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Grimwith Reservoir

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Free car park at Grimwith Reservoir (SE063641)
Ordnance Survey map	OL2 Yorkshire Dales Southern & Western Areas or Explorer 298 - Nidderdale
Distance	4.2 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This walk round Grimwith Reservoir, just inside the Yorkshire Dales National Park, is a very straightforward affair, ideal for a quick two hour or so walk. It is mostly on wide tracks with just a fairly short footpath section where you might get a bit muddy after wet weather. The reservoir belongs to Yorkshire Water and is surrounded by heather moorland, various areas being designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). The reservoir is Yorkshire Water's largest at 0.57 sq. miles.

At the right times of the year, a good selection of wildfowl can be seen and for this reason, dogs must be on leads.

The circular route around the reservoir is very clearly signposted and it is impossible to go wrong. This Introduction is therefore longer than the walk directions!

There was a smaller reservoir here, built in 1864 by Bradford Corporation but it was enlarged, with work being completed in 1983, resulting in a raising of the water level by 20 metres.

A sailing club uses the reservoir.

There was at one time a hamlet of Grimwith and the name means a wood haunted by a ghost or goblin. At the eastern end of the reservoir is the decaying Grimwith House built in the 19th century, probably to replace a property destroyed by the first reservoir. There are records of a farm being at Grimwith since 1302. It is a great shame something constructive is not done with this property before it is too late as at the moment, it looks reasonably sound. It believed to have been occupied until the 1970s.

A hamlet of "Gate Up" also disappeared beneath the waters. Only a ruin remains.

Grimwith Reservoir is by the north side of the B6265 Grassington to Pateley Bridge road. The entry road is clearly signposted by the typical blue Yorkshire Water signs, just short of 2 miles west of Stump Cross Caverns. There are picnic tables and toilets at the car park and various benches around the reservoir where you could enjoy a picnic with views of the water.

Start: From the car park take the obvious track to the water's edge track and turn left, soon crossing the dam. That is about all you need! Just follow the route, guided by the fingerposts around the reservoir in a clockwise direction. If in doubt, turn right! Gates you are not supposed to venture through are clearly signposted.

At SE 052647, the route turns left by a barn, joining another track at a 'T' junction. Turn right.

About ½ mile later, two bridges take you over Blea Gill and Gate Up Gill, which feed the reservoir.

At SE 054655, the broad track reverts to a traditional footpath, returning to broad track at SE059650.

A ruined farmhouse with impressive stone mullions is at SE 080650 and is all that remains of the hamlet of Gate Up.

At SE 071649, the track passes between the main reservoir and a smaller pool which is the end of Grimwith Beck, another feeder.

At SE 072647, you pass the substantial remains of Grimwith House on a spit of land. You are not allowed a close look as the area is a nature reserve.

At SE 072644 there is the well preserved thatched barn, High Laithe. When the reservoir was being enlarged, historians realised this was an important example of a cruck barn. Unfortunately, there seems no provision to let you have a look inside.

You return to the car park about ½ mile beyond High Laithe.

