

SUGGESTED START: Stainforth car park (SD 8205 6727)

DISTANCE: 7.2 km / 4.5 miles (plus 2 optional detours)

TIME: 3 hrs (plus sightseeing)

TERRAIN: Mostly farmland, some short sections on roads. Some steep climbs.

DIFFICULTY: Moderate

OS MAP: It is advisable that you use OS Explorer OL2 with this guide.

 11 (Horton in Ribblesdale - Settle)

 Stainforth car park (pay and display)

 Stainforth car park


 Various shops in Settle (2.5 miles)

 The Craven Heifer

 The Knight's Table

THE RIVERS: The River Ribble begins at the confluence of Gayle Beck and Cam Beck, near Ribblesdale viaduct. Stainforth is within the Upper Ribble Catchment, and is located approximately 10 miles from the source of the Ribble. This stunning landscape forms part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The land in this lightly populated area is predominantly used for grazing sheep. As the Ribble continues into Lancashire, the land becomes more fertile, enabling an increase in dairy farming.

The Ribble is one of the few rivers that start in the Yorkshire Dales and flow west into the Irish Sea. This route passes two impressive waterfalls: Catrigg Force and Stainforth Force. Stainforth Force is one of the best places in the Ribble catchment to see salmon leaping upstream. The optimal time of year to spot salmon on their journey to spawning grounds is October and November, particularly after heavy rainfall.

 **WILDLIFE:** Salmon can be seen along this route, moving upstream to reach their spawning grounds. The critically endangered European eel is also found along this section of the River Ribble.

Otters can occasionally be seen along the riverbank at Stainforth, if you are patient and very lucky! Wading birds such as curlew and snipe might be spotted on the marshy pastures on the route. The area is home to rare, lime-loving plants such as globeflower, rigid buckler fern and bird's-eye primrose.



European eel



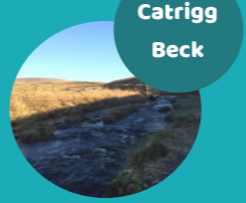
Curlew

WHAT TO EXPECT: Starting in Stainforth, this scenic route heads out of the village and uphill into farmland. There are opportunities to visit two waterfalls via short detours. Spectacular views of the Yorkshire Dales countryside can be enjoyed on much of the route. This walk features numerous stiles including ladder stiles and involves a steep uphill section after leaving the village; it is therefore best suited to walkers with good mobility. Please be aware of traffic on the sections of road. Livestock are present in some of the fields on this route. Please keep dogs on a lead. If cattle get too close or become excitable, let the dog off the lead.

 **LOOK OUT FOR:** (see points on the map)

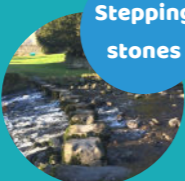
1. Stainforth House sits at the end of Church Lane and was built in 1750, with additions during the 19th & 20th centuries. The property's owner was Thomas Foster Knowles, a London tea merchant. The house was used as a shooting lodge during the grouse season.

2. Catrigg Force - the North Craven Fault is a major tear in the earth's crust which runs through Stainforth and has led to the development of two spectacular waterfalls, both seen on this route via short detours. The first of which, Catrigg Force, features a 6 metre drop into a narrow rocky gorge. This secluded spot is said to have been one of composer Edward Elgar's favourite places. Elgar drew inspiration from the Yorkshire Dales to compose some of his most famous works.



Catrigg Beck

3. Once back in Stainforth village, the **stepping stones** are worth a visit and can be crossed if the beck is low enough. Please take care if using the stepping stones!



Stepping stones

4. On the detour to Stainforth Force, look out for the **Old School House**. There has been a school in the village since at least 1710, however, the building we see was built in 1857 and was paid for by public subscription. The school originally taught pupils aged 5 - 14, and in the 1950s became just a primary school. The school was closed in 1984.



Old School House

5. Stainforth Force - here the River Ribble tumbles over a series of cascades. Set against a wooded backdrop, the waterfalls offer magnificent views. The packhorse bridge was built in 1675 by Samuel Watson, the owner of Knight Stainforth Hall. In order to preserve the bridge, it was given to the National Trust in 1931. *See overleaf for more information about the woodlands planted at Knight Stainforth Hall by Ribble Rivers Trust.*



Packhorse bridge

6. The Hoffmann Lime Kiln is an industrial lime kiln constructed for the Craven Lime Company in 1873. The kiln processed limestone into lime which was used in a variety of local industries including: farming, leather making, textiles and paper making. Firebricks line the inside of the kiln, whilst a layer of limestone rubble covers the top to keep heat inside. The kiln was closed in 1931, opening again briefly in 1937, but was closed permanently 2 years later. (The kiln is not displayed on the map overleaf, but is accessible to the public and free to explore. Location: SD 8237 6634)



Hoffmann kiln

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2020. All rights reserved. Environment Agency copyright and / or database rights 2020. All rights reserved.



The Ribble Catchment

You are here



Follow us:



This walk has been created by Ribble Rivers Trust as part of a series of circular routes for the Ribble Life Together project. Scan the QR code to find out more or visit www.ribblelifetogether.org. Download the **Ribble Life app** to accompany this route on Android and iPhone.

- Follow the Countryside Code: consider wildlife and other users
- Carry spare food and drinks
- Take a charged mobile phone, first aid kit, map and compass
- Wear sturdy boots and clothing suitable for forecast conditions

Enjoy safely

- A Pennine Journey - Settle to Horton in Ribblesdale
- Stainforth to Giggleswick Scar & Feizor

Nearby trails

Ribble Life Together is working to create a healthier river system by 2020 for people and wildlife. The project celebrates the heritage of the rivers, improving access and using the river to inspire and educate. Through practical environmental action, based on science, we aim to leave a positive legacy for future generations.

River Walks Stainforth

A bracing walk offering spectacular views of the Yorkshire Dales countryside and the opportunity to visit two waterfalls, Catrigg Force and Stainforth Force, via short detours.

Distance: 7.2 km / 4.5 miles

Difficulty: Moderate

To the National Lottery Heritage Fund for supporting Ribble Life Together and to Bryan Beattie, Stainforth History Group, Stainforth Parish Council and Craven Museum for support in developing and trialling the route.
Photography: H. Smith.

ROUTE DIRECTIONS

A. From Stainforth village

From the car park in Stainforth, turn right out of the car park entrance. At the end of the road bear left, following the signs for Halton Gill, Arncliffe and Malham Tarn. Follow the road round the right hand bend and uphill. Before the national speed limit signs, as the hill gets very steep, take the path to the right at the side of the last house. Follow the track and go through the field gate at the end. Keep to the fence on your left. Follow the track uphill, then cross the stone bridge over the beck and bear left towards a wooden field gate.



Stainforth Beck

B. Towards Catrigg

Keep to the dry stone wall along the right of the field. At the top of the field, head left through a gap in the dry stone wall and make your way towards the wooden ladder stile in the field ahead. Head straight on, following the dry stone wall ahead, keeping to the well-worn track. Go over the ladder stile in the stone area next to the field gate. Follow the dry stone wall along the left-hand side until the corner of the wall. From there, head diagonally right across the field, towards the wall on the right, up to the far corner. On a clear day, enjoy views of Pen-y-ghent to your left. Go over the ladder stile, head straight across the field, along the right-hand wall towards the ladder stile in the wall at the end of the field.

Sheepfold



C. To Gorbeck

Follow the dry stone wall to your left until it turns a corner. Look for two wooden posts on the horizon in an 11 o'clock direction - that's the next stile you're aiming for. Go over the stile. Head straight across the field and over the beck (take care when crossing). Head towards the wooden fingerpost on the roadside. Turn right onto the tarmac road and continue over the cattle grid. Opposite the track up to a farm (Westside House) on your left, look out for a finger post and metal field gate on your right. Go through the gate and head diagonally left to a small wooden field gate with steps in the dry stone wall. Head diagonally right in a 2 o'clock direction towards a metal field gate in a fence. Go through the gate and head diagonally left (10 o'clock direction), through a small wooden field gate with stone steps. Head towards the far right-hand corner of the field, crossing the beck where safe to do so. Look out for a wooden ladder stile over the dry stone wall. Go over the stile. Head left towards the ladder stile in the wall, but DO NOT GO OVER IT. Instead, follow the dry stone wall to the bottom of the field and follow the fence. Go over the wooden stile in the fence. Head straight through the small woodland to another stile. Once over the stile, walk straight on through the middle of the field and use the stone steps and small wooden gate in the dry stone wall at the end of the field.



By Henside Road

D. To Catrigg Force

Head diagonally left across the field, over the crest of the hill and towards the footbridge over the beck. Roughly follow the dry stone wall uphill to the ladder stile in the wall at the end of the field. Head diagonally left, down the hill, towards the far-left corner of the field. Go through the wooden field gate at the end of the field. At this point it is a short detour to Catrigg Force waterfall (well worth it). See Detour A.

Detour A - Catrigg Force

Take the small gate directly on your right and follow the winding stone path downhill. At the bottom bear right, you should be able to hear the waterfall. Take care when viewing the waterfall, the gorge is very steep and the rocks around the top area can become slippery with the spray from the falls. To see the gorge from ground level, take the path towards the woodland and follow it downhill. Follow the same route back up to resume the original route. Turn right out of the small gate and continue down the path.

E. Return to Stainforth village

Follow the path between two dry stone walls back into the village. Once in the village, bear left along the edge of the green and continue straight. Take the right turn when you can see the Craven Heifer pub at the end of a short street. At the pub turn right and go over the bridge. Take the next left to follow the road back to the car park. Stainforth Force is a short walk away and can be visited by following Detour B.



Cowside Beck

Detour B - Stainforth Force

This detour is recommended on foot as the lane to Stainforth Force includes a very narrow bridge. At the T-junction next to the car park, head right along the edge of the B6479. Follow this along until the next turning on the left, Dog Hill Brow. Take this turning and follow the lane down until you reach an old stone bridge. Cross the bridge and take the wooden gate on the left straight after the bridge. From here you can view Stainforth Force, the historic packhorse bridge and the woodland planted by Ribble Rivers Trust. Follow the same route back to return to the car park.

Ribble Rivers Trust Projects

Stainforth woodland - in 2014, 5,631 trees were planted across three woodlands at Knight Stainforth Hall Camping and Caravan Park by Ribble Rivers Trust and many volunteers. The native mix of oak, birch, alder, rowan, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and holly will provide vital habitat for wildlife around the river. The woodlands are also helping to slow the flow of water from the land, reducing the risk of flooding. The roots of the trees also help to stabilise the riverbank by binding the soil, reducing bank erosion. Trees help to filter sediment and pollutants from the surface runoff, meaning that the water that reaches the river is cleaner. Trees along riverbanks also provide shade, which is essential for fish and other species during hot weather.

(For location, see tree icon on the map).



Stainforth woodland

Selside weir - in June 2017, Ribble Rivers Trust removed a weir on Gayle Beck, near Selside, as part of the Ribble Life Together project. Although small, the weir was restricting the movement of migratory fish such as salmon and trout. The project has improved access for fish to 9.4 km of water-courses upstream, near the source of the River Ribble. Drone footage of the project was captured by students from Durham University to enable 3D modelling. To see the results of their work, search for 'Selside Weir Removal by Drone' on YouTube. (The former weir is located on private land and is not accessible to the public).



Before



After



Route guide and content copyright © 2020 Ribble Rivers Trust.

Every effort has been made to provide accurate information in this guide. Ribble Rivers Trust cannot take responsibility for any errors. No recommendation is given by inclusion or omission of any establishment.