

Tupgill Park Walk

Linking Wensley, Middleham and West Witton

Visit my website for full details: <https://www.paulbeal.com/tupgill-park>

Introduction to the Walk

This scenic circular route explores the heart of Wensleydale, starting at Wensley Bridge on the banks of the River Ure. From there, it follows a peaceful riverside path before climbing gently south towards Middleham, famous for its castle and racing heritage. The walk then crosses the open expanse of Middleham Low Moor and leads into the varied landscape of the Tupgill Park Estate, home to The Forbidden Corner. From here, it heads across farmland towards West Witton, before returning along field paths and riverside tracks back to Wensley.

Highlights of the Walk

Highlights of the walk include the historic villages of Middleham and West Witton, panoramic views over Wensleydale, and the tranquil woodland paths of the Tupgill Park Estate. In Middleham, you'll pass the impressive ruins of the castle and the Jubilee Fountain in Swine Market. In West Witton, you'll visit the peaceful St Bartholomew's Church. Hidden gems within Tupgill Park include the whimsical Fishing Temple and a quiet memorial bench known as Leo's Seat. The riverside sections along the Ure add even more variety to this rewarding route.

Tupgill Park Estate is a vibrant and family-friendly destination. It's best known for The Forbidden Corner—a surreal garden maze filled with tunnels, sculptures, and hidden surprises. The estate also includes self-catering holiday cottages, The Saddle Room restaurant, a beautifully designed herb garden, and several public rights of way that allow walkers to explore the grounds and surrounding countryside.

Explore the full walk, view the maps, and plan your day using the tools on my website.

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Additional Information

- **Distance:** 11¼ miles (18 kilometres).
- **Duration:** Approximately 5 hours (excluding stops and breaks).
- **Difficulty:** Moderate. Mainly field and moorland paths, with some gentle ascents and occasional navigation challenges where paths are indistinct.
- **Trail Conditions:** A mix of riverside paths, field tracks, moorland bridleways, and minor lanes. Paths can be muddy in wet weather, and some sections may be slightly overgrown in summer.
- **Recommended Map:** OS Explorer OL30 – Yorkshire Dales Northern & Central Area.
- **Parking:** Large roadside car park on the A684 beside Wensley Bridge, south of Wensley village.
 - **Google Maps Link:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/5ZcoB6QvZ84QARed8>
 - **What3Words:** ///diagram.ounce.shakes

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Thank you for your support!

Paul Beal



Step-by-Step Directions

Begin your Tugill Park walk at Wensley Bridge. There is a large tarmac roadside car park on the A684, situated next to Wensley Bridge just south of Wensley village. The car park lies on the south side of the River Ure.

From the car park, cross the road and walk towards **Wensley Bridge (1)**, but do not cross it. Just before the bridge, turn right onto the public footpath. If you are heading in the right direction, the River Ure will be on your left-hand side as you follow the path. Walk along the riverside for approximately 1½ miles, keeping the river close by on your left.

When the **river bends sharply to the left (2)**, turn right and cross the field to meet a wide stone track. Turn left here and walk along the track. Continue until you meet the river again, then turn right onto a public bridleway near a **large metal gate (3)**. Follow this bridleway uphill to the south, crossing a large field and entering a **wooded area (4)**.

Continue on the bridleway through another couple of large fields. Follow the blue public bridleway waymarker arrows to stay on course. Eventually, you'll reach a **metal gate at a junction (5)** where a public footpath branches left and the bridleway continues right. Take the public footpath to the left and follow it along the edge of three more fields, heading east. As you progress, you'll begin to see the tops of the houses in Middleham appearing ahead.

Eventually, you'll reach a T-junction with another public footpath. Turn right and walk uphill. Just before reaching a row of bungalows at the top, turn left. Follow the path behind the backs of the houses to reach the top of St Alkelda's Road. Continue straight ahead and take the path that leads to a children's play area. Go straight on, passing the play area, and head towards the churchyard of the **Church of St Mary and St Alkelda (6)** in Middleham.

Walk straight through the churchyard, passing the church entrance on your left, and continue through the stone archway to exit the grounds. Keep going straight ahead to reach the A6108. Turn right and walk uphill to the old stone cross on the cobbled area in Middleham's Market Place. This marks roughly a quarter of the way around your Tugill Park walk.

Turn right again, following Coverham Lane uphill towards Middleham Castle. Continue along this lane to reach **Swine Cross (7)**, then turn left and walk up to the castle. Pass the front of the castle and turn right onto a tarmac road, which soon becomes a stone track. This public footpath, part of the Six Dales Trail, leads to Cover Banks. Shortly after passing the castle, take the public footpath through a dry stone wall on the right-hand side.

Follow the path across a couple of fields that are often used for grazing horses. Continue straight ahead with the dry stone wall and the road on your right-hand side. Follow the edge of the fields for about a quarter of a mile, then exit through a **gate in the wall (8)**. Cross the road and go through a wooden gate to enter Middleham Low Moor. Here you'll see an information sign reminding visitors to stick to public rights of way during racehorse training hours.

The route you'll be following is marked in blue on the sign and follows a designated public bridleway. The bridleway crosses Middleham Low Moor from east to west. Roughly halfway across, the bridleway splits. You'll be taking the left-hand fork, which gradually bears south and leads off the moor towards a well-defined stone track.

After familiarising yourself with the directions, start your crossing of Middleham Low Moor. At first, the grassy bridleway is visible underfoot, but it soon becomes indistinct. To stay on course, keep the racehorse gallops fairly close on your right as you continue west. These gallops are easy to identify, enclosed by white fencing.

Follow the line of the gallops for about a mile. Eventually, they will veer away and come to an end. This roughly marks a **bridleway junction (9)**, although you may not see it clearly underfoot. At this point, take the more southerly or lower path, branching left across the open moor. Follow this route for another two-thirds of a mile, gradually descending towards the edge of the moor.

The path meets a **stone track (10)** beside a dry stone wall. Continue straight ahead along the track with the wall on your left. A short distance later, turn left through two large stone pillars and follow a public bridleway downhill. Walk past a large house called Fern Gill on your left. Continue along the track, passing two ponds on the left. This is roughly the halfway point of your Tupgill Park walk.

Walk past the Fishing Temple on your left, then go through the large **wrought iron gates (11)** marking the exit from Fern Gill House. Turn right and follow the tarmac lane uphill to a roundabout where the Tupgill Park welcome sign is displayed. With the entrance to the Forbidden Corner in front of you, turn right and follow the tarmac lane. This lane climbs uphill through Ashgill, part of the Tupgill Park Estate.

At the top of the hill, go through the gate to leave the estate and continue straight along a wide stone track. When you reach the road, continue forward and pass **Havana House and Laurens Lodge (12)**, both part of Spigot Lodge. Stay on the road as it passes more Spigot Lodge dwellings. A little further along, turn left onto a **public footpath (13)**.

The path runs alongside the edge of woodland before cutting across a large field. Pass the **wind turbine (14)** as you walk, then exit the field and pass the front of some farm buildings before returning to open pasture. Follow the public footpath west for about half a mile, crossing three large fields. Eventually, the path meets a **wider stone track (15)** that bends to the right and descends into woodland.

Do not follow the bend. Instead, continue straight ahead across more fields. As you progress, the houses of West Witton will come into view ahead, with the grassy slope of Capple Bank rising to your left. Keep to the public footpath and continue heading downhill for just over 1¼ miles, diagonally crossing around ten fields towards West Witton.

Eventually, the path emerges onto the **A684 (16)**. Turn left and walk into the village. When you reach the Fox & Hounds pub, turn right and follow the path to St Bartholomew's Church. This marks roughly three-quarters of the way around your Tupgill Park walk.

Pass the church and walk straight through the graveyard along a slabbed path. This leads to a flight of stone steps that descend to a tarmac lane called Church Lane. Turn right and follow Church Lane steeply downhill. At the bottom, turn left onto another tarmac lane, Flats Lane, heading north.

Continue along Flats Lane for about two-thirds of a mile, passing West Witton Farm. Keep following the lane as it bends right and leads past the front of **High Wanlass Farm (17)** and its buildings. The track continues towards Low Wanless Farm, visible ahead. Walk past the right-hand side of the farm buildings. Then continue along the footpath through three more fields, heading towards the River Ure.

Soon you'll reach a wooden fingerpost. Follow the public footpath signposted to Wensley Bridge. Cross several more fields for roughly half a mile, heading in the direction of Lords Bridge. Exit the final field onto a stone track. Turn left and head down towards **Lords Bridge (18)**. Just before reaching it, turn right onto a riverside path with the River Ure on your left-hand side.

Follow the trail through woodland beside the river. The path may be slightly overgrown at first, but it soon becomes a lovely woodland walk, with the river close beside you on the left. Continue along the riverside path for just over a mile. Eventually, you'll return to Wensley Bridge and the car park where you started, concluding your Tupgill Park walk.

Map of the Walk

