

# Heritage Walk

## Cow and Calf



explore and conserve

Original artwork by Angie Rogers, 2010



**Heritage Walk**  
**Cow and Calf**

© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. 100019304

# Heritage Walk

## Cow and Calf

*This walk only takes about an hour and takes you from the popular parking place at the Cow & Calf Rocks to the quieter areas beyond. It is very easy underfoot, on a good but rough path which has muddy patches after rain.*

Start at the Cow and Calf Car park. Ahead of you is the old quarry with the Cow and Calf rocks to the right. A paved path leads up to the quarry entrance - this was the route that was originally used to extract the quarried rock. Follow this until just before the quarry entrance you take a smaller paved path which branches off left. It is worth having a look into the quarry before you continue. The path rises and after a few minutes levels out on a flat grassy area at Waypoint 1.

**Waypoint 1** Straight uphill to the ridge and quarry. Turn right on the main path, pass the quarry and turn left you'll see your path heading up the slope ahead to a low hill with a pile of stones. The path is not paved from here and so can be muddy, particularly the next 100 metres. The path soon drops slightly and you come to the rocky stream of Backstone Beck - Waypoint 2.

**Waypoint 2** Several paths meet here and you need to take the one leading from the stream up towards the pile of stones on top of the cliffs on your right. The path is very eroded and you'll find yourself in more of a trench than on a path. You can look over the edge of the cliff to the area below known as Rocky Valley and beyond that there are views across Ilkley and the Wharfe Valley. You soon reach the pile of stones Waypoint 3 before the rise with another pile of stone on the top.

**Waypoint 3** Turn left here on to a well made path. This is known as Dick Hudson's path as it leads to Dick Hudson's pub about two hours away. If you follow the path to the right it takes you to White Wells where you can get a cup of tea if the flags are flying, but it is a long way down and back. The path crosses open moorland and ahead you'll see the moor stretching into the distance. For a few hundred metres the path rises gently and then drops to a small stream at Gill Head - Waypoint 4.

**Waypoint 4** 10 yards before the stream (Backstone Beck) turn left here and follow the stream down. You'll pass a ruined hut which was part of the water works, gathering water for Ilkley's supply. As you return towards Backstone Beck look out for a cup and ring stone on the path. Pass cup and ring stone at SE 127 463 to the left of the path. At the crosspaths turn right down to the canalised stream.



Continue on this path and after 400 metres you arrive back at the stream crossing at Waypoint 2. If necessary you can make a quick return by the same path as earlier, but it is more interesting to cross the stream and follow the path which goes down on the right hand bank. The stream drops into a small gorge past the Crocodile Rock and you'll see a splendid variety of ferns and other shade loving plants on the cliffs on the far side. After 150 metres the path swings right up a rocky bank and you find yourself looking into the end of Hangingstone Quarry at Waypoint 5.

**Waypoint 5** The quarry covers a large area but is quite shallow. There are several paths to the right most go in the right direction but the best is to drop down slightly and follow the upper edge of the trees. After 100 metres you reach the old entrance to the quarry - an old cobbled path leading downhill to your left. At this point you need to go up to the top of the quarry or you find that you have to drop down below the Cow & Calf rocks. At the top you find an area of flat rock covered in carvings at Waypoint 6.

**Waypoint 6** Some of these carvings are recent but some are Bronze Age (BC 2500-750). Their meaning is unknown, although there are many theories. Perhaps they are star charts or maps, perhaps they are rock art. Below you to your left are cliffs and so follow the path round. You'll pass the top of the main quarry and arrive back at Waypoint 1. From here it is just two minutes down to the car park and a cup of tea, or three minutes to the Cow & Calf Hotel across the road.



Help conserve Ilkley Moor by becoming a member of the FoIM. To join, use the membership form on our website.

[www.ilkleymoer.org](http://www.ilkleymoer.org)

