

GREAT AYTON WALK

Hutton Moor and Hanging Stone Circular Route

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

Introduction to the Walk

This Great Ayton walk is a varied circular route from the village, exploring woodland tracks, quiet lanes, open moorland and the Cleveland Way. The route visits Hutton Moor and Hanging Stone before returning by Little Roseberry, Aireyholme Farm and Cliff Ridge Wood, with fine views towards Roseberry Topping, the Cleveland Hills, Guisborough and the North Sea.

Highlights of the Walk

The walk begins gently from Great Ayton before climbing through quiet woodland and open countryside, with changing views back towards Roseberry Topping and south across the Cleveland Hills. Peaceful tracks through Mill Bank Wood and Pale End Plantation give the route a sheltered, atmospheric feel before the landscape opens out across Percy Cross Rigg and Hutton Moor.

A memorable highlight is the short detour to Hanging Stone, a dramatic sandstone outcrop with sweeping views over Guisborough, wooded ridges, fields and the distant North Sea. The return follows the Cleveland Way below Little Roseberry, then passes Aireyholme Farm and Captain Cook connections before descending through Cliff Ridge Wood and returning to Great Ayton's attractive village green.

Additional Information

Distance: 9¼ miles (14¾ kilometres)

Duration: Approximately 4½ hours (excluding stops and breaks)

Difficulty: The route includes a steady amount of ascent, some rougher woodland paths, moorland tracks and stone steps, but there are no especially technical sections.

Trail Conditions: Tarmac lanes, stone tracks, woodland bridleways, moorland paths, field paths and sections of the Cleveland Way. Some stretches may be muddy after wet weather.

Recommended Map: OS Explorer OL26 North York Moors Western Area

Parking: Small car park and roadside parking at the eastern end of High Street in Great Ayton, near the village green and close to the junction of High Street, Newton Road and Station Road.

• **Google Maps Link:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/GZKAgTQRmTgJHUDG7>

• **What3Words:** ///pouting.screeches.stated

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



STEP-BY-STEP DIRECTIONS

Begin your Great Ayton walk from the small car park and roadside parking area at the eastern end of **High Street (1)**, close to Great Ayton's large village green. The car park sits at the junction of High Street, Newton Road and Station Road. From here, head south along Station Road, which is signposted towards Little Ayton and the railway station.

At the mini roundabout, follow the road straight ahead, again signed for Little Ayton. At the next junction, immediately before the **road bridge (2)** over the River Leven, turn left. This turning leads to Brookside Farm and may also carry a sign for Fletcher's Farm Coffee Shop.

Carry on along the tarmac road, which passes through the farm and becomes a stone track as it continues past Fletcher's Farm Coffee Shop. The coffee shop is set in a large wooden building on your left. Continue along the track and over the bridge crossing the **railway line (3)**. Beyond the bridge, go straight ahead through the metal gates.

At the end of the track, turn right onto the narrow tarmac bridleway. The lane gradually narrows into a track, then tightens further as the route steepens and crosses an area of exposed tree roots. Keep following the bridleway uphill. Where the path splits and a footpath climbs left into **Ayton Banks Wood (4)**, ignore this and stay on the bridleway, ignoring any further paths to the left or right.

The bridleway eventually emerges from the woodland into more open countryside. Follow it around the side of the hill, keeping a dry stone wall on your right. The path re-enters woodland a short while later. Carry straight on here, avoiding the right hand path that drops down the hill. Soon you reach a **T-junction (5)**; turn left following the bridleway sign.

Continue your Great Ayton walk along this broadening forestry track for about a mile until you emerge onto a tarmac lane. Turn left and head uphill, passing **Bankside Farm (6)** on your right. Carry on climbing along the lane through the woodland of Pale End Plantation. At the top of the bank, ignore the left turn onto the Cleveland Way National Trail and stay on the tarmac lane.

The lane descends towards **Lonsdale Farm (7)**. Walk past the farm on your right and continue downhill. Near several large barns, the lane bends left towards Oak Tree Farm, but instead go straight ahead onto the stone track, which climbs back uphill into the woodland at Nab End.

At the top, you reach a tarmac lane and crossroads on **Percy Cross Rigg (8)**. Turn left here and then immediately go through the gates. Avoid the grassy public footpath on the left and instead take the public bridleway stone track straight ahead. To continue your Great Ayton walk, follow this across the moorland for almost a mile until you reach a set of gates on Hutton Moor.

Turn left here, joining the **Cleveland Way National Trail (9)**. After about a third of a mile, the stone track begins to ascend gently and bends slightly to the left. As it does so, two tracks lead off to the right; take the second of these, just before the Cleveland Way wooden signpost. This track leads down towards Hanging Stone, a large rock outcrop. Where the track swings sharply to the left, take the narrow public footpath on your right down through the trees to **Hanging Stone (10)** itself.

After visiting Hanging Stone, retrace your steps along the narrow path back through the trees to the track and turn right. Follow this track to a **crossroads (11)**, then walk through the gate or cross the stile to enter the National Trust's Roseberry Topping area. Continue straight ahead across the moorland with the dry stone wall on your right. In the distance, also to your right, you will see Roseberry Topping.

You will rejoin the Cleveland Way National Trail at a crossroads. Turn right here, through the gate, and begin making your way downhill on stone steps. The path takes you around the left hand side of the small cone shaped hill known as Little Roseberry, with Roseberry Topping rising in the distance ahead of you.

At the lowest point between Little Roseberry and Roseberry Topping, you will see an **interpretation board (12)** about the Roseberry Topping pathways improvement works. Turn left here and walk through the large gate. Follow this route for about three quarters of a mile down to **Aireyholme Farm (13)**.

On reaching the farm, where a large wooden barn stands directly in front of you, turn right through the gates and across the cattle grid. You come to a stone built house with a grey slate roof; here, turn left and walk along the edge of the grassy field. Continue straight ahead past a small cluster of larch trees to an interpretation board about Captain Cook's cottage.

At this sign, turn left, then almost immediately turn right and drop down into **Cliff Ridge Wood (14)**. Follow the path downhill through the trees, passing two large concrete pillars set into the ground on your right. At a crossroads in the paths near a wrought iron gate, continue straight ahead down some stone steps.

You will emerge into the open countryside of Rye Hill. Keep following the path downhill alongside the fence on your right. The path continues straight across the **railway line (15)**, then through more sets of wrought iron gates before reaching the main road in Great Ayton. Turn left here to return to the car park and complete your Great Ayton walk.

