

The wooded valleys and cloughs which run down into the upper Calder valley near Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd are delightful places to explore. Whilst the National Trust's Hardcastle Crags woodland walks beside the Hebden Water are well known, the riverside path beside neighbouring Cragg Brook is much less frequented. It's well worth taking time to discover.

This guide will introduce you to the linear path through the woods beside or close to Cragg Brook. The route uses both rights of way and concessionary paths, created with the permission of local landowners.

To start the walk, catch local bus C from Hebden Bridge or Mytholmroyd. Rural bus 900 between Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd, Ripponden and Huddersfield provides another option.

Note: In places, the path runs high up above the river directly below, and for safety reasons this walk may not be suitable for families with younger children.

Mytholmroyd: a Walkers are Welcome town

Mytholmroyd, like neighbouring Hebden Bridge, is an official Walkers are Welcome town. This means that we try to ensure that footpaths and bridleways are in good condition, and to improve the facilities for local people and visitors wanting to walk in our beautiful countryside.

This leaflet has been produced by Mytholmroyd Walkers' Action. More information is on our website www.hbwalkersaction.org.uk

An illustrated guide to three waymarked trails from Mytholmroyd station, produced by Mytholmroyd Walkers' Action, is available price 50p from local outlets in Mytholmroyd and from Hebden Bridge tourist information centre.

Cover photo, Spa Bridge: Mark Anderson

A riverside walk between Cragg Vale and Mytholmroyd



Enjoy the pleasant woodland paths beside little Cragg Brook in Calderdale's south Pennines countryside.



Cragg Brook

This 3½ mile (6 km) linear walk uses the regular bus service from Mytholmroyd to get you started.

- 1 Take the bus up the Cragg Vale road, and alight at the bus turning circle almost at the top of the settlement. Continue walking up the road for a few metres/yards, and then – immediately past the terrace of houses on your right – turn right down a set of steps.
- 2 You cross the river at a small stone footbridge in the woods below. Turn right, and continue in the woods close to the river. Turn right when this path eventually reaches a farm lane.
- 3 You will emerge on a more major road; turn right to pass the Hinchcliffe Arms country restaurant and cross the river. Immediately turn left, walking through a field towards the woods beyond. Follow this path until another lane is reached.
- 4 At the lane, turn right. Almost immediately, look for the concessionary path back down to the river. This path (which can be overgrown) runs close beside an old mill pond.

Like other rivers in this area, Cragg Brook played an important part in the early industrial revolution. There were nine mills beside the river in the nineteenth century (and two further mills in the Withens Clough tributary), though not all were functioning at the same time. This reservoir is upstream from the site of Castle Mill, a cotton mill.

Cragg Vale's millowners had a poor reputation for labour conditions. During agitation for legislation, one minister wrote "If there was one place in England that needed legislative interference it was this place, for they work 15 and 16 hours a day frequently and sometimes all night".

- 5 Once past the mill pond, follow the path to the right up steps to rejoin the track you were briefly on back at the last bridge. Continue up this track. Just before the main road is reached, turn half-left through the garden of a house to follow a path diagonally back down to the river. Cross, and immediately turn right.

This is the site of another former mill, Paper Mill.

- 6 The path now climbs up from the river, and enters Paper Mill Wood. Carry on through the woodlands, taking care as the path is briefly high up above the river. When your path forks, keep to the route nearest to the river. You will emerge from the woods into a pasture to reach a lane close to another bridge over Cragg Brook.

Just before the bridge is the site of Cragg Spa, a small spring which was considered to have health-giving properties and was in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a minor visitor attraction. Local histories tell of the spa being 'dressed' each May.

- 7 Beyond, make use of the concessionary path which runs on close to the river. Once more enjoy the woodland landscape. When you reach another farm lane beside Clough Foot Bridge, turn briefly left before once more finding the concessionary footpath running on northwards.
- 8 The path emerges on to a farm lane. Turn right here along the lane until the main road is reached at Dauber Bridge. Turn left, and walk back down the main road into the centre of Mytholmroyd.

