



**THE DARLEY MILL CENTRE, DARLEY,**  
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**“Visit The Darley Mill Centre for shopping, eating and generally milling about in the heart of Nidderdale”**



The award-winning village of Darley lies away from the main road, so that many visitors to Nidderdale see only the village sign, the Wellington Inn and Darley Mill Centre. This trail gives an insight into the heritage of the village when it was a thriving industrial and farming community, by labelling and explaining sites of interest.

You can choose to walk along the Main Street with a few diversions and see all the sites, or you may wish to incorporate a few of them with one of the several riverside or field walks that are detailed, and come back for a number of visits. The choice is yours!

Parking is available at Darley Mill Centre, the Wellington Inn, Christ Church Community Centre and Darley Memorial Hall. The village can also be reached from Harrogate or Pateley Bridge by a regular service of Transdev bus No. 24, which runs along Main Street.

The main trail, taking in the labelled sites, is about 5km (3.1 miles) and will take around 1.5 hours (add an extra 1.5km (1 mile) and an extra 30 mins if you continue to The Holme (V)). The other walks starting and finishing at Christ Church Community Centre have their distances noted.

## Welcome to Darley

**Y DARLEY MEMORIAL HALL** has stood on this site since 1947, but it started life 18 miles away at the top of the Dale at Scar House Reservoir. When the reservoir was completed after 25 years, there was no further need for the village that had been built there to serve the workers – a village including houses, dormitories, a church, shops, cinema and canteen. Funds were raised in Darley to buy the canteen, and it was transported back down the Dale and re-built to become a recreational facility for the village. A dance on opening night on 15 November 1947 was attended by 508 people. Despite some controversy, a licence to serve alcohol was granted in the 1970s and the Hall continues to be used for dances, village events and private functions, as well as for snooker, badminton and bowls.

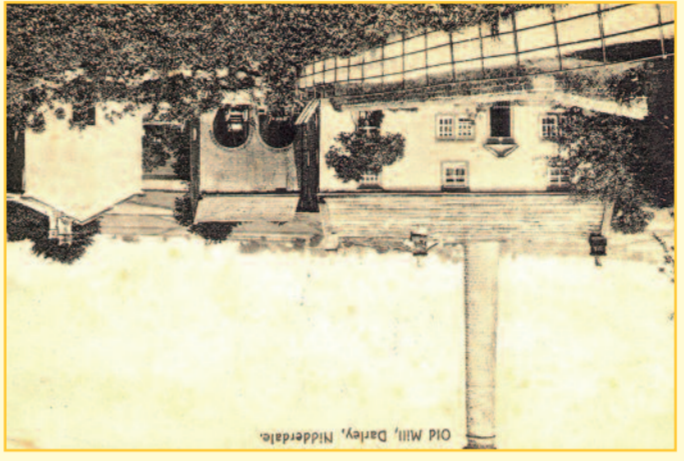


**Z** The **PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL**, was built by a breakaway Methodist group in 1841 for £170 and a school room was added in the 1920s. The Methodist factions reunited in 1933 and the Wesleyan Chapel on Main Street became the main focus, although the Primitive Chapel continued to be used until 1978 when it was sold. Two of its memorial windows and some of its wood were used in the refurbishment of the Darley Methodist Church in 1979.

This Heritage Trail has been produced by Darley in Bloom as a way of encouraging visitors to this beautiful village. Christ Church Community Centre and Bill Lofthouse have contributed other walks and the sketches, and members of Darley Local History Group have helped with the historical detail and photos. Financial support was provided by Awards for All and Darley Mill Centre.

**D THE OLD POST OFFICE** operated from a wooden hut next to the building in the triangle between the roads. It was also the local telephone exchange, and was responsible for alerting the local garage when an air-raid was imminent. The garage then sent out a wagon blaring its horn to the Wellington Inn. The vicarage was built next door at and consecrated in 1887. The vicarage was built next door at and consecrated in 1887. The vicarage was built next door at

**C THE WELLINGTON INN** has been an inn for many years, serving the local farmers and mill-workers. During the mid 20th Century, Roman Catholic Church services were held in the small detached building at the rear, accessed by the flight of stone steps. The room below was used for storing carcasses by the local butcher.



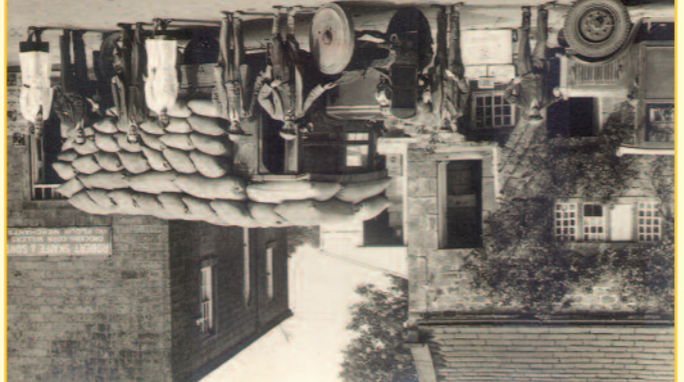
**A DARLEY MILL** was built in the 17th Century as a flour mill. A miller's cottage and walled gardens were added in 1761 and in 1874 a large waterwheel. This 27 foot wheel ceased working in the 1950s and the mill then operated over the next 50 years as an animal feed store, a hire shop, a nursery garden and a retail outlet. In 2009 the wheel was restored so that it could once again power the building, the new Darley Mill Centre. Teas have

**W HOLME HALL** is a thatched house, the oldest still remaining in Darley, and is one of the two oldest houses in Nidderdale. It has a date stone of 1677, recording a building by William Luty, but it is thought that this was the date when an earlier wooden house was encased in stone. In the 1870s, it was occupied by Mr Pullan, a farmer, and his family. In 1874, the house and yard took on a new role when the owner diversified into taking in laundry. The business grew as hotels developed in Harrogate, Leeds and Otley and its fleet of vans changed from horse drawn to motorised vehicles over the years. The business closed in 1972. The old laundry building was pulled down and the three adjoining houses you see today were built on the land.



**X MURDER MOST FOUL** Stumps Lane features in the story of two young lovers coming back from Hartwith Church in 1858. Mary Jane Skaife was murdered by James Atkinson after she turned down his proposal of marriage, and her mutilated body was found in the ditch the next morning. James admitted the murder but was found not guilty on the grounds of insanity in a well-publicised case. This sad site is now marked by one of the village entrance signs tended by Darley in Bloom.

**H CHRIST CHURCH** was built in 1849 as a Chapel of Ease for Hampsthwaite at a cost of £340, and was re-built and consecrated in 1887. The vicarage was built next door at that time for the first vicar. Adjoining the Church was a hall which was used for concerts, dances and snooker matches before the Memorial Hall was built. The area now occupied by the car park was once the home of Darley Tennis Club. The hall was totally rebuilt in 2007 as Christ Church Community Centre.



**G FIELD HOUSE** and its associated barn used to be a shop owned by one of the Skaife brothers and passed on to his sons. It was known as Top Shop to distinguish it from the other main shop in the village (Low Shop), and it sold everything needed for man and beast. You could buy animal feed, screws, nails, flour eggs, sweets and carrots. The shop

**F DARLEY HOUSE** was built around 1850 for the local Dales doctor, Dr Clarkson. Members of the Skaffe family (local shop and mill owners) later lived in it. The village cricket pitch was once behind the house.

**E METHODIST CHURCH (Wesleyan Chapel)** was built in 1829, near to a farmhouse where services had previously been held. It was a thriving chapel, with many of the congregation walking several miles to attend services. In 1851, a religious census counted 38 adults and 39 children attending morning service, 91 adults and 39 children in the afternoon and a total of 80 people in the evening. The Sunday School room was added in 1929.

**T ALDON'S GARAGE** has become **ABBOTT'S GARAGE** and has always been a thriving business. In the 1930s and 40s, Mr Aldon had 10 or 12 wagons with different tops which were used for a variety of jobs such as clearing the snow in the lanes, taking villagers on outings to the seaside and warning local residents of air-raids.

**U NEW ROW** houses (now South View) were built by Robert Pullan in the early 1900s to house key workers for his Nidd Valley Laundry based at Holme Hall.



**And now? You are now at the top of Nidd Lane and can choose various options.**

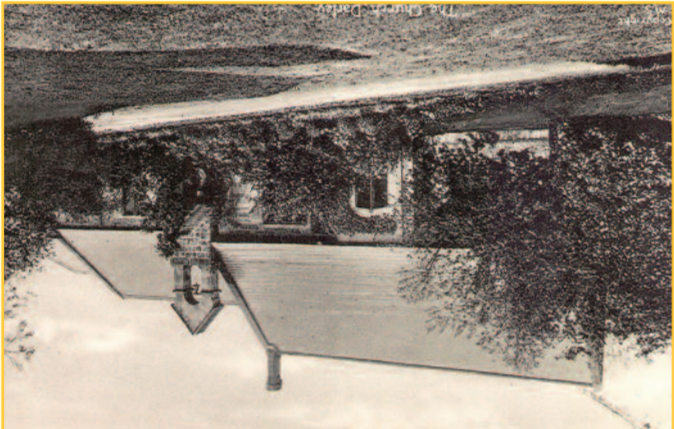
You may wish to walk down to the river and see the footbridge which was used by the lovers (see Murder Most Foul) to reach Hartwith Church. (400m each way). Just over the river (but now hidden and difficult to access) is one of the 1767 boundary stones which marked the boundary between the Forest of Knaresborough and the lands of Fountains Abbey. **V** If you prefer, you can continue along the main road to Holme Hall (distance around 600m each way). Walk with care as there is no footway alongside the road.

Or you may wish to turn around now, take a short diversion up Stumps Lane, and then retrace your steps along Main Street to Sheepcote Lane. Turning up Sheepcote Lane will allow you to see the last two sites and return to your starting point via Walker Lane.



**J STOCKS GREEN** is the original village green and it was where the local brass band played for a church service every Hospital Sunday. A set of stocks gives the green its name and the cottages at the back of the green are some of the oldest in the village. On the green is a stone commemorating the recent national and international successes of Darley in Bloom.

**I WALKER HOUSE** was built by Thomas Wilkes in 1771, but later the house was owned by the Walker family for many years, hence the name of the house and also the lane opposite. The farmer who lived in the adjoining farm was a joiner who made coffins for the local people.



**Q FRINGILL MILL** was converted into houses in 2009, but for many years it was a mill. It was built as a corn mill in 1820, but from 1875 it was adapted to a flax mill, spinning heavy yarn for twine and rope making. By 1985 when it ceased operation, it was the only flax spinning mill in England. The mill was powered by a water wheel that is still under the building, and was fed by 3 mill dams which you can see if you walk a little further up the lane.



**R FRINGILL BECK** flows under the road and down to the River Nidd. It has always been a place of great interest to children, and is now maintained as a wildflower area by Darley in Bloom. A board explaining some of Darley's history is situated just over the bridge.

**S** The **FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE** (Quaker Chapel) was built in 1802 for £341 and was part of the thriving Quaker movement in Nidderdale. The House was the location of a small library during the 19th Century, with many local villagers recorded as borrowers. Burials took place next to the Meeting House but the headstones were moved in 2005 when the premises were sold. The building has been used for the Girl Guides, for Methodist services and school classes when their buildings were out of action, and more recently for rehearsals of the Dacre and Summerbridge Silver Band. It is now a private house.



**L THE OLD RAILWAY LINE** can still be made out soon after the line closed in the 1964 and houses are now on the site. The railway, running between Harrogate and Pateley Bridge, opened in 1862, and allowed flax and hemp to be brought into the village for processing, and coal, milk and dressed stone to be taken out to the neighbouring towns and cities. Local children took the train to high schools in Knarsborough and Harrogate. The line closed to passengers in 1952 and to freight in 1964.



**K WALLER SQUARE** was the name of this row of cottages, including Cloggers Cottage which was the site of a cobbler's shop run by Mr Walker. Aldon's Bicycle Shop was also in this row. The road here was once much narrower and opposite was the building known as the Taghole.

**M SCHOOL HOUSE** was built in the 1840s by the Walker family, who were prominent local Quakers, to house the Headmaster of Darley School. Elizabeth Walker also provided Walker Cottage next door and the village hearse which used to be parked between the house and the cottage.

**N** The **PROSPECT INN** once stood where the new Prospect Cottages have been built. This was the last of several pubs in the village to disappear, when it closed in 1995. It had been the scene of many village events – both celebrations and wakes.

**O LOW SHOP** is now home to Ali's Family Store and it has been a shop for nearly 200 years. It was known as Low Shop (to differentiate it from Top Shop) and for many years was run by members of the Skaife family. It was a general store offering food, bed linen, shirts, animal food, and anything else that was needed.



**P DARLEY SCHOOL** dates back at least to 1749 (see date over the middle window). Children could stay at the school from age 5 to 14, although some achieved scholarships and moved to Knaresborough or Harrogate Grammar Schools at age 11. One famous pupil back in the early 1900s was Herbert Sutcliffe, England's most successful ever Test Match batsman. Unfortunately his arrival was shortly after an accident with a cricket bat in the school playground, so playing cricket was not allowed there!

**Walk through this Nidderdale village and learn about the buildings and industries of yesteryear**





# 1 Low Hurst

Distance 2.5K

Going: Muddy in fields in wet weather

Turn left on leaving the car park, cross the road to the pavement and in 200m, just past the bus stop take the narrow footpath to the right, skirting the back of Field House **G**. Climb the stile over the wall and walk down the field to the second gate on the opposite side. Next aim for the diagonally opposite corner at the bottom of the field and climb the stile into the next field. With Darley Beck on your left go to the corner and climb the stile into the third field with a footbridge over the beck in the far corner. Go over the bridge and take the squeeze stile in the wall slightly to the right. Turn left and with the stream now on your left follow the path, aiming for a point 25m to the right of Low Hurst Farm which is ahead for you. Go through the gate and take the path to the side of the bridge where there are steps and a stile to the road. You will pass near to the site of the old Brightwater Mill **B**. Turn left and keeping to the footpath walk up the hill and take the left hand branch past the village sign and in 500m you are back at the Community Centre.



Christ Church

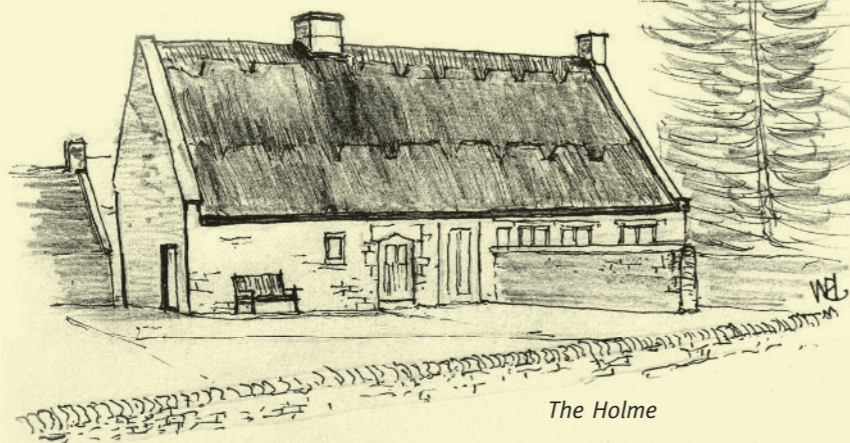
# 2 Green Lane

Distance 2.3K

Going: Surfaced roads and grass covered meadows which are muddy in wet weather

Turn right from the Community Centre car park, cross the road to the footpath down to Stocks Green **1** and turn left down the track – Green Lane – at the left hand side of the green. Notice the limestone boulder with the plaques mounted on it. These are the awards Darley received for winning the gold medal in the Entente Florale in Bloom competition, when it represented Britain in the European Large Village Class in 2005, and also the gold award in Champion of Champions in 2009.

At the end of the track climb over the stile into the field and keeping near the wall on your left walk forward down the hill. Then aim for the stiles over the walls in front until you see the footbridge over Darley Beck in front of you. Go over the bridge, turn right and go through the metal gate into the next field. Climb up the slight slope, round the trees and then, through a metal gate into the next field. Keeping the wall on your left, walk through the field to the kissing gate at the bottom, and then follow the footpath to the underpass bridge under the disused railway line **1**. There is a stile over the fence directly in front of you leading to the stepping stones, but take the gateway on the right and follow the path by the side of the river to the next fence, stile and footbridge over Darley Beck which joins the river a few paces from the bridge. Turn left and walk round the field with the river on your left until you reach the next stile. Turn right on the hedge enclosed path for 50m until you join the metalled road which is Station Road. Go up the road, passing the playing fields on your right, until the Main Street is reached. Turn right, and the Community Centre is 500m on your left.



The Holme

# 3 Riverside

Distance 3.1K

Going: Muddy along the riverbank with stones through the worst section

Turn right from the Community Centre car park and walk down the Main Street for 500m then turn down Station Road. When the road takes a bend to the right at the bottom of the slope, carry straight ahead on a narrow footpath between hedges until the river is reached. Climb the stile on the right and pass along the riverside in front of 3 houses, built on the site of the old station and railway cottages. Follow the river downstream, through 2 gates and over a footbridge. The path follows the river, over a boggy area by means of stones, another stile and open meadow until a gate in a wire fence is reached. A footbridge over the River Nidd is on the left at this point. If you cross the river and turn right, one of the boundary marker stones **V** for the King's Forest of Knaresborough which has been excavated recently may be seen 25m from the bridge. The walled track Nidd Lane leads from the end of the bridge back to Darley Main Street, about 400m. Turn right along the road back to the Community Centre **1**, a distance of 1.2K

# 4 The Holme

Distance 4.5K

Going: Muddy in fields and on tracks in wet weather

Turn right along Main Street, passing Stocks Green on the left and then Low Green on the right before dropping down to the Post Office and the little garden at Fringill Beck. Climb the rise from the Beck and in 200m Daleside Park is reached. Turn left and directly in front is a cobbled drive named Meadow Bank Farm. Walk down the drive and at the gateway take a ginnel at the right hand side following it round to the wall stile into the field. Turn left and walk down to a stile in the centre of the wall at the bottom of the field. Climb the stile and the river is 50m ahead. Turn right and in 200m the footbridge over the Nidd is reached. Turn right and in 20m, when the track levels out on what was the old railway line, turn left and after crossing a bridge climb the bank to the field on the right hand side. Walk round the edge of the field with the wood on the left until you reach a wall and stile with an open pasture field beyond. The path, which is indistinct, goes half right diagonally to the corner by the house on the road leading to Birstwith. Follow this path to the road. Just round the corner of the road towards Birstwith is one of the oldest houses in the Dale, Holme Hall **W**, with its thatched roof. This was the origin of Darley Laundry, which then developed into other specially built buildings which have now been demolished. Turn right on the road back towards Darley and in 300m take the signposted bridleway on the left. Proceed up the lane for 600m to Cinder Hills hamlet and after the first farm on the right, turn right on a signposted footpath across the fields with the hedge first on the left and then on the right after going through a metal gate in the hedge on the right. The last field before Stumps Lane is reached is crossed diagonally to the far lower corner where a convenient stile is found. Turn right down the hill and take the footpath through the farm yard on the left. Go through the farmyard which turns into a walled track and leads to Fringill Lane, which will lead you down past the dams and Fringill Mill **1** before regaining the Main Street by the bridge over the Beck. Turn left and follow the road back to the Community Centre 1 kilometre away.

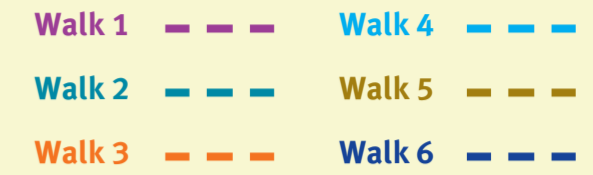
## Key

### Darley Heritage Trail

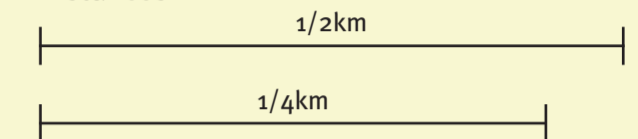


### Village Walks

Starting and finishing at Christ Church Community Centre **H**



### Distances



# 5 Fringill Lane

Distance 1.4K

Going: Surfaced roads, hard tracks and field paths, muddy in wet weather

Turn right from the Community Centre car park and walk along Main Street passing Stocks Green **1** on the left. Passing Low Green on the right, the Post Office **1** and school are reached in another 100m. The bridge over Fringill Beck **3** adjoins the school and the bridleway to the right (Fringill Lane) is now taken passing the mill **1** and the two mill dams to end at two cottages. Go along the drive of the right hand house and turn into an opening just past the disused pig sties on the right. Go through a small yard and over the step stile into the field round the head of the dam, through a gate and then over the step stiles in the walls further up the hill until Sheepcote Lane is reached. Turn right down the road and at the next junction take the right hand branch passing the old Primitive Methodist Chapel **2** on the left and Darley Memorial Hall **1** on the right. The junction with Main Street is reached in another 100m, when a left turn will lead in about 700m back to the Community Centre.

# 6 Crake Lane

Distance 2.5K

Going: A walk on metalled, quiet country lanes with a short steep section

Turn right out of the Community Centre car park and walk down Main Street for 100m. Take the right hand junction – Walker Lane – up the hill until its junction with Sheepcote lane is reached in 500m. Continue up the hill – a steeper climb here but stops to admire the view, which improves as you get higher, are quite acceptable. After another 300m the gradient levels off and the junction with Crake Lane is reached. Turn down Crake Lane for approximately 1 kilometre enjoying the views to the north over Nidderdale, until the road from Otley to Dacre is reached by the village cricket field. Turn right down the hill and then opposite the Wellington Inn **1** turn right past the side of the Old Post Office back into Main Street **1** and back to the Community Centre.



Stocks Green

