

Pinch Beck, High Birks Beck and Hole Bottom Beck

A switchback walk between three valleys, with some steep climbs. Although you don't spend much time walking by the becks, this walk gives a fine sense of the network of tributaries that flow down from the Queensbury ridge into Bradford Beck.

Warning! This walk involves one very boggy section, so make sure you are wearing suitable footwear.

Length: 6km.

Terrain: Quite strenuous in places, with 3 steep climbs. Some road walking.

Starting point: Path to Great Northern Trail next to Thornton Primary School, Thornton Road BD13 3NN. GR096327.

Parking: There is some parking on Thornton Road, or park courteously in side streets.

Bus: Buses from Bradford to Thornton (607, 696, 698). Get off at Vine Terrace and walk towards the pedestrian crossing.

1. Take the Great Northern Trail and follow it round the back of the school. At the path junction turn left to walk along Thornton Viaduct, which crosses Pinch Beck running 33 metres below. The viaduct is a Grade II listed building and is regarded as one of the greatest viaducts in England. It opened in 1878 as part of the Queensbury to Keighley line, and finally closed in 1965. Keep on the path until you reach the road.

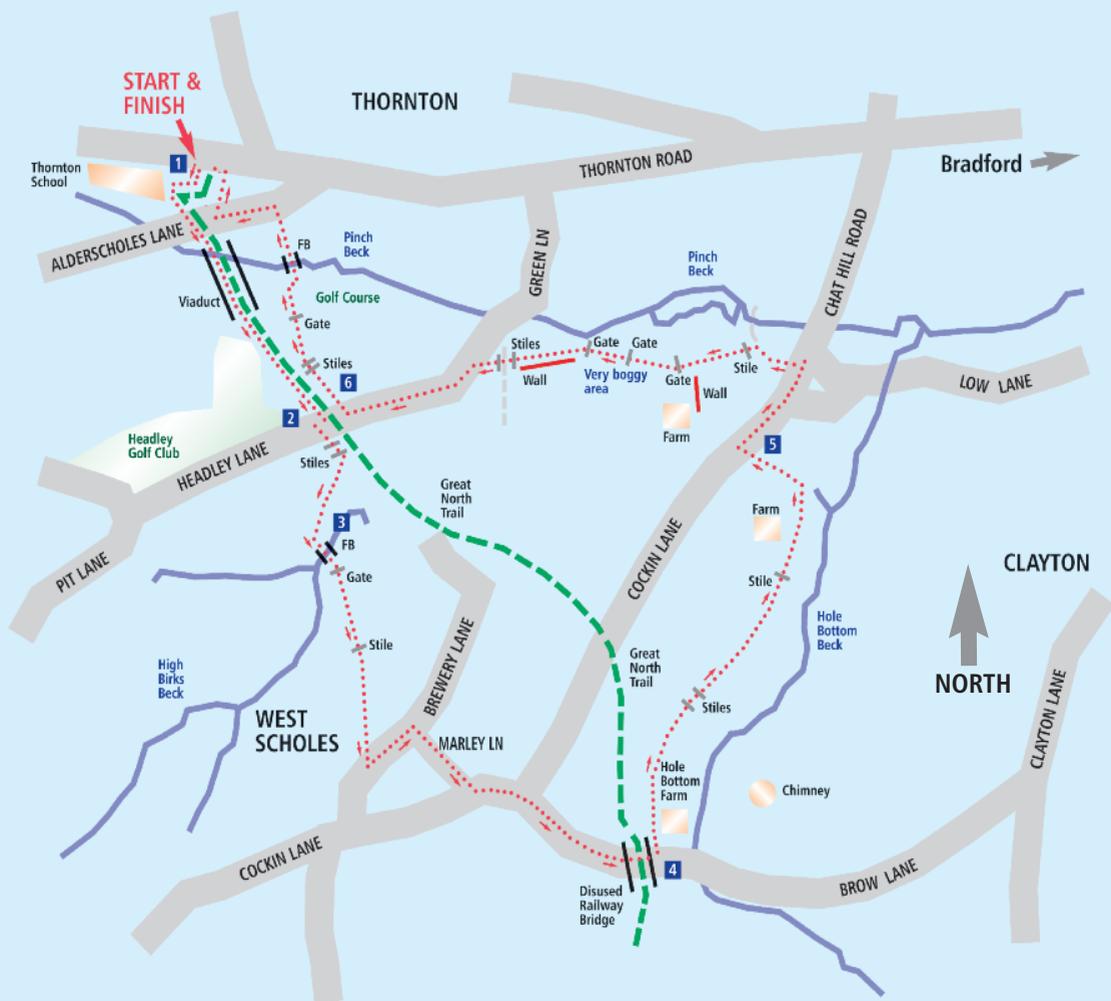
2. At the road, turn right, walk up the hill for about 20 metres and take the footpath on the left to West Scholes. Go through the squeeze stile and walk down the field with

the wall on your left. At the bottom corner go over the stile and follow the path to go through a stile by a metal gate. Follow a faint path along the valley side, gently descending towards a gap in a wall. This is a delightful place, with High Birks Beck winding along the valley and views towards the village of Mountain on the horizon.

Go through the gap in the wall and keep in the same direction to cross the beck by a footbridge. Go through the metal gate in the wall ahead.

3. Follow the path steeply uphill, go over the stile at the top of the field and continue to climb on a clear path through rough ground. Enter a walled track, pass by the side of a wooden gate and keep forward to emerge onto a track. Turn left along the track – there are good views here across the valley to Thornton and beyond. Take the footpath on the right signposted Marley Lane. At the end, cross the road and turn left. Follow the road round to the right, and where the road curves left keep forward along Brow Lane for about 200m until you reach a former railway bridge.

4. When you are underneath the bridge, take the road on the left which leads through a metal gate to Hole Bottom Farm. Just before a set of large wooden gates, go through a small wooden gate on the left and follow a grassy footpath above the buildings. At a gap in the trees you can see an elaborate chimney on the other side of the valley, which is all that remains of the Clayton Fireclay Brickworks. Eventually you



Above left: Thornton viaduct.
 Above right: Clayton Fireclay Brickworks chimney.





*Above left: High Birks Beck footbridge.
Above right: High Birks Beck.*



Clayton Fireclay Brickworks. Eventually you will see Hole Bottom Beck running along the valley bottom. Follow the path through two squeeze stiles and continue forward with the wall on your right. When you reach the buildings, go over a stile next to a wooden gate into the yard. Ignore the gate straight ahead, and go to the right of a yellow building to emerge onto a track. Walk down the track to the road (Cockin Lane).

5. Turn right and walk with great care down the road to Corn Mill Lane on the left. Turn left here (sp Bronte Way). Where the path bends to the right look for a metal gate and stile on the left. Go over the stile, then half left and after a short climb look for a wall ahead with two trees in front. Head towards the right end of the wall. Pinch Beck is down on your right, At the end of the wall, go through the metal footpath gate and follow the fence and wall on your right to go through another gate. Keep following the fence, and where the fence bends right keep forward to another gate in the wall ahead. Warning – the area round this gate can be very swampy at any time of year. Head

slightly right towards a wall and walk up the field with this wall on your left – there is no obvious path. In the far corner go through the stile, then over the stile on the left, and then turn right and follow the path to the road. Turn left here and follow the road steeply upwards for about 250m to the junction with the Great Northern Trail.

6. Just before the Great Northern Trail take the footpath on the right signposted Thornton. Go through two stiles and turn right to follow a grassy walled footpath. At the end, go through a metal gate and down the stone steps to a golf course, and then go straight ahead to reach a footbridge at the far end of the green. Cross the footbridge and follow the flagged path uphill. When you come to the road, turn left along Alderscholes Lane. Before the viaduct turn right into Lane End, which soon becomes a narrow path past houses, and follow this until it emerges on to Thornton Road. Turn left to return to the beginning of the walk.