

THE HARDEN HIKE - ROUTE DESCRIPTION

STAGE 1 HARDEN TO HIRST WOOD (4 Miles)

From the start turn L down Long Lane and then turn L up Keighley Rd. After 500 yds turn R into St Ives estate. After 50 yds take the FP on R (signed Frog Trail). When you reach the track turn R (signed Frog Trail) and at the next junction take path on L uphill (still signed Frog Trail). After 75 yds take the signed FP on R (now Squirrel Trail) and continue on Squirrel Trail until metalled rd. is reached. Turn R down this rd. for 200 yds. before L at the FP (Squirrel Trail) sign. Your path leaves the Squirrel Trail after 50 yds. and drops down to the Bingley Rd. which you cross and go down Beckfoot Lane opposite .. At the bottom the Rd. bears L and after 3~0 yds. you cross the packhorse bridge to avoid the ford. Continue along Beckfoot Lane past the cricket field and golf course to the A650. go straight across and take the FP which takes you down the RH side of the River Aire. Follow this for nearly a mile until, having gone under the railway line, you bear R uphill through the wood and continue ahead to CP 1 (GR 132383)

STAGE 2 HIRSTWOOD TO INTAKE GATE (8 Miles)

From the CP cross the canal by the bridge and turn R. After 50 yds take the FP on the L which crosses the River Aire. Head for the red bus shelter and take the FP behind it. On reaching the wood take the FP to the L. follow this path which keeps to the R of Loadpit Beck and climbs steadily until it reaches the Glen Rd. Turn L on this Rd. until the Rd. starts to bear R. At this stage take the FP straight ahead. This leads to a pleasant beckside path through the woods to reach the Rd. at Glovershaw Farm. Take the bridleway opposite and after 1/4 mile continue on the track to the R of Golcar Farm. Go through the gate and ahead keeping fence on R. At the hut bear L (still keeping fence on R) and at the gate go through it and bear sharp L. Take the stile on to the sandy track. Where this bears R go with it (still very sandy). Continue along this track past Birch Close and follow track round to R. After passing next building turn L (to the R of Oakwood Barn). Very soon take the RH path down the hill, cross the beck and continue uphill (signed Public Bridleway Bingley Rd.). The bridleway passes the L of Old Wood Farm. At the Rd. turn R to CP 2 which is in the layby beyond the road junction. (GR 147428).

STAGE 3 INTAKE GATE TO ILKLEY (12MILES)

From the CP retrace your footsteps for about 100 yds and take the signed FP on your R to the moor keeping the wall on your R. When the wall turns R follow it over the stile and for a further

200 yds. Then turn L on FP to a green hut. From here follow the track which passes to the R of the old rifle range. At the range continue straight ahead on a faint path until you reach a more substantial track. Turn L on this and admire the views as you climb and pass an old railway carriage and reach a collection of big rocks. At the rocks bear R (marked on rocks) and cross the dam wall of what remains of High Lanshaw Dam. Immediately after doing this take the path on L which bears R and climbs to a big yellow post. Counting this as the first yellow post continue on the path to the third yellow post at which point the path bears L and down hill towards Ilkley. The path drops into a valley and then climbs steeply uphill alongside a row of posts above Ilkley Crag before, at a big cairn it joins the path from Dick Hudsons. Bear R downhill to the white walled building (White Wells) from here take the man made path to the left and, after crossing a steep valley take the path to the L when the railings finish. At the Rd. bear L to CP 3 (GR11468).

STAGE 4 ILKLEY TO WINDGATE NICK (15 miles)

The navigation on this section is straightforward so long as you remember to go through the gap in the wall which leads uphill and not through the stile which leads downhill shortly after you have passed the reservoir. Otherwise it consists of following the track and then path for nearly 3 miles to CP 4. If you get to the wood at White Crag Plantation you have gone too far. (GR 069471)

STAGE 5 WINDGATE NICK TO HOLDEN GATE (18 miles)

Over the stile on your L and then head for the rocks (Doubler Stones) going through the gate on the route to them. From the rocks head towards the farm. Go down concrete track through farm following yellow markers. Once through the farm the path bears L and, keeping the wall on R head for Far Ghyll Farm. Keeping wall on L for 3 fields, you then take the stile on your L. Then bear R and head downhill for gate and bridge over beck. Climb up the hill and then head slightly L towards Out Laith. Take the stile to the R of this barn and continue ahead over another stile. You then turn R across a very rough wet field. Aim for the shed below the crag. Go through the gate and follow track with wall on R. When over the hill bear to L with wall on your L to CP 5. (GR 065443)

STAGE 6 HOLDEN GATE TO THWAITES BROW (20 miles)

Take the second FP on the R and go diagonally across 4 fields to a track. Turn L on track and after about 200 yds. turn R beyond the houses (signed Nature Trail). the Path passes the L of Low Wood Head and L along a metalled Rd. Just before the houses on the R take path on R downhill. At track L for 50 yds. and then R again through wood to canal. L on canal. Cross the bridge to the

other side of the canal and as the houses finish (about 200 yds. before red brick warehouse) turn R down path. At the Rd. the path goes through the left hand gate and swings round to the A650. R on this Rd. for 400 yds. then L on Aireworth Rd. At roundabout continue ahead (signed Worth Village). Take the 3rd Rd. on left over the railway and after passing Robbos pub turn L. In 50 yds. turn R up the steep cobbled Rd. to CP 6.(GR 077408)

STAGE 7 THWAITES BROW TO GOLDEN FLEECE (25 miles)

Just before the bus turning circle turn L on track past the first farm. As you approach Jackfield Farm (the second) the path goes to the R of the building over 2 stiles before turning uphill to Currer Laithe. Ahead then up the Rd. before going through gate on L after 200 yds. For 3 fields the fence/wall is on your L but then having gone over a stile it is on your R. Continue ahead, crossing track until you reach large rocks known as Druids Altar. From here bear R towards sign posts. Through big gap in wall take bridleway L to St Ives. This bears R down Cross Gates and after passing car park you come to a T junction. turn R and follow this Rd. to St Ives entrance. Here L down Keighley Rd. to Harden village centre where R to finish.(GR085384)