane, the Otley to Pateley Bridge Road, and join a byway with a sign prohibiting entry to vehicles.

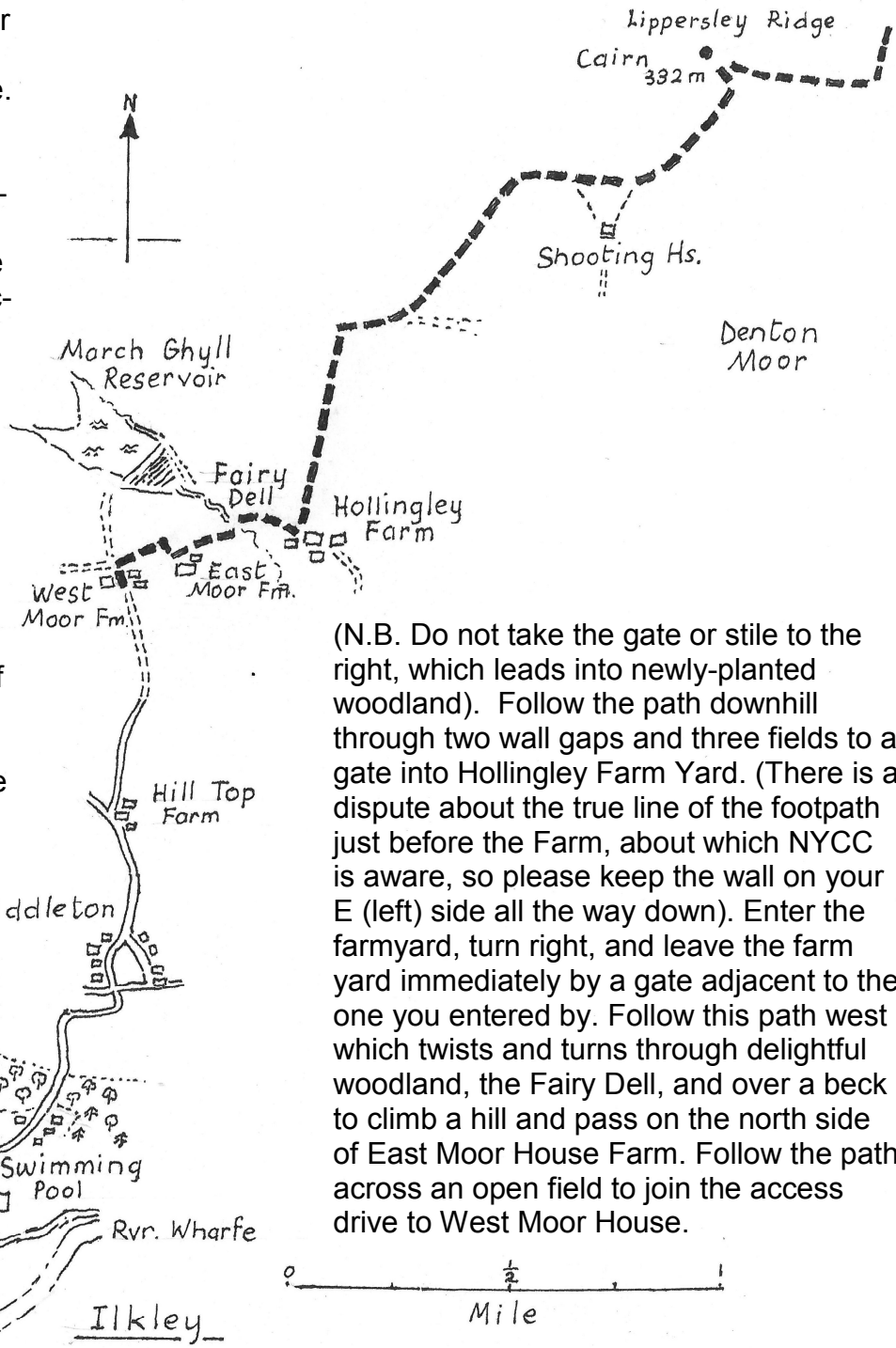
You pass Sourby Lodge and Farm and enter the forest at Great Timble. Some 100m into the forest you come to a track junction with a left turn signed to Denton, Middleton and Ilkley. Ignore this turning and carry straight on along the forest road. You pass a Yorkshire Water sign for Timble Ings. Carry straight on ignoring turnings to the left and right climbing gently. You pass through two gates on the waymarked track to reach a bridleway junction. Carry straight on to join a 1m wide track with blue waymarks into the trees, still heading west. This track soon brings you to the wall at the edge of the forest and you turn left to pass through two gates to reach the edge of Denton Moor.

Go straight ahead to join a moorland path heading west along a small ridge (Lippersley Ridge). You pass several boundary stones along the ridge the first marked with a capital D. At this path junction keep right, uphill, along the ridge to a prominent cairn and a boundary stone marked 'KF 1767'. Pause to enjoy the panoramic view from the high point of this walk (332m at

143525). If you are lucky enough to have your walk in August, the moors will be a wonderful blaze of purple heather stretching south towards Bradford and north into Nidderdale.

Lippersley Ridge to Ilkley 4.2miles (7km)

From the cairn, retrace your steps some 5m to a small track on the right-hand side. Descend on this track (heading SW) to join a wider path alongside shooting butts defined with white sticks. At times you will see a lodge ahead in your direction of travel (south). Just before the lodge, at a path junction, the track with white sticks heads west. Follow this track for 300m where it broadens and heads west, slowly gaining height in superb open moorland. Follow the white posts to head south at 137522 with a good view of March Ghyll Reservoir directly in front. Follow the track to the wall at the edge of the moor at 130515 and go straight ahead through the gate into farmland.



(N.B. Do not take the gate or stile to the right, which leads into newly-planted woodland). Follow the path downhill through two wall gaps and three fields to a gate into Hollingley Farm Yard. (There is a dispute about the true line of the footpath just before the Farm, about which NYCC is aware, so please keep the wall on your E (left) side all the way down). Enter the farmyard, turn right, and leave the farmyard immediately by a gate adjacent to the one you entered by. Follow this path west which twists and turns through delightful woodland, the Fairy Dell, and over a beck to climb a hill and pass on the north side of East Moor House Farm. Follow the path across an open field to join the access drive to West Moor House.

Turn left into the farm and carry straight on out of the farmyard heading south to Hill Top Farm. Keep on the road, ignoring the road turning on your left, to reach the hamlet of Middleton. You pass a phone box on your left where you cross over the road to descend Curly Hill. Follow the road down past houses and some woodland until you reach a public footpath (metal post sign), on the left, which brings you to the public playing fields and the swimming baths. Walk past these and cross the road. Carry straight on to reach the river where you turn right to reach the start of the Dales Way at the second bridge.

THE RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION is a registered charity devoted to the preservation and care of the countryside and its network of footpaths and to helping people appreciate and enjoy them. The activities of the Ramblers involve a structure of area and group organisations. The activities of the Harrogate Group, including the walks programme, are displayed on the web site at www.willouby.demon.co.uk/ramblersassociation/harrogategroup.htm



THE DALES WAY ASSOCIATION was established in 1991 by a small group of individuals to press for improvements and resolve problems that may arise on the DALES WAY footpath between Ilkley and Bowness. It publishes an annual guidebook with details of any route changes, public transport and accommodation. Full contact details are to be found on their website at www.dalesway.org.uk

OTHER PUBLICATIONS BY THE HARROGATE GROUP

Leaflets on The Harrogate Ringway and The Knaresborough Round are available at 30p each (please make your cheques payable to the Ramblers Association and enclose an s.a.e.) from;
Mr P L Goldsmith, 20, Pannal Ash Grove, Harrogate, HG2 0HZ

Two fine, recently published books of walks by Douglas Cossar are also available from book-sellers;

Country walks around Harrogate Volume 1 East (£4.99)

Country walks around Harrogate Volume 2 West (£5.50)



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the dales way

