

Abbeystead and Tarnbrook

We start from a layby on the right hand side of the Abbeystead road from Dolphinholme, just before Christ Church, Over Wyresdale. The church is quite prominent, and is clearly visible from the road, but if you miss it, and get as far as Abbeystead, turn round and drive back no more than 1 mile, now with the church and layby on your left. If you are using satnav to get to the start of the walk, then the postcode for the church is LA2 9BE – but this covers quite a large area, so the what-3-words tag **amid.finer.coats** may help. The OS grid reference is SD54895456.

From the layby we start by walking down to the church and heading toward the particularly splendid Lychgate – noting the war memorial to the right of the path.

We take the public footpath round the side of the church – this starts next to the gate and then heads south along the side wall of the graveyard, offering good views of the church and the large stained glass window in the end wall of the nave. The path veers left, and takes us gently downhill, heading a for a stile in the far corner of the field, where we cross Parson's Brook at a wooden footbridge before following the fence line to head toward farm buildings at Far House Barn and Bank Wood.

We cross a further field boundary at a gate, heading east, and as the buildings come clearly into view, we take a route between the larger House on the left and the smaller barn on the right, aiming for a gate that leads us onto Abbeystead Lane just to the West of the village.

We head right at the lane, which takes downhill into Abbeystead village.

We head down the main road through Abbeystead down to the bridge over the river Wyre. This is Stoops Bridge - and you may notice parking on a track on the right which is worth remembering as a start for other walks in the area – including the reservoir walk.

We continue steeply uphill along Strait Lane with woodland on our right until we arrive at the top of the hill where there is a sharp left turn. At the corner is an attractive cottage – this is Laundry Cottage, and our path continues through the white gate and through the garden of the dwelling. The correct route is well marked.

Once clear of the garden, we find ourselves in open fields with the wooded gardens of Abbeystead House on our right. We head straight on as the boundary of the woodland peels off to the right, so that we head east toward the corner of the field where two footpaths cross, a location marked by an attractive Wyre Way marker post. This is a good place to take a break.

We take care not to be tempted by the paths crossing ours and carry on East toward the prominent farm buildings at Emmetts. We need to keep the large houses at Higher Emmetts to our left and head toward a stile not far from the corner of the field which takes us onto a minor road at Top of Emmetts. We cross the road and head down a farm track where we see a stile on our right which accesses a path which takes us past the farm with the field boundary on our left.

We are on the Wyre Way now, and although not in the league of the Pennine Way, this is an important long distance route, so the path should be clear. If in doubt though, we head Northeast toward the left hand side of the prominent Greenside Hill. This takes us past a woodland area called Emmetts Wood and a farm called Ouzel Thorn, both of which need to be on our left, as we approach a bridge over the Wyre at Tarnbrook.

This is a good place to take lunch.

The return leg of the walk starts by crossing the bridge over the Wyre to find the minor road into Tarnbrook – in fact this is one of the relatively small number of classified roads that is a cul de sac – it ends just a short distance to the right, so we head left following the course of the Wyre downhill.

As we go, we notice that almost everything in Tarnbrook is painted the same shade of grey, indicating that the hamlet in effect belongs to the Grosvenor estate.

We follow the road downhill, keeping the river in view until we arrive at a junction at Lower Lee. We then take a right turn and head uphill - still on a road at this stage. We look for a stile on the left as the road starts to climb, and this takes us onto a path across the moors back to our starting point.

At this stage we are heading West and after a brief (and rather steep) climb at the start of the path, we tend to contour around the hill, enjoying great views back to Tarnbrook Fell.

The path we are on eventually brings us to a minor road – we cross this and continue in the same direction on the other side, until we arrive at a slightly larger road where we head right. We are now back on Abbeystead Lane and have just a short walk back to the church and the parking.

- **Total distance 10.1 km (6.3 miles)**
- **Total ascent 251 m**
- **Easy walk**