


Burley-in-Wharfedale Goit and Weir

Starting point and OS Grid reference	The Roundhouse, Burley-in-Wharfedale (SE 166464). Car park at rear of Queens Hall.
Ordnance Survey map	OS Explorer 297 Lower Wharfedale & Washburn Valley
Distance	1.7 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This easy walk takes you on something of an industrial archaeological exploration of the area which gave Burley-in-Wharfedale its prosperity in the 18th and 19th centuries. Burley became a mill village when cotton mills were built in 1790 and 1811, powered by a head of water created by a weir across the River Wharfe. In 1850, William Fison and William Forster, partners who had started in business in Bradford, bought Burley mills, and converted them to worsted production. The earliest mill was demolished and all new work was concentrated on the Greenholme Mill site.

The walk takes you past a good view of the mill building and follows the course of the goit to the weir.

The walk starts at the Roundhouse, in Burley Park.

Start: With your back to the door of the Roundhouse (SE 166464), turn right and drop down to Main Street, opposite the Red Lion pub. Turn right and pass the Queen Hall. Note the prominent memorials to William Forster (1818-1886) and William Fison (1820-1900). Continue past the pedestrian crossing then take the next left turn along Iron Row (SE 167464), an attractive row of cottages built for mill workers about 1800.

The route continues through the old stone gateposts for what was the mill entrance and beneath the underpass under the A65. Pass the recreation ground and rise gently to Great Pasture Lane and turn left. There are good views on the left here towards Burley Moor.

As Great Pasture Lane turns left into Great Pasture (private road), go straight on at the bend to walk along the fenced footpath (SE167468). The path is marked with a small green sign indicating a permissive footpath. Along here, you realise the scale of the Greenholme Mill building on the right.

Go through a metal kissing gate and follow the path as it swings left through the trees. It drops down to the corner of the fence marking the Greenholme Mill boundary. Turn left here.

You are now following the course of the old redundant goit which provided water power to the mill, on the right.

The path becomes a broad track, still following the goit.

You pass a large green metal gate on the right. This is the entrance, over the bridge, to private land owned by the West Riding Anglers and the hydro-electric generating plant (the stone building which you might see through the trees) and it marks the spot at which water from the goit flows to it. You will note a marked increase in the speed of the water from here on.

Continue along the broad track until you reach a junction on the right (SE 166474). Turn right here to view the impressive stone weir. At this point, stepping stones, which were restored in 2013, cross to the north bank and when water levels permit, give access to a large number of walking routes in North Yorkshire. Please do not attempt to cross unless you are sure it is safe, as there are some deep pools here. There is a long running campaign by the Burley Bridge Association to have a bridge constructed here.

There is a very good chance of seeing herons on the river here.

Return to the broad track and turn right. The track becomes a tarmac lane known as Leatherbank. There are pleasant views eastwards, towards Otley Chevin. Follow Leatherbank until, as it turns right around the school playing field, you go straight ahead to follow the path through another underpass under the A65.

Follow the path until it emerges into Burley Main Street by a black and white cottage. Turn left to follow Main Street back to your starting point.

