

Walk 3

Ilkley and back via Nesfield, Middleton & the Dales Way

Start & Finish: The Memorial Hall, Addingham Main Street, LS29 0LZ, SE 079 497

Full walk: 7¼ miles

Height gain (Full walk): 360ft (109m)

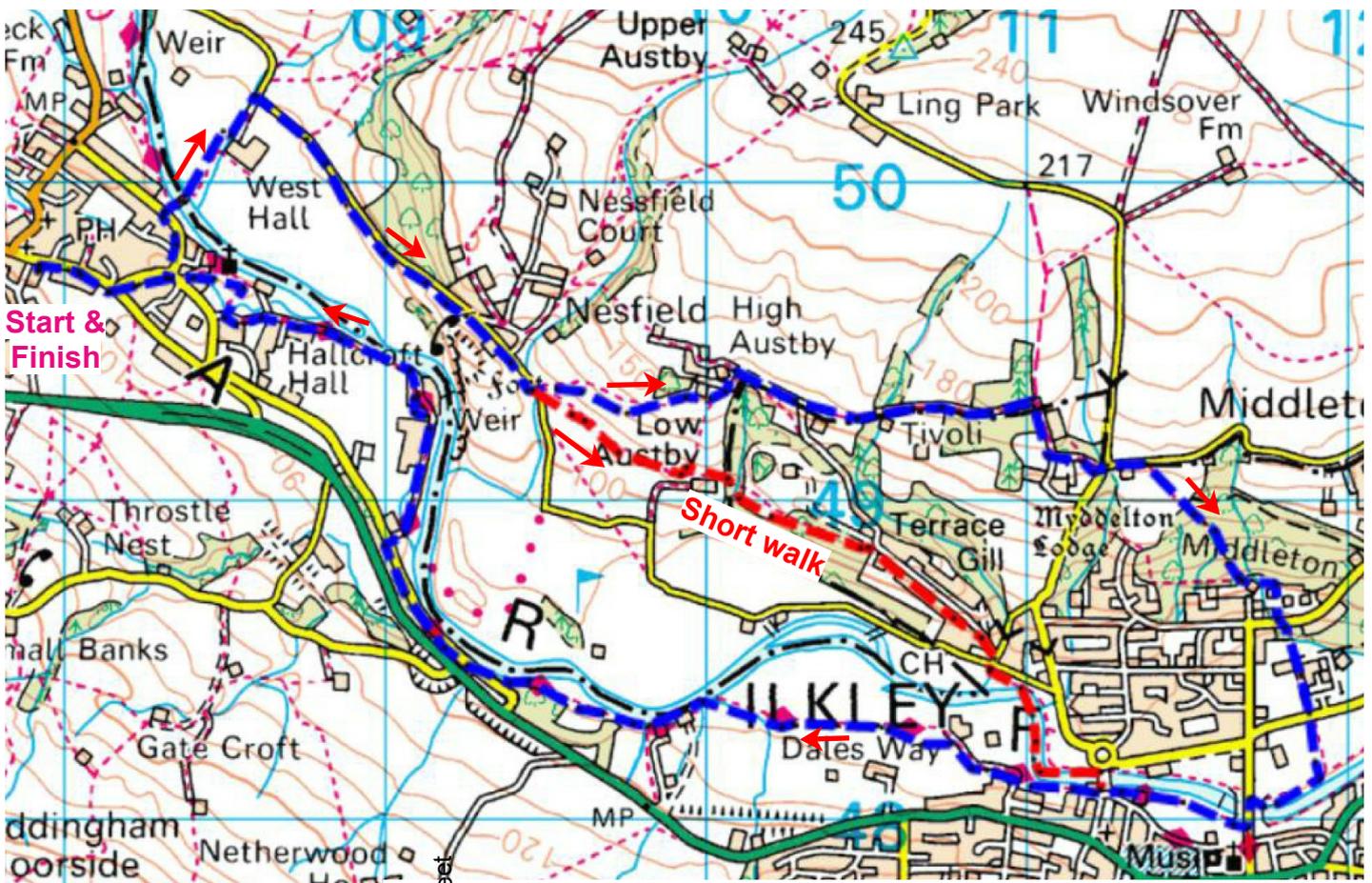
Shorter Walk: 6 miles

Summary:

A gentle walk to Ilkley and back, good for a hot day as it is mostly shaded and wooded, but nice at any time. Convenient for a diversion into Ilkley for shopping or refreshment but also passes the Riverside pub which has a take-away food outlet. Ilkley would make an alternative start point and there is a shorter option. Easy going, mainly across meadows and minor roads, returning along the riverside Dales Way.

The Walk

The walk starts from **The Memorial Hall**. Turn **right** and go **down** Main Street but, **bear left** into Church Street (the first part of this walk is the same as Walk 2).

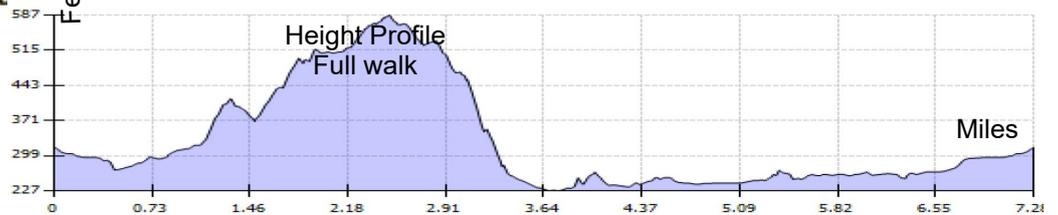


At the junction, cross the road and go left up North Street to take the footpath right just after the bend, soon after the village information board, sp 'Dales Way'. Turn right partway

down the steps and cross the Suspension Bridge. Continue along the footpath, past the West Hall buildings, to the (narrow) end, **go right** through two gates and **left up** the road.

At the road junction, **turn right** and **follow** the road, which is narrow but has little traffic except for cyclists - it is on the Dales Cycleway - to the hamlet of Nesfield. Up on the green to the left is a shelter which was used by the village postman as a rest place after his journey from Ilkley. It has now been renovated by the village (coffee, anyone?).

Continue past Nesfield, keeping **right** along the road, and just after an old stone bridge **turn left** up a farm track to a stile.



For the short route, take the **right-hand footpath** and, keeping the fence then the wall on your right, follow the path through three fields to Low Austby House. In the field behind the house bear left and follow marker posts to a small bridge and into Spring Wood. The path drops down through the wood and then crosses a meadow, following the curve of the hill to Owler Park Wood. Both these woods are ablaze with bluebells in the spring. Continue through the wood and up to Owler Park Road. Walk down the road for about 1/3 mile Turn right through the houses to the bottom road. **Cross with care** and take the path along the river to the Old Bridge where the **full walk is rejoined (go to next page)**.

For the full walk, take the **left-hand footpath** to a **stile near the top** of the stone wall, below the wire fence. Follow the wall **round to the left** to another stile and High Austby Farm. There are fine views across to Rombald's Moor from here. **Follow the garden boundary** across in front of the farmhouse to the stile **right of the gate** and **turn right** along the road, continuing **straight** on to the bridleway. After ½mile (800m), in shady woods, **the road bends right** and continues downhill, following the track **left** past the entrances to Myddleton Lodge and Grange. The old lodge can be seen through trees on the right at the bend.

After Myddleton Grange, **turn left** at the T-junction and then **right** along a minor road and go **right** through the **metal gate** after a wooden gate. The path goes diagonally left across the field towards a large free-standing oak tree and then **over a stile** into Middleton Woods. Take the path **going left** to a large waymarked stone, bear right down the footpath and keep more or less straight and down flights of stone steps.

At the path junction, **bear left** over a wooden bridge and **along** the boardwalk, then keep **right** beside a large holly bush and down steps to the road. Turn left and then immediately right, down more steps to the park. Walk down the park, alongside the swimming pool, cross the road and continue down to the river.

Go right along the riverside path to the road bridge, up the steps to the road and cross the bridge. **The road ahead leads into Ilkley town centre for a diversion, or buses back to Addingham.**

To continue the walk, go down the steps on the **right-hand** side of the road to the other (south) riverside path, into the **Riverside Gardens** and playground. After about 50m, climb up the grassy bank on the left to view the remains of **Ilkley Roman Fort** (Olicana), which has an information board. Continue along riverside, past the Riverside pub (this supplies take-away food etc.) and toilets, to the Old Bridge.

The Old Bridge marks the start of the Dales Way which this walk now follows to Addingham. **The short route rejoins here.**

From the Old Bridge, continue **along the riverside** to, and past, the tennis centre buildings but then **turn left** into a meadow and **follow the footpath ahead (the Dales Way) across meadows and through gates until it rejoins the riverside.**

The path now closely **follows the river**. Having crossed a meadow at Cocken End the path becomes a road (Ilkley Old Road). After about 500m, **turn right** and continue along Old Lane to Smithy Greaves. Note a blue plaque on the first old cottage (See Walk 4 for details).

Beyond the mill cottages, the path narrows but then opens up again to follow Low Mill Lane. The path goes **down the steps on the right** and up through a gate into the churchyard. This is the Parish Church of St Peter (see Walk 4 for details). Again, note the blue plaque on the wall outside the main gate.

After reaching the main drive, **bear right over a small bridge** to come out at the North Street and Church Street junction. Continue along Church Street and back to the start point at the **Memorial Hall**.