

Safety in the hills

Whilst none of these walks are dangerous, walkers are responsible for their own safety and are reminded of the importance of being fully prepared for walking on the fells. Appropriate footwear is essential. The weather can change quickly and it is advisable to carry warm clothing and wet weather gear, along with adequate food and drink. Rivers and becks can flood rapidly after heavy rain. A mobile phone can be extremely useful, should an emergency arise, and it is a good idea to let someone know where you are intending to walk. Dogs should be kept under proper control particularly during lambing time and during the late spring and early summer mating season of ground-nesting birds. Please follow the countryside code and take your litter home.

Weathercall: To obtain the latest weather report for this walk call 09068 500 419 and enter the code 1903 when prompted. Calls cost 60p/min from a UK landline, mobile charges may vary.

Directions

From the M6, leave at J37 signposted Sedbergh A684. Dent is a further 5 miles from Sedbergh.

From West Yorkshire, leave the A65 at Kirkby Lonsdale, heading north on the A683 towards Sedbergh. At Barbon Village look for signs to Dent.

From the A1, exit at Northallerton and head west on A684 towards Leyburn and Hawes. At Hawes take the B6255 towards Ingleton, looking out for the junction to Dent.

By Rail: Trains from Leeds and Carlisle to Dent Station. Please note Dent Station is 4 miles from Dent Village.

By Bus: Service 564A, Kendal-Sedbergh-Dent (limited service).

Walking in Dentdale

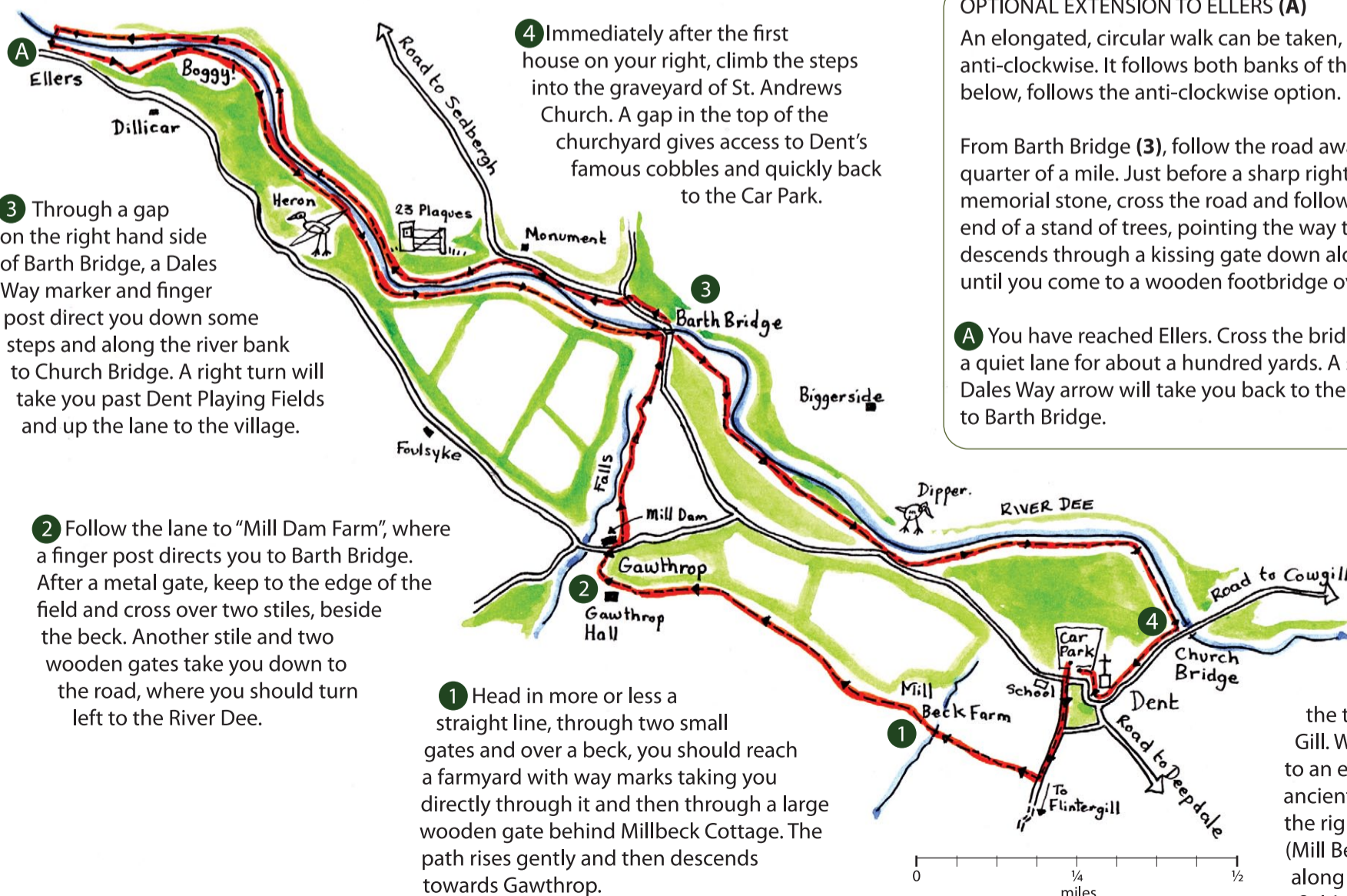
Gorgeous Gawthrop

Easy

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Gorgeous Gawthrop - Quick Guide



3 Through a gap on the right hand side of Barth Bridge, a Dales Way marker and finger post direct you down some steps and along the river bank to Church Bridge. A right turn will take you past Dent Playing Fields and up the lane to the village.

2 Follow the lane to "Mill Dam Farm", where a finger post directs you to Barth Bridge. After a metal gate, keep to the edge of the field and cross over two stiles, beside the beck. Another stile and two wooden gates take you down to the road, where you should turn left to the River Dee.

1 Head in more or less a straight line, through two small gates and over a beck, you should reach a farmyard with way marks taking you directly through it and then through a large wooden gate behind Millbeck Cottage. The path rises gently and then descends towards Gawthrop.

4 Immediately after the first house on your right, climb the steps into the graveyard of St. Andrews Church. A gap in the top of the churchyard gives access to Dent's famous cobbles and quickly back to the Car Park.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION TO ELLERS (A)

An elongated, circular walk can be taken, either clockwise or anti-clockwise. It follows both banks of the River Dee. The route below, follows the anti-clockwise option.

From Barth Bridge (**3**), follow the road away from Dent for a quarter of a mile. Just before a sharp right hand bend there is a memorial stone, cross the road and follow the finger post at the end of a stand of trees, pointing the way to Mire House. A path descends through a kissing gate down alongside the river. Follow until you come to a wooden footbridge over the river.

A You have reached Ellers. Cross the bridge and turn right along a quiet lane for about a hundred yards. A stile on the left with its Dales Way arrow will take you back to the river bank, follow back to Barth Bridge.

START

Head up the lane to the left of the Memorial Hall past the village green. Follow a finger post at the top of the green to Flinter Gill. When the cottages come to an end you should find an ancient metal kissing gate on the right. Follow its direction (Mill Beck) onto a faint path along the bottom of a sloping field.

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Walking in Dentdale

Gorgeous Gawthrop

Route: 3 miles / 1¼ hours / Easy (with optional extension to Ellers: 5½ miles / 2¼ hours)

Start/Finish: Dent Parish Council Car Park at SD 703871 on OS Explorer OL2 map.

This delightful amble manages to pack in a variety of terrain and points of interest, taking in traditional farmhouses, the lovely hamlet of Gawthrop and a series of little waterfalls. It continues along a popular stretch of the Dales Way, beside the River Dee and concludes with an interesting diversion through St. Andrews churchyard. More ambitious walkers could add an extra section down the dale, taking in both sides of the Dee.

Head up the lane to the left of the School and Memorial Hall to Dragon Croft and the village green. Follow a finger post at the top of the green which directs you to Flintergill. The delights thereof belong to other walks, for as the cottages come to an end and just after a little stone water trough set into the wall on the right, you should find an ancient metal kissing gate, also on the right. Follow its direction (Mill Beck) onto a faint path along the bottom of a sloping field with views of The Howgills and Rise Hill opening up before you.

For a while the route becomes a little boggy and indistinct at times, but if you head in more or less a straight line, through two small rickety gates and over a tumbling beck, you should reach the farmyard of Millbeck with way marks taking you directly through it (listen out for plenty of woofs!) and then through a large wooden gate behind Millbeck Cottage. Clearer now, the path begins to rise gently.

1. Immediately after a second metal gate, a grassy knoll on your right conceals a beautifully positioned new bench (2008). With lovely views back over Dent village, this makes a pleasant place to break your walk for a few minutes before cresting the rise for some lovely views the other way. On a clear day, it is possible to make out the eastern edge of the Lakeland Fells in the far distance, with the ridge of Barbondale and rugged Combe Scar much closer on your left. Soon you begin to descend towards a collection of cottages and farmhouses which make up the picturesque hamlet of Gawthrop. This rather strange place-name is believed to derive from the Old Norse word "gawke", meaning cuckoo. Until relatively recently "Cuckoo village" could even boast a shop and café. The first inhabited building you come to is the imposing-looking "Gawthrop Hall", whose fine stone-mullioned windows are evidence of its 16th and 17th century origins.

2. In the middle of Gawthrop, in front of its sign, there used to be a dam and a corn mill. Your route takes you down the lane and around "Mill Dam Farm", where a finger post directs you to Barth Bridge. After a metal gate, walkers are requested to keep to the edge of the field, across two wobbly stiles, beside Oliver Gill. A series of waterfalls make this an attractive little stretch of the walk, unless there has been an uncharacteristic dry spell and the beck has disappeared beneath its limestone bed. Another stile and two wooden gates take you down to the road, where you should turn left for fifty yards and reach the River Dee and Barth Bridge.

3. A small gap on the right hand side of Barth Bridge, a Dales Way marker and finger post direct you down some stone steps and along the river bank to Hippins. On this lovely section, keen-eyed walkers can oftenspot black and white dippers, bobbing up and down on little rocks. Kingfishers, too, have been sighted here, flashing arrow straight above the water. At an obvious bend in the river, just before a series of gates

and little footbridges, the Megger Stones can be spotted on the skyline straight ahead. On the other side of the river, across the aptly nicknamed "Flood Lane", and slightly up the fell side stands an imposing Grade 1 Listed farmhouse, named Biggerside, complete with its massive round chimneys, more reminiscent of the Lake District.

After a very brief detour back on the road at Hippins, the route returns to the river bank. With the long ridge of Whernside, dominating the skyline, the Dales Way reaches Church Bridge. A right turn will take you past Dent Playing Fields (home to cricket, football and the Dentdale Show) and up the lane to the village.

4. Immediately after the first house on your right (Eastview), climb seven stone steps and into the graveyard of St. Andrews Church. This little shortcut takes you past the beautifully maintained church with its rich history stretching back to the 13th century. You pass several interesting gravestones, including some very ancient ones against the South wall of the church on your right. A gap in the top of the churchyard gives access to Dent's famous cobbles and quickly back to the Car Park.

Optional Extension to Ellers

From Barth Bridge, an elongated, circular walk can be taken, either clockwise or anti-clockwise. It follows both banks of the River Dee for almost all of its length. There is a good deal of wildlife to be seen, as this seems to be a favourite haunt of herons and several species of ducks and grebes. A pair of raucous oystercatchers have made their home somewhere in the river bank. Younger ramblers may be interested to spot and work out the designs of 23 bronze plaques, on gateposts and bridges, made for the Millennium by the children of Dent Primary School, in partnership with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. The route below, follows the anti-clockwise option.

From Barth Bridge, follow the road away from Dent for a quarter of a mile. Exotic animals such as llamas, alpacas and soay sheep have been known to graze in the fields along here. Just before a sharp right hand bend, a handsome memorial stone, erected in 1878, by the "grateful inhabitants of Dent" commemorates a certain Lucy Elam, who apparently re-routed the road at this point. Cautiously listening for oncoming traffic, cross the road from the memorial and follow a finger post at the end of a stand of trees, pointing the way to Mire House. A path descends through a kissing gate (with the first bronze plaque) down to a raised path alongside the river. Although a little rough and boggy in places, this is a fine section of the walk, with the river close at hand and lovely views across to Helm's Knott on the right.

When a substantial wooden footbridge over the River Dee comes into view, you have reached Ellers. Cross the bridge, looking out for plaques, of course, and admire the quaint old farmhouse with its name upon the block of stone from an old cheese press. Turn right along a quiet lane for about a hundred yards looking for a stile on the left with its Dales Way arrow, visible across a rough verge. You will be fortunate if the edge of the field beyond the stile does not resemble a quagmire as you pick your way across to rejoin the river bank. From here, all the way back to Barth Bridge is a riverside delight. Of particular note is the plaque placed by the side of a tiny bridge and gate across the famous "Dent Fault". This geological phenomenon was first recognised by Dent's most famous son, Adam Sedgwick. More of him can be learned on your return to the village.

