

# Countryside & Rights of Way

## The Length & Breadth of Ilkley Moor

**7 miles (11.2km) circular walk with a shorter circular option of 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> miles (9.2km)**

### Walk Information

This walk is suitable for most reasonably fit walkers and has the option of an easy short cut return if required. An invigorating walk in the footsteps of the giant Rombald crossing rough open moorland, walking mainly on well used paths, many of which can be wet and muddy in places. Although the first half of the walk involves several stiles and some hill climbing, there's nothing too strenuous.

You will require comfortable, strong waterproof boots with outdoor clothing to suit the season. Packed lunch is advisable. Due to the very nature of the countryside, this walk is not suitable for pushchairs, wheelchairs and people with restricted mobility.

### Public Transport

Ilkley is well served by bus and trains. Please contact Metrolink for travel information on: 0113 245 7676.

Please note that both the bus and rail stations in Ilkley are approx. 600yds (548m) from the walk start point at Wells Road car park.

### The Walk Start Point

Wells Road car park adjacent to Darwin Gardens, Wells Road, Ilkley.

### The Walk Route

From Wells Road car park make your way back onto Wells Road, turning right uphill passing the stone built water pump house on your left and on your right the rather grand former hotel the Ilkley Hydro. At the top of Wells Road, where the road divides, take the road off to the left (Keighley Road), to walk steeply uphill to the top of the first incline where the road levels out. Here turn right off the road to follow the footpath across the grassy area and over a small footbridge to follow the path, parallel to the houses on your right along the bottom of the moorland for quite a distance, passing through a field gate along the way. Approximately 175yds (160m) beyond the gate, turn left off the path adjacent to the two gates in the dry stone wall on your right.

Follow the well-worn path uphill across the moor as it bears right and eventually divides. Here again take the path off to the left, which will eventually lead you over a small footbridge over Black Beck and onto a field gate. Through the field gate the rough moorland path will lead you on to the Swastika Stone, its location can easily be found behind the metal railings, which can be seen ahead across the moor. From the Swastika Stone continue straight ahead following the well-walked path in a westerly direction along the escarpment of the moor, until you reach a stile in the dry stone wall (from here it's important to count the wall you cross to ensure that you find the correct route across open country). Climb over the first stile and continue a short distance before crossing a broken down wall (no. 2). Now follow the dry stone wall on your right all the way across the field to the third wall to find the stile in the corner by a small building.

Over this wall the path divides through the trees, take either of the paths here as they both lead to the fourth wall, where you can either climb over the stile or go through a broken down section of the wall to continue straight ahead to the stile in wall no. 5, next to a very large stone at Piper's Crag. Once over the wall no. 5 continue straight ahead to the obvious gated gap in wall no.6 (the western boundary of Ilkley Moor). Go through the gate and then leave the well trodden path by bearing left to walk diagonally across the enclosed area of moorland heather to find a stile in the dry stone wall at the top right hand side of the enclosure.

Once over the stile the faint path/sheep track bears very slightly to your left heading in a southerly direction as you start climbing up towards the sky line by walking parallel to the shooting butts which can be seen across the moor to your left. On reaching the top of the incline, the moorland levels out as you make your way straight ahead following the well worn path to the boundary wall of the tree plantation, which can be seen in the distance



Ilkley Hydro (now residential)

at Shepherds Hill. On reaching the plantation boundary wall, turn left to follow the wall on your right (or as near as possible due to the boggy ground) across Crawshaw Moss and up the short incline to the top of West Buck Stones. From the top of West Buck Stones turn left again and continue by following the wall on your right for approx 1/2 mile (0.8km) passing East Buck Stones on the left as you go, until you reach a wide rough road which is the top end of the Keighley Road at Whetstone Gate (here you can cut short your walk, by turning left to walk down Keighley Road to its junction at the bottom with Wells Road, Ilkley from where you started your walk).

To continue on the full walk, cross straight ahead over Keighley Road and continue following the path adjacent to the dry stone wall on your right along the partially paved and often wet moorland, for approx 1 1/4 miles (2km) to Ashlar Chair passing Whetstone Gate radio masts, Thimble Stones and the highest point on Ilkley Moor 1317ft (402m) above sea level. On reaching Ashlar Chair noticeable by

a large stone and two gateways in the dry stone wall on your right, turn sharp left to follow a well worn path away from the wall and across the moor in a northerly direction heading towards the early warning radar golf balls which can often be seen across the valley at Menwith Hill. After only a short distance the path starts its



*Whetstone Gate Radio Masts*

descent towards Ilkley crossing straight ahead over a path, which crosses from left to right. The path becomes less defined here but continue downhill to eventually cross over a small gully and onto a much more well used path. Here turn left and continue downhill along the well-worn path and over the boardwalks for quite a distance until you arrive at a very obvious intersection of paths at the top of Ilkley Crags overlooking the town of Ilkley in the valley below. Here bear slightly to your left to go down a very steep flight of stone steps. Once at the bottom continue down the wide rough path until you reach a few trees on your right. Just beyond the trees leave the main path by turning right down the much narrower path leading to the rear of White Wells cottage (refreshments available when the flag is flying).

On reaching the back of the building turn right then immediately left down the steps to walk along the side of the building before starting your final descent down the steep footpath back to Wells Road car park which can be seen below.



*East Buck Stones*

#### **Footnote**

We hope you enjoyed your walk. If so tell your friends, if not, or you have encountered any problems please tell us at:

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council  
Transportation, Design & Planning  
The Countryside & Rights of Way Service  
5th Floor, Jacobs Well, Bradford BD1 5RW

Tel: 01274 432666  
[www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk)  
e-mail: [crow@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:crow@bradford.gov.uk)

**For up-to-date information on Open Country please contact:**



**Access Maps** online at  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

#### **General Information**

Open access contact centre  
Telephone : 0300 060 2091

