
Cal-Der-Went Walk

Crossing 3 counties (West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and Derbyshire), the Cal-Der-Went walk links the rivers Calder with the Derwent and was devised by Geoffrey Carr in the 1970s.

The companion book to the walk, "The Cal-Der-Went Walk" by Geoffrey Carr with its detailed notes, background, illustrations and maps is essential for anyone wanting to complete the full route

The following text has been freely adapted from this book.

You can buy the original book from Amazon.co.uk, Waterstones.co.uk, JohnMerrillWalkGuides.com and other good booksellers. As of writing, the cost is around £4.50 plus postage.

The Walk

The walk, almost 30 miles in total is often split into sections. There are several places which could be used as starting and finishing points for sections of the walk with plenty of options for parking if you want to follow a return trip.

The sections here are the ones presented in the original book. The Google map on the Visit Penistone Site (www.visitpenistone.co.uk/walks/cal-der-went.html) will give you an idea of the terrain and the places you might like to visit.

As with all long walks, please be prepared. Although the first two sections of the Cal-Der-Went pass near or through towns and villages, the final stretch between Langsett is fairly wild with no facilities until you reach the Derwent Visitor centre.

The booklet by Geoffrey Carr contains several hand-drawn maps to illustrate the route but it's wise to consult an Ordnance Survey map or similar before setting off. There is a Google map of the route on the Visit Penistone website; if you follow the link to the larger version you will be also able to familiarise yourself with landmarks from the roads by using the Google Street View. This can be particularly useful when trying to locate footpaths leading from main roads.

1 - Calder Valley to Cawthorne Park: 9 miles

Start at the bridge over the river Calder near the Hotel Bingley Arms, Bridge Rd, in Horbury, Wakefield (this is the main Wakefield - Huddersfield road).

Head under the railway arches, and turn left on Water Lane. Continue until the road it turns to the right and then continue down the narrow path with the stream on the right-hand side.

Follow the stream up the valley for around half a mile. Turn right at the mill and then left after passing a row of houses. Go left again, behind the row of houses, and to the small lake.

Turn right along the valley bottom. (*When the guide was written there was a high wall on the right and a wire mesh fence on the left - this may no longer be there.*)

Carry on south, following the stream with the wood on the left and fields on the right. There are several stiles to cross until the end of the last field where the path meets a wide track running left to right. Turn left here, and head towards a foot bridge and continue uphill. This leads to the main road (B6117) which you need to cross.

Turn right onto the first public footpath and cross Stockmoor Common on the public footpath. (*Carr advises to "ignore the stiles and keep outside the fences until the southern edge of the reserve reached."*)

Here, go over the stile or through the gate and go up the track to the A637 which you need to cross and then carry on along the road opposite.

Cross the next main road, the A636, and go along the broad track opposite until you reach the big iron gate. Go through this and along the track towards Bretton Park (Sculpture Park).

Go through the wooden gate and turn right and on to the next gate. Go through this and follow the track downhill to Cascade Bridge over the two lakes.

Continue in this direction and through through the big iron gate up ahead. Carry on uphill towards the lodge and up to another large iron gate; don't go through this - instead, go over the stile on the left.

Turn left, heading uphill and after for a considerable stretch and past HighHoyland church (now a community centre or similar), and turn right onto the footpath at the beginning of the line of yew trees. This is marked as a public bridleway. Take this footpath as it swings to the left. There's a low stone wall and a steep wood on the right. Continue on up and turn right onto the road towards Winter Hill Farm.

Follow the footpath opposite the farm which slants down to the left through a wooded area. You'll reach a gate - go through it (or use the stile) and pass two houses. Head right down tarmac drive and turn left at the public footpath sign, and on through another wood.

Follow this as far as a wooden gate. Go through this onto the road and turn right. Pass the old High Hoyland Methodist Chapel ,(no longer a chapel but still recognisable) go left over a stile and follow the footpath across a field and into a wood.

Follow the track southwards through the wood and go over a stile into a field. Once over the stile, it's better to turn left and walk round the edge of the field until reaching a farm track heading south towards Cawthorne.

Turn left by a stream and then take the second gate on the right. When another track is reached running left to right, turn left over a stile, cross another stream by a bridge and follow the track leading up to Cawthorne.

Turn right over another bridge and go through a gate and past the cricket pitch and head for the bridge over the park lake.

After the bridge turn left and walk along the lake side towards the car park. Refreshments are available at the nearby garden centre and Cannon Hall Farm (just beyond Cannon Hall itself).

2 - Cawthorne to Langsett: 9 miles

From the car park head west along the road with the garden centre on the left. Leave the road at a public footpath sign pointing towards Jowett House Farm (*which in July-September is the home of the "Maize Maze"*).

Follow the path between the farm buildings and then left along a walled lane which enters a field. Turn right here keeping the hedge on the right-hand side. Cross four stiles and across a field to Spring House Farm.

Keep in a single file when crossing this and other fields - depending on the time of year they are growing crops. The farm road leads to a main road, the A635 which you need to cross. After crossing turn right for a few yards and take the public footpath which is signposted on the left. The path bends left and then right between farm buildings to a stream.

Cross the wooden bridge, head up the bank and turn right at the top. Amongst the brambles is a stone stile and then a wooden one; cross both and go towards Head House which can be seen in the distance.

Go past the house and into the lane turning left then almost immediately turn right onto the path slanting down. Follow this along the steeply wooded Rons Cliff. Keep to the edge of the wood with a wall on the left.

At the end of the wood the track swings left but you need to go through a gate on the right and across

the field on a bearing of 240° until you reach a wall. Follow the wall round to the left until you reach a stile at the corner. Go over this, turn right and follow the field edge, which has an area of scrub and low bushes on the right. You'll reach another stile - cross this and follow the track to Hill Farm.

Go around the farm on a signposted route and onto the farm road which leads to Gunthwaite Bridge. Go over the bridge follow the road on the right up to Cat Hill and Netherlea farm.

Go up the road and turn left on Firs Lane.

Turn right on the first footpath after the farm buildings and look for a stile in the wall opposite and then on a bearing of 210° go to the stile in the next wall. Head south towards a swing gate. Follow the flagged path towards the main Barnsley road, the A629. Cross the road and go down Wellhouse Lane towards Penistone.

At the main road cross over to the lane which head towards the town centre. The lane comes to a gate (you can see the viaduct on the left) which you go through and carry on up to the road to the centre. *(About halfway up this unsurfaced road you'll pass some bollards which prevent traffic using the street you cross as a through road.)*

When you reach the top of the road which faces the police station, turn left and go under the railway bridge (now the Transpennine Trail) and cross the road just before the roundabout. turn right and walk to a row of houses just after works buildings on the right. Turn right down past these house and along Stotercliffe Road until you reach the showground (know locally as "the rec").

Head across the showground through a gap in the wall opposite - don't follow the TransPennine trail which is on your right.

Cross several fields on the way towards Cross Royd Head Farm. Go over the stile and down the farm road, turning left at the end.

Take the next road to the right as far as Bank House Farm then take the footpath on the left. This track narrows after passing over a stile by a gate. Keep to the wall towards the wooded bank and continue along the wooded path with Hartcliffe Hill on the left.

Turn right at the road and left at the crossroads towards Langsett. After passing the last house on the right turn right along a broad track and follow it down to the main road (the A616, the Sheffield to Manchester road).

(On the right is a car park and picnic area; about a ¼ mile to the left is another car park and picnic area along with the Waggon and Horses and Bank View Café.)

3 - Langsett to Derwent: 12 miles

This is the longest section of the walk and is by far the wildest, reaching 1,700ft above sea level at the highest point with no point of access between the Sheffield - Manchester road and the head of Howden Reservoir in the Derwent Valley.

Cross the road and go through the gate and follow the track until it divides. Take the left hand fork in the path sign-posted 'Derwent' which soon leads to the Porter or Little Don river spanned by Brookhouse bridge.

Cross the bridge and take the path which now heads left but soon turns right to reach a point high above the bridge. The footpath has been diverted here to prevent further erosion taking place.

Continue south along the footpath with Mickleden Beck on the right. The path is marked as Cut Gate on maps and is easy to find.

After about three miles, the watershed is reached and at the summit are impressive views down to the Derwent Valley.

The descent is steeper down a cairned track to the steep side of Bull Clough. The path then swings to the side of Cranberry Clough down to the point where two streams meet where you cross Bull Clough and continue down the right hand-side of the stream. Follow sign posts to Derwent and Bamford and over the footbridge and along the track at the east of the reservoirs (which used by the "Dam Busters" squadron for training!).

The track becomes a metalled road for a while but reverts to a track again beyond a car park. Go down to the bridge on the Snake Road and to the end of the 'Cal -Der-Went Walk'.

(Although this is "officially" the end of the walk, you may prefer to use the Derwent Visitors Centre as the finishing point.)