

Otley Nine Leagues - Route description

White House Visitor Centre 2030 4450 to Bar House 2375 4440 - 2½ miles

From the White House Visitor Centre on Otley Chevin walk 15 yards east past the cafe and take wide track half right uphill. Keep to this track for 100 yards then take the path to the left at the next junction. Follow this path past Pelstone Crag and through a disused quarry to East Chevin Quarry Car Park. Turn left down the road for 60 yards then go right into woods through a gate next to a millstone with the sign Chevin Forrest Park, Danefield Estate. Follow wide track past forester's huts, keep right uphill at track junction, pass Caley Crag (GR 2295 4450) to where overhead power lines cross your path. Keeping the fence around Pool Bank tip on your right follow the narrow path through rocks, leading east, to come out at the A660 Leeds Road. Cross road with great care and walk to your right to the Bar House shop on the corner ahead. (Bus stop for Leeds and Otley here).

Bar House 2375 4440 to Pool Bridge 2440 4550 - 1¼ miles

Take the road east at the rear of the shop past houses. Look for a path into the trees on your right just as the road swings to the left. Shortly you will see a row of houses in the middle of the wood. Look for a path on the right into the trees. This path descends steeply at times, to a stile at the edge of the wood. DO NOT go over stile but go left down a narrow lane between wall and hedge to Old Pool Bank. Walk to your right down the road then left at 'T' junction to go through Pool village to Pool Bridge. (Shops here and bus to Otley and Harrogate)

Pool Bridge 2440. 4550 to Leathley Mill 231.0 4775 - 1¾ miles

Cross bridge and find gap stile on the left with a public footpath sign, walk diagonally across field to road (B6161). Left on the road for 15 yards, to a stile into fields on your right. Go ahead with fence on your left, cross a plank bridge, over stile then keeping the fence close on your left go over the brow of the hill to a stile next to a gate. Over stile, then with fence on your right go along cart-track to Leathley Hall (2370 4680). At track junction turn left for 15 yards to go over a stile on the right with a public footpath sign. Go uphill across field to stile to the left of the garden at Hartmires. Go down a narrow lane to the road. (This lane is very overgrown during the summer months.) At road turn left for 90 yards to a public footpath sign at a stile on your right. Walk through field, look for waymark at second stile (on your left), over slight rise to Fishpool farm (2320 4750). DO NOT go ahead through gate into farmyard but go through a gate on your right, keep farm buildings on your left to come out onto road. Turn right for 300 yards to Leathley Mill.

Leathley Mill 2310 4775 to Timble 1800 5295 - 7 miles

Follow sign for Lindley Bridge through gates and past back of the old mill. Walk with the river Washburn on your left then at the next stile look for a path on your right indicated by an arrow on a tree on the right. Follow path next to an old goit channel and past the Trout Farm to Lindley Bridge (225 483). Cross road, take path through lodge gates signed 'Norwood Bottom'. (n.b. this wood. is part of Farnley Estate Game Reserve, if you have a dog with you please keep it on a lead). Walk on this track for approx nine tenths of a mile, past the reservoir overflow to GR 215 494. Look carefully for a path on the right into the wood, up a steep slope to stile at the wood boundary. Over stile, follow wall on the right (loo): for yellow 'Waymarks), turn right with wall and walk ahead to road.

Turn left on road then take concrete farm access track to Prospect House Farm on the right. On reaching farmyard gate turn left (look for footpath Sign) to a gate on the left at the top of the yard leading into fields. Through gate and walk ahead across meadow to a gate into Knaresborough Forest (look for scattered rocks near to forest boundary). Ignore the wide grassy track ahead and walk uphill on faint path half right. At wide (muddy) access track turn left and walk ahead to the gate at the top of Norwood Edge. Right on road for approx. 50 yds then left at road junction to Cherry Tree Farm (first right)

Right along farm access road (207 516), on reaching yard look carefully for stile at corner of barn to the left. Right over stile along narrow ginnel at the back of the barn, cross field, over stile and keeping field boundaries to your left go ahead to road. Turn left on road and then first right into lane past Scow Hall. Through farmyard and up the rise ahead, after reaching the brow of the hill look for gate and stile on right before the track swings left. Over stile and follow walled lane downhill to Swinsty Reservoir, turn left on road through gates then right across damn. Right at other side and follow track for approx. ¼ mile to a turning on left into' wood and Swinsty Hall (194 532). Turn right at front of hall, right again at a barn to a gate at the end of muddy track. Through gate and walk due West across fields to lane leading to Timble. (Pub in village usually with food). (Now converted into houses)

Timble 180 529 to Denton 143 490 - 4 miles

Continue on road in same direction out of village to the Otley - Blubberhouses Road. Straight across and walk up lane past Scourby Farm to track junction on left signed Denton and Ilkley. Follow track to Ellercar Pike (160 523), over stile and take track ahead signed 'Denton'. (Take care in mist). This track over Denton Moor gives very good views of Ilkley Moor, Otley Chevin (the White House) and Beamsley Beacon. After crossing the first stile (near a small wood) keep the wall on your right past Yarnett House Farm (148 502). Then onto farm access road to Denton village.

Denton 143 490 to Cow & Calf 131 467 - 4 miles

Keep right at 'T' junction in centre of village, look for lane on the left signed ' Middleton'. Keeping the fence on your right walk along cart track to the corner of wood ahead over stile. Then with fence on your left walk in the same direction and look for a stile into 'Stubbs Wood' on the left just before the boundary fence swings to the right. Cross beck by footbridge, over stile and straight ahead across meadow to stile into wood. Cross 'Bow Beck' by footbridge, climb bank and then keeping fence to your left pass the back of Middleton Hospital and through fields to the road. Left on road (ignore narrow lane to left) to Middleton Village. Straight across crossroads, follow 'Ilkley' sign down 'Curley Hill'. After passing the entrance to 'Curley Hill Scout Camp' look for a small gate on your left into woods. Follow path down hill through wood to the suspension footbridge across the river Wharfe (122 435).

Cross bridge, turn right and walk along; riverside path to Ilkley road bridge. (Shops, toilets, busses to Skipton, Otley & Leeds). Turn left, walk uphill across traffic lights, up Brook St., Across The Grove, up Wells Promenade to the cattle grid at edge of moor (118 472). Take one of the many paths (head S .E. past Ilkley Tarn) across the moor to the Cow & Calf Rocks.

Cow & Calf 131 LI67 to Hare &: Hounds (Pub) 179 434 - 4 miles

Take path in S.E. direction crossing Coldstone Beck to York View Farm (149 446). Left through gate between Farm and Water Works pump house. Follow lane down to Burley Woodhead road (155 444). Cross road, at bottom of short steep hill between houses look for narrow ginnel on left with hedges on both sides. Over plank bridge and into fields. At the bottom of a lane, with Holly bushes on each side, look for stile to the right (ignore gap in wall ahead), to Mill House (159 445). Follow Bleach Mill Lane to road (turn left and walk through Menston village (shops, toilets). Turn half left on reaching children's playground to Hare &: Hounds corner. (Busses to Otley, Leeds & Bradford).

Hare & Hounds 179 434 to White House 203 445 - 2½ miles

Cross main road, (take care) take road to the right hand side of the Ambulance Station. Over railway bridge, past Intake Farm, cross road, past Bracken End Farm to road junction. Turn right on road for ¼ mile to Moor Houses (194 432). Left up lane past Moor Houses and then follow lane to Yorkgate. Left on road for 100 yards to gap in wall on right, cross field to wood. Follow path to the right through wood and across Chevin ridge back to Surprise View then downhill to the White House.

End of the Otley Nine Leagues

Derek Haller