

Walk 1-S Melmerby & The Glen local walk

Melmerby village
and local beck-side
woodland

Distance:

1½ miles (2.4 km) estate loop

1¼ miles (2.0 km) village loop

Cumulative Height

150 ft.

Our rating: Easy

Local services: Melmerby has 'The Village Bakery' and 'Melmerby Stores and Tearoom': both providing refreshments and shop facilities. It has sporadic public transport. Church: St John the Baptist C of E.

Start grid: NY611373

Map: OS Explorer OL31
North Pennines Teesdale and
Weardale

This walk begins at the arched gateway to Melmerby Hall. It firstly has a looped section within 'The Glen' - the private wooded valley of Melmerby Beck which forms a part of the Rowley Estate. A second loop then uses public paths and local roads in and around Melmerby village and green.

Melmerby is a village of Norse origin whose name means 'Farmstead or village of a man called Maelmuire'. The village with its extended green, sits at the foot of the North Pennines astride one of England's most scenic major roads (McAdam constructed A686) which leads up to the summit of Hartside.

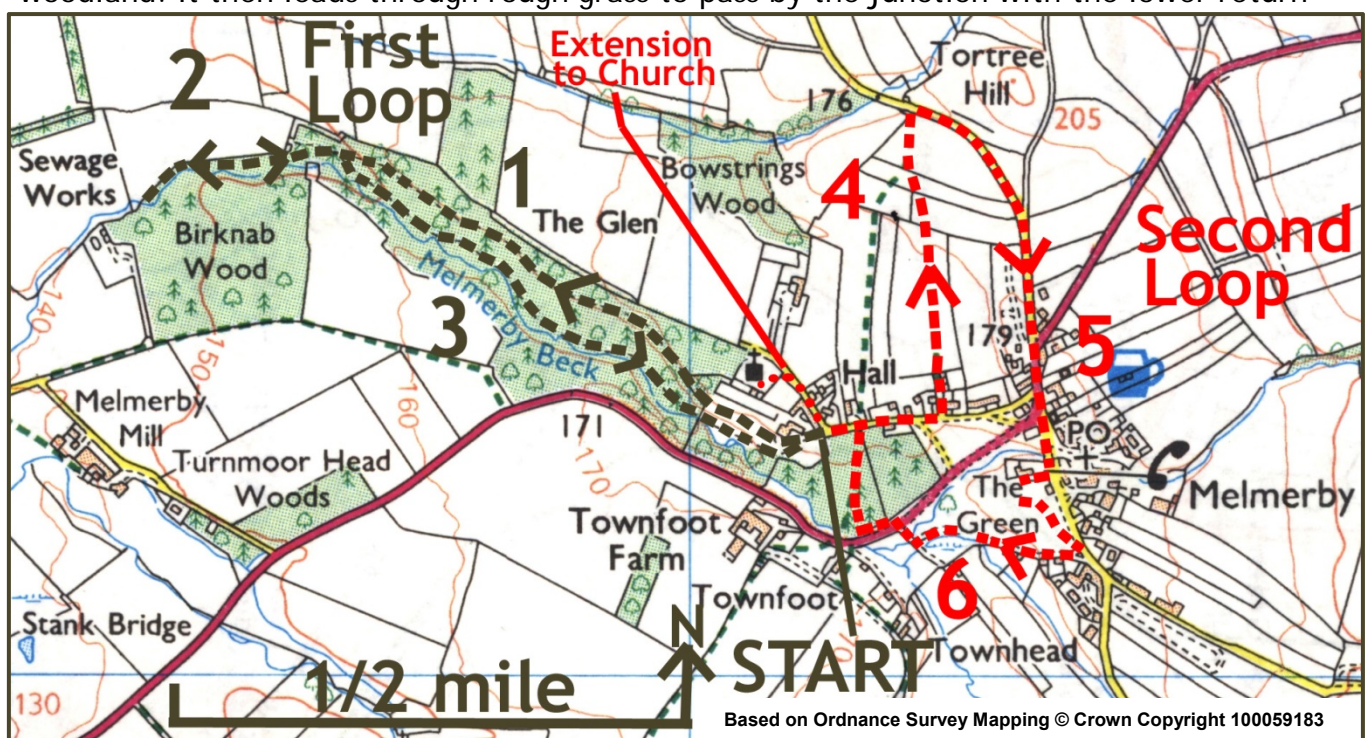
The Walk

The First Loop - The Glen

Note: This loop of the walk is over private estate land and is only available for guests at Melmerby Hall, Kirkbride Hall and Stag Cottage.

1. Commence the walk from the Melmerby Hall gateway and proceed down the drive, across the front apron and onto the wall lined archery lawn. Keep ahead along the length of this lawn and leave through

a small gate ahead into the woodland of The Glen. *The Glen is the quite deeply incised valley of Melmerby Beck, which flows into the River Eden near Little Salkeld to the west. This wooded valley is characterised by a mix of native broad leaf trees (some quite old) and some plantation evergreens. In season you will experience banks of bluebells and fern ground cover.* Continue along a clear path through the trees atop the steep slope above the beck. After a short distance a secondary path descends left diagonally down to the foot of the valley. Don't follow this path, except to shorten the walk but continue ahead on the main path, keeping on the flat amongst the trees. This path eventually drops downhill as it nears the end of 'The Glen' section of woodland. It then leads through rough grass to pass by the junction with the lower return



path (which should be noted). It then reaches a fence immediately alongside Melmerby Beck, where there is a narrow girder bridge for use by farm and forestry workers.

2. Don't cross the beck but continue on, immediately alongside the water course, the path now being within the edge of Birknab Wood. After about 300 yards the path finishes at the woodland edge. Turn around here and retrace your steps back to the narrow girder bridge. Veer away from the bridge and Beck through the grass to the path junction passed earlier. **Note: The lower path to the right may be wet in places so as an alternative you may prefer to retrace your steps back to Melmerby Hall along the outward route.**

3. Turn right at the junction along a winding path that keeps within the valley bottom. Keep along this path but don't cross the beck. In part the route will leave the close woodland and may be wet and muddy. It eventually rises up alongside the hedge beside the archery lawn comes and emerges from woodland on the downside of the lawn in front of Melmerby Hall. Veer left and cross the lawn to the drive then turn right to reach the arched gateway and the end of the first loop.

The Second Loop - Melmerby Village and Green

4. With your back to Melmerby Hall proceed ahead along the village street to reach the village green. Keep ahead at a road junction then turn off the road to the left along an enclosed track between dwellings just past Summer Cottage and in advance of the clock tower to the former school building. Pass through a gate into a field at the end of the track, then continue ahead and rise gently uphill to reach a stile set in the further wall. Climb over the stile then bear slightly left across the head of the next field to reach another stile. From here cross a third field to a further stile, then continue on to drop down to a final stile which is set in the far left corner of the fourth field. This leads on to the local Gamblesby to Melmerby road.

5. Turn right, along the road, to reach the junction with the A686 road after ¼ mile. Continue ahead, now within the village. From where the A686 turns to the right, keep ahead along the road signed to Ousby and Culgaith. Pass by the Melmerby Village Stores and cross a bridge over Melmerby Beck. Immediately after the bridge turn off the road to the right along a track beside the property 'Brook Side'. After passing by the property turn sharp left and climb to the upper level of a grassy bank, containing several seats, that overlooks the Green. Cross over the top level of this bank then drop down left back to the road at the southern corner of the green.

6. At this point turn immediately sharp right, back off the road and onto a track. This drops gently down the southern edge of the green, with houses on its left side. Continue along this track which eventually turns to a junction with the A686. Cross the road then turn left along its grass verge, with a wall now on the right side. Make for a gateway ahead at the beginning of a length of Public Footpath signed to the Village Hall. Pass through the gateway then turn immediately right and proceed gently uphill along an enclosed path through an area of woodland. Pass through a gate at the top of the rise and turn left along the village street that leads back to the Melmerby Hall gateway and the end of the walk.

You may wish to extend the walk a little by turning to the right, in front of the gateway and visiting St John the Baptist Church at the road end. This church is linked in to Melmerby Hall historically and today is regularly used for marriages for people staying and being catered for at the Hall. The C19th church stands on the site of a C13th building. In a sense the siting, looking eastwards to the North Pennines can be appreciated especially inside the church due to the installation of plain glass behind the altar which has the effect of bringing the mountain landscape into the church.