

# Bents Moorland

We start from the car park at Lairgill in High Bentham. The address for your Satnav is Butts Lane High Bentham LA2 7JZ. If you prefer paper maps, then the grid reference is SD67096933 and the what-3 words tag is **quieter.node.canal** Parking is free.

We set out by walking down to the bottom of Butts Lane and heading left along the B6480 toward Clapham. We are on the main road for only a short distance – about 50m, after which we take a right turn following a signposted right of way.

The path leads down to a step stile and from here we are into fields behind the houses at the edge of Bentham. We need to head downhill toward a concrete slab bridge over a small beck – the path is clear – and on the far side of the bridge we cross a gated stile and climb a gentle hill noted on the OS map as Cowslip Hill. The path then enters an enclosed lane which we follow uphill toward a cluster of buildings at Summerfield Farm. As we follow the enclosed lane uphill, we soon see a stile in the righthand wall and take the path over the field heading east along the contour lines. This takes us through a gate, and we then start to head downhill to cross a pasture heading toward the large cowsheds of the farm ahead. As we approach this, we have a further stile to climb, before we take a path around the left hand side of the cowsheds. Note that the OS map shows the path heading directly through the sheds, which is clearly not possible.

We follow the path round through the farm and then once we come down into the farmyard need to be careful with the route: There are paths up the access road to the farm on our left, straight ahead to continue up the Wenning Valley, both of which we ignore, and a path to the right and between the farm buildings – this is the one we need. There are way markers, but they are easy to miss.

We are now on a lane which leads down to the railway where we pass under the line and arrive at a gate with a stile to the right. Ahead of us at this point is a short crossing over a field to a pedestrian bridge over the river Wenning. Once across the bridge we have a fence in front of us with a stile to help us cross. Beyond this, we head across the flat field and then uphill toward a stone stile then straight ahead and up into the woodland that sits either side of Branstone beck. The path initially heads up the left hand side of the beck, before crossing to the right at a wooden footbridge, then climbing toward a house. Note that the right of way is round the right hand side of the house adjacent to the garage / workshop.

Once past the house, we head left and follow the track between the properties and down to a gate. Beyond that, the track heads uphill and across a field toward Mewith Lane. On the way up the field, the path branches again – the route on the left heads over toward Sunny Bank, but we stay straight ahead and find a stile and somewhat muddy path along the side of a house and then on to Mewith Lane. Immediately opposite we see a gravel track which heads up onto the moors at Banks. We follow the track up to a cattle gride and then once clear of that, head slightly to the right to cross the moor diagonally toward a clearly visible patch of woodland and a few houses.

As we reach the far side of the moor, we arrive at a small stream in a deep ravine – Burbles Gill – it becomes Branstone beck further down toward the Wenning. As we climb up the far side, we arrive at a rough road that serves the cluster of houses, and we follow it back to the Slaidburn Road, where we have the Big Stone in our view.

Once we get to the Slaidburn road, we look opposite and see a continuation of the small road we have been using and we follow this past the front of several houses and then on to a junction where we need to keep left and head west along a rough track. There are a number of paths in this area,

but in practice, our route is the clear one – just stay on the rough road that we have been on since we cross the Slaidburn Road. This takes us along the side of a farm at Moorlands, and to our right now is the open moorland referred to as Bents – hence the name of this walk. We need to keep heading west now, which in practice means that we need to leave the track about 100m before the gate to the farm, and then follow the drystone wall, keeping it to our left as we head over to a house on the far side of the moor about 500m away.

As we approach the house, we cross a gate and find ourselves on the access lane for the property. We follow this down to a bridge over a small stream and then on up to a cattle grid, after which we head sharp right. We now head north through a couple of large fields, passing Tunstall house on our left and then heading steeply downhill. As we descend, we see two farms - Oakhead on the right and Oakhead Bank on the left. Our path goes between the two so look for a stile and footbridge at the bottom of the valley where we cross a small beck and then head up to a large oak tree to the left of Oakhead.

Once we are on the lane, we go through the gate at the side of Oakhead and then left through a stile, where the path continues north with Oakhead Bank on our left. We keep to the left of the large field ignoring a tempting stile just past the farmhouse and press on down to the far end where we arrive at Mewith Lane again.

We cross the lane and see a way marker indicating the route almost opposite – our route is simple for a little while now: We head consistently north through six fields directly toward Low Bentham.

In the last of those six fields, we will likely meet horses (friendly) and need to aim to the left of the stable block that we see ahead. This takes us onto a yard at the side of the stable and then onto Mill Lane in Low Bentham. We turn left at Mill Lane and walk along the road until we get to Cloudsbank where (on the right) we see the start of the path along the edge of the Wenning up to High Bentham. Simply follow the river upstream to the caravan park, passing the weir and fish ladder on the way.

Once at the caravan park we head right along the internal road – still part of a public footpath, and then once past the reception building, follow the right of way through the caravans at the side of the Wenning crossing a stile then a footbridge to access a patch of woodland at the side of the Wenning.

As the path emerges from the trees, we pick up the access road for the site again and take it up to the Slaidburn Road where we see the road bridge. We cross the bridge, move to the other side of the road and soon see St Margarets Church ahead of us on the right, with Angus on the left.

We head up past St Margaret's, and then take the path around the right of the church, noting the allotments further to our right. The path then follows the railway line until we arrive at a crossing where we cross carefully and continue uphill opposite. This brings us up toward the enclosed lane at Cowslip hill, so the route back to Lairgill is then a simple reversal of our initial outbound steps.

- **Total distance 12.3 km (7.7 miles)**
- **Total ascent 279 m**
- **Moderate walk**