

Cragg Vale Fell Race Route (courtesy of the Calder Valley Fell Runners)

Distance: approx 4.5 miles / 7 Km

Time: approx 2 hours

This walk mostly follows the route of the annual Cragg Vale Fell Race, completed in under 25 minutes by the fastest runners, but they won't be taking the time to have a chat and enjoy the scenery along the way!

Some of the tracks can be wet and uneven underfoot, so strong, waterproof footwear is highly recommended.

Starting from the **Hinchliffe Arms** (HX7 5TA), with the church behind you, follow the lane for approx 200 yards until you reach the Cragg Vale Heritage Trail storyboard in front of the Old Vicarage and the Gate House, two beautiful properties providing links to the Hinchliffe dynasty when the area was a hive of industrial activity.

Turn right here, and take the lane between the two properties climbing upwards until you reach a junction in the lane at the Old Cragg Hall and cottages. Follow the lane round to the left and climb a little further until the track levels out, then ignoring the fork to the right, proceed ahead up the lane, past the Swan Bank farm buildings on your left, heading up the valley towards Withins reservoir.

At the top of the lane is a metal gate, and then a T-junction with a tarmac lane. In the facing wall, around 10 yards to your right is a stone stile with a waymarker. Cross the tarmac lane and over the stile into the field. Keep in same direction, following the track up the field until you reach another stile and an unmade country lane between two dry stone walls. Turn left, towards the reservoir, following the lane until you reach a gate. Go through the gate, then follow the track diagonally right for around 100 yards until you reach a wooden stile, over the fencing, approx. 50 yards from the stone wall on your right.

Go over the stile and into the plantation (Sunderlands Pasture), following the trail. Half way up the plantation is a crossroads and waymarker. Ignore the left and right turn options, and carry on ahead up the next section of the plantation until you reach a stone wall with a stile and waymarker (Dicks Lane). Go over the stile and you will see Stoodley Pike, around a quarter of a mile to the left. There's a clear trail to the Pike if you fancy a visit, but that's the opposite direction to this route.

Resuming the route, turn right, and follow Dicks Lane, a wide, unmade country lane between two stone walls, enjoying the views to the left across the valley. Pass over a stile and continue on the lane until you reach the corner of the wall on your right. Turn right, following the line of the wall and the electricity pylons and keep going in same direction for around $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. The track finally descends to meet a narrow lane, turn left and follow the lane for around 100 yards until you reach a waymarked metal gate, down to your right. Go through the gate and head down the hill towards the nearest electricity pylon. Follow the track, through a gap in the walls, then continue downhill, following the line of the wall on your left until it brings you to another waymarked metal gate. Go through the gate and down the track, until it emerges between two properties, and stay on this track as it becomes a tarmac lane, winding its way down the hill. As you descend, you'll see the river down to your left, and finally reach the lovely arched stone bridge that crosses the river. Just before you reach the bridge, there's a waymarker for a public footpath on your right which takes you up and through the woods. Follow this path, as it rises high above the river to your left, and follow this track as it descends, through a pair of stone gateposts and weaves its way through the woods, past the tennis courts, and finally emerges at the side of the Hinchliffe Arms.

Ready for that drink ?