

This walk description is from happyhiker.co.uk

Ramsgill to Lofthouse

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Ramsgill – roadside parking at village green (SE 119710)
Ordnance Survey map	OS Explorer Map 298 - Nidderdale.
Distance	5 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: Nidderdale missed out on a Yorkshire Dales designation when the National Park was founded in 1954, which was a pity as it is certainly scenic enough to justify inclusion. It has gained prestige however through being designated as an Area of Outstanding National Beauty in 1994.

Not surprisingly, the River Nidd flows through it and this walk from Ramsgill explores a short pretty middle section of it. The walk is an easy low level 5 mile “stroll” following the Nidderdale Way, ideal for the shorter winter days or when conditions higher are unappealing. It could be linked with my Lofthouse to Scar House Reservoir walk if you wanted a longer walk of about 15 miles. The Nidderdale Way sign with its Curlew will become a familiar sight.

To get to Ramsgill, heading west through Pateley Bridge on the B6265, turn right after crossing the river bridge. Ramsgill is signposted. The road follows the lengthy Gouthwaite reservoir and Ramsgill is reached shortly after its end. Park on the main road by the village green, opposite the Yorke Arms where there are convenient benches for booting up.

Refreshments are a possibility at the Crown Hotel in Lofthouse but check the times (and days!) of opening.

Start: Facing the Yorke Arms, turn left and walk along the road. After only 50 yards or so, after crossing the bridge, take the track on the left then fork right to follow the fingerpost for the Nidderdale Way.

Stay on this main track and when it turns left to a farmhouse, keep straight ahead, following the right hand field boundary.

Stay on the track for some distance until after going through a gate, the field footpath joins a broad track. Turn left to follow this to West House Farm (SE 108723). The path passes the farm on a segregated path with a narrow stile at each end. In the field beyond, the route is marked with posts.

Eventually, the path drops down to join a broad track by a barn below High Blayshaw. Turn right. There is a convenient long length of concrete here where sandwiches can be enjoyed.

As the track crosses the stream, it becomes a walled lane.

At A 'T' junction of tracks by some cottages (SE 098731), turn right and at the bottom of the cobbled section, turn left following the direction of the public bridleway sign for Stean.

Stay on what has now become a metalled lane, passing Studfold Caravan Park. 50 yards or so beyond the caravan park, turn right across the bridge (SE 097733). At the bridge, you could go straight on for about ¼ mile to visit How Stean Gorge. Return to this point if you do.

At the road junction, turn right following the direction of the road sign "Lofthouse ¼ mile" but after only about 50 yards, as the road bends right, go straight ahead through a kissing gate to follow the footpath across the field to Lofthouse, so avoiding the road (SE 099735).

Keep to the left of the fire station and cross the narrow packhorse bridge over the infant River Nidd and follow the footpath coming out in the centre of Lofthouse by the war memorial. Turn right.

At the memorial Hall on the left, take the Nidderdale Way to its right (the fingerpost says "Nidd Heads ¼ mile". As you enter the field to the right of the memorial Hall, follow its left hand boundary to the slit stile in the wall and through this, turn immediately right.

The footpath comes out on the road down some stone steps (SE 105732). Turn left and walk along the road for slightly less than ¼ mile before turning right as the road bends left following a finger post for "Bouthwaite".

The footpath joins the road again at the drive entrance to West House Farm. Go straight over the road following the footpath still signposted "Bouthwaite". The path climbs the hill towards the trees to a gate at the corner of two walls. Go through the gate and follow the left hand side of the wall along by the trees. Gouthwaite Reservoir soon comes into view. It can be muddy along this section.

Join a broad track at Longside House (SE117721) and turn right.

Just after passing a farm, the track bend right but go straight ahead through the gate and follow the contour level along. The track divides, the left hand branch going uphill but continue to follow the contour of the hill, straight ahead.

A few yards further on, the track divides again although the left hand branch (the one you want) is not particularly conspicuous. Pass to the left of the house.

As you get to more trees, the path descends towards Bouthwaite. Ignore the large ladder stile on the right and continue to follow the direction of the path arrows.

Pass between the farm buildings, to the back of Bouthwaite Grange with its mullioned windows. At a crossroad of tracks, where the fingerpost indicates the Nidderdale Way goes straight on, turn right here to follow the tarmac lane back to Ramsgill. At the junction, turn left back into Ramsgill.

