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## Shipley To Ilkley

<b>Starting point and OS Grid reference</b>	Shipley train station (SE SE 150374)
<b>Ordnance Survey map</b>	OS 297 Lower Wharfedale and Washburn Valley and OS 288 Bradford and Huddersfield
<b>Distance</b>	8.3 miles
<b>Date of Walk</b>	5 September 2015
<b>Traffic light rating</b>	

**Introduction:** This linear walk is ideal for anyone who wishes to use public transport as it starts from Shipley and ends in Ilkley, both of which are well served by trains and buses. Trains link the two directly. The walk passes a number of interesting features but my main reason for doing the walk when I did was to view the blooming heather on the moors. The walk crosses Bingley, Burley and Ilkley Moors (each part of the all encompassing Rombalds Moor) and provides fine views over the moors themselves and across Airedale and Wharfedale.

The walk begins from Shipley rail station, with a short section by the Leeds/Liverpool canal, before crossing Roberts Park and progressing through the woodland of Shipley Glen to Bingley Moor.

Roberts Park was originally built for Sir Titus Salt (of Saltaire fame) and known as The Peoples Park or Salts Park. In 1891, it was purchased by Sir James Roberts, who renamed Roberts Park as a memorial to his son Bertram and donated eventually to Bradford Council.

Across the road from the park, is The Shipley Glen Cable Tramway, the oldest working cable tramway in Great Britain, apart from some cliff systems. It dates from 1895 when it would have cost 2 old pence for a round trip. It is open Saturday and Sunday afternoons, according to its website.

Once on the moors, the route passes Horncliffe Well, which was first mentioned in records in 1273. It was then a free flowing well which never dried even after droughts and at one time simply opened on to the moor over an old stone. It was said to have healing powers and was no doubt a boon to those making their way across the moors. Unfortunately, after Yorkshire Water acquired it, the visible well disappeared beneath a manhole but the water can clearly be heard rushing below. An old stone sign marks its position, after crossing a stone stile which includes an unusual boundary stone. This mentions one Thomas Pulleyn, who was at one time the Lord of the manor living at Burley Hall (Burley-in-Wharfedale). He died in 1759.

Beyond Horncliffe Well, the walk passes The Twelve Apostles Stone Circle. It is believed there were originally between 16 and 20 stones, erected some 4,000 years ago but over the years, various "restorations" have resulted in the 12 we see today. The purpose of the circle is uncertain but could have related to religious ceremonies and/or astronomical observation.

Close to the stone circle is Lanshaw Lad, a large, 19<sup>th</sup> century, rectangular stone marking the boundary between Ilkley and Burley parishes. There are several letters and dates carved on it.

Finally, the famous White Wells makes an interesting stop for refreshment and to see the bath house - when open. Sometimes regarded as of Roman origin (though without any evidence!), the bath you see was actually built in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

As stated above, the walk starts at Shipley train station. Note there are no public toilets here. Maybe if enough people ask where the toilets are, Network Rail would get the message! It is ridiculous that a station where people wait to change train lines have none.

There are toilets in Roberts Park at the café (when open) and at White Wells. Refreshments are available at both.

Please note parking in the centre of Shipley is barely an option. If wanting to use a car, I suggest locating Coach Road, along which the walk passes and parking there. The first part of the walk can then be used to return to the car.

Somewhat confusingly, you will see various signs for differently named walks on this route, not least the Airedale Greenway, Dalesway Link, Millennium Way and Dales Highway. Various sections of these walks overlap. I therefore refer to these walks at various points.

**Start:** Shipley Station (SE 150374) has a number of exits which can be confusing if you do not know it. My advice would be to take the main exit next to the booking office. Walk down the access road to the main A657. Turn left but immediately cross the main road via the traffic light controlled crossing. Immediately opposite is a car park. If you look closely to the left of the buildings (next to what was a carpet shop when I did the walk), there is a public footpath sign.

Follow this sign to cross the canal, then turn left (west) along it (SE 151378). This could be described as "right" once over the bridge due to the way the exit turns.

Follow the canal under the main A6038 (Otley Road), following the signs for Saltaire. This part of the canal is part of the Airedale Greenway.

Stay on the canal until you get to the Boathouse Inn. Cross the footbridge on the right over the river Aire into Roberts Park (SE 139382). In the park, follow the perimeter path anti-clockwise until you get to a gateway, just to the left of a large shelter where there is a lot of information about the area and the park itself. Go through this gateway on to the road. If you want to see the Shipley Glen Tramway, you need to turn right here for a few yards but the route goes left along the road, passing Titus Salt School.

After half a mile or so, look out for a stone cottage on the right hand side and a nearby shop. Pass both of these and a hundred yards further on, turn right to follow a public bridleway and Dalesway Link sign (SE 132386). There is an information board at the turn which tells about "The Coach Road" (along which you have been walking) and various other local facts.

Walk up this track for about 150 yards then take a clear left turn. The path goes into the woods.

There are a number of paths which have been created by wandering walkers and it is difficult to describe the correct route. The path passes beneath a boulder field - up to the right. The main path is fairly level to begin with but eventually it starts to curve clockwise and upwards. However before heading in this direction, look out for a dam (Crag Hebble Dam) below you to the left. This in itself can be difficult to spot through the trees as it is covered with green algae (or was when I visited). However, you need to find it because the route crosses the beck (Loadpit Beck) at the dam (SE 129389).

After crossing the beck, keep straight ahead on the broad climbing track, identifiable by the row of cobbles which runs up its centre. Pass and ignore an old kissing gate on the left.

When the path levels out slightly, just before a straight line of rectangular stones across the path for drainage, turn right through a gap in the wall (SE 128389). Follow the path through the trees, curving left at the corner of a wall by an old stone sink.

The path now generally follows the left hand edge of the trees, for over half a mile. Below you to the right you may hear the trickling on Loadpit Beck at the bottom of the Glen. Eventually, as you near the top of the Glen and start to catch glimpses of the stream, the path forks. Take the right hand fork down to a castellated stone bridge over the Loadpit Beck, where it is joined by Glovershaw Beck (SE 129401).

Cross the bridge, after which the path splits into three. Take the left hand path. You reach a fingerpost pointing right for "Millennium Way". Here, turn left, off the main track, on to a narrower path which follows the course of Glovershaw Beck.

Follow this path until it exits into a road via an awkward slit stile, just by the road sign for Eldwick. Cross straight over the road (SE 132406) and up the drive for Golcar Farm and Willowfield, following the bridleway fingerpost for "Dalesway Link" and "Millennium Way".

At Golcar Farm, there are three paths. Left is the Dalesway Link and to the right a path over a wooden stile, neither of which you want! Keep straight ahead on the middle path (Millennium Way). In the next field, follow the right hand boundary.

Confusingly, the route is also marked by arrows for the "Dales Highway", a 90 mile walk from Saltaire to Appleby in Cumbria. We **almost** follow this now to White Wells on Ilkley Moor but the Dales Highway route involves walking along a section of the moor road between Hawksworth and East Morton. This is a fast, busy, narrow road and very unpleasant/dangerous to walk along. My route avoids this.

Follow the field round until you reach a wooden stile. Over this, turn left.

Next, turn left through a metal farm gate onto a broad track which is a horse gallop. Go straight ahead following the Dales Highway arrow. At a crossroads of gallops, go straight ahead. There is a trodden path just to the left of the gallop itself which might be a safer alternative!

At the next fork, go left, passing under some power lines and almost immediately, fork right off the gallops, soon passing another Dales Highway arrow.

Walk straight ahead past Birch Close cottages and follow the drive.

When reaching the tarmac, turn left (SE 139408).

As the metalled track turns left towards the embankment of Weecher Reservoir, at a 'T' junction, we leave the Dales Highway to avoid the road. Go fractionally right and through a slit stile on the left (SE 138420). This almost faces you at the junction. Down the steps at the far side of the stile, cross the stream via a metal bridge, then go over another stile.

The path may be a little indistinct but head for the diagonally opposite corner of the field where there is a stone stile. Cross this and follow the right hand boundary initially. As the wall kinks right, at a gateway, keep straight on to follow the wall ahead, to the road.

Cross with care and go through a stile following the direction of a public footpath fingerpost across the moor on an obvious path (SE 138425).

The path rises gently for just over half a mile, to meet a wall at a stile marking Horncliffe Well (SE 132433). The route continues straight ahead, not over the stile but it is worth going over briefly to look at the stone marker for the well and to examine the boundary stone which is part of the stile. There are the remains of a building too.

Returning to the original route. Pass through a walkers' gate where a sign informs that you are entering Burley Moor.

At SE128443, join a broad track by a large round topped milestone and turn right. (You have to look at the rear of the stone to see the writing. There is also a bench mark used at one time by Ordnance Survey to measure altitudes, relative to known exact heights). Looking behind you, there are good views across the Aire Valley and in good visibility, the Emley Moor transmitter can clearly be seen on the horizon.

At a junction of tracks, turn left.

Arrive at the Twelve Apostles stone circle and just beyond, the Lanshaw Lad boundary stone (SE 125452). Follow the descending path to the right of Lanshaw Lad. The path is now extensively paved.

After crossing a small stream, the path forks. Go left.

You arrive at a crossroads of tracks from where there is a good view of Ilkley and the Wharfe Valley. Go straight on.

As you start to descend a rougher section of track, part man made steps and part rocks, the buildings of White Wells appear below. Continue to follow the path down to them. Have a look at the bath house if open.

From White Wells, there are a number of choices of paths to Ilkley. My choice was to cross in front of the buildings and take the small path down from the front left hand side of the buildings (as viewed from the front).

This path brings you down some steps by the boating pool to Wells Road (SE 118472). Turn right here and follow the road down into Ilkley. This brings you out virtually opposite the train and bus stations.

