

Wark

Walk 1: Latterford - 5.5km/4 miles

Walk 2: A Warks Burn wade - 3.5 km/2½ miles

These two walks share the same outward journey and then part company to create quite different routes. One involves an adventurous crossing of the Warks Burn and the other meets up with the North Tyne.

Wark

Wark was once the capital of Tynedale in the days when this part of the world was governed by Scotland. After the Norman Conquest at Hastings, the incoming nobility developed an impressive castle, with motte (keep or stronghold) and bailey (inner courtyard) on the banks of the River North Tyne. These were the glory days when Wark was the place to hold court and saw its fair share of royalty and wealth. Similar castles were built at Gunnerton and Bellingham. A private house now stands on the old castle mound on the south side of the village.



In the long period of 1400-1600s, law and order broke down badly in this region. The village suffered from raids on its livestock and its buildings throughout a long period of civil unrest caused by a culture of 'reiving' (thieving) that had grown up in the wake of battles between the English and Scots.

Gradually, things calmed down and with improvements to security and law and order, the village grew in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The nineteenth century has seen several periods of growth in the village.

The Pinfold

About 100 metres up the Stonehaugh Road is this attractive walled enclosure. The 'pinfold' is a stray animal compound, built in the mid 19th century. The crescent moon of the Duke of Northumberland features above the doorway.



Ramshaw Mill

Taking advantage of the small gorge and regular rainfall with a large catchment area, this eighteenth century water mill ground barley, oats and wheat for farms and the nearby village. The gorge is eroding; new rock falls can be seen from the bridge. Sulphur and iron-rich springs nearby used to be visited by pilgrims on New Year's Day.

The Warks Burn

The Warks Burn begins its journey beyond Wark Forest on Great Watch Hill, drawing its peaty waters from Slatey, Peepie and Bluehemmel Sikes. Because of its huge catchment area which has an annual rainfall of over a metre of rain, the water in the burn can rise very, very rapidly. It cuts an eastward course through layers of sandstone, limestone and shales to meet the River North Tyne at Wark. The different rock hardnesses in the stream-bed give rise to gorge formation, waterfalls, crags and landslips which create stunning landforms near Wark.

Mid Tyne Community Trust



We hope you enjoy these walks from Wark. This is one of 10 leaflets available, with 18 walks in all, to help you enjoy exploring Hadrian's Wall Country in this lovely part of Northumberland.



- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Wall (2 walks) | 6 Humshaugh (3 walks) |
| 2 Wall & Chollerford (2 walks) | 7 Wark (2 walks) |
| 3 Warden Hill | 8 Wark - Warksfield Head |
| 4 Newbrough (2 walks) | 9 Stonehaugh (2 walks) |
| 5 Newbrough - Carr Edge | 10 Fourstones (2 walks) |

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Walk 1 : Latterford


Length: 5.5 km/3½ miles

Allow: 1 hour 30 mins

This route climbs steadily onto the valley side above Wark to Low Moralee and then follows a quiet lane down to the main road before taking the riverside path back to the village.

 Bus stop in Wark
(Tyne Valley Coaches 01434 602217)

 The Battlesteads (01434 230209) serves meals and all pubs in Wark welcome walkers.

 In Wark, beside village green.

Start outside Wark Post Office. Walk west out of the village by a road signposted 'Stonehaugh 6, Wygate 7'.

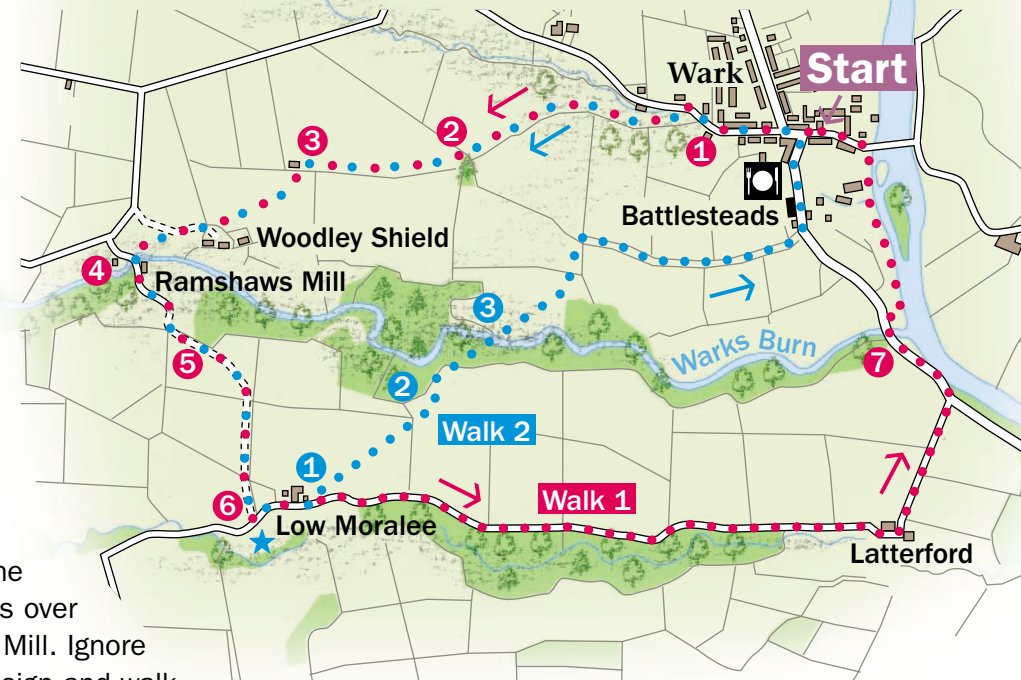
- 1 Walk up this road beside a lovely walled garden and allotments on the left. Take the public footpath through a kissing gate on your left, signed 'Ramshaws Mill ¾'. Cross the burn and bear to your right, climbing steadily up the field. At the path divide, keep left to stay close to the field boundary.
- 2 Go through a waymarked gate beside a group of scots pine and keep straight on, following the left hand field margin for about 250m towards a barn.
- 3 Just before the barn is a step stile on your left, go over this. Head half right across this field following a waymarker post down to a cluster of houses (Woodley Shield). Bear right before the houses following another waymarker to a ladder stile. Cross the stile and join a track for about 50m. At a telegraph pole with waymarker on the left leave the track and walk down to a stile. Cross the stile to a road.



You may see grey wagtails hunting for insects along the Warks Burn

Illustration ©John Walters

- 4 Turn left and stop to look at the Warks Burn gorge as you cross over the bridge. This is Ramshaws Mill. Ignore the right-hand public footpath sign and walk on the good track that takes you behind the buildings. Once at the rear of the steading, take a half right up a good lane through an old wooden gate into an oak woodland up a fairly steep path.
- 5 In about 200m, you'll come to a marker post. Take the left hand marker along a line of mature oak trees. At the edge of oaks, follow the track as it veers to the right and up to a gate. Go straight ahead down the side of the next field (Low Moralee farm is on your left), to a gate onto a minor lane.
- 6 Turn left, passing the farm. ★ Follow the road for about 1.5km (1 mile), passing through Latterford Farm on the way. At the junction with the Bellingham Road turn left. **Take great care here** for 200m walking along the main B6320 road.
- 7 At the bridge, turn right through the haulage yard to follow a footpath along the River North Tyne back to the village of Wark.



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Walk 2 : As Walk 1, but with a return route with a wade through a ford to cross the burn

Length: 4 km/2½ miles

Allow: 1 hour 30 mins

This is not suitable for anyone who cannot manage very deep steps, slippery paths, heights, and in the event of having to return to the road route if the river is unpassable there is a very steep incline.

This route is prone to erosion and collapse due to the Warks Burn cutting a steep gorge through relatively soft rock and boulder clay. The Warks Burn has a large catchment zone which means water levels can rise and fall rapidly.

   As Walk 1

Follow the directions for walk 1 as far as ★.

- 1 Just past Low Moralee Farm cross a stile on the left to follow a footpath that cuts diagonally across the field.

Follow the finger-post 'Wark 1 through ford' and take this path for about 300m to go through a clearly marked gate. Then follow a directional arrow down the field to the right of an oak tree and then turn left to zigzag steeply down to go through a wicket gate.
- 2 Once through here, bear to your right along an edge, down some deep steps. The path then bends to the right again, down another flight of steps. Now follow the yellow binding around the trees.

Make your way carefully down a steep section of path to the bottom of the gorge. Using the yellow bands wrapped around tree trunks find your way to the ford in about 100m (it is about 10m downstream from the tree with two yellow bands). Cross the river by way of the ford (line yourself up with the yellow path sign on the opposite bank) and **keep clear** of the barbed wire at each side of this ford.

- 3 Now head half-right up the field, quite steeply to go left of a block of conifers to a step-stile on the brow of the field. Here, the village comes into view. Head through a gate beside an arable field. At end of this field, turn right through a gateway, this good track takes you to the Hexham Road. Turn left and walk back to the village.