

ROSEBERRY TOPPING WALK

Trail Featuring Captain Cook's Monument

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

Introduction to the Walk

This circular walk from Great Ayton climbs Roseberry Topping via Cliff Ridge Wood and Cliff Rigg Quarry, then continues over Newton Moor and Great Ayton Moor to Gribdale Gate before rising again to Captain Cook's Monument. The final stretch descends through Ayton Banks Wood, passes Little Ayton and the River Leven, and loops back to Great Ayton. It's a varied route with woodland, open moorland, long views, and plenty of local history. If you enjoy exploring beautiful landscapes with a mix of history, views, and varied terrain, this Roseberry Topping walk is well worth experiencing.

Highlights of the Walk

Roseberry Topping is one of North Yorkshire's most distinctive hills, known for its half-cone summit and dramatic cliff edge. Its unique shape, shaped by resistant sandstone over softer rocks, makes it a landmark above Great Ayton and Newton under Roseberry. From the summit, the views stretch across Teesside and, on clear days, towards the distant Pennines.

Other highlights include Cliff Rigg Quarry, the James Cook interpretation sign, the straight hedgerow path, the shooting box, the ascent to the summit, the views over Newton Wood, the moorland above Roseberry Common, the route to Captain Cook's Monument, the memorial benches and crash plaque, the descent through Ayton Banks Wood, and the peaceful lanes of Little Ayton.

Additional Information

- **Distance:** 6½ miles (10¼ kilometres).
- **Duration:** Approximately 3½ hours (excluding stops and breaks).
- **Difficulty:** Moderate. The route includes sustained climbs to Roseberry Topping and Captain Cook's Monument, along with several steep or uneven sections. Suitable for walkers with a reasonable level of fitness.
- **Trail Conditions:** A mix of woodland paths, moorland tracks, stone steps, and surfaced lanes. Some sections are steep, and the descent into Ayton Banks Wood can be slippery in wet weather. Paths are generally well defined and easy to follow.
- **Recommended Map:** OS Explorer OL26 – North York Moors Western Area.
- **Parking:** Public parking is available in Great Ayton at the east end of High Street near the village green, with additional spaces at the junction of High Street, Newton Road, and Station Road.
 - **Google Maps Link:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/ixWU83pVJGX2jXcXA>
 - **What3Words:** ///mainframe.slices.upon

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Thank you for your support!

Paul Beal



Step-by-Step Directions

Start your Roseberry Topping walk by parking in Great Ayton at the **east end of High Street (1)**, close to the village green. You'll find a car park plus additional parking available at the junction of High Street, Newton Road, and Station Road. From the car park, walk briefly north along Newton Road and look for a public footpath on your right-hand side. Pass through the wrought iron gate and set off along the footpath heading east. The path is straightforward and easy to follow, though it may be muddy in places. After half a mile, you'll **cross the railway line (2)**; continue straight ahead and begin your ascent of Rye Hill, aiming for Cliff Ridge Wood.

As you enter **Cliff Ridge Wood (3)**, you'll notice a National Trust sign indicating that there are three paths: one to the left, one to the right, and one diagonally to the right. Take the diagonal uphill path to your right, which leads through the wood. Stay on the main trail, and as you emerge at the top, turn left briefly before turning right near a sign marked 'In Search of Cook's Cottage'. Follow the footpath straight ahead towards a farmhouse. Partway along this path, you can take a short detour to the left, steeply uphill, to explore Cliff Rigg Quarry. **Once at the farmhouse (4)**, continue your Roseberry Topping walk by turning left, then almost immediately turning right. Ahead of you, Roseberry Topping's distinctive peak will come into view.

Follow the straight footpath beside the hedgerow for nearly half a mile until you reach the stone shooting box at the base of Roseberry Topping's south-western slopes. Walk past the shooting box on your left and a solitary wind-sculpted tree nearby before beginning your ascent. The stone slabbed steps will guide you all the way to the **Roseberry Topping summit (5)**. As you approach the triangulation pillar at the top, note that your descent will involve a right-hand U-turn rather than retracing your steps.

To descend, follow the stone-stepped path, which forms part of the Cleveland Way National Trail. The path zigzags down the hill, so avoid any side trails and continue until the terrain levels out. Keep the dry stone wall on your right-hand side as you follow the trail, still part of the Cleveland Way, towards the cone-shaped hill in the distance. Pass a gate on your right and a **Roseberry Topping interpretation board (6)** on your left before climbing the stone-stepped path towards Newton Moor. This path skirts the right-hand side of the cone-shaped hill, eventually leading to a gate at the top.

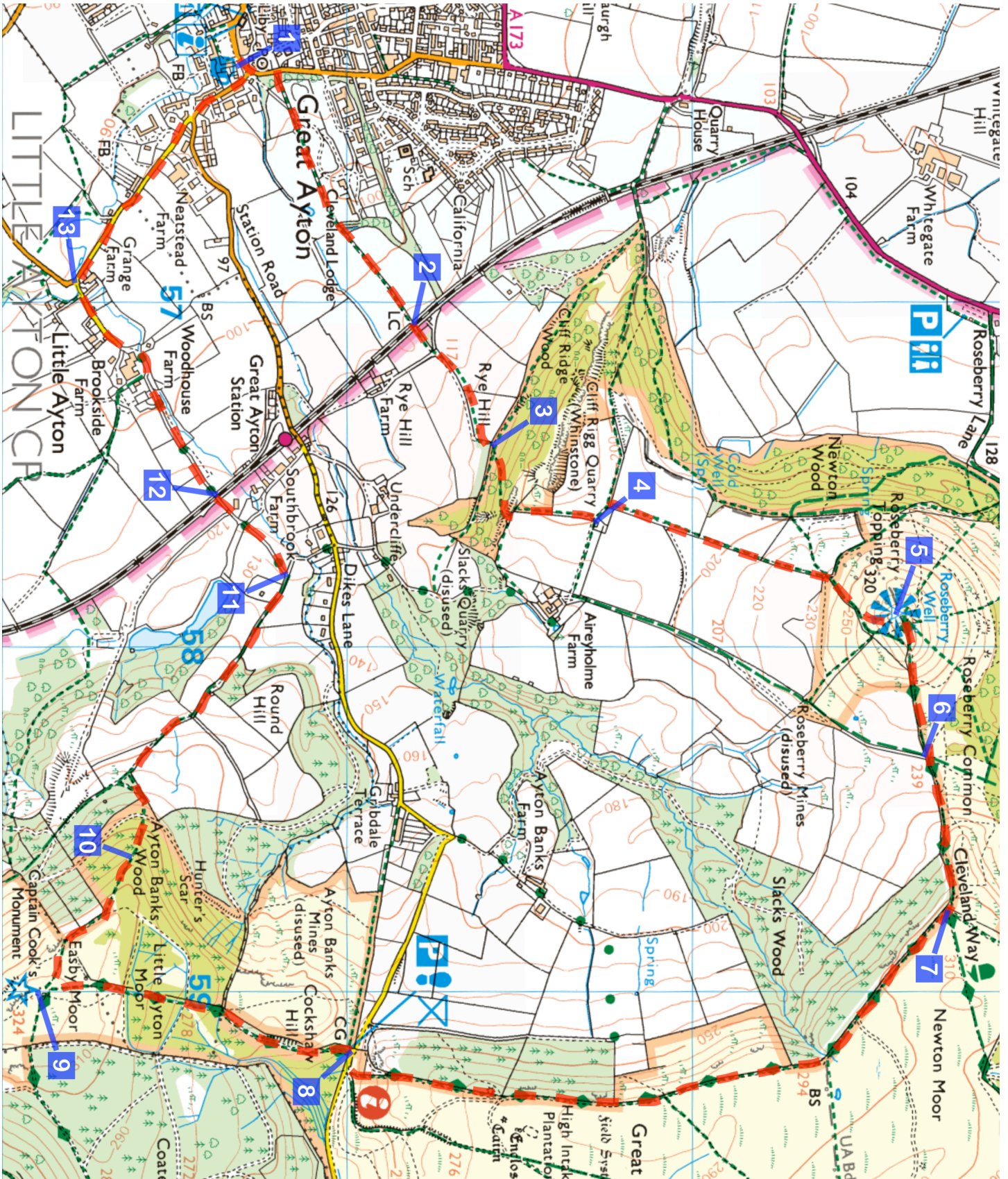
Beyond the gate, you'll encounter **three route options (7)**: a path to the left, another diagonally left, and a wider track straight ahead. Continue your Roseberry Topping walk by taking the straight-ahead track, which leads south-east before curving south. With the dry stone wall on your right and open moorland to your left, follow this track for approximately one and a quarter miles. At the end of the track, descend the stone-stepped path to the road at **Gribdale Gate (8)**. Turn right at the road, then almost immediately turn left onto a forestry track that ascends southward.

Follow the forestry track uphill for over half a mile. Eventually, the track narrows into a stone-stepped path, which leads to **Captain Cook's Monument (9)** on Easby Moor, a highlight of this Roseberry Topping walk. From the monument, take the sharp right-hand path that briefly crosses the moorland and passes between two large stone gateposts. Ensure Roseberry Topping is in view to your right as you proceed. The path soon veers left, descending steeply through **Ayton Banks Wood (10)**. Continue down the path until it crosses a forestry track and passes through a gate into open countryside.

At the gate, go straight ahead, soon meeting another path. Turn right and follow it north-west, descending the hill. As you near a few large houses, the path widens into a concrete lane. Turn left onto a **stone track (11)** heading south-west for just under half a mile, **crossing a railway bridge (12)** before arriving at Fletchers Farm in Little Ayton. Walk through the farm and continue straight along the tarmac road. At the junction with the main road near the **River Leven bridge (13)**, turn right.

Conclude your Roseberry Topping walk by following the road north-west for half a mile, returning to the village of Great Ayton. This final stretch leads you back to your starting point, completing a rewarding and scenic journey through the North York Moors.

Map of the Walk



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