



Distance:

5 3/4
Miles

Time:

2 1/4
Hours(With optional 1 1/4 mile
(30 minute) addition)

VILLAGES BY THE DERWENT

The highlight of this delightful short walk is a two-mile section alongside the River Derwent. The entire river is an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and abounds with a variety of wildlife, both in the water and the nearby fields. The walk also circles Sutton Wood, a large area of semi-natural woodland that's a further refuge for wildlife with good displays of wildflowers in spring. An optional addition to the main walk (*italic type at point 6 in the directions*) provides a short circuit of the wood. Please note that sections of the route alongside the river can be subject to flooding, especially in winter. Otherwise, most of the route is easy underfoot with little mud.

Directions

1 Starting from Newton on Derwent (go to point 4 for a Sutton upon Derwent start) outside of the Half Moon pub, go north (right if facing away from the pub) along the street. As the main road goes right at a WW1 hero's memorial stone, take a left down Mask Lane. Continue down this long straight lane, through farmland and passing a seat, to eventually arrive at a gate. Go through this and continue on a short grassy path down the bank to arrive at a footpath signpost beside the river.

2 Turn left and follow the river downstream with a field to the left. You'll arrive at a bridge over a ditch and a gate. Continue with the river to your right into an area of young trees with farm buildings soon visible up the bank to the left. As you emerge from the trees go through a kissing gate to the left (not adjacent metal gate) slightly away from the river. Ahead is a further kissing gate and a metal gate.

3 The official right of way goes through the kissing gate and along the edge of the field with the fence to the right. However, most walkers go through the metal gate down the grassy path to return to the riverside and so this is the recommended route unless the river is in flood. Continue alongside the river going through further gates and soon nearing a wood (Sutton Wood) away to the left. At the far end of the wood ignore a signed path left leading into it and stay alongside the river. The riverside path eventually becomes a track passing alongside boat moorings to reach the road at Sutton Bridge.

4 Go left, away from the bridge following the roadside pavement, soon passing a derelict mill and then Sutton upon Derwent Church to the right (for the shop and pub in Elvington turn right over the bridge). Where the main road goes sharp right into the village go straight ahead (left) on Sandhill Lane (to visit the Vincent Arms keep on the main road). Continue on Sandhill Lane taking care on the verge when the pavement ends beyond the houses. Follow it around a left bend (ignore signed footpath to right) to arrive at a footpath sign on the left by a farm track entrance.

5 Take the path down the track, very soon continuing on a pleasant tree-lined path with a large open field to the right. At the end of the trees cross a plank bridge and continue straight ahead over a grass field to arrive at a rough track. Turn left here (following the sign) towards the corner of the wood (Sutton Wood).

6 At the gate leading into the wood turn right on a path that follows the edge of the wood with open fields to the right. *(For the optional 30 minute circuit of the wood go through the gate and another gate and follow the track into the wood. At a footpath sign leave the track but in about 100 metres turn sharp right following the permissive path on a grassy path through the wood. When the path comes to a gate go right on a better, stoned, track, following it right at the next junction. This will eventually return you to the footpath sign where you left the track shortly after entering the wood. From this point exit the wood to the left, back through the gates.)* Continue alongside the wood over a plank bridge. Where the wood ends; go across the short uncultivated strip to reach a tarmac track.

7 Turn right to follow the track across the open fields and around a double bend to arrive at a road. Turn left here but in less than 100 metres turn left again, signed Newton on Derwent. Follow the road as it swings right into the village to arrive back at the Half Moon pub.

DISCLAIMER: Walks are undertaken at your own risk. Due care must be taken in following the walk, particularly after poor weather. Whilst every care is taken in compiling the description changes may have occurred since publication. Neither the walk author nor Your Local Link can accept any responsibility for errors or omissions.

Getting there

The best starting point, with plenty of roadside parking, is Main Street in Newton on Derwent but it's also possible to start from Sutton upon Derwent parking on Sandhill Lane. Newton on Derwent is just over nine miles from York taking the A1079 and turning right at Wilberfoss, then right again into the village. There is no public transport to the village but bus no.36 offers an infrequent service from York to Sutton upon Derwent.

Refreshments

There are pubs at Sutton upon Derwent (Vincent Arms) and Newton on Derwent (Half Moon). There is also a pub and village shop in Elvington, both less than a ten minute walk from point 4 of the walk directions.

What to see

The quiet River Derwent is a haven for wildlife. While scouting for this walk, swift, house and sand martins and an egret were seen overhead and large gaggles of greylag geese seen on the water. The riverside meadows have a varied flora which is at its best before the hay is cut in summer. Sutton Wood contains a mix of deciduous and conifer trees and has a good display of flowers in spring including wild daffodils. The fertile farmland around both villages is used to grow a wide range of crops including fields of carrots and peas.

