

# Long Preston

Long Preston is on the A65, 4 miles out of Settle toward Skipton, and roadside parking can generally be found in any of the roads that connect to the A65. Alternatively, travel to the village by train – the station is close to the village and adds no significant distance to the walk. For this walk, we parked on a residential street – Satnav users can find it by searching for Chapel Walk Long Preston. The grid reference for paper map users is SD83265818, and what-3-words tag **moth.disco.iceberg** will find it. As ever, please park with consideration for local residents.

We start by crossing the A65 and heading in the direction of Skipton – the Maypole pub should be behind you, and the (currently closed) Boars Head ahead of you on the opposite side of the road. Continue past the Boars Head, and then take a left into Church Street.

Walk around the right hand side of the church to see the exit stile onto New House Lane at the far end of the grounds. You will note a fingerpost here indicating Haw Lane – this is the direction we take.

The walk now heads East along New House Lane for a good while – this minor road gives access to a number of properties so be aware that (very light) traffic may be present. We pass Beckstone Laithe on our right, and then New House on our left – and beyond here the minor road continues through a gate as a farm track - we are still heading East at this stage. The lane winds round to the left following the contours of Cow Pasture Hill which is to the left of the lane.

We soon see buildings ahead of us – this is Little Newton. The track ends at Little Newton, and we look for a gate on the left, marked as the footpath onto the grassland next to Newton Gill.

We start by following the stream, crossing it at a surprisingly large and impressive arch stone bridge – which suggests that there was once much more significant traffic at this location. We follow the line of the beck upstream for a while now – keeping the stream on our left as we go. The path does not hug the bank of Newton Gill though, so don't worry if we feel that we are veering away from the water.

We pass an interesting, exposed rock formation on the left and then arrive at a stile over a wall, continuing beyond in much the same direction. The land beyond the stile has been planted as a woodland, and the route shown on the OS map is uphill though the plantation – we found it easier to stick to the bank of the stream, which curves round to the right to reconnect with the path marked on the map.

We soon see a small wooden footbridge over the stream, and we cross this and head up the opposite bank along the line of the drystone wall.

We see a stile in the wall ahead of us, and we cross this into a relatively featureless moorland. The path here may be somewhat indistinct, so if in doubt, at the stile, identify the peak of the hill directly ahead and head for this.

We soon see a wall ahead of us at the far side of the pasture, and the path goes through a gate onto a track known as Langber Lane – we take this to the left and follow it for a good while. We press on for a while, noting paths and bridleways on both sides of Langber Lane – those on the left tend to return to Long Preston, so keep these in mind as a shortcut if you are flagging.

Before long we find that the lane runs along the side of a stream – this is Bookill Gill Beck, and beyond here we enter a wooded area known as Langber Plantation.

We carry on following Langber Lane, and although it meanders a little, our direction is generally to the North, passing another woodland on our left – this is Wild Share – before arriving at a minor road, the Settle to Airton road.

We go left on this quiet road, crossing Scaleber Bridge, and then taking the footpath on the left via gate / stile into Scaleber wood. This is owned by the Woodland Trust but is publicly accessible, and is home to Scaleber Foss (also known as Scaleber Force).

Having spent a little while enjoying the falls, return to the road and head left toward Settle – take care on the road as there will be some traffic.

In a short while we see a lane join from our right – this is Stockdale Lane, and the Pennine Bridleway. We carry on along the road as it heads left where we take the Bridleway as it leaves on the left at another small lane, we are now on Lambert Lane.

We now head South past a derelict barn (called Preston's barn) before the track bears right to head uphill toward the edge of a plantation – this is Black's Plantation. We continue and head up to a minor road and take a sharp left – almost reversing our direction.

We stay with this track for a long time now – initially uphill along the edge of Black's plantation, avoiding the tempting footpath on the right.

The lane bears right until the direction of travel is due South, passing though flat and relatively featureless ground for a while until it veers right end then left – this is the site of a pair of disused quarries.

The bridleway straightens again, and we continue South, soon gaining good views on the right over the flood plain of the Ribble Valley.

The bridle way continues, and we stay with it, until it merges with Edge Lane – technically it is a road at this point. On our left we see a number of paths coming in from the hills – these are the potential shortcuts from Langber Lane that we identified on the outward journey.

Edge Lane becomes Green Gate Lane, and we follow this all the way down into Long Preston past some new housing which fits rather well with the existing character of the village.

At the end of Green Gate Lane, we turn right and see the Maypole green ahead of us – here we cross the A65 and return to the cars

- Total distance 15.8 km (9.8 miles)
- Total ascent 462m
- Challenging walk