

Copplestone Gate and Conistone Pie

We start at the bridge over the River Wharfe at Conistone. Roadside parking is free, but please park in a manner considerate to local residents. To find the start use grid reference SD97876750, or the rather splendid what-3-words tag **satin.hamsters.dries**. Satnav users should find that postcode BD23 5HS gets them to the bridge.

From the bridge we head East over the river into Conistone, passing the trekking centre on our left, to find the centre of the village with the tall maypole ahead of us.

We take the left hand fork to pass the maypole and then almost immediately find a track on our right heading out toward the Dib. The route through the Dib is clear but can be challenging – particularly in wet or slippery conditions, as some clambering over quite large stone steps is required.

We are in the realm of tough walking here rather than rock climbing, but if a gentler route is required, rather than taking the first lane in Conistone take the road past the church and take a right up Scot Gate Lane until you find the Dales Way where the two alternatives come back together.

We recommend the Dib as the primary route – the sense of adventure is better and the views back through the steep gorge are well worth the effort.

At the top of the Dib, we arrive at a flatter area where we find the Dales Way crossing our path. We briefly take this to the left and head uphill to meet Scot Gate Lane – a wide green lane that eventually finds its way over to Mossdale, where the Mossdale Caverns may be found.

We the lane Northeast – Scot Gate Lane becomes Bycliffe Road at this point, and despite the names sounding like well made tarmac roads, these are just rough green lanes and there is no traffic, other than the occasional horse to worry about. Our route is signposted for “Sandy Gate”, and we are now walking on much flatter land than at the start of the walk.

After a few hundred meters, look out for a crossroads where the route ahead ends and our route, signed for Capplestone Gate leaves on the left. We are now on the Conistone Turf Road.

This heads North toward a stand of conifers where we find a gate leading onto Conistone Moor, where we follow round the back of the trees to pick up a drystone wall which we follow up a steep hill. The path here is not particularly clear, and it may be easier to take a somewhat “alpine” approach to the climb.

Ahead of us at this stage is a striking limestone scar – we need to crest this before we see the route continuing to climb, but now much more gently, toward Copplestone Gate, and a trig point.

From the trig point we head North and notice a fork in the path. We take the right hand route, but if you miss that, it’s not a problem as the path later merges with our route which now continues along the line of the scar with excellent views across Wharfedale and toward Kettlewell.

We cross a fence and track along a drystone wall to take shelter for lunch before taking a sharp left turn over a stile and heading steeply downhill.

The path is clear and generally heads Southwest initially. A second path crosses – this is the one from the fork by the trig point, so welcome back if you missed that one.

We now head down toward a stand of trees in the bottom of the valley, to arrive at a gate into the woods. However, we do not enter the woods, instead we turn hard left, now on the Dales Way again, to

walk along fairly flat ground along the base of Swineber Scar and above a series of Lathes – North Flats Lathe, Hill Castles Lathe amongst them.

As we continue along the Dales Way, we see Conistone Pie come into view. The Pie is a prominent limestone outcrop shaped, unsurprisingly given the name, like a stand-pie and it commands extensive views of both Littondale and Wharfedale which are divided by the Birks Fell ridge.

The view up Wharfedale extends as far up the valley as Buckden Pike and Yockenthwaite Moor. Down to the left meanwhile is a good view of another of Wharfedale's finest limestone features – Kilnsey Crag.

From Conistone Pie, we continue to head Southeast along the top of Hill Castles Scar until we meet Scot Gate lane, just below where we had our morning coffee.

If we felt adventurous, we could clamber back down the Dib, but on this occasion, we opt to turn right down the lane, passing the communications tower at Wassa Hill, so that we can enjoy a different and more gentle view, and so that we see the pretty church in Conistone.

Past the church, we carry on into Conistone where we cross the river and collect our cars.

- **Total distance 11.8 km (7.3 miles)**
- **Total Ascent 437 m**
- **Easy walk**