

WEST TANFIELD WALK

Marmion Tower and River Ure Circular Route

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

Introduction to the Walk

This varied circular walk from West Tanfield follows the River Ure through peaceful countryside and attractive North Yorkshire villages. The route visits North Stainley and Mickley, using riverside paths, quiet lanes and woodland tracks before returning to West Tanfield. Historic St Nicholas's Church and the impressive medieval Marmion Tower provide a memorable finish.

Highlights of the Walk

The early stages follow the River Ure past the weir and through Sleningford Water Mill Caravan and Camping Park before continuing towards North Stainley. Village ponds, St Mary the Virgin Church and quiet countryside add plenty of interest before the route heads through the North Stainley Estate towards Lightwater Quarries.

Later, the walk passes through Mickley and rejoins the Ripon Rowel Walk beside the River Ure. Woodland paths through Piccadilly Wood lead back towards West Tanfield, where St Nicholas's Church and Marmion Tower are well worth exploring. From the tower, there are memorable views across the churchyard, Tanfield Bridge and the river below.

Additional Information

Distance: 8¼ miles (13¼ kilometres)

Duration: Approximately 3½ hours (excluding stops and breaks)

Difficulty: Generally easy to moderate, with relatively little ascent. The walk includes riverside paths, bridleways, woodland tracks, quiet lanes and some road walking.

Trail Conditions: Most of the route follows clear paths and tracks, although some riverside and woodland sections can become quite overgrown during the summer months.

Recommended Map: OS Explorer 298 Nidderdale

Parking: West Tanfield Memorial Hall car park in West Tanfield. Parking is available by honesty box.

- **Google Maps Link:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/5TPz1w82QCVQ31xu8>
- **What3Words:** [///subway.smile.scores](https://www.what3words.com/5TPz1w82QCVQ31xu8)

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STEP-BY-STEP DIRECTIONS

Start your West Tanfield walk at **West Tanfield Memorial Hall car park (1)**, where parking is by honesty box. This is a circular route, so you'll finish back where you began. Leave the car park, turn left and walk down the road towards Tanfield Bridge, which crosses the River Ure. You'll pass the Bull Inn on your right as you go.

Immediately after crossing Tanfield Bridge, turn left onto a public footpath signposted Ripon Rowel. Follow the path alongside the River Ure for about half a mile, **passing the weir (2)** on the way, until you reach a tarmac lane. Turn left and enter **Sleningford Water Mill Caravan and Camping Park (3)**. Walk through the park, following the signposted public footpath past the right-hand side of the reception building. Continue on the tarmac path, then turn right to follow the public footpath across the grass. Leave the caravan park and carry on along the waymarked public footpath.

This path forms part of the Ripon Rowel Walk and generally follows the course of the River Ure. Keep on this route for about half a mile until you **reach the A6108 (4)** on the northern edge of North Stainley. When you reach the road, turn left and walk into the village.

Head south through North Stainley, passing North Stainley Cricket Club on your left and the church of St Mary the Virgin on your right. Continue all the way through, passing the village duck ponds on both sides. Along the way, ignore the first public footpath on your right and the public bridleway that also leaves on your right. Leave the village behind, pass the gates of North Stainley Hall and, a little further on, turn right at a **sign for a public bridleway (5)**.

Follow the blue bridleway waymarker arrows through the North Stainley Estate. Cross a large concrete area between some large agricultural buildings, then take the track on the far side. Aerial photographs fixed to the signposts help show you the way. The track joins a wider tarmac road, so carry straight on, passing Lightwater Valley on your left. Rather than walk along the road itself, look for the bridleway running parallel to it on your right, tucked behind the trees. Follow this bridleway alongside the road, keeping to the clear blue and green waymarker arrows.

When you reach **Lightwater Quarries (6)**, the bridleway joins a wide stone track that passes the quarry car park on your right. Keep straight ahead along the stony track, passing the solar panels and four brick-built semi-detached houses. When you **reach the road (7)**, turn right towards Musterfield. Follow this road for just over half a mile to a **T-junction (8)**, then turn left. This is roughly the halfway point of your West Tanfield walk.

Carry straight on, following the sign for Kirkby Malzeard and Grewelthorpe and ignoring the right turn to Mickley. After another half a mile or so, the road bends sharply to the left. At this bend, **turn right onto a public bridleway (9)** heading across country. Continue straight ahead on the bridleway. Where it enters the woodland, take care to pick up the signed public bridleway on the left, just after the metal gate, then follow it along the southern edge of the wood. This section can become overgrown in summer, so shorts aren't the best choice here.

After about two-thirds of a mile you'll **reach a road (10)**. Turn right towards Mickley and follow the road for over half a mile into the village. Walk all the way through Mickley to the **small village green (11)**, where you'll find benches and a house called Lark Rise ahead of you. Here, turn left onto a public footpath and stone track signposted to West Tanfield. Follow the stone track, which becomes a grassy path, straight across the middle of a large field, with a straight row of about a dozen large trees to guide you along the way. At the far end of the field, **go through a gate (12)** and follow the path as it curves round to the left, hugging the edge of the woodland.

The last part of the West Tanfield walk now follows the River Ure back towards the village. The path leads you down towards the river, which appears below on your left. Follow the footpath along the riverside. This stretch can also become overgrown in summer. It stays entirely passable, but shorts again aren't recommended. The path becomes clearer as it runs high above the river on the right-hand side of the valley. Where the footpath splits into two, take the left-hand path, dropping down to stay close to the river. Go through a gate, pass a wooden hut on your left and carry straight on, with West Tanfield coming into view.

When you reach a **narrow tarmac road (13)**, turn right and follow it all the way back to the A6108. Turn left and cross Tanfield Bridge over the River Ure to return into West Tanfield, then follow the road up through the village to arrive back at the Memorial Hall car park where you began. Before you leave, it's well worth taking a look at St Nicholas's Church and Marmion Tower in West Tanfield.

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MAP OF THE WALK



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