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Grindleton Fell and Beacon Hill

Starting point and OS Grid reference	On street parking at Grindleton (SD 759454)
Ordnance Survey map	OL42 – Forest of Bowland & Ribblesdale
Distance	7.7 miles
Date of Walk	15 July 2024
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This circular walk is from the attractive Lancashire village of Grindleton and takes you on a route around Grindleton Fell to Beacon Hill before returning to the village.

This walk was the idea of a friend of mine and I had forgotten that I had visited Grindleton Fell once before on my Waddington Fell walk! However this route is slightly different and gives better views, in particular to the Yorkshire Dales. You also get super views of Pendle Hill.

Grindleton is a former spinning and weaving community, within the Forest of Bowland. At one time it was part of West Yorkshire. It was also the place of the 'Grindletonians', a Puritan sect which came into being in 1610. They remained active until about 1660. Presumably the pubs in the village came into being after that!

Grindleton Fell is effectively one large plantation but by circumnavigating it, you get the views.

Navigation is pretty straightforward but the fly in the ointment is the stretch through Access Land over Harrop Fell. This is a fairly wet section, even after a dry spell as evidenced by the presence of large amounts of the stiff, spiky grass called (I believe) "soft rush" or "Juncus effusus". I don't find it particularly "soft" and it makes for difficult walking. You need to weave about quite a bit to find the best route. If you are using GPS, the route I have shown is based on the trace of the exact route I walked but the wetter patches may well change.

Because of the above, gaiters are recommended. No steep inclines.

Picnic spots are a bit thin on the ground. There are some stones by a fork in the path which are a possibility.

The walk starts in Grindleton, where parking is on street. To get there, turn off the A59, signed for Sawley and Grindleton. Pass through Sawley and cross the river Ribble. Beyond the bridge, the road forks. Turn left for Grindleton. Just past the two pubs, the road bends left and is quite wide. I parked alongside a high wall there. There is a bench a little further along, handy for boot changing.

Start: From the parking spot (SD 759454) walk uphill (or find the Duke of York pub, almost opposite the Rum Fox) and turn down the street to its left (Buck Street).

As you get to the gates of the mill complex, turn down the footpath to the left of the gates, with the fence on your right. This was not particularly obvious when I did the walk.

The path leads down to a footbridge which you cross, then bear left first, before climbing the bank. The path at this stage may be a little indistinct.

At the top of the bank, walk straight ahead but keep a look out for a stone step-stile on the right. You do not cross the stile but it gives you a landmark. Walk ahead as though you had just crossed the stile and turned right. Hope that makes sense!

Follow the line of trees towards the buildings ahead.

Cross a stone step stile and turn right along the lane (SD 754453). The tarmac lane becomes more stony and eventually reverts to footpath status.

Reach White Hall Farm and continuing along its drive. About a hundred yards after the farm, turn left following a bridleway fingerpost,

Pass Cob Manor then go through a five bar gate and along a stony track.

Go through a second gate which goes into a field (SD 748468). Follow the left hand boundary.

At the end of the field, go through a gate then follow the path bearing left.

On reaching the road, turn left (SD 750470).

Follow the road, which becomes a stony track for just over half a mile. After going through a gate, you enter Access Land (SD 740475) but continue to follow the stony track for 0.4 of a mile.

When the broad stony track turns right into the trees, keep straight ahead on a footpath through a walkers' gate.

As the path reaches a wide recess into the trees, the path splits. Take the right hand **fork** – not the right hand turn! There are some stones here on which to perch if you want a picnic.

The path climbs. At the top of the rise, meet a wall and turn right to follow it.

Fifty yards or so before you get to the trees, turn left through a convenient gap in the rather dilapidated wall and work your way over to the trees, turning left to follow their edge.

At the corner of the trees (SD 730486), go through a gate and turn right to follow the trees.

The fun part now starts in that you need to follow the edge of the trees for almost a mile. However the nature of the ground with the obstruction of the stiff spiky grass and boggy patches means you need to weave around a little. On the plus side, there are great views towards the Yorkshire Dales.

You will arrive at a wall topped with fencing. Exactly where you meet it depends on where you have been weaving but you need to turn right to follow it to the corner where there is a stile. Once over the stile, continue ahead following the dilapidated wall on the left.

When you meet another stile, cross and turn left to follow the yellow footpath arrow. Continue to follow the now obvious path as it turns right through the trees (note this path route seems slightly east of the one shown on OS maps).

The path is fairly level at this point. When the land rises ahead of you, you will be at a 'T' junction of paths (SD747480). Turn left.

The trig. point on Beacon Hill comes into view. Just before it, go through a gate on the left. Follow the wall on the right, passing a second gate with a notice advising there is no entry. Which denies entry to 'bag' the trig. point. I leave it to your conscience!

Go through a gate at the corner of the field and follow the footpath arrow.

At the road, which is very quiet, turn right to follow it back to Grindleton.

