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Baildon Moor to Hawksworth

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| Starting point and OS Grid reference | Car park on Bingley Road Baildon (SE 143407) |
| Ordnance Survey map | OS Explorer 297 - Lower Wharfedale and Wasburn Valley |
| Distance | 8.7 miles |
| Date of Walk | 21 April 2021 |
| Traffic light rating |  |

Introduction: I have done several walks around Baildon Moor over the years and indeed this walk has some overlaps with my Baildon Moor Circuit and Baildon Circular walks, though this walk is the longest. However this was the first time I had ever made it to the very summit and the trig. point. No particular reason for that, just how it is. Unfortunately for the photos, amidst a run of superb walking weather, my friend and I managed to pick the only grey day! However, there are expansive 360° views from the summit, where there is a trig. point, topograph and benches.

The walk involves crossing three golf courses, not least Baildon Golf course right at the start. This is perhaps a little unusual in that it is on open moorland which is Access Land, meaning the public have a right to roam anywhere on it, so you need to be extra vigilant looking out for golf balls. On the others, the routes across are easily identified but the same warning applies. These are Bradford Golf Club and Hollins Hall Country Park.

Baildon Moor, also sometimes called Baildon Hill is registered as an urban common, with rights of access by the public for 'air and exercise' and recreation in a wide range of activities. This means you could see golfers, cyclists or horse riders. Not surprisingly therefore, there are multiple paths, where people have made their own way so, describing the route with precision, is difficult at times. Overall, the description of the route is quite complicated I am afraid, as it meanders across farmland, moor land and in places close to built up areas.

Baildon Moor rises to 925 ft (282m) above Baildon village. It has a complicated geology. Its flat top sits over various layers of sandstone, some of which reveals itself as rocky outcrops. There are also coal bearing rocks and evidence of mining as far back as the 12th century. The last pit closed in 1863. There were also ironstone and smelting works. There is much information on line.

Bird watchers could well find much to see as Baildon Moor is home to skylarks, curlews, plovers and lapwings. Indeed, curlews were in evidence when I did the walk. Other birds also visit, a few being Reed Bunting, Willow Warbler, Kestrel, Snipe, Meadow Pipit and Wheatear.

From Baildon Moor, the walk follows footpaths to Hawksworth. This long, linear village of attractive houses which provide mostly a commuter conurbation for relatively well heeled residents. Its name seems derives from one Walter de Hawksworth, who lived there in the 11th century. Hawksworth Hall in the village, a Grade II listed building, dates from the 17th century. It was the seat of the Hawksworth family before passing to a relative who happened to be Guy Fawkes,

who needs no introduction! There is not a lot more to say about the village which has no facilities for those passing through.

The walk starts from a large car park on the right hand side of Bingley Road, which runs from the northern outskirts of Baildon to Eldwick (and then on to Bingley). The car park is three quarters of a mile from the Baildon end (SE 143407).

Start: For a few yards, follow the footpath parallel with the road in a westerly direction (i.e. turning right as if leaving the car park). After about fifty yards, turn right on a path heading away from the road. At this point, if you have a compass, it could be useful to set it to follow 308° magnetic, which should keep you in the right direction to the gate mentioned below but otherwise I will do my best on the instructions.

Join a broad stony path used by golfers and turn left.

Pass between a green on the right and a fairway on the left, then between two more fairways. Cross the one on the left

When you get across it, turn right along the obvious path. You are heading for a gate which is at the bottom left hand corner of the golf course area (SE135412)

Once through the gate, keep straight ahead, up the path along the left hand side of the gallop. Cross over another gallop (SE 135413) and continue along the left hand side.

The path goes through a section of walled track, then between some properties at the junction (SE 137417), turn left following the yellow footpath arrow, along a mixed tarmac and stony lane.

At the next junction, turn right along a stony track (SE 138420).

Look out for an attractive stone built house on the left and turn left just after it, going quite sharply back on yourself and descending to a stream. An old stone clapper bridge provides a dry crossing. Continue along as the path narrows, following a fingerpost for "Bingley Road 1 mile" (this is a different Bingley Road to where you started!).

At Old Wood Farm, follow its access track to the road and turn right. This can be quite busy for little more than a country lane but there is a grass verge and the distance is under a hundred yards.

Turn right over a stile (SE 147428) then right again over a ladder stile. Walk down the field following the left boundary to another ladder stile. Cross and follow the line of the power poles.

Follow the path past the opposite side of Old Wood Farm. Cross a couple of stiles marked with yellow paint, then follow the wall on the right. There is a gap in the wall but keep straight on, continuing to follow the right hand wall.

The path drops through West Wood and up the other side, where you turn right into a small estate of smart wooden lodges.

As you reach the lodge with a stone lower storey, bear left and follow the drive to Sconce Lane (SE 145416). Turn left.

Follow Sconce Lane to the road and turn right, for about a hundred and fifty yards.

As you pass a small group of houses on the left, turn left along a broad track, passing a letter box attached to a pole. Opposite the last house on the left, turn off the track on to a footpath which leads to a small bridge.

Cross the bridge and through a kissing gate. Turn right to follow the obvious path. Follow the footpath to a stile and over this, turn left (SE 153411).

The next stile, in the left hand corner of the field, you will not see until you are further along the field. Cross this and turn right through the woods, following the pleasant stream.

Cross it via the bridge. A few yards further on the path divides. Follow the path uphill.

It is quite a steep climb up the field to a stile. Turn right to the corner of the field then left, to follow the wall on the right (this is the "official route" but I suspect many cut the corner!).

Go through a gateway on the right and follow the wall on the right.

Through the next gateway (SE 161415), bear left to the diagonally opposite corner. Cross the stile and turn left, following the left hand boundary. Continue to the road in Hawksworth and turn right.

Walk through the village, keeping a lookout for a large stone on the left which says "Hawksworth Village" on the reverse side as you approach. Take the footpath almost opposite this marked with a public footpath fingerpost (SE 164417).

Almost immediately, go left on to Bradford Golf Course. The route across the course is marked by green poles with yellow tape and leads into some trees. Once through the trees, the footpath runs parallel with the edge of the course.

When you reach a tarmac path, turn right and at the junction of paths, left.

Come to a junction with a stony track off to the right where there is a sign marking the 8th tee and pointing left. Turn right along the stony track.

As you leave the track through the trees, the path straight on is obvious.

Follow the path down the right hand side of the golf course (now Hollins Hall Golf Course) by the stream Turn right and cross via the footbridge.

Follow the track as it curves left passing Tong Park Dam (SE 164402). About a quarter of the way round the lake, look out for a walkers' gate on the right next to the entrance to Tong Park Esholt Cricket Club. Walk up the side of the club. As you come to the pavilion, bear left uphill, climbing through the trees.

Join another path and turn right to follow it as it curves gently left.

Go through a walkers' gate and follow the path as it climbs the hill. Turn left through a walkers' gate by the stables (SE 157403).

After rounding a corner, the path splits into three. Keep straight on, keeping the steps to a gate on your left.

Join a broad tarmac track and turn left.

After only twenty yards or so, past a stone house, branch off left and follow the edge of the moor past the houses.

On reaching the road, go straight across (SE 153401) and again, follow the broad path along the edge of the moor.

Just over a hundred yards past the end of the houses, the path divides. Keep left.

You now basically keep to the main path, curving right, avoiding turns off as the path follows the contour of the hill. You pass some large boulders, which look oddly out of place (I thought) by a bench.

When you reach a broad metalled track, the access track to the caravan site, turn right (SE 142402), soon passing a rocky outcrop (SE 140401), where there are views across to Rombalds Moor.

After another two hundred and fifty yards or so, a path on the right will take you to the summit. Return to this wide track and continue to the road and the parking area.

