

# Askrigg

We start in Askrigg village centre, where you will generally find roadside parking on Main Street, or at the village car park on the Leyburn Road. There is also parking in front of St Oswald's church, with an honesty box where you may pay for parking. This is where we started, so if you park elsewhere walk down to St Oswald's to pick up the route. The OS grid reference for St Oswald's is SD94809102, and the What-3-Words tag is **typical.fruits.selling**. If you are using Satnav to get there then use the postcode DL8 3HT.

We start out around the left hand edge of the church and then take the gap stile (rather than the gate into the graveyard) to walk around the back and up a narrow lane to meet a metalled road – we head left here and walk down the road for some 150m. We need to look for a way marker on the right showing us the path over to an old mill. This is West Mill, an early 19<sup>th</sup> century corn mill.

We follow the path over a small wooden bridge and then uphill following Mill Gill toward Mill Gill Force. There are a number of paths here, but signage is good, so just follow way markers for Mill Gill Falls. On the way to the falls, the path runs just below a disused lime kiln, this together with the mill is a clear indication that the area was once more industrial than it is now. Once at the fall, we are greeted by water cascading down a drop of about 20m, then having enjoyed the waterfall for a few minutes, we return to the last way marker and then head uphill following signs for Whitfield Gill.

This path takes us north through two open fields – with great views – to another footbridge, this time over the higher reaches of Mill Gill. From here there are a number of routes we could take. There is a path to the left of the beck up to Whitfield Falls – similar to Mill Gill Force - less impressive, but still worth considering as an addition. You will also see paths to Helm – not for us today.

We cross the bridge and then bear slightly left heading up the embankment to the corner of a drystone wall, and from there we see a gate ahead giving us access to a lane at Leas Head. We follow this for the next 200m or so as it curves round to the left and climbs to meet a slightly broader track known as Low Straights Lane. We will go right on Low Straights Lane, but it's worth knowing that if you did add the walk up to Whitfield Gill Force, there is a path from there up to this track – adding this diversion would extend the walk by about 1.5 km.

We follow Low Straights Lane to the right for about 700m, with great views across the valley to our right and Askrigg Common to our left, until we arrive at a minor road – we are now at Lead Green and need to head right and slightly downhill. The road is generally quiet, and we are on it for only 100m until we see a marker on the left taking us over a couple of fields heading east toward Newbiggin. Once at the hamlet, we cross the Newbiggin Beck and take a moment at the green to enjoy a break before pressing on along the path at the front of the houses at the left and into an open field. Ahead and slightly to our left we see a small plantation of trees – our path heads toward these trees crossing four fields as it does so.

We then pass to the left of a barn – the path is clearly signed - and then cross a stile to access the woodland. From here the path rises up through the trees and then after crossing a couple of fields, we arrive at a stile onto a long straight lane, looking very similar to Low Straights Lane. From here we look across the valley toward Bainbridge and see the startlingly straight Roman Road (Cam High Road) toward Ingleton.

We go right here, and after just 40m arrive at a fork. We keep right and start to head downhill on what is now a metalled road – albeit a very minor one. We now need to look to the left to find a sign

for a chapel – we follow the directions around the garden of the house to a gate and then climb up through woodlands to find the chapel. There is little to explain the chapel, and almost nothing online, but it would appear that it is remembrance of Charlotte Browne, the wife of Piers Browne, a local artist. Charlotte died in 1998, and Piers passed away in July 2024. The chapel is both poignant, and rather beautiful, featuring stained glass windows depicting the saints Joseph, Mary, Peter and Paul created by well-known stained glass artist Alan Davis.

After returning to the road, we head downhill until we arrive at Dolly Farm and the main road out of Askrigg. We go left here and walk on the main road for just 100m until we take a signed footpath on the opposite side of the road taking us down to Nappa Hall, a fine example of a 15<sup>th</sup> century fortified manor house.

The path continues along the side of the Hall and then down past outbuildings to a gate where the path is clearly signed across a couple of fields and down to Nappa Mill – another disused water powered corn mill now repurposed as a farm. We walk down to the mill and then round the right hand side to pick up a path along the banks of the river Ure, heading upstream.

We continue along the riverside path until we arrive at a minor road, and at this point we see a bridge to our left. This is Worton Bridge, and we took the opportunity to cross the bridge and climb the road opposite to the hamlet of Worton which features a number of unusual and attractive buildings, including another fortified house – less grand than Nappa Hall, but in good repair.

We return to Worton Bridge and pick up the riverside path again, still heading upstream on the Askrigg side of the river. Just 400m later we arrive at the stepping stones across the river. We don't need to cross the stepping stone as our path is now back across the fields to Askrigg, but few can resist striding across them when the river levels and weather permit.

We now turn away from the stepping stones and head directly toward Askrigg, using the church of St Oswald as our landmark – particularly easy when wrapped in sheeting.

We arrive at the town centre, next to an agricultural warehouse, where we turn right and head up the road past the Temperance Institute and public toilet to get back to our parking place. If all this walking has made you peckish, there are a number of places in Askrigg where you can get something to eat - the Bake Well is recommended.

- **Total distance 10.4 km (6.5 miles)**
- **Total ascent 284 m**
- **Easy walk**