

Walks around Redesdale West Woodburn & Corsenside



- ① Cragg Farm & Ridsdale Ironworks
- ② West Woodburn Village & Corsenside Church
- ③ Lises Valley

By stopping in West Woodburn you join a long history of travellers through here. Fleeing monks, Roman soldiers, Border Reiver and cattle drovers. Whilst at Ridsdale you can explore a striking reminder of Northumberland's industrial past.

St. Cuthbert's Church, Corsenside

Walk 2 takes you out to Corsenside church. This remarkable little church reveals hidden stories of Redesdale's past. Although it seems remote today, the ancient Roman Road of Dere Street passed by here, running from York via Corbridge to Melrose. In medieval times, drovers herded Scottish cattle through here to English markets. These well-worn paths brought people, animals and goods into Redesdale. 'Corsenside' could mean 'the place beside the cross'.

Monks fleeing Viking raids on Lindisfarne in 793 took the coffin of St. Cuthbert with them. This church is thought to mark a spot where they rested. Its oldest part is the chancel at the east end dating from the 11th century. The nave being early medieval, with further alterations in the 18th century.

During the 1600s, villagers may have sought refuge in the church from the Border Reivers,

Habitancum Roman Fort



Photo: Richard Carlton

as the church has some unusual defensible features that include vaults and an upper chamber. The churchyard is now partly managed as a wildflower meadow, with grave slabs stretching back to medieval times.

Habitancum Roman Fort

Walk 1 takes you past Habitancum Roman fort (or Risingham as it is often referred to); one of a series of forts built along Dere Street, which is partly followed by the line of the A68. The now grass covered mound once housed 1,000 cavalry and infantry. The fort was built during the 2nd century. A classic rectangle shape with rounded corners, the fort would have had a substantial rampart and wall. It was either abandoned or destroyed when many of the Roman troops were withdrawn. It was later rebuilt as an active garrison until the end of the fourth century. Please note there is no public access to Habitancum.

The Pubs of West Woodburn and Ridsdale

Above the door of the Bay Horse in West Woodburn is the date 1797. It was once one of only 10 buildings in West Woodburn before the village grew in the 19th century. Opened in 1865 West Woodburn also had its own railway station and aside Redesmouth, was the only other place in Redesdale regularly served by trains. It closed in the 1960s.

The Gun Inn at Ridsdale takes its name from William Armstrong's gun testing range which was used to test large gun barrels from battleships built by Vickers Armstrong in Elswick Newcastle; today the facility is run by BAE systems. Since 2020 the pub is run by a community benefit society.

Thanks to Redesdale Ramblers for their part in developing the walks and content in this leaflet.

Ridsdale Ironworks

Walk 1 takes you to the village of Ridsdale built to house employees of an ironworks in the 1830s, with the old engine house still dominating the view from the north. The ironworks closed around 1850, although its last owner, the industrialist William Armstrong, continued to export iron from Redesdale until 1878.

Many people passing along the A68 mistake the remains of Ridsdale Ironworks for the remains of a castle. They are surprised to discover it was part of a complex of 3 furnaces, an engine house, coke ovens, kilns and reservoirs connected by tramways to the iron ore mines at Broomhope. Iron from the Broomhope mines was used in the construction of the High Level Bridge in Newcastle, part of Robert Stephenson's railways concept.

Lisles Valley

Walk 3 takes you down Lisles valley. Between West and East Woodburn some well-preserved fishponds are all that remains of Hallyards, a medieval grange (house and farm) which was the seat of the de Lisle family. Otwell de Lisle built a stone tower that may have stood on a rocky knoll by the road above the River Rede. The family name lives on in the 'Lisles Burn' and 'Lisles Valley'.

Local Wildlife to Look Out For

As well as the regular mew of buzzards, ground nesting birds such as lapwing, oystercatcher and curlew nest here in the spring and summer. Flocks of geese can also be seen over the autumn and winter.

Photo: James Innerdale



Ridsdale Ironworks Enginehouse



Walk 1 : Cragg Farm and Ridsdale Ironworks Distance: 6.5 miles/10.5 km (3 hrs)

Grade: Moderate Start: Corsenside Parish Hall, West Woodburn

- 1 Turn left out of the Hall towards the A68. Turn left up the A68 for a short distance before carefully crossing the road to a gap in the wall on the right-hand side, marked by a fingerpost.
- 2 Go through the gap into the field, following the fingerpost diagonally left to a ladder stile in the opposite corner. Cross the stile and head left through the field to cross the fence onto a track.
- 3 Turn right and follow the track alongside the wall. Where the wall ends, head diagonally across the field following a raised linear feature towards alder trees edging Chesterhope Burn. Look out for a gate and a bridge over the burn. As you cross the field, to your right you can see the square of Habitancum Roman Fort.

- 4 Go through the gate, over the bridge and through the next gate. Bear left towards the field wall and follow the wall line to a gate in fence at right angles to the wall. Continue through this gate and bear slightly to the right following the right of way up through the field to another gate to the left of the trees.
- 5 Go through the gate and follow the narrow route between the wall on the left and a wire fence on the right. The path bears left to cross a stile.
- 6 Cross the stile and head diagonally right across the field to the edge of an enclosed woodland and gate. Go through the gate and follow the farm track left towards the buildings of Cragg Farm. Go through another gate and follow the path to the left of the house.

7 Once past the house and buildings, continue towards a large modern barn, straight over a crossroads of dirt tracks. Continue along the mud track past the barn to a gate. Head through the gate and over the stone railway bridge. Bear right to pick up a field gate to the right of the field dividing wall.

8 Head through the gate into the field, following the right of way up the field alongside the wall. Pass through another gate and continue until you reach a fence to overlook an area of newly planted woodland.

9 Cross the fence and follow a gravel path ahead through the recently planted trees.

10 Forestry work has disturbed the path but look to pick up the stoned path surface, following the path as it bears right down a slope to a fence. Keep this side of the fence and follow to the left of Calf Close outbuildings, through a wooded area and a gate into a field. The footpath crosses the field towards a finger post at the opposite left corner.

11 Turn left onto the tarmac road and follow the road for approx. 2km, passing over four cattle grids until you reach a junction of two minor roads.

12 From here the route continues out and back to Ridsdale village to view the Ironworks. Please note: if you decide not to carry on to Ridsdale jump to step 14, heading left at the fork downhill in a northerly direction back to West Woodburn.

13 If you are heading to Ridsdale take the road to the right, on what becomes Armstrong Street as you enter the village. At the junction with the A68 turn left at 'The Gun', a community owned pub. As you leave the village along the A68, ignore a small barn and gate on your left, and continue along to the Ironworks interpretation panel. A small gate gives access across the field to the remains of the massive engine house.

To continue on the walk retrace your steps back along the road into the village, turning right at The Gun. Follow the road until it forks then take the right fork.

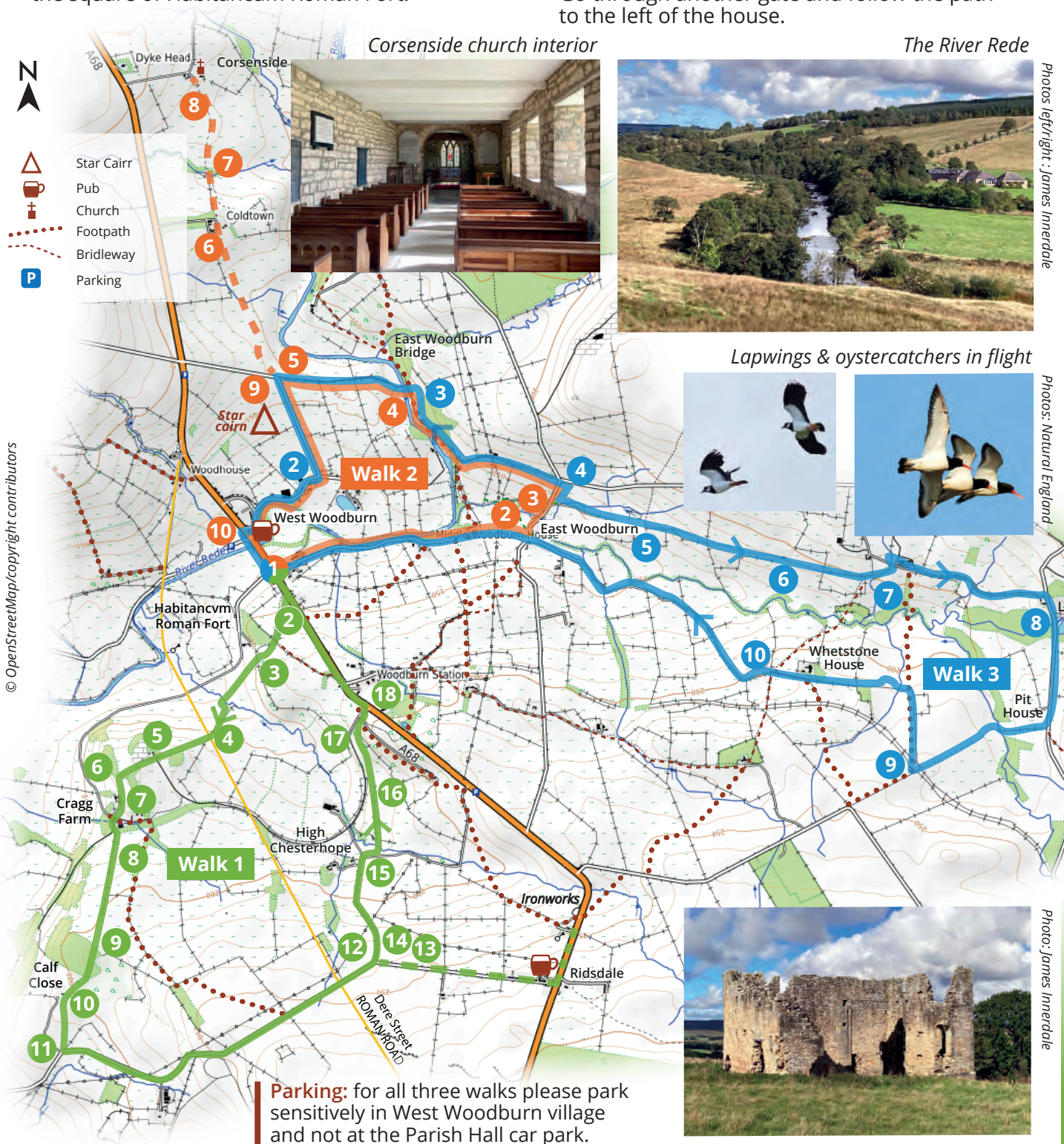
14 At the fork in the road, the tarmac road heads downhill back to West Woodburn. As you head down, the engine shed of the Ironworks becomes visible to your right. Continue along the road until you reach 'High Chesterhope' and glamping pods on a small flat area. Follow the road round to the right past the glamping pods and look for a fingerpost on the left, with a gate into a field.

15 Go through the gate descending to a wooden footbridge. Go over the bridge and through the gate on the other side. Follow the wall to your left across the field to another gate.

16 Continue across this field to enter the woodland at the bottom. Don't go under the railway bridge, but continue into the woodland and bear left, heading towards the far corner of the stone wall and an almost hidden step stile.

17 Go over the stile to emerge onto a track. Bear right before heading through a metal gate on the left. Go through a further metal gate onto the drive of a house and out onto the A68.

18 Take care crossing the road and head left on the A68 road verge back towards West Woodburn. After a short distance the grass verge becomes a tarmacked pavement. Turn right at the junction towards East Woodburn and Monkridge to return to Corsenside Parish Hall.



Parking: for all three walks please park sensitively in West Woodburn village and not at the Parish Hall car park.

Walk 2 : West Woodburn Village & Corsenside Church Distance: 5.2 miles/8.3 km

Grade: Moderate (2¼ hrs) Start: Corsenside Parish Hall in West Woodburn

Please note: sections of this walk form part of the St Cuthbert's Three Churches Trail which can be followed using the guide booklet, available for a donation at St Cuthbert's churches in Bellingham, Elsdon and Corsenside.

- 1 From the Hall turn right / east along the road away from the village, following the River Rede into East Woodburn.
- 2 At the crossroads turn left up the hill, until the road bears left.
- 3 Take the tarmacked lane to the left. Through the gate at the end continue down the surfaced path, bearing right alongside the River Rede towards East Woodburn Bridge.
- 4 Turn left over the bridge then follow the track to reach a road junction.
- 5 Turn right through a gate following the fingerpost north over rough ground towards Coldtown Cottage. Follow the track until it turns down towards the river. Bear left off the main track following a faint raised route across boggy ground in line with a row of ash trees below Coldtown. Cross a burn and up past the trees, entering Coldtown through two gates.
- 6 Go past the buildings, across the yard and through another gate. Follow the ditch and fence

down to a ford crossing over Crow Burn. The path is often muddy but the burn can be crossed although there is no bridge.

7 St Cuthbert's church is visible through the trees. Head up through the field towards the corner of the churchyard. In wet weather cross the burn that appears below the church.

8 Follow the churchyard wall to the left and through a gate before turning right into the churchyard. The church is usually open to enjoy. Retrace the previous steps back over the burn, past Coldtown to the road junction at step 5.

9 Continue through the gate and follow the road towards West Woodburn. At the next junction turn right and follow the road through the village to the A68.

10 Keeping to the pavement, turn left past the Bay Horse Inn and over West Woodburn Bridge. At the next road junction turn left, and Corsenside Parish Hall will be on the right.

Corsenside church interior

The River Rede

Lapwings & oystercatchers in flight

Ridsdale Ironworks Engine House

Photos left/right : James Innerdale

Photos: Natural England

Photo: James Innerdale

Walk 3 : Lises Valley

Distance: 8 miles/12 km (3½ hrs)

Grade: Strenuous

Start: Corsenside Parish Hall

1 From the Hall turn left to the A68. Keeping to the pavement turn right, cross over Rede Bridge and turn first right down White Acres. Follow the road past some bungalows, keeping the river on your right, continue until you reach a junction.

2 Turn left uphill. When the lane bears left, turn right through a gate. Cross the stile into the next field and enter an enclosure to pass in front of a second farmhouse and on into the next field.

3 Cross the bridge and turn right to follow the path along the river and then uphill. Near the top ignore a gate on your right, instead go through the gate out onto the track and follow the track until you reach the road junction.

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Walk 3 : Lisles Valley

4 Turn right towards East Woodburn. Just before the 30 mile an hour signs, turn left through the gate with a fingerpost and follow the bridleway to Woodburnhill farm. At the farm go through the gate and pass in front of the farmhouse into the next field.

5 Continue with the wall to your right. Cross the stile into the next field and enter an enclosure to pass in front of a second farmhouse and into the next field.

6 Look for a drystone wall stile to the right of the gate. Go over the stile and follow the wall to the left.

7 Cross over another stile; bear left through a gate before heading right, through another gate crossing a stream and up the bank to pass behind Blakelaw Farm. Continue over a stile and then through another gate on the left to follow the driveway east to Linnheads. Turn right to cross over Lisles Burn.

8 Follow the track past Pit House before heading down through the next gate on the right. Cross Risey Burn a stream by the footbridge and bear left up towards the disused railway bridge.

9 At the bridge turn sharp right, down past old gateposts and follow the track turning left past Whetstone House.

10 Follow the single track road down to East Woodburn. At the crossroads go straight on and follow the road back to West Woodburn and the Parish Hall.



Re-used sign; Walk 1

Photo: James Innerdale

Other Places to Visit in Redesdale

This is one of 6 walk leaflets created by the Revitalising Redesdale Landscape Partnership Programme that ran from 2018 to 2022. There are many wonderful sites to explore in Redesdale.

For more information on these sites, please visit www.revitalisingredesdale.org.uk

Scan Me



Where is Redesdale - how to get here



Travelling to Redesdale

Redesdale is easily reached by road on the A68 or by the A696 from Newcastle. Options for parking are identified as part of each walk description. For public transport options see www.travelinenortheast.info for details.

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy of the walk descriptions and maps but changes can occur. We recommend using the relevant Ordnance Survey maps which show more of the surrounding area. This leaflet is covered by OL42 (Kielder Water & Forest) 1:25,000 / Land Ranger 80 (Cheviot Hills and Kielder Water) 1:50,000. Please follow the Countryside Code, check the weather before you set off and wear appropriate outdoor clothing.

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Heritage Fund



Northumberland National Park



NATURAL ENGLAND



Northumberland Wildlife Trust