

SHORT WALKS IN NIDDERDALE



Toft Gate Heritage Trail



2-2.5
hours



5.5 / 8.8
Miles / KM



Moderate



Heritage/Habitats



© Nidderdale AONB

Upper Nidderdale is renowned for its stunning natural beauty. This scenic walk around Toft Gate 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. Along this route you will experience a range of different settings, from the industrial heritage of Toft Gate Lime Kiln to Coldstones Cut, a monumental piece of public art with spectacular views, and hear the calls of upland birds on the high pastures of Toft Gate Farm.

PARK: Toft Gate

EAT & DRINK: Pateley Bridge/Bridgehouse Gate/Toft Gate Café

SHOP: Pateley Bridge/Bridgehouse Gate

For more free Nidderdale AONB walking and cycling guides, visit our website at nidderdaleaonb.org.uk

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

1 Begin the walk from the car park at Toft Gate Lime Kiln. Take the path on the opposite side of the car park to the road and bear right. Stay on the path as it leads out onto Peat Lane, the narrow road running from Bewerley up through the Middle Tongue valley to the main Pateley Bridge to Grassington road (B6265), 20 yards (15 metres) to your right. Turn right along Peat Lane. Ignore the path to **Coldstones Cut** in front of you for now and look for a gate on your left just before you reach the junction with the B6265. Go through the gate and follow the path as it skirts around the quarry. The steep slopes which surround the quarry to your left are part of the **Coldstones Calcareous Grassland**, a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

2 When you reach the quarry entrance go through the gate and cross the B6265. Briefly head right along the B6265 and then take the tarmac track which leads down the hillside to your left. Follow the track for around 250 yards (230 metres) then take the turn to your right leading down the hill to Coldstones Fold. After a while scenic views of Laverock Hall nestled in a small secluded tree-lined valley open up to your left. Carry on along the track past Coldstones Farm until you reach a footpath leading over a cattle grid to your right.

3 Take this path and briefly follow the track to Ivin Waite Farm. Just before you reach the farm a path branches off to the right. Take this path and carry on up the hillside, keeping close by the wall on your left. You now walk through an enigmatic landscape of rough undulating pastureland with scattered boulders and disused trackways that suggest the presence of long past human activity. It is likely that this area and the adjacent Bale Bank, the hillside to your left, were sites of early mineral extraction and smelting. Stay on the path as it climbs up through two fields before reaching a third field where the hillside levels out. At the end of this field, go over a stile and through a small woodland copse to the section of the B6265 which climbs the hill from **Pateley Bridge to Greenhow**.

4 Cross the road and go through the stile at the other side. You now cross the high pastures surrounding

Toft Gate Farm with their rich **upland bird habitats** and spectacular views across Nidderdale. The path here is not easy to follow, but carry on along the right-hand edge of the first field, go through a stile and keep to the right-hand edge of the next field. At the end of this field look for a gate to your left approximately 40 yards (36 metres) in from the wall.

5 Go through the gate and head diagonally across the next field to another stile, keeping to the left of the gully which runs across the centre of the field. Go through the stile and follow Backhouse Gill, the small stream that runs along the right-hand edge of the field. Cross the stream at the corner of the field and follow a short fenced pathway that leads you to Gillbeck Farm.

6 When you reach Gillbeck Farm carry on downhill along the track in front of you. Stay on the track as it winds down the hillside, crosses the beck and climbs up the other side of the valley.

LOOK OUT FOR MIDDLE TONGUE BANK

The woodland in this secluded valley is part of a regionally significant Site of Importance for Nature Conservation owned by the Woodland Trust. Ancient birch and oak prosper here as do wild flowers and fern species, such as common sorrel, enchanter's nightshade, lesser celandine and opposite leaved golden saxifrage.

7 When you reach the top of the hillside the track joins Peat Lane. Turn right and follow the road uphill as it sweeps round to the right, back towards Toft Gate Lime Kiln approximately 1.5 miles (2.4 km) away.

LOOK OUT FOR ABANDONED QUARRIES AND SLATE MINES

The land either side of Peat Lane bears the scars of intensive stone extraction. In the late 19th century Noonstone Quarry and slate mine to the left of Peat Lane and Moorhouses Quarry down the hillside to the right both produced high quality flagstones and roofing slates

8 As you approach Toft Gate Lime Kiln you will see **Coldstones Cut** on top of the hillside that surrounds Cold Stones Quarry to your left. This remarkable piece of public art was opened in 2010 and is well worth a visit. It can be reached by taking the pathway leading up the hill to your left.





COLDSTONES CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND

A complex grassland mosaic proliferates on the slopes that surround Coldstones Quarry. Limestone bedstraw and autumn gentian can be found dotted around the hillside. There are also spoil heaps from lead mining that support characteristic calaminarian grassland species such as mountain pansy and adder's tongue fern.

© Robert Light



COLDSTONES CUT

Opened in 2010, this monumental piece of public art was created by the artist Andrew Sabin. The sculpture takes the form of a contemporary streetscape and is constructed from locally quarried stone. Its various platforms offer spectacular views across the immense Coldstones Quarry and the surrounding landscape.

© Nidderdale AONB



TOFT GATE LIME KILN

The kiln here is significantly larger than those elsewhere in the area and produced lime on an industrial scale. It was built around 1870 when quicklime was in high demand for use in the building industry and as an agricultural fertiliser. The coming of the railway to Pateley Bridge in 1863 provided access to the national rail network and some local industries attempted to profit from wider markets.

© Robert Light



UPLAND BIRD HABITATS

The fields here are rich in upland bird life. During the spring lapwings, curlews, redshank and snipe are common on these wet upland pastures.

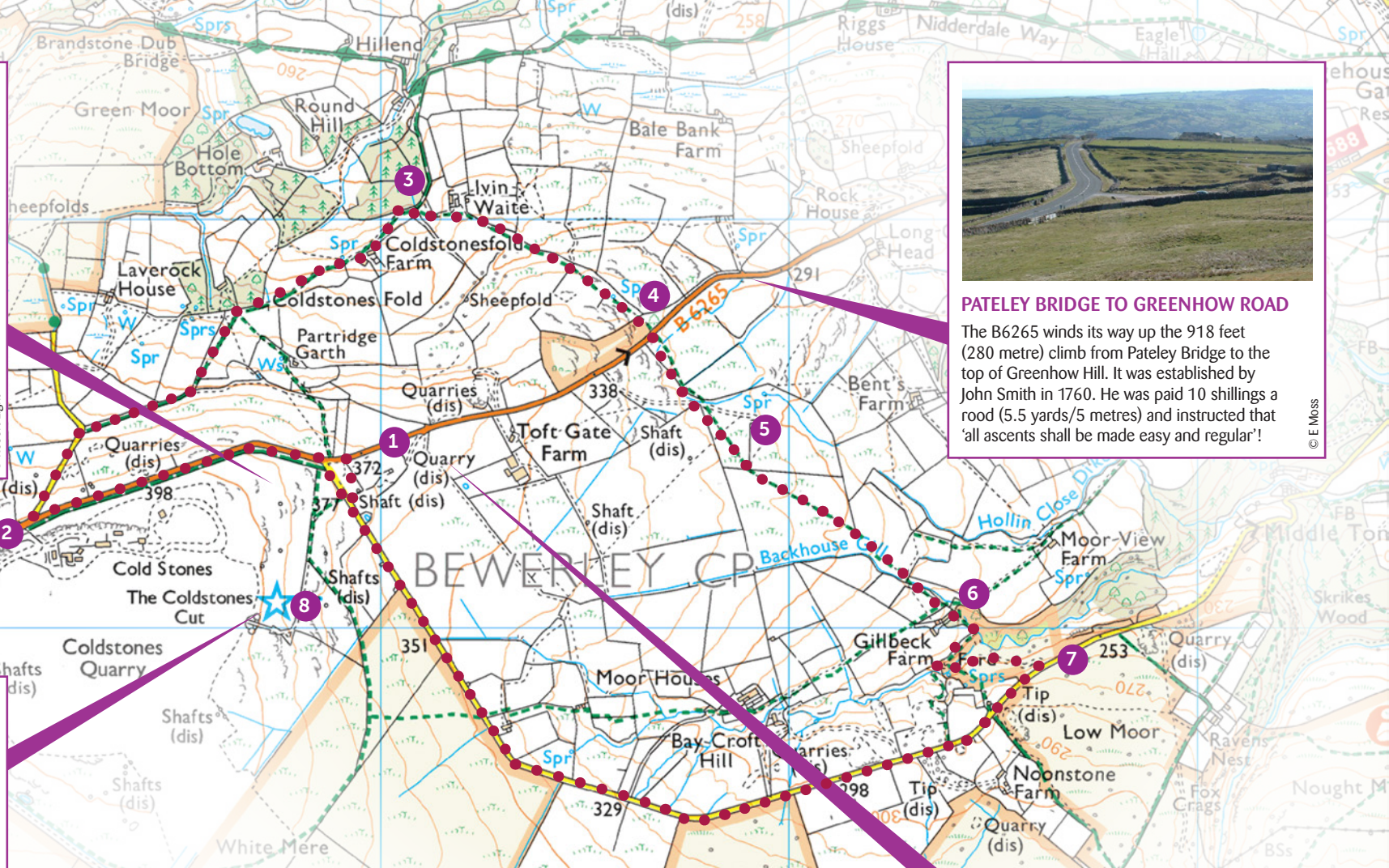
© Nidderdale AONB



PATELEY BRIDGE TO GREENHOW ROAD

The B6265 winds its way up the 918 feet (280 metre) climb from Pateley Bridge to the top of Greenhow Hill. It was established by John Smith in 1760. He was paid 10 shillings a road (5.5 yards/5 metres) and instructed that 'all ascents shall be made easy and regular'!

© E Moss



Seasonal Features

Spring: Lapwing, curlew, redshank and snipe nest in the upland pastures. Golden saxifrage blossoms in the woodland on Middle Tongue Bank.

Summer: In late summer autumn gentian and mountain pansy flower in calcareous grassland on the slopes surrounding Coldstones Quarry.

0

1 (km)