

# Wensleydale Walk

## From West Witton to Aysgarth and West Burton

Visit my website for full details: <https://www.paulbeal.com/wensleydale>

### Introduction to the Walk

This walking route is set in the stunning North Yorkshire countryside of Wensleydale. Starting in the village of West Witton, the circular route takes in a fantastic mix of scenery and landmarks, including Redmire Force, Aysgarth Falls, West Burton, and the historic ruins of the Penhill Preceptory. With riverside paths, stepping stones, waterfalls, and classic Dales villages, this walk really captures what makes Wensleydale such a special part of the Yorkshire Dales.

### Highlights of the Walk

Wensleydale, named after the village of Wensley, is one of the most scenic and historically rich valleys in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The River Ure winds its way through the dale, carving out a landscape of rolling hills, wooded glades, and limestone features. The area is famous for its cheese and dotted with lovely villages like Aysgarth, Bainbridge and Hawes. It's also packed with history—from Roman roads and medieval churches to traces of lead mining and lime kilns.

There are loads of visual highlights on this route. Early on, there's a peaceful stretch beside the River Ure, followed by the secluded cascades at Redmire Force. The stepping stones across the river are always a fun feature, and the views of Lower Force at Aysgarth Falls are stunning.

A bit further on, the impressive St Andrew's Church in Aysgarth catches the eye with its warm stone and striking Gothic windows. You'll also pass Cauldron Falls at West Burton and the atmospheric ruins of the Penhill Preceptory—definitely worth a pause along the way.

You'll find full directions, maps, and planning tools over on my website at <https://www.paulbeal.com/wensleydale>.

### Additional Information

- Distance: 10½ miles (16¾ kilometres)
- Duration: Approximately 5 hours (excluding stops and breaks)
- Difficulty: Moderate – includes riverside paths, field crossings, gentle climbs, and one longer ascent through woodland
- Trail Conditions: Mostly well-defined footpaths and field tracks, some sections may be muddy or uneven, particularly after rain, a few stiles, steps, and moderate inclines
- Recommended Map: OS Explorer OL30 – Yorkshire Dales Northern & Central Area
- Parking: Free roadside parking on the eastern edge of West Witton, by the side of the A684
  - Google Maps link: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/2Dc4kHTvAmFL9Q93A>
  - What3Words: [///easygoing.forgotten.like](https://www.what3words.com/easygoing.forgotten.like)

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Thank you for your support!

Paul Beal



# Step-by-Step Directions

Begin your Wensleydale walk in the picturesque village of West Witton, located in North Yorkshire along the A684, around four miles (6.4 kilometres) west of Leyburn. You'll find a spacious **roadside car park (1)** on the eastern edge of the village, just off the main road. From here, walk along the grassy verge back towards the centre of the village. As you approach, you'll pass a large cream-coloured house on your left.

Continue walking into West Witton, passing a series of stone cottages and a bus stop, both on your left-hand side. Opposite **Fold Cottage (2)**, turn right down a tarmac lane that slopes gently downhill. Ignore the public footpath branching off to your right and continue along the lane, which takes you past the entrance to West Witton Farm. Stay on this route, called Flats Lane, as it winds its way downhill for about half a mile (800 metres), eventually arriving at a farm at **High Wanlass (3)**.

Once you reach the farmyard, turn left and follow a track through a gate, entering a field which is part of Wanlass Park. Head diagonally across the field, keeping a solitary oak tree on your right, until you reach a gap in the dry stone wall. Here, your Wensleydale walk joins a public footpath. Continue diagonally across the next field, descending towards the **River Ure (4)**.

At the riverbank, turn left and follow the signposted public footpath towards Aysgarth. This stretch takes you alongside the river for approximately three quarters of a mile (1.2 kilometres), often with a dry stone wall and the River Ure running to your right. Eventually, you'll enter Cornlands Wood and arrive at **Redmire Force (5)**, a beautiful series of waterfalls hidden in a wooded glade.

Wander through Cornlands Wood to the falls, then climb the steps out of the woodland and return to open countryside. Continue following the field edges, again with the dry stone wall and woodland to your right. After crossing several more fields, drop into a small wooded area where you'll find the **stepping stones (6)** across the River Ure. Pass the stones on your right and keep following the riverside path ahead.

You'll soon pass through another patch of woodland at **Adam Bottoms (7)** before reaching the A684. Turn right and cross **Hestholme Bridge (8)**. On the other side, turn right again onto a public footpath that cuts across a field. Be careful not to follow the track leading to Hestholme Farm. Keep to the footpath as it crosses the field diagonally towards the River Ure, then pass a set of waterfalls on your right.

Carry on along the riverside trail and enjoy the views of **Lower Force (9)**, part of the Aysgarth Falls series. You can choose either the lower or higher path here; the lower route offers better views of the falls, but make sure to rejoin the main footpath afterwards. Your Wensleydale walk now takes you through another wooded section, eventually emerging at **St Andrew's Church (10)** in Aysgarth.

In front of the church entrance, take the path to the left and follow it uphill to reach the **A684 (11)** once more. Cross the road and join the footpath directly opposite, which is signposted to Eshington Bridge. Follow the trail across the fields, heading downhill. Stay on the main footpath, avoiding any turns, and continue across several fields until you reach the stone-built **Eshington Bridge (12)**.

Cross the bridge, walk a short distance along the road, then take a right-hand turn following the public footpath signposted to West Burton. This route takes you across fields to a stream before turning left across more fields to arrive at the northern edge of West Burton. Cross the **main road (13)** and climb the steps directly ahead into the village. Turn right to reach the village green, then left to walk downhill towards the bottom of the village. Here, turn right at the sign for the waterfall.

At the waterfall, turn left and cross the stone **packhorse footbridge (14)** over Walden Beck. Climb the steps that lead up the side of the valley and continue on the footpath signposted to Morpeth Scar via Barrick Wood. Once you reach the woodland edge, take the left-hand path marked for Morpeth Lane. Follow this along the woodland boundary until you arrive at a stone track. Turn right and continue until the track curves right. At this bend, take the **left-hand footpath (15)** signposted to Temple Farm.

This section of your Wensleydale walk guides you along the edges of several fields for over a mile (1.6 kilometres), eventually bringing you to **Temple Farm (16)**. When you exit the final field, you'll see large barns in front of you. Turn right here and follow the track uphill into the woodland. This stone path rises diagonally through the trees. At the top, walk straight ahead, following the public footpath towards Nossill Lane via Langthwaite Lane, passing the ruins of the **Knights Templars (17)** on your left.

Climb the grassy bank ahead until you reach a concrete lane. Turn right and follow it uphill. About halfway up, leave the concrete track by turning left at the signpost to West Witton via Nossill Lane. A short distance on, turn left again onto a public footpath that crosses open fields. This leads you to **Langthwaite Lane (18)**, an enclosed track bordered by dry stone walls.

Follow Langthwaite Lane for around three quarters of a mile (1.2 kilometres) until you meet a minor road called **Chantry Bank (19)**. Turn left and head downhill to reach the western edge of **West Witton (20)**. Finally, turn right and stroll through the village to return to the car park, bringing your Wensleydale walk to a rewarding close.



# Map of the Walk

