



Addingham Moorside Connections Walk



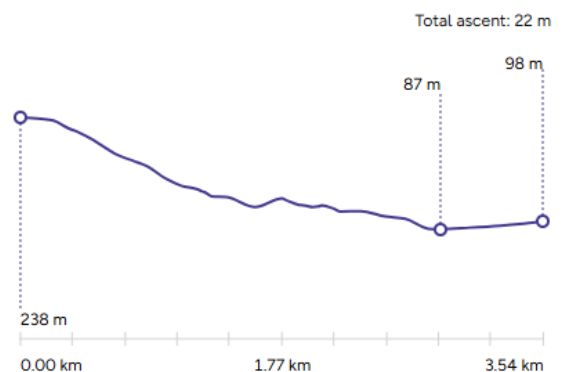
RED ROUTE

From Beck House Farm on Moorside Lane to Addingham Village via Sunnybank Farm, Low Lathe, Gatecroft, Hall Gill, Lumb Ghyll Wood, over the bypass to Ilkley Road and Main Street.

Distance: 3.54 km

Total Ascent: 22 m

Total Descent: 140 m



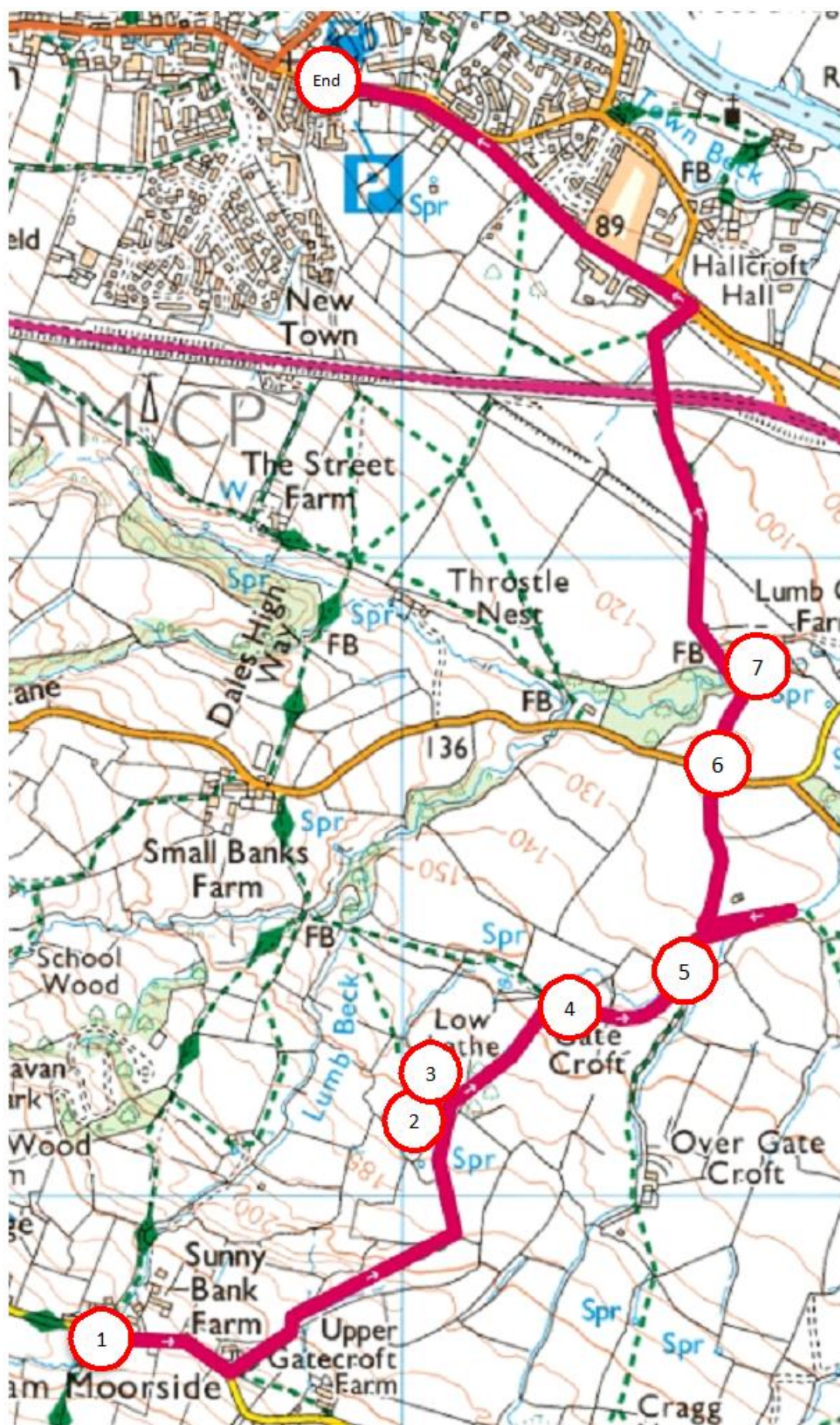
Cattle and sheep: Dogs must be kept on leads where cattle and sheep are grazing.

Ground nesting birds: Please also keep dogs on leads during the nesting season.

Liability: While every care has been taken in the preparation of this self-guided walk, please note that Addingham Civic Society does not accept any liability relating to personal injury or illness, loss or damage to personal property, or any other unforeseen events that might occur during your walk.

Click a heading and its position will be displayed on Google Maps. If you have location enabled it will also show where you are standing.

The 1:25,000 scale map OS explorer 297, or similar digital mapping, should be carried in addition to this route description.



1. From Beck House Farm [[SE 07518 47784](#) [53.92614](#), [-1.88699](#)]

turn left and walk along the lane passing Lumb Beck Farmhouse Ghyll House Farm & Campsite and Lumb Beck Laithe to **Sunny Bank Farm** [[SE07704774](#) [53.92578](#), [-1.88415](#)]. Turn off at the footpath sign, round to the right of the farmhouse. Go through the gate into a small paddock, with young trees. Take the mown path around to the left (rather than the path that goes straight across the paddock to a wall stile) to the bottom of the paddock. Go through the pedestrian gate and follow the way mark downhill (noting the new fencing, tree and hedge planting in the fields to the left). Pass a small plantation on your right, at the short steep section, and continuing downhill aim for the telegraph pole, to walk along by the side of the hedge to the gate at the bottom of the field. Go through the gate and follow the wall to a stone stile and head downhill towards the stone barn, noting the earth bank and Beaver Pond wetland behind (to the left of the footpath).



2. Beaver Pond wetland [SE08014813](#) [53.92928](#), [-1.87942](#)

- Beaver Pond is the site of a medieval pond located on a headwater of Hall Gill, a tributary of Lumb Beck. The pond was used to provide a water supply for iron workings at Plumtree Banks lower down Hall Gill. An earth bank was constructed to hold back the water and create the pond. At a later time, probably in an attempt to drain the pond, the outlet was lowered. The pond is now a tall-herb fen dominated by reedmace (*Typha latifolia*) with a small woodland enclosure behind.
- According to Alison Armstrong (p 82 in Pacey (2008)) the name Beever is thought to be derived from the latin “vivaria” meaning a fishpond. It does not refer to the medieval presence of beavers!
- The fen has been heavily infested with invasive Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) which AEG volunteers are now bringing under control.
- The site has also been degraded by livestock grazing. As an important wetland habitat it could be protected by fencing to create a buffer strip around the fen, excluding cattle and sheep and allowing the fen and its herb-rich margins to recover.
- A botanical survey by Otley Ecologists’ Haycock and Jay has demonstrated the potential of the site for wildflower population restoration.



3. Low Lathe Barn [SE08064819](#) [53.92982](#), [-1.87866](#)

- This a fine example of a traditional field barn, which housed six cows with a hayloft above and threshing floor for grain.

Once you reach the barn (on your left), go through the gate in the stone wall at the bottom of the field and continue



following the footpath downhill until you reach Gatecroft. Turn right through the gate and follow the track past the farm buildings.

4. Gatecroft [SE08234831](#) [53.93090, -1.87607](#)

- This barn and farmhouse (sometimes known as Lower Gatecroft) was at the bottom of an agricultural holding owned in the 17th century by a prominent Quaker farmer, Joshua Dawson. Upper Gatecroft Farm on Moorside Lane is at the top of the holding. Later in the 18th century, Joshua Dawson's heirs let the bottom half of the farm to the Emmott's, another Quaker family, making two separate holdings.
- During the 19th century the Emmott family built a fine new barn in high quality masonry, detached from the farmhouse. There is a detailed and fascinating account of the Gate Croft farmsteads in "Addingham: A View from the Moorside", p 48).
- Today the barn has been converted into a house, and like the farmhouse is detached from the farmland around it.

Once you leave the Gatecroft buildings continue along the farm track heading east, over a cattle grid and then around to the left to continue following the farm track downhill in a northerly direction.

5. Hall Gill -Plumtree Banks [SE08444833](#) [53.93107, -1.87287](#)

- At this point the land opens up with large fields on either side of the track. Today there seems to be little to see, except the remains of a field barn. However, you are standing in the centre of a medieval landscape. Although now somewhat faint the fields show evidence of ridge and furrow ploughing. A hall, Plumtree Banks, occupied by the Wade family in the 16th and 17th centuries, stood close to the field barn remains. Further to the east, the beck, Hall Gill, was the scene of medieval iron working. The earthworks in the fields and along Hall Gill were surveyed in detail by archaeologist Stephen Moorhouse in 1992 and described by him in the Appendix to Kate Mason's book "Addingham: from Brigantes to Bypass".

Turn off the main path and take a spur along the public footpath to the right to the point where it crosses Hall Gill, here: [SE08644844](#) [53.93206, -1.86982](#) and walk beyond the crossing point to gain height and look down the steep-sided valley (see the picture below).

- The main site of iron working was on the bend in the valley. Iron ore and charcoal supplies were available locally and waterpower was provided by the Gill. Water flow would have been controlled by releases from Beaver Pond, described above, and by one or more small dams across the Gill just above the working area.

- The iron-working complex came to the attention of Kate Mason, who lived at nearby Reynard's Ing Farm, by the presence of iron slag on the banks of the Gill. Mounds of slag can still be found but they are covered by vegetation, especially by gorse. The soil developed on the mineral waste from the site is low in nutrients. Gorse is able to fix nitrogen from the atmosphere so it is capable of growing well on such soils where it competitively excludes almost all other plants.
- Much more recently Hall Gill has been the focus of concerns about the prevalence of the non-native invasive plant species Himalayan balsam. This vigorous plant quickly forms dense stands if left unchecked, taking the place of our native wildflowers. In the autumn it dies back leaving bare ground contributing to bank erosion. It was abundant along almost the whole length of Hall Gill and more generally within the wider Lumb Beck catchment when the AEG group began its activities in 2016. At this location in Hall Gill it grew along the beck and in amongst the gorse bushes. It is now under control as a result AEG volunteers, working with the landowner, during the summer months pulling out the plant by hand.
- Non-native invasive Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) was also a problem in Hall Gill but is now under control. This plant causes severe irritation and burning if the sap comes into contact with the skin. The source of the invasion was found to be a single plant in an abandoned garden upstream. That individual, as well as several other 'daughter' plants, has now been removed. However, viable seed remains in the soil. New plants are taken out as they appear in leaf in spring. It is hoped that the plant will soon be permanently eradicated once the dormant seed bed has been exhausted.



Return to the main track and continue north downhill towards Cocking Lane.

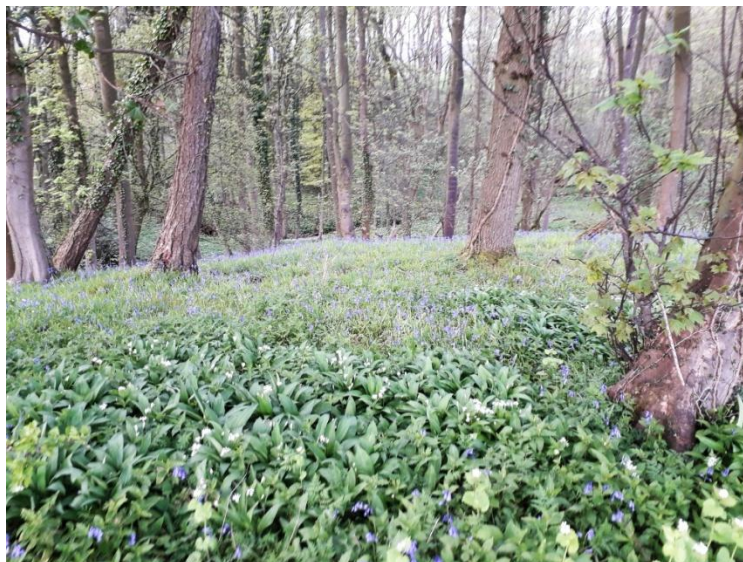
6. Cocking Lane [SE08494865](#) [53.93395, -1.87210](#)

- This lane was once the main road between Ilkley and Colne. It was improved as a 'turnpike' at the end of the 18th century, so that it was easier for woollen manufacturers to convey their cloth to the markets.
- Hedgerows along Cocking Lane are species-rich, including native plants such as hawthorn, hazel, oak, elm and holly. In Spring there is blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*) and hawthorn blossom providing food for pollinators, and in summer scented wild honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), a colourful display of wildflowers including foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), vetch (*Vicia* spp.), and greater stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*).
- Hedgerows are not common in Bradford District, where most field boundaries are dry stone walls, so they are a priority habitat in the 'Local Biodiversity Action Plan'. Old species-rich hedgerows are particularly valuable for wildlife. They provide shelter, nest sites and food for small mammals, birds, bats, butterflies, bees and other insects. They are important also as 'corridors' for wildlife to move along.

Once you reach Cocking Lane, turn left and almost immediately right ([SE08484867 53.93413, -1.87225](#)) to take the footpath across the field to Lumb Ghyll Wood.

7. Lumb Ghyll Wood [SE08544878 53.93512, -1.87133](#)

- Most of the surviving semi-natural native broadleaved woodland on Addingham Moorside is on the steeply sloping sides of Lumb Beck and its tributaries. Lumb Ghyll Wood is the largest of these.
- ‘Indicator species’ in the herb layer such as bluebell, wild garlic (*Alium ursinum*), wood anemone (*Anemonoides nemorosa*), dog’s mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) and red campion (*Silene dioica*) tell us this is the site of an ancient woodland.
- However, the woodland has been altered over the centuries with the trees felled and replanted with non-native species such as beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) and douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), alongside native trees such as ash, oak, and common alder. Sycamore is the most common tree in the woods. Despite these alterations ‘plantations on ancient woodland sites’ still have the complex soil of ancient woodland and remnants of the woodland specialist plants and insect life. For this reason, the site is designated as a Local Wildlife Site.
- Lumb Ghyll Wood is particularly beautiful in spring with a carpet of bluebells, wild garlic, red campion and greater stitchwort, before the tree canopy reduces the light.
- The perimeter of the wood is fenced and protected from grazing by farm animals.
- AEG worked with the landowner to fence the one area that was unfenced next to the footbridge, to reduce nutrient pollution and to allow the vegetation to recover where it had been heavily poached by cattle. A climate action grant from Bradford Council and donations received by AEG for nature recovery work on the Moorside contributed to the costs.



Once you cross the footbridge climb the steps into the field ([SE08494885, 53.93575, -1.87209](#)) and follow the waymarks to take the footpath across the fields to return to the village. Take great care crossing the bypass at [SE08394924 53.93925, -1.87361](#). Once over the bypass walk down the field on to Ilkley Road at [SE08444936 53.94033, -1.87284](#) and turn left to walk back into the centre of the village along Main Street.

References

Greenhalgh, J., Collins, R.A., Edgley, D.E., Genner, M.J., Hindle, J., Jones, G., Loughlin, L., O'Donnell, M., Sweet, M.J. & Battarbee, R.W. 2022 Environmental DNA-based methods detect the invasion front of an advancing signal crayfish population. *Environmental DNA* 2022, 596–607.

Kate Mason, Addingham from Brigantes to Bypass. 1966

Arnold Pacey et al, Addingham: A view from the Moorside. 2008

Don Barrett, Walks Around Addingham. 2018

Haycock & Jay Associates Ltd., Moorside Connections: Phase 1 Habitat & National Vegetation Classification mapping of Lumb Beck Catchment 2021. (study funded by a Natural England Nature Recovery Grant, for the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust & Addingham Environment Group)

Addingham Civic Society, 2025. [Will Varley's Addingham Geology Trail](#)

Addingham Environment Group website links:

[Moorside Connections](#)

[Bee & Butterfly Transects](#)

[Bird Report](#)

[Invasive Plants](#)

Photograph Acknowledgments

Addingham Environment Members

Addingham Photo Archive (Southfield Aerial photo)

John Fontana, Ilkley Camera Club – Moorside buildings & footpath signs

Keith Allen, Ilkley Camera Club – moorland birds

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