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Bleach Mill and Hag Farm

Starting point and OS Grid reference	The Roundhouse, Burley-in-Wharfedale (SE 166464). Car park at rear of Queens Hall.
Ordnance Survey map	OS Explorer 297 Lower Wharfedale & Washburn Valley
Distance	3.2 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This walk takes you via Burley-in-Wharfedale village green and Burley House (Burley's only Grade 1 listed building), to Burley House Field. From here, pleasant footpaths, which feel almost like a secret escape route, guide you through modern housing and into open country.

Burley House has had various incarnations. First a private house, then a school, pub, pizzeria and corporate headquarters. The neighbouring Burley House Field, once part of the house's estate still has the remains of a "ha-ha", which, in times past, would have provided (from the house side) an invisible barrier to prevent livestock entering the house grounds.

The 8 acre Burley House Field was the subject of a protracted campaign to have it designated as a Village Greenspace and Recreational Open Space, starting in 1993. It was finally approved as a village green in 2009. It has been improved with the addition of new bridges and stiles and a Burley Community Orchard has been created with apple, damson, plum and pear trees, planted early in 2014.

After crossing the disused and current railway lines, the route takes you across fields with good views, to Hag Farm. It passes within 100 yards of Bleach Mill House. In its grounds are foundation remains of the old bleach mill, which used to bleach fabrics woven in the Bradford mills. A perhaps more interesting reason to visit, is to enjoy a tea and coffee break, accompanied by excellent cakes at the tea room. The owners Sue and Simon Richmond will show you the foundation remains and tell you about the history if you ask. The tea room is normally open during the day.

Start: With your back to the door of the Roundhouse, turn left, walk through the park to Grange Road and turn left. Pass the Methodist Church.

As the road bends left, at the junction with Norwood Avenue, go straight ahead on Back Lane. Follow this to the village green, where there is an attractive view of St Mary's Church. Note also the unusual fountain cascading over the large rocks. Turn right, following a fingerpost for Burley House Field, along Langford Lane (SE 170462). Follow the lane past Burley House, indicated by the black and gold topped railings and high stone wall.

At the end of the high wall, turn left through a kissing gate into Burley House Field. Immediately in front of you are the remains of the stone built “ha-ha”,

Turn right across Burley House Field, heading for the bridge in the middle. Cross it, over Wood Head Beck, then, turn right for the diagonally opposite corner of the field. Along here you pass the Burley Community Orchard.

In the corner of the field, cross the bridge with the metal gate at the corner of Prospect Road and St Philip’s Way (SE 168458). Turn left to follow the broad path alongside the beck (ignore the sharp left turn over another bridge, which goes through to Sandholme Drive).

The path passes allotments. After crossing another bridge, turn sharp right to follow the beck at the other side. When you get to the cul-de-sac (Jumb Beck Close), turn right to continue following the beck.

The path emerges into Sandholme Drive. Go straight across, to follow the public footpath fingerpost, arriving at a road - Holme Park. Turn right for a few yards then left down a fenced footpath, indicated by another fingerpost.

Climb some rough steps to join the course of a disused railway line. Turn left and almost immediately right to descend some more steps. Cross the stile and turn right over a second stile to follow the path left, through the woods (indicated by a yellow arrow) to the current railway tracks and cross carefully via the walkway (SE 166452). The footpath descends to a stile which you cross. There are attractive views here to Burley Moor.

Bear left and after going through a walkers’ gate, cross the small bridge and turn right. Go through a gateway (with a rather redundant stile alongside). Bear left, heading for the diagonally opposite corner of the field. [Note - depending on how recently this field was mown and/or vegetation growth, the diagonal route, which follows the Right of Way, may not be clear. In this event, the convention seems to be to skirt the field anti-clockwise, following the stream. A path here is well worn.]

Pass another redundant stile and cross a two plank footbridge. Bear left slightly to meet the beck (Carr Beck) and follow its right hand bank.

Go through a metal gate and immediately over a wooden stile. Hag Farm comes into view. Continue following the course of the beck.

The beck disappears underground and at the end of the field where this happens, go through a squeeze stile. After the next squeeze stile, the beck reappears. Continue following the right hand bank. After the next squeeze stile, the path exits into a broader track where there is a post with various yellow footpath arrows (SE 159446).

Bleach Mill House is a hundred yards or so to the left here, should you be seeking refreshment. Otherwise, turn right.

Cross a stile close to Hag Farm and turn right to join the access track to the farm (SE 158446). Follow the track away from the farm. This becomes the tarmac Hag Farm Road. At the junction with Moor Lane/Station Road, by the railway bridge, turn right to return to the village centre and right along Grange Road to return to the park and your starting point.

