

Scar House Reservoir Heritage Trail



2-3
hours



4.3 / 7
Miles / KM



Moderate



Heritage/
Habitats/Scenic



© Sally Wilson

Upper Nidderdale is renowned for its stunning natural beauty. This scenic walk around Scar House Reservoir is one of a series of trails which offer the chance to enjoy the contrasting landscapes and fascinating heritage that make Upper Nidderdale such a special place. This route enables you to enjoy the remote beauty of Scar House and Angram reservoirs, appreciate the labours of the men and women who lived and worked here during the reservoirs construction, and see how innovative approaches to farming are helping vulnerable species and habitats to thrive.

PARK: Scar House Reservoir Car Park

EAT & DRINK: Studfold, How Stean, Lofthouse, Middlesmoor

SHOP: Studfold, How Stean

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Please follow the countryside code. Keep your dogs on a lead and close gates behind you.

LOOK OUT FOR SCAR VILLAGE

Take a walk back towards the entrance you drove through into the car park. You are walking across the site of 'The Terrace', a row of bungalows which housed married men and their families working on the construction of the reservoir. Just to the right of the entrance to the car park a track leads onwards through a gate. Follow the track and you will see an interpretation panel which provides further details about Scar Village. You can also stream more information about the history of the village to your smartphone from here by following the instructions on the panel. If you have the time take a walk across the site in front of you where many of the village's modern amenities were once situated.

- 1 Leave the car park through the exit next to the bungalow which houses the café and toilets. You will pass a circular dry stone 'pin fold' to your right. This contains a series of panels giving information about the reservoirs and the landscape that surrounds them. After leaving the car park, head left along the road to **Scar House Reservoir** dam wall.
- 2 When you reach the dam wall follow the road that crosses it and enjoy spectacular views to both your left and right. If you're not averse to heights, take time to look out from the viewing points half way across the dam wall. The view here illustrates the monumental scale of the construction.

LOOK OUT FOR CARLE FELL QUARRY

The wide exposed rock faces high on the hillside overlooking Scar House Reservoir from the north mark the site of Carle Fell Quarry. Over a million tons of stone was taken from here and used to construct the dam wall. Six locomotives were used in the quarry and the stone was transported down the hillside on a self-acting inclined railway, the route of which is still visible.

- 3 When you reach the end of the dam wall take the track known as Carle Fell Road that leads up the hillside to your left. The land all around you here belongs to **High Woodale Farm** which is owned by Yorkshire Water. Land on both sides of the reservoirs was bought in its entirety by Bradford Corporation in the early 20th century to establish control over the catchment area for Scar House and Angram reservoirs. In 2017 High Woodale Farm became part of the Beyond Nature programme, an innovative scheme introduced by Yorkshire Water.

- 4 After following Carle Fell Road for around a mile (1.7 km), you approach a collection of trees near a small gill that runs down the hillside to the reservoir. Look out for a flat stone to the left of the track just beyond the last gate before reaching the trees which bears the carving 'Welcome to Lodge'. A little further on you reach the remains of **Lodge** a small settlement that was abandoned shortly before Scar House Reservoir was completed. In 2016 Lodge was the site of the Upper Nidderdale Landscape Partnership's first 'Big Dig' community archaeological excavation. Take a look around the ruins and you will see more carved stones bearing the names of the ruined houses and some of the people who lived there. An interpretation panel by the side of the track provides details about the history of Lodge.
- 5 Shortly after passing through Lodge you reach a T-junction with another track. This is the old packhorse route over Dead Man's Hill into Coverdale. Turn left here and head towards the reservoir. You soon reach a gate into a sheep fold. Go through the gate and at the other end of the sheep fold follow the path towards **Angram reservoir** which leads through another gate to your right. Follow the path along the hillside above Scar House Reservoir. Both the valley sides and the water below narrow here, providing a sense of how the top of the Dale looked before the reservoirs were built. At Angram two farmsteads were submerged by the reservoir, Angram farm and Westhouses. Like Lodge, both had first been established as grange farms of Byland Abbey, as was Haden Carr which is submerged under Scar House Reservoir.
- 6 Carry on across Angram dam wall and enjoy the views across the water.

LOOK OUT FOR GREAT WHERNSIDE

As you walk across Angram dam wall Great Whernside dominates the view in front of you giving the reservoir its remote and tranquil mood. At 2310 feet (704 metres) this is the sixth highest fell in Yorkshire.

- 7 At the south eastern end of Angram dam wall turn left and follow the road down the valley that takes you back to Scar House Reservoir car park.

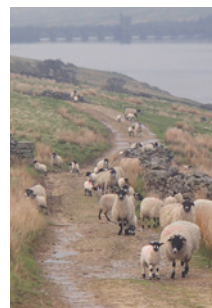




THE HAMLET OF LODGE

These atmospheric ruins are all that remain of the settlement of Lodge. This small farming community began life as a Byland Abbey monastic grange farm. But when Bradford Corporation bought the land for its Water Works Scheme the residents were asked to leave. The last occupants had left by 1929.

© Nidderdale AONB



BEYOND NATURE FARMING

Since 2017 High Woodale Farm has been a Beyond Nature farm. Beyond Nature was introduced by the landowners, Yorkshire Water, who work closely with the tenant farmer to take a more holistic approach to farming by managing habitats to encourage biodiversity, increase carbon storage and provide greater social and recreational opportunities.

© Sally Wilson



SCAR VILLAGE

A temporary village was erected to house the workers at Scar. Accommodation was provided for married men and their families as well as hostels for single men. Each had hot running water and inside toilets. At its height there were around 1250 village residents who could enjoy other amenities such as a cinema, school, gymnasium, and infirmary as well as shops including a Morrisons grocery store!

© Nidderdale Museum



ANGRAM RESERVOIR

Work on Angram reservoir began in 1904 but disruption caused by the First World War held back completion until 1917. John Best and Co. from Edinburgh were engaged to build the reservoir. Concrete pillars and huge stone blocks were used to construct the core of the dam wall. The dressed external stone blocks used on all three dam walls in the Nidd Valley scheme provide them with their distinctive look.

© Eric Moss



SCAR HOUSE RESERVOIR

Built between 1921 and 1936, Scar House is the largest of Bradford Corporations three Nidderdale reservoirs. It has a capacity of 2,200 million gallons and the dam wall is 233 feet (71 metres) high. At the time of its completion this was the highest dam wall in Britain.

© Janina Holubecki

Seasonal Features

Summer: Nesting curlews, lapwings, redshank and meadow pipit can be seen and heard around Scar House and Angram reservoirs.

Winter: The extreme weather at this high altitude can provide spectacular winter scenery. Wrap up warm though and take care on the roads!

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1 (km)