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Galphay Circular

Starting point and OS Grid reference	On street parking by the village green (SE 252726)
Ordnance Survey map	OS Explorer 298 - Nidderdale
Distance	8.6 miles
Date of Walk	3 June 2024
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This circular walk starts from the attractive village of Galphay in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The walk is a mixture of passing through extensive agricultural land, woodland, by streams. The River Laver is crossed via Woodhouse Bridge, which is a Grade II, late 18th Century Listed Building with three arches.

Galphay has a large village green with a flagpole and a nice looking pub. The village name is believed to stem from two parts Galga and Haga. Both words are from the Dark Ages. The latter means enclosed field. Galga is an old English word referring to Gallows. So, Galphay was the Gallows Field!

The walk passes the delightfully named Witch of the Woods house, a 17th Century house. It is so named on the Ordnance Survey map. One can only guess how it got its name.

It also passes the unusual Braithwaite Hall, another Grade II Listed Building. It is thought to date from the 16th Century with periodic additions and restorations.

The walk starts from the larger of two village greens in Galphay where there is room to park. The village is surrounded by a number of fairly tortuous lanes but the easiest route to describe is to leave the A61 at Ripon via the B6265 signposted for Pateley Bridge. After one and three quarter miles turn right on to Galphay Lane. Galphay is signposted. You will pass the Galphay Inn and the village green is just beyond. To get there any other way, good luck!

Start: From the village green, walk along the road, passing the pub.

After passing the village hall, go through some gates to Braithwaite Hall.

Just after passing Braithwaite Hall, fork right along the gravel track. It turns to grass and you will reach two gates. Go through the right hand gate following the blue bridleway arrow. The path starts more or less down the centre of the field and continues in a straight line which, as the field widens, is more to the left of the field.

At the end of the field, go through a gate and join a broad track. Turn left.

Pass through the farmstead of Lawnwith then pass a wood. At the far side of the wood, turn right through a kissing gate following the edge of the wood in the direction of a yellow footpath arrow.

Cross a stile at the end of the wood and bear left, again following a yellow footpath arrow, to the opposite corner of the field at SE 245744. Cross a stile and follow the right hand boundary of the next two fields.

Cross a stile, the path is then straight across the next three fields.

Cross a stile next to an ornate iron gate at Azerley (SE 256745), then keep right to follow the stream. Keep right at the next fork.

Continue through the woods, passing a house, then straight across a broad track.

After Home Farm, the track splits, take the right hand fork. There is no Right of Way to the left – a notice advises.

The track opens into a field and splits. Follow the main track. There is a small stone bench at the junction. Follow the left hand boundary.

Cross a footbridge and keep in the same direction across the first section of field to the far boundary. Bear right to follow the boundary as it curves right passing Witch of the Woods house (SE 268731).

About half way up the field, bear left to a gateway (SE 267730). Join a broad track and turn left.

Follow this clear broad track straight through Cow Myers farm, reaching the road at SE 266 722. Turn left.

Follow the road for a third of a mile. Just beyond some woods, turn right (avoid the tempting track into the woods!). There is an old fashioned metal sign indicating a bridleway (SE 271720).

Stay on this track passing the farm buildings at Low Lindrick, for almost a mile and a quarter to arrive at the road opposite a grand but now rather rough gateway. This is their rear entrance to Studley Park but you cannot get in this way.

Turn right along the road, keeping to the right hand verge. This is a very busy road but the verge is wide and you only follow it for about a hundred and fifty yards, where you turn right along a lane following an old stile bridleway sign.

When the lane splits, take the right fork along an wide gravel track. There are some long distance views to the North York Moors.

Keep straight ahead at the farm.

At a fork, keep right following a public footpath fingerpost.

Go left at the next junction.(SE 265709), through the trees and follow the main track avoiding any turns off.

Cross Woodhouse Bridge (SE 262712).

Exit the woods by an abandoned farmhouse (SE 261712), passing through a gate marked with a yellow footpath arrow.

Enter a field and head in the direction of the diagonally opposite corner, passing to the left of a line of trees across the field. As you pass the trees, bear right to a corner (SE 260715), then follow the left hand boundary.

At the end of the field, there is a field marked private According to my map, the footpath should go straight ahead here but the path has been diverted (not sure if officially). Turn left here in the direction of the yellow arrow. In practical terms, you are going round the same rectangle so it is no further.

About two thirds of the way up the field, turn right through a walkers' gate (SE 25907160) and follow the right hand boundary.

At the end of the field, turn left, following its right hand boundary. In effect you are walking rough the edge of the field to avoid crop damage

At the top of the field (SE 257717) things are a bit tricky. The footpath is over the fence directly ahead then a right turn to follow the right hand boundary. However, I could not see a stile and the crossing would have been into a copious nettle bed. I therefore turned right following the boundary now on the left to the end of the next field turning left to join the path proper next to a stile.

From that stile, as if you had followed the proper path, keep straight ahead (North), passing to the left of a power pole to a stile beyond. Cross and carry on to a kissing gate you can see.

Cross a farm track and go over a stile and keep straight ahead, crossing a stream.

Cross a stile keeping straight ahead in the direction of the yellow arrow.

Continue until you reach the road then turn left back into Galphay.

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