

Otley Riverside Walk

The highlight of this walk is the pair of dining room chairs someone has kindly left for walkers to sit on whilst they relax by the riverside. (Assuming they're still there)

This is a pleasant late summer walk on both sides of the river, passing the bowling green, the riverside Lido (disused), a childrens playpark, the weir which once served a mill, the relatively new Archimedes screw power generator, the Gallows Hill nature reserve, and Tittybottle Park(!)

Approach Otley from either the Leathley area (via Farnley Lane), or from Pool Bank on the A659). The Leathley route is ideal for people living in the Beckwithshaw, Harlow, Rossett, and Burn Bridge areas. Park on Mill Lane/ Garnetts Grove, where there is ample safe parking.

Walk back along Mill Lane and Tittybottle Park, turn right to cross the bridge, and take a little footpath into the riverside area. In this area you will notice the row of houses not much back from the river and not much higher than it. I'm not aware of any recent flooding.

Continue walking east on tarmac paths to pass the bowling green, old lido, play-park, and grassed parkland. At the footbridge, cross over to the south bank and continue walking by the riverside through Gallows Hill nature reserve, which is a wetland but hopefully not too muddy on the gravel paths. Do not cross over the stile, but turn right into the nature reserve and turn west in the vicinity of the pond.

More information about the community orchard and the history of the area can be found here:

<http://gallowshill.org.uk/about/history>

After a short distance you come to a small carpark at the end of Gallows Hill, where you turn right to walk north through the carpark towards the river. Continue walking west along the riverside and come to the bridge you crossed earlier.

Do not cross.

This is an area of pleasant newly-constructed stone houses, which you walk past before coming to the old mill, which has been redeveloped as apartments. By the riverside, there is a fairly recent hydro-power development in the form of twin Archimedes screws, fed from what was the mill race. Who says that renewable energy is maintenance free?

As part of the housing development, a new piazza has been constructed and, when we're allowed to use it, there is a nice coffee shop and restaurant "Buon Apps", which has a river lounge:

<https://www.buonappsotley.com>. The photo displayed on the Buon Apps website shows tree trunks and suchlike in the background, obscuring the mill race at the hydro power plant – the route of choice for tree trunks.

Your car will be parked here somewhere.

For people who would like a longer walk, you can take a chance, since it should be possible to continue on the north side of the river at the bridge mentioned above – see the extension map.