

Abbey Village West & North

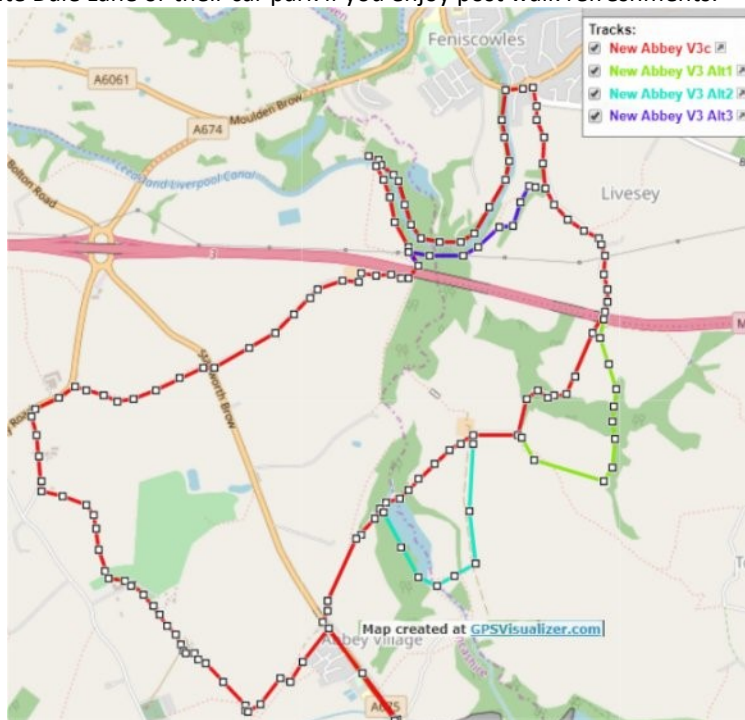
There are many documented walks starting from Abbey Village, mainly involving the reservoirs and perhaps Tockholes.

This 6.7 mile walk takes a less common direction to follow less known paths west and north of Abbey Village to the edge of Blackburn.

One stretch of the originally intended route is now so overgrown as to only be viable only by the adventurous, and replaced with some more tarmac walking. So a number of variations are offered which together reduce the tarmac to a lesser amount but add 0.45 & 0.4 miles. The outward part of the walk is mainly over fields and farm tracks, while the return involves a towpath and a distance on quiet roads. The variations are largely over fields.

Generally the underfoot conditions are reasonable but probably easiest when the fields are fairly dry. There are a couple of short stretches that could be somewhat soggy in poor weather.

The walk actually starts from the north west end of Abbey Village near the entrance to the Withnell Local Nature Trail but there is only space for a couple of cars nearby. The start point suggested here is by the Hare & Hound either in the opposite Dale Lane or their car park if you enjoy post walk refreshments.



It is important to always be appropriately dressed for the conditions and carry, and know how to use, a suitable map for the walk.

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1: SD 643224 Wherever parked, head north west along the main street (A675, left in this picture) towards the other end of the village (1/3rd mile/550m). Find a footpath running down the right hand side of the Naga restaurant.



2: SD 640228 Turn left up this path which after 290yds(260m) reaches a bridge, on the right, over a disused railway. Cross the bridge and immediately turn left. After 160yds(145m) the path splits. Bear Right angling away from the disused railway on the degrading path.

In 80yds(70m) a corner is reached. Look for a stile on the right. It's rather concealed in the corner beside an old stone gatepost.



3: SD 636224 Cross the stile into the field and turn left to follow the fence on the left. The route will continue in this approximate direction (NW) for more than 3/4mile(1200m).

First at the next field boundary there is a stile beside a tree in the left hand corner. After 110yds(100m) there is a gap in the fence (collapsed stile/gate at this time).



4: SD 634226 Go through the opening but continue in the same direction with the fence on your right. Shortly some farm buildings are reached. At this time there is construction work in progress.

5: SD 633227 There is a kissing gate near the top left hand of this picture. Go through it and bear a little right (over more construction?) to continue in the original direction beside the fence. At the end of the field find the (double) stile in the corner.



6: SD 632229 Cross the stile and immediately cross the second stile on the right leading onto the driveway of the house. Turn left and in 155yds (140m) the driveway to the golf club is reached. Turn left on this concrete road to promptly find an entrance (labelled "Service").



7: SD 631230 Turn right into this road and then enter the car park on the left and head towards the exit at top right of the car park to find a green sign to Hole 1 and Hole 10.



8: SD 630230 turn right towards Hole 10 tee and continue straight past it towards some trees (fence on left). It will look as if there is no way through but hunt around.





9: SD 630230 Buried in the trees is a vague path that continues with the fence on the left. At the next field boundary there is a stile offset to the left but continuing in the same direction. Continue (220yds/200m) in the same direction to find a gate/stile at a bit of an angle.



10: SD 629233 Go through the gate or stile and bear left heading (nearly W) through the two trees beyond with the fence on the left. NOTE: this was somewhat boggy but could be circumvented going around to the right of the boggy bit. In 150yds(135m) another gate is reached. Continue through this to promptly find another gate.



11: SD 628234 This gate had a footpath access at the right. It was necessary to lift away and replace some wire mesh to squeeze through the rather overgrown entrance.

Continue on the walled path past the house to find a road just beyond the wall of the house.



12: SD 627234 Turn right and follow the road to reach Chorley Road in 340yds(310m). Turn right onto Chorley Road staying on the right hand pavement. Shortly the road bears left and just before it straightens out again, search for some steps up to a stile that is somewhat buried in the hedge.

13: SD 628239 Cross the stile and head directly away from it to another stile/footbridge that should be visible directly ahead. Cross that stile into more open fields.



14: SD 629239 Head towards the middle of two trees directly ahead. On passing through them head slightly right to find a footbridge & gate.



15: SD 630238 Pass through the gate and head 1/4 mile (400m) towards the far right corner of the field where there is a gate. Perhaps note the good views to the left.
Caution: the gate at the end of the field leads directly onto the busy A675 at a partly blind corner and limited grass verge.



16: SD 635240 Pass through the gate and cross the road to the footpath directly opposite. Follow this farm driveway for almost 1/2 mile (800m) to a farm gate and enjoy the wide views on the way.





17: SD 640244 On reaching the farm buildings find the little wooden gate between a wall and a main gate. Go through this and continue down the driveway past the house and follow it around the left of the house.

It looks like a dead end but go all the way to the tree at the end opposite the barn and cross the stone stile into the field on the right.



18: SD 642244 Head down the hill with the fence on the left to reach a crossing path and turn left to pass through two gates/stiles under the motorway.



19: SD 644244 As you exit from under the motorway, immediately ahead are two signposted stiles. DO NOT cross them.

(they do lead to a shortcut along the canal that re-joins this walk at Point 23 -can be muddy)

The formal footpath goes left uphill and then right back down. However, continue near the fence on the right for 1/4mile(400m) to reach a canal bridge.



20: SD 642249 This is the Leeds & Liverpool canal. This is also about halfway around the walk so perhaps a good stopping place.

When ready, the walk continues to the right (East) by going left over the bridge and back under the bridge.

Follow the towpath as it curves to the left and after more than 3/4mile(1200m) reaches bridge 93B under the A6062 on the edge of Blackburn.

21: SD 648252 Go under the bridge and then left up the ramp onto the road. Turn left (east) and walk to the nearby roundabout.



22: SD 649253 Cross the road and go up the road to the right (Horden Rake). However, when this almost immediately bears left, continue straight on the smaller road (Stockclought Lane). Follow this lane for 1/4 mile (400m) to meet a Y junction.



23: SD 650248 This is where the shortcut mentioned in **Point 19** rejoins this walk. Continue on the road on the left for another 1/4 mile (400m) to the entrance to Little Acorns playgroup.



24: SD 652245 The walk continues along the road. **(NOTE: If you are particularly adventurous, the stile on the right leads past a shooting area and down into the valley to meet this walk at Point 26. As that path approaches the motorway it is very overgrown and barely manageable. Near the motorway do Not cross the stile to the left but stay with the fence.)**





25: SD 653242 In 350yds(320m) a tunnel under the motorway is reached and immediately on the exit is a road to the left to Higher Whitehagh Farm.

This is the start of a major variation which is defined from **Point 34** and rejoins the current road at **Point 27**.

The current walk continues straight ahead along the road and downhill and in just over 1/4mile (400m) crosses a bridge.



26: SD 649239 The broken stile on the right is where the heavily overgrown alternative from **Point 24** re-joins this walk.

Continue as the road bears left and uphill to meet a junction in 200yds(180m) and turn right.



27: SD 649237 This is where the major variation from **Point 25** re-joins the main walk from left and behind. Continue up this road and turn left at the farm to reach a set of three gates.



28: SD 647237 Formally the route goes to the right beside the second gate . If that's, easy to go through the fencing and head 45deg right, otherwise continue through the next two gates onto the open field and turn back on yourself at about 45deg right. In both cases look for the stile between two trees in the nearby fence line.

Note: there is another variation starting here and defined at **Point 41**

29: SD 646236 Cross the stile and head half left (south west) towards a tree line hiding a valley. As a guide, head towards the Tower of a church in the distance. As you approach the tree line look for a path post for the route.



30: SD 646234 The entrance to the valley is not obvious, you may have to hunt a bit to find this post. The post leads to some steps beside a wooden fence going down into the valley. **Note:** these can be very muddy & slippery. Continue down to reach a reservoir.



NOTE this /\ is from the wrong side

31: SD 643234 Go through the gate beside the reservoir and across the outflow bridge and follow the path up to a road.

Note: one of the variations comes around the other side of the reservoir.



32: SD 642233 The road is just the parking area for the reservoir fishermen. Turn left and pass over the stile beside a metal gate. This road will lead back into Abbey Village after 1/3rd mile (550m).

Note: The alternative of going the other way around the reservoir meets the main route here. See **Point 41**





33: SD 640228 The path reaches the village opposite where the walk properly started beside the signs to the Nature Reserve. If you parked at/near the Hare & Hounds, turn left and walk through the village.

----- **The End of the Main Route.**-----

-----**Next is the Main Variation.**-----



34: SD 653242 This is the road junction beside the motorway tunnel (**Point 25** above).

Turn right and immediately left towards the farm. (Ignore the footpath on the left running beside the motorway.) Go through the first gate and head diagonally across the forecourt to find a pair of gates at either end of a walled path.



35: SD 652241 Go through both gates into a field. The path formally goes straight ahead to the left of a large tree and then bends right towards the far right corner of the field near a building.

Look for a part stone part wooden stile rather hidden under a tree a bit right of a building (meeting hut?).



36: SD 753238 Cross the stile and head fairly steeply downhill through trees to find a bridge over the stream.

37: SD 653237 Cross the bridge and the route is straight ahead up the slope. However a fallen tree may force you to the right through tall undergrowth. The area is used by cross country motorcycles so it is best to keep near the wall at the left. Near the top of the slope there is some rope and a notice to the cyclists to get under.



38: SD 653237 Continue to the top of the slope and then continue in the same direction parallel to the fence on the left. Shortly pass through a gate to be between the stream and a fence on the right. After 280yds(250m) The fence turns hard right.



39: SD 653234 Looking to the right there are farm buildings. Formally the path continues beside the stream for some yds and then turns at right angles directly towards the farm. Head 350yds(320m) to the farm, crossing one stile on the way, and looking for the metal gate and footbridge.



40: SD 650235 Pass through the gate and pass through the farm buildings diagonally towards the right. Follow the driveway out of the farm to shortly find a junction. The road coming in from the right is the main route. Continue left to be at **Point 27**.

---- End of Main Variation-----



----- Alternate Route Around Reservoir-----

41: SD 647237 At **Point 28** above the main route heads right towards the reservoir. An option is to continue through the three gates into the open field. Continue further passing through another gate to arrive at an (open?) gate at a tree line.



42: SD 647231 Ensure this is the correct gate. There should be a stile 80yds(70m) to the right. Turn right along the fence and cross over this stile. Continue in the same direction which shortly heads downhill. The reservoir soon appears on the right But continue directly down the slope, **Not** towards the reservoir, to find a bridge a bit hidden in trees.



43: SD 645230 Cross the bridge and turn immediately right to find another (muddy?) bridge in the trees. Pass over this bridge where the path weaves right to pass through an old fence. The formal footpath should go diagonally up to the left but instead only seems to head towards the reservoir.



44: SD 644231 A managed path appears (for the fishers) and follows along the reservoir side towards the dam. Just before the dam the path bears left uphill to a road and parking area. See **Point 32**



---- End of Variation.-----

Developed by: Eric Crichton
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