

Buckden Pike & lead mine walk... 5 miles

Upper Wharfedale, Yorkshire Dales

 THE NATIONAL TRUST

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/walks

Discover remnants of the lead mining industry set within the beautiful, diverse landscape of Upper Wharfedale; from upland hill farms and hay meadows along the River Wharfe to wild moorland, big skies and far-reaching views at Buckden Pike.

Start: Buckden car park – grid ref: SD943774 – map: OS Explorer OL30

Getting here & local facilities

By bus: from Skipton: Pride of the Dales 72, Mon–Sat; from Leeds & Ilkley: 800/5, Sun, Apr–Oct alight Buckden




By foot: Buckden is on the Dales Way long distance footpath

By bike: Kettlewell is on the Yorkshire Dales Cycleway (Sustrans Regional Route 10); follow the B6160 from Kettlewell to Buckden

By car: 18 miles north of Skipton; follow signs from Threshfield and Kettlewell

Car parking (pay & display, not NT), cafés, pub, shop and accommodation at Buckden. WCs at the Yorkshire Dales National Park car park in Buckden

Things to look out for...

-  **Buckden Gavel Lead Mine:** Ore was smelted at Buckden High Smelt Mill until 1706 when Buckden Low Mill took over. Coal from the pits at Starbotton and Yockenthwaite, together with local peat, fuelled the furnace; a waterwheel powered the bellows. After 1843 the ore was smelted at Starbotton Cupola and the flue ran over 1000ft up the hill to a chimney in Cam Pastures. Thirty years later most of the mines had closed due to a drop in demand and cheap imports.
-  **Hay Meadows:** We encourage traditional farming methods to maintain the rich variety of wild flowers which are so much a part of the Dales' landscape. Meadows are cut for hay in July, when the flowers have set seed. The application of manure and only limited amounts of fertiliser prevents the grass outgrowing the wild flowers and smothering them.
-  **Field Barns:** These were used for over-wintering cattle that were fed on hay stored in the loft above. Dung was forked outside through the muck hole, where it remained until spring and was then spread on the fields. Today, few barns are used in this manner. Farms now tend to have buildings nearer the farm, which are large enough to access with farm machinery and which also meet current animal welfare standards.



The mine shafts of Buckden Gavel Lead Mine twist and climb to follow the narrow mineral veins. It was first mined in 1697, under the ownership of the Earl of Burlington. It is now an important habitat for ferns, mosses and bats.



View along Upper Wharfedale, looking towards Buckden and Buckden Pike. The hay meadows can be seen along the valley bottoms in June and July. They attract wildlife, such as butterflies and insects. Our traditional species-rich hay meadows are a rare habitat of high nature conservation value.



In 1942 a Wellington bomber crashed during bad weather on Buckden Pike, killing five men. The only survivor followed a set of fox tracks in the snow, which led down to the village of Cray. He later arranged for the building of the Polish war memorial, which stands at the top of Buckden Pike.

Directions

1. Leave the car park through the bridleyway gate, heading away from Buckden village. Immediately turn right at the sign to Buckden Lead Mine and take the path to a stile. Cross the stile and continue to a track. Turn right and follow the track to reach the sheep pens on your right. Cross the beck and follow the sign to the lead mine.

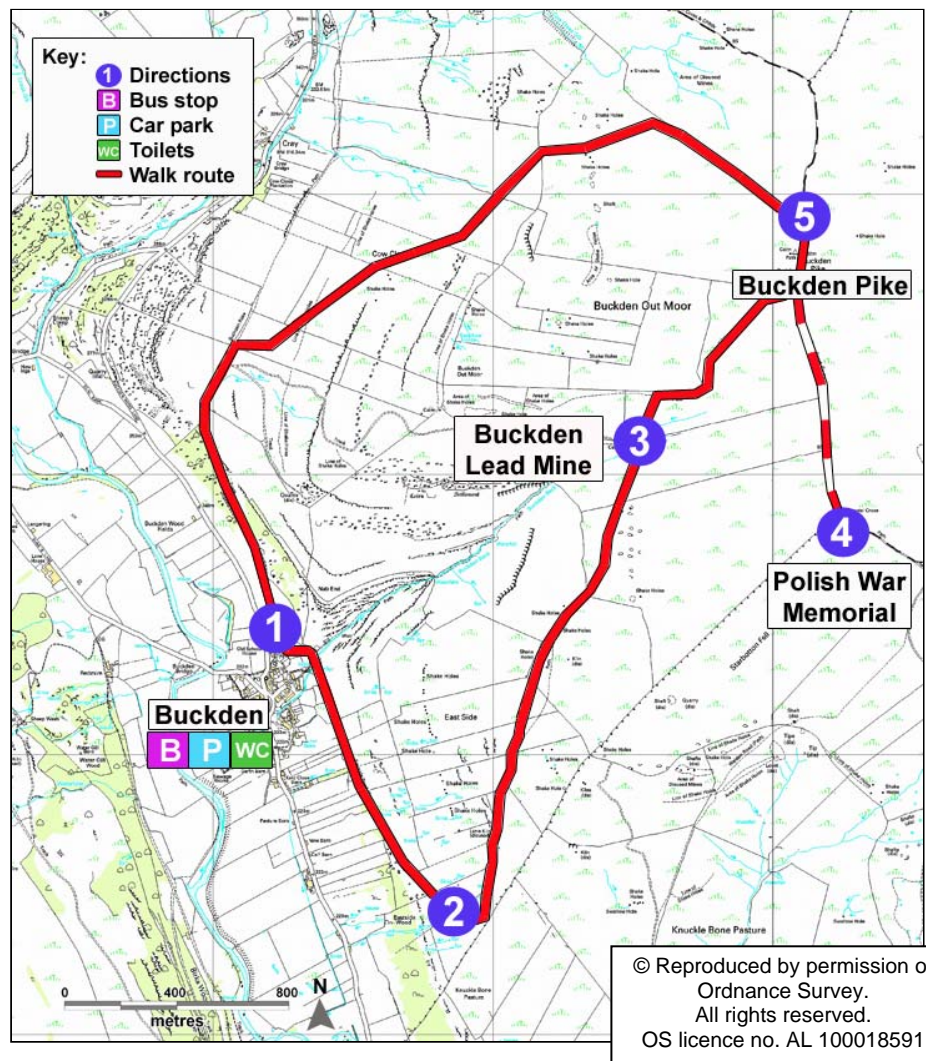
2. Above the steep and strenuous section of the Centenary Path, the route approaches a wall then doubles back on itself. Continue following the signs to the lead mine.

The orange hue of the Buckden Lead Mine spoil heap can clearly be seen as you approach. The building at the base of the spoil was Buckden High Smelt Mill. Please do not enter the mine entrance. It is a valuable habitat for shade-loving ferns and mosses and provides an important roost site for bats. It can also be **very hazardous**.

3. At the lead mine, walk around it to the left and head up to a wall above you. Follow the wall up the fellside to the summit ridge and cross a ladder stile at the corner of the wall. Keep the wall on your right and head towards the trig point (concrete structure used for surveying).

4. Before you reach the triangulation point you can take a detour to visit the Polish war memorial: turn right instead of left at the summit and follow the path to the memorial.

5. Follow the bridleyway signs back down into Buckden. Take care on the level section below the summit as this can be quite boggy at times.



National Trust places to visit nearby

- Malham Tarn Estate
- Braithwaite Hall
- Fountains Abbey
- Studley Royal

Simple trail maps available from Town Head Barn in Buckden, or the Yorkshire Dales National Park Centre in Grassington.

Contact us...

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Walk distance, terrain and accessibility

5ml / 8km circular walk, mostly across fields, unmade tracks and open fellside. Very strenuous, steep climb up to Buckden Pike; can be muddy after wet weather. Dogs welcome under close control; they must be kept on leads at certain times of year. Please visit our website for more information: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/upperwharfedale

As a charity, independent of government, the National Trust relies on the generosity of its supporters to continue caring for our countryside and wildlife, so that everyone can enjoy the beauty of the outdoors for generations to come.

Find out more at www.nationaltrust.org.uk