

Aysgarth Falls Walk

A Family-Friendly Circular Walk in Yorkshire

Visit my website for full details: <https://www.paulbeal.com/aysgarth-falls-walk>

Introduction to the Walk

This family-friendly walk offers easy-to-follow, well-signposted paths, woodland trails, and plenty to enjoy at every stage. The walk begins at the car park on Church Bank, a road that branches off the A684 next to the Aysgarth Falls Hotel. The route takes you past St Andrew's Church and Yore Mill, crosses Yore Bridge, and visits the Upper, Middle and Lower Falls before winding through Freeholders' Wood and St Joseph's Wood, passing Hollins House, and looping back via the visitor centre for a delightful and scenic circular walk.

Highlights of the Walk

Highlights include the first glimpse of the Upper Falls from Yore Bridge, the dramatic Middle Falls reached by a short descent, and the broad, rocky ledges of the Lower Falls—a perfect spot for a pause and a bite to eat. The trail also winds peacefully through Freeholders' Wood and St Joseph's Wood, and passes points of interest such as the historic Yore Mill and St Andrew's Church, which features a medieval rood screen from Jervaulx Abbey and one of the largest churchyards in England.

Aysgarth Falls is a stunning series of three waterfalls carved by the River Ure over nearly a mile as it descends into mid-Wensleydale in the Yorkshire Dales. Designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest, the falls—also known as High Force, Middle Force and Lower Force—have inspired visitors including John Ruskin, J. M. W. Turner and William Wordsworth. Dropping roughly 200 feet over limestone steps, they are particularly dramatic after heavy rain, and the surrounding area is alive with wildlife and seasonal wildflowers, with salmon sometimes seen leaping in autumn.

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Additional Information

- **Distance:** 2¾ miles (4½ kilometres).
- **Duration:** Approximately 1¼ hours (excluding stops and breaks).
- **Difficulty:** Easy. A short, well signposted walk suitable for families with small children, though not all sections are accessible for prams or pushchairs.
- **Trail Conditions:** Well-maintained paths and woodland tracks, with some steps and short sections that may be uneven or slightly overgrown.
- **Recommended Map:** OS Explorer OL30 – Yorkshire Dales Northern & Central Area.
- **Parking:** Car park on Church Bank, a road that branches off the A684 next to the Aysgarth Falls Hotel.
 - **Google Maps Link:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/gqb5RPJNmyZYVBP76>
 - **What3Words:** ///dean.onlookers.teamed

Support My Work

If you've found these directions helpful or enjoyed this walk, please consider making a £2 donation to support what I do. Your contribution helps me create more free walking guides like this one.

You can donate by visiting <https://buymeacoffee.com/paulbeal> or by scanning the QR code.

Thank you for your support!

Paul Beal



Step-by-Step Directions

Your Aysgarth Falls walk begins at the **car park on Church Bank (1)**, a road that branches off the A684 next to the Aysgarth Falls Hotel. Before setting off, take a moment to enjoy the view from the car park wall, which offers a lovely glimpse of St Andrew's Church. When you're ready, turn right as you leave the car park and begin your walk down the hill. As you approach the bottom, the Upper Falls of Aysgarth Falls will come into view on your left, and you'll pass Yore Mill on your right before reaching **Yore Bridge (2)**.

After crossing Yore Bridge, you'll notice a footpath signposted to the Upper Falls and Askrigg on your left. On your right, another sign directs you to the Middle Falls, Lower Falls, and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Visitor Centre. If you'd like a closer look at the Upper Falls, take the left path for a brief detour. After enjoying the view, return to the main path and continue your Aysgarth Falls walk by heading uphill towards the **Yorkshire Dales National Park Visitor Centre (3)**.

Once you arrive at the visitor centre, walk through the car park and exit at the far end. After crossing the road, you'll find a clearly marked footpath leading to the Middle Falls and Lower Falls. Within a few minutes, you'll encounter steps on your right that lead down to a platform with a wonderful view of the Middle Falls. Once you've taken in the sight, return to the main path and continue your hike through **Freeholders' Wood (4)**.

The trail through Freeholders' Wood is well-maintained and easy to follow. Eventually, you'll reach another set of steps that lead down to the Lower Falls. Take a moment to admire the falls before heading back up the steps. Once back on the path, briefly retrace your steps until you are able to turn sharply right, effectively making a U-turn to follow the public footpath through **St Joseph's Wood (5)**.

This section of the walk takes you through woodland, across an open field, and up to **Hollins House (6)**. As you pass by the farm buildings at Hollins House, bear left onto the stone track for a short distance. Then, turn right to follow a footpath along the right side of a large grassy field. When you reach a dry stone wall with a **gate and signpost (7)**, resist the temptation to go through the gate unless you want to explore the longer Aysgarth Falls 'black route'. Instead, turn sharply left and cross the field, following the signpost towards Freeholders' Wood.

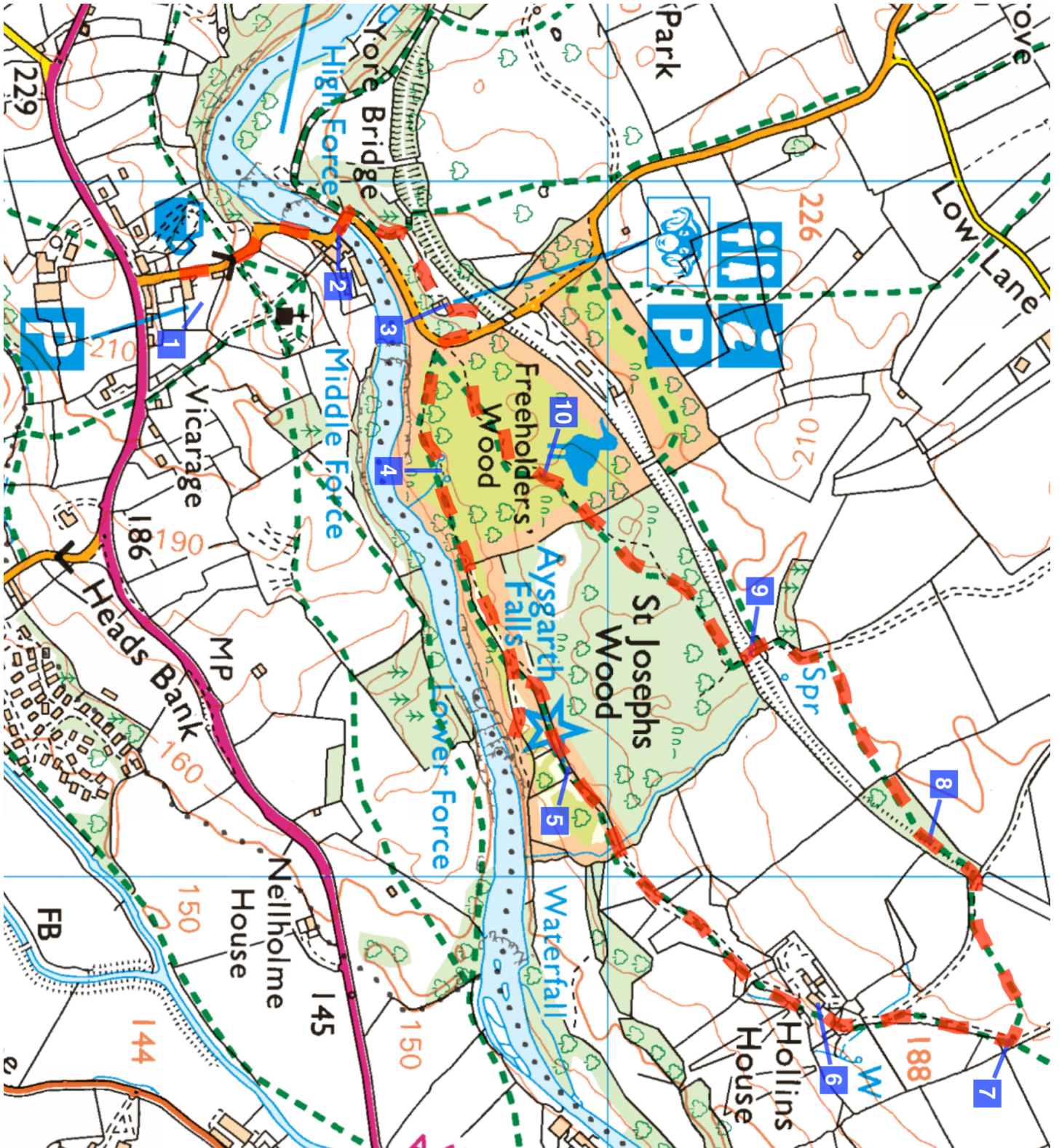
Continuing along the path, you'll soon reach a stone track with another public footpath sign. This path leads through a **small wooded area (8)**, which can be slightly overgrown at times. However, it soon opens up into another field. Cross this field, heading towards the bottom left corner, where you'll pass under a **railway tunnel (9)** and re-enter St Joseph's Wood.

After emerging from the tunnel, turn right to follow the path through St Joseph's Wood and back into **Freeholders' Wood (10)**. This section of the walk also follows the Aysgarth Falls 'red route'. Eventually, you'll exit Freeholders' Wood and find yourself back on the road you walked earlier. Cross the road and turn right, then turn left to return to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Visitor Centre.

Now that you're back on familiar ground, continue your Aysgarth Falls walk by following the path through the visitor centre car park. Retrace your steps back to Yore Bridge, then walk up Church Bank to return to the car park where you began. This circular walk covers approximately 2¾ miles (4.4 kilometres) or slightly longer, around 3 miles (4.8 kilometres), if you include the detour to explore the Upper Falls in more detail.

This Aysgarth Falls walk is perfect for families, as the trails are easy to follow and well signposted. Although there is a short section that may be slightly overgrown, it shouldn't present any real difficulty. At the Yorkshire Dales National Park Visitor Centre, you'll find toilets, refreshments, and plenty of information to enhance your experience. Finally, while I've referred to the waterfalls as Upper Falls, Middle Falls, and Lower Falls, some maps may label them as High Force, Middle Force, and Lower Force. Don't worry—these are simply different names for the same locations.

Map of the Walk



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