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Burnsall to Troller's Gill

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Burnsall SE 032611 – Limited road parking plus pay and display cp.
Ordnance Survey map	OL2 Yorkshire Dales Southern and Western Areas
Distance	7.3 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This is a short walk but through interesting scenery in the shape of the limestone gorge of Troller's Gill. According to legend, all sorts of evil creatures including a monstrous black dog called Barghest live in this gorge but I was unmolested when I walked through it! The gorge is not on an official footpath route according to the OS map so it is often an eerily silent place but walkers are catered for by stiles at the top. The going is rocky but not difficult. It just takes a little care to avoid turning an ankle. This route also provides for a very pretty walk alongside the River Wharfe.

Start the walk in the Dales village of Burnsall. There is a car park although on quiet days, it is possible to park on the main street by the river where there are benches to sit and feed the ducks or put on boots.

Start: Turn right over the road bridge and immediately over the bridge, turn right at a fingerpost signposted Dalesway and Appletreewick. Walk across the pleasant river meadow ignoring the request for pedestrians to pay 50p (this is a public footpath) and follow the Dalesway along the very pretty riverside path for about two miles until you reach a road near Howgill (SE 060593).

Turn left along the road. Just past the old Wesleyan Chapel (Chapel House), turn right through gated stile on to footpath signposted Skyreholme (SE 061594). Keep to the higher ground climbing gradually (do not go down to the stream).

Follow footpath to exit into road at Howarth Farm (SE 064602). Cross a gated stile by a caravan park and turn right.

At the next road junction (where there is a bench for lunch!) turn left (SE 069607). Follow the road around a right hand bend (where there is another bench) and just before the entrance to Parceval Hall, turn left to follow the south west bank of Skyreholme Beck (SE 068610).

Ignore the first path off to the left to New Road (after 100 yards or so) and at the next junction, fork right (SE 068617). The left fork is the easier broad public footpath route shown on the OS map. The right fork is not shown but is clear enough.

You approach and enter Trollers Gill. Skyreholme Beck obviously once used to flow through this gorge and was no doubt responsible for creating it but the beck now emerges at the foot and the gorge itself is dry (*see footnote 1*). Follow Trollers Gill.

At the top of the gorge is a ladder stile. Once over this, follow the valley. The beck re-appears and you eventually come to a precarious looking plank bridge across it. Cross the bridge (SE 071623) and go through the gated stile (see footnote 2) at the other side.

A short steady climb now until the track splits. Take the right hand fork and follow this to the road.

Turn left on road. Ignore the first footpath on right. Take second where finger post points to Hartlington one and three-quarter miles along a broad track (SE 623620). It forks at a farm – take right fork.

At the next group of farm buildings, fork right down the walled track (Kail Lane on OS map) (SE 049610). Cross over the road you come to and after about 150 yards, turn right following the Burnsall sign crossing a narrow single plank bridge.

Footnote 1) - Although I have walked this gorge several times over the years and never seen any water flowing through it, it was reported to me in 2019 that after recent exceptionally heavy rains, the gorge had become an impassable torrent. In these circumstances, play safe and do not attempt the gorge!

Footnote 2) – Since doing this walk I am advised this gated stile has been replaced by a ladder stile but I have not yet checked this out.

