



# *Walking In...* Teesdale

## BOWES WEST CIRCULAR

START AT: BOWES CAR PARK  
OPPOSITE VILLAGE HALL

DISTANCE: 7.75 MILES

TIME: 4 HOURS

Series Walk...

# N<sup>o</sup>. 10

*A walk of 7½ miles through the picturesque village of Bowes, past Dotheboys Hall, and across the moors above the village. The return is via God's Bridge and fields and lanes on the south side of the river. Boots are essential and the route should not be tackled in poor weather conditions unless you are an experienced walker.*

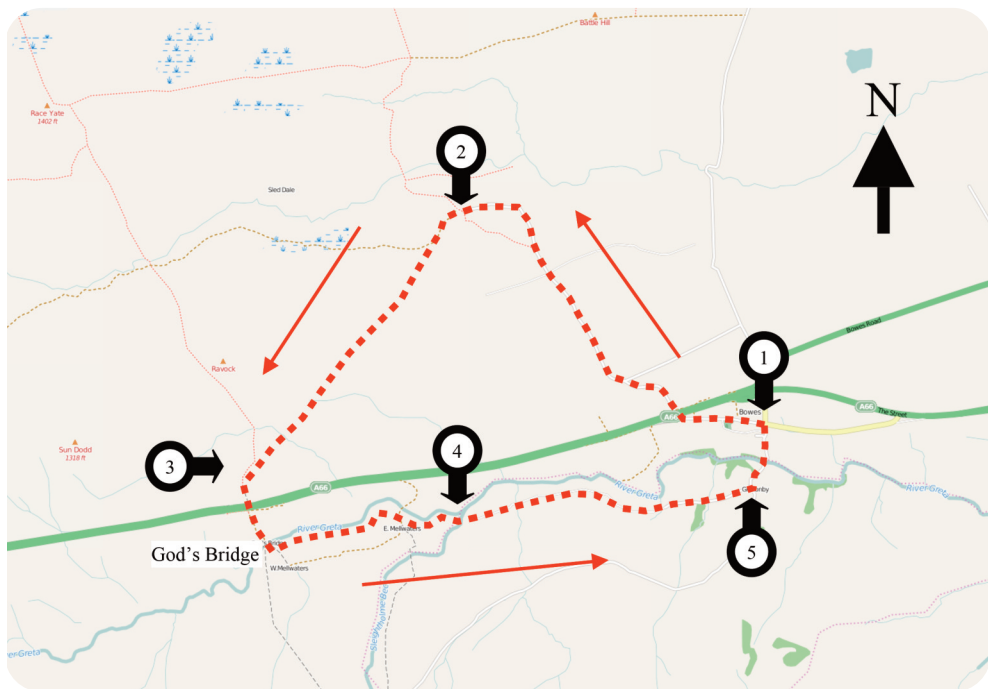
# Route Information

Outdoor Leisure Map 31

*From the free car park opposite the Village Hall, by the crossroads at the eastern end of Bowes, you will walk up through the village past St Giles Church and Bowes Castle. From there the route will take you up and over the moors, then back down under the busy A66, over the River Greta, and back via fields and lanes. This walk includes a section of rough moorland where the conditions underfoot are likely to be difficult and wet.*

From the Village Hall car park by the crossroads at the eastern end of the village(1), walk up the main street past St. Giles Church, where a detour to the left will take you to the ruins of Bowes Castle, built in 1170 on the site of an earlier Roman Fort. Continue on the main street past Dotheboys Hall, a former school used by Charles Dickens in his novel "Nicholas Nickleby" which is now in residential use. Then follow the road

to the right, over the A66, and continue up the hillside. From there you will get good views back over Bowes and the moorland beyond. Keep on the road as it bears left at the top of the hill and follow it for about 1½ miles past Ministry of Defence land. Ahead of you are extensive views of Teesdale – the distinctive white farm buildings of the Raby Estate can be seen in the distance on your right.





God's Bridge

As the road drops down, follow it round to the left until you come to the entrance to West Stoney Keld Farm(2) – keep right here to pass through a gate then turn immediately left at a fingerpost, “Public Bridleway Pasture End 2 m”. Follow the well-made track, parallel to the wall on your left, until, shortly after the wall bends away, you reach a waymark post. Turn left here off the made up track onto a grassy path towards another marker post at the top of the hill. The path from here until reaching the Pennine Way, over moorland which is registered common land, is generally not visible on the ground.

You may be able to see the patchwork effect of the different aged heather resulting from the controlled burning which encourages young shoots on which the grouse feed. Such moorland management helps to retain the habitat for birds and preserve the heather moor landscape. Birds which you might see on the moors include curlew, snipe, lapwing and oyster-catcher.

On reaching the waymark post at the top of the slope, keep bearing right towards the next marker post, and then the end of a line of stone shooting butts and a bield (a stone wall construction often T or Y

shaped in plan, built as a wind/snow break for the sheep). Keep along the edge of the slightly higher ground with the lower, wetter heather area to your left. Go past another bield, and after a wet area of rushes head towards a stone, waymarked on the opposite side. Go left here to a waymark post and then down across Rove Gill. Continue up the slope ahead, keeping the stone wall on your left, and join the Pennine Way at the corner of the wall. Turn left and go down towards the A66 road, crossing it by the underpass(3). Turn left at the end of the underpass, then right onto a farm track signposted “Pennine Way Gods Bridge”. Follow down the track, keeping to the left of the cottage and passing under the disused Barnard Castle to Kirby Stephen Railway line. Go over the natural limestone rock slab which forms God's Bridge and then go immediately left through a gate. Once through this, keep straight on along a well made footpath signposted “Bowes 2½ m”. Continue along here with the River Greta on your left, through several gates, until you reach a stone bridge over the river.

Cross the road, and keep on along the path with the river still on you left. Soon you will come to Sleightholme Beck, a tributary of the River Greta, which you cross by a footbridge(4). Bear left around the buildings of West Charity Farm and follow the Pennine Way arrows to follow a good track which becomes a road. Continue on this for about 1½ miles, passing several more farms. When you reach the road junction at Gilmonby(5), turn left along the road to cross the River Greta and continue uphill to the car park in Bowes where you began your walk.

# ENJOY WALKING IN TEESDALE

It is recommended that you take the appropriate Ordnance Survey map with you, see inside, and know how to use it. Wear suitable clothing and footwear. Whilst every effort is made to provide accurate information, walkers head out at their own risk.

If you encounter any problems with the condition of the public rights of way, please contact [prowd@durham.gov.uk](mailto:prowd@durham.gov.uk) or ring 03000 265342 with the details.

There have been various incidents in recent years involving cows. This is very often when people have a dog but this is not always the case. It is advisable not to get between a cow and its calf. The NFU advice is that if you have a dog to let it go if cows threaten you.

These leaflets are based on an earlier set of walks and thanks to all who helped with previous versions. All the routes and descriptions were walked and checked in 2020.

Thanks to; Jo Bird, Graham Young, Lynda Bares and Barnard Castle Ramblers, Sue Berresford, Alex Kaars Sijpesteijn, Visit County Durham, Chris Clark, Nicky Grace, Mike Ogden - Durham County Council.

Walk 1 Barnard Castle &  
Abbey Bridge Circular

Walk 2 Abbey Bridge &  
Whorlton Circular

Walk 3 Barnard Castle &  
Lartington Circular

Walk 4 Barnard Castle to  
Cotherstone

Walk 5 Cotherstone to  
Barnard Castle

Walk 6 Cotherstone East Circular

Walk 7 Cotherstone West Circular

Walk 8 Staindrop Circular

Walk 9 Bowes East Circular

Walk 10 Bowes West Circular

Walk 11 Barnard Castle  
& Stainton Circular

Walk 12 Barnard Castle West  
Circular. The Bridges Walk

the.  
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Leaflets and visitor information are available from  
The Witham Community Arts Centre.

Walk leaflets made available by Making Barney Brighter Together

