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Buckden to Kettlewell

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Buckden - pay and display car park (SD 943774)
Ordnance Survey map	OL 30 Yorkshire Dales – Northern and Central Areas
Distance	8.9 miles
Date of Walk	28 November 2014
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This easy to navigate walk from Buckden to Kettlewell follows the fell side to Kettlewell, I then returns via the valley bottom riverside footpath which is part of the Dalesway. The first mile involves some work uphill but is then a very gentle downhill stroll to Kettlewell and a level walk back. There are a lot of stiles on the route to Kettlewell.

There are refreshment opportunities at pubs/cafes in Kettlewell and also theoretically at the Fox and Hounds pub in Starbotton but it has never been open when I have passed, so I would phone to check before you rely on it. There are public toilets in Buckden and Kettlewell.

The walk starts at a pay and display car park in the pretty village of Buckden. To get to Buckden, head north out of Skipton on the Grassington road (B6265). At Threshfield, ignore the right turn to Grassington and continue ahead, now on the B6160 to Buckden. The car park is through the village on the right (SD 942773).

Unfortunately, it was a grey misty day when I did this walk so photos are limited.

Start: Leave the car park (SD 942773) at the opposite end to the toilets, via a gate signposted Buckden Pike and Cray High Bridge but immediately through the gate, turn right to follow the fingerpost for “Path leading to Buckden Lead Mine and Starbotton” (SD 942772).

When you get to the stream, although it seems counterintuitive, turn right to access stepping stones. Cross these, then follow the obvious path as it zig-zags up the hill.

After crossing a small stream (which might be dry in summer), go up the right hand side of a dilapidated wall and come to a three way fingerpost (SD 950767). Turn right for Starbotton.

The hard work is now done and the path is now much more level (you may be pleased to know!) and more or less follows the contours of the hill whilst descending very gradually to Starbotton. There are a number of posts with yellow tops along the way to guide you.

You arrive at another three way fingerpost. Turn right for “Starbotton $\frac{1}{3}$ mile”.

At the junction of the footpath and the road in Starbotton, turn left along the road through the village, only for 200 yards or so. Just past a bench, turn left to follow the fingerpost for “Kettlewell 2 miles”.

You soon go through a gateway with another fingerpost, turn left to go slightly uphill along the field to a rather unusual stone step stile in that it has a handrail (SD 956747). Over the stile, turn right.

When the path arrives in Kettlewell, follow the road straight ahead to the village centre, passing the village hall and coming to the Racehorses pub. If required, you now have a choice of pubs for refreshment. If you want somewhere in the village to sit for a picnic, there are some benches opposite the Blue Bell Inn or on The Green (cross the bridge over Kettlewell Beck and turn left. The benches are in an "island"). There is another pub, The King's Head on The Green.

To continue the walk, follow the main road (B6160) south out of the village, passing the main car park and toilets.

Cross the bridge over the River Wharfe and immediately, turn right, to follow the fingerpost for the "Dalesway" and "Starbotton 2 miles Buckden 2 miles" (SD 967722).

It is now a case of simply following the Dalesway to Buckden. In any cases of doubt, keep to the path closest to the river. The path runs along the valley bottom, more or less parallel with the river although the river meanders and is not always next to the path. Pass but do not cross a footbridge to Starbotton.

At SD 939765 turn right at a two way fingerpost showing the Dales Way in each direction. In effect, it is the first right turn you come to.

At the road, turn right to retrace your steps to Buckden.

