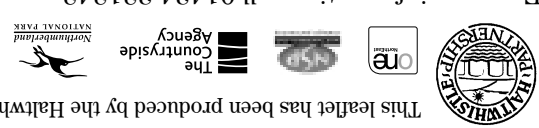




For further information on things to do in and around Hadrian's Wall Country call 01434 322002
 Or visit www.haltwhistle.org or www.hadrians-wall.org
 In planning your transport, please refer to:
 Journey Planner – www.planner.org.uk
 Traveline – www.traveline.org.uk
 Walks designed by Mike Swan (www.walkinghadrianswall.com) Tel: 01434 382620
 Photography by David G. Prakeel – PhotoWorkshops Partnership
www.photopartners.co.uk Tel: 01434 322595
 This leaflet has been produced by the Haltwhistle Partnership and part-funded by:

 For more information call 01434 321242

Walk 12
 Knarsdale & Kirkhaugh
 9/6 miles
 14.5/9.7 km
 Moderate Difficulty


The Haltwhistle Rings

22 Walks in the Historic Parishes of Haltwhistle, Northumberland

An amazingly varied 9 or 6-mile walk up the beautiful valley of the Knar from the old village of Slaggyford, and on to Kirkhaugh by pastures and the old railway and return by the landscaped park of Barhaugh.

O.S. Explorer OL 43 Slaggyford – Merrie Knowe – The Hill – The Knar – Longdyke Head – Lintley Farm or Barhaugh Park

‘This sweet solitude is difficult of access...’

Start Point: By Car.
 From Haltwhistle take the road south off the A69 bypass at Bellister Castle, signposted ‘Alston’. Turn left onto the A689 at Lambley to Slaggyford 2.5km south of Lambley.

1. Park carefully in Slaggyford.

Did you know: Slaggyford was anciently know as ‘Slagginford’ and it is suggested that its name means ‘muddy ford’ but just where there was a ‘muddy ford’ is confusing as the bed of the River South Tyne is stone. Another suggestion is that the ancient village was further north where a ford crossed the Knar Burn on a bed of solidified clay know locally as ‘slag’ and hence its name. At one time it was the market town of the valley with its own Crown-granted annual fair every September, but was eclipsed when Alston’s wealth from mining made it the capital of ‘Alstonedale’. When the railway arrived in 1850 things looked up for a while and a lot of coal and lime came from around the village. Tom Bell, the Stationmaster, in his book on the village in 1924 described it as, ‘a small place, but boasts a Post and Telegraph Office, a Temperance Hotel, a Reading Room, a Wesleyan Chapel and a Railway Station.’ He also refers to the last annual fair in 1907 when, ‘a goodly number of cattle, sheep and horses exchanged hands, buyers coming from a considerable distance’ and followed by ‘a series of sports, pony racing, hurdle-leaping, running and wrestling and a hound trail, followed by dancing at the village inns.’

Take the road west uphill with the village green and kids’ play area on your left. Turn right at Yew Tree Chapel onto the Pennine Way. Keep to the right at the various paths that link it to the South Tyne Trail on the left. Cross a small footbridge and follow the path down right to the footbridge over the Knarburn, beneath the railway arches. Once over the footbridge turn right and through a five-bar-gate, over a culvert emerging from a stone wall on your left and turn left to go through the tunnel under the railway line. Continue on up the track – Pennine Way – which bends to the right and through a gate to follow the main track across the field up to Merry Knowe.

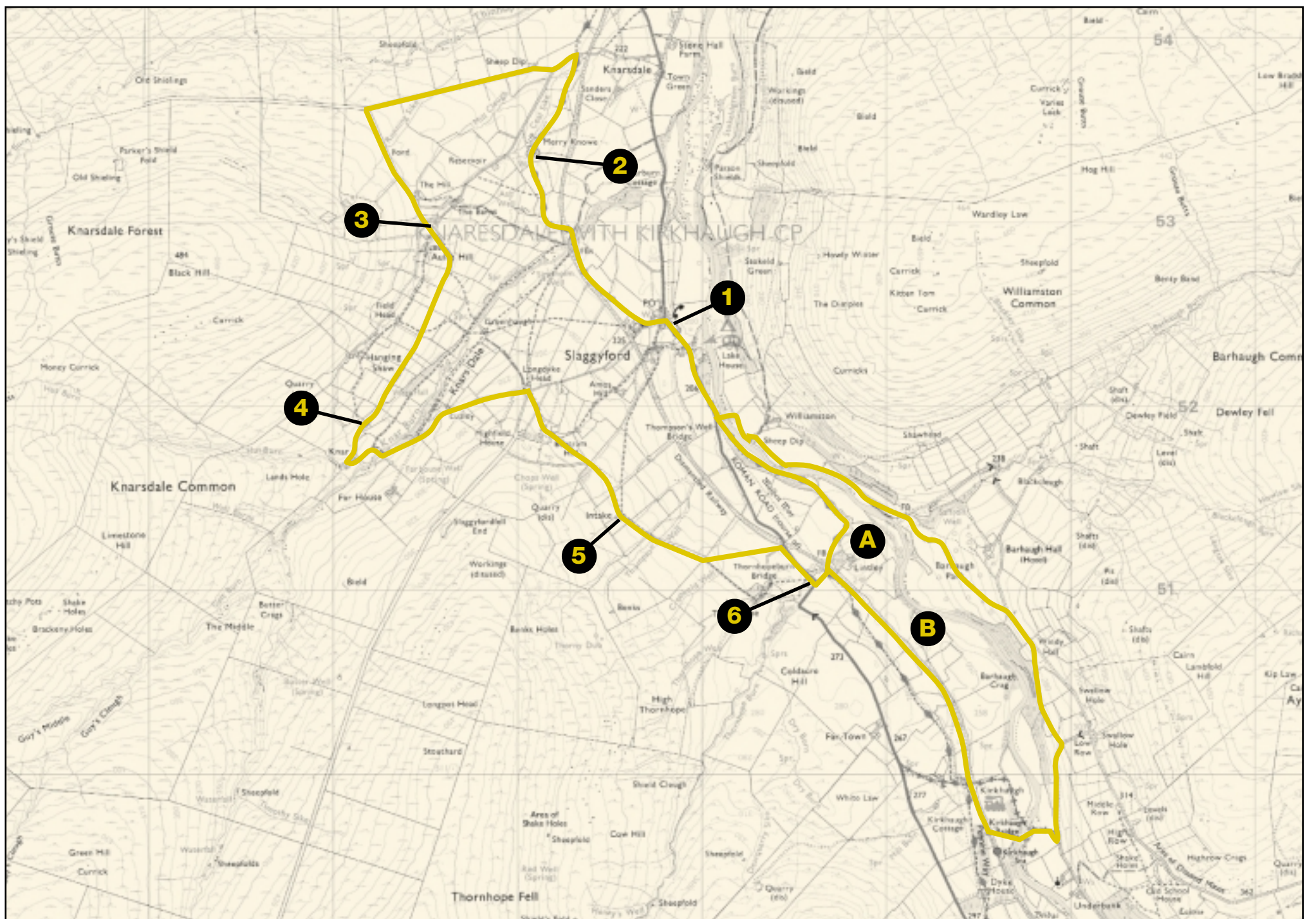
Did you know: One explanation for this name is ‘merry night’; a place where festivities were held. These may have been the ‘Kirn’ suppers when farmers celebrated the cutting of their corn and the ‘Guisers’ dressed up, played a variety of musical instruments and celebrated late! Indeed, ‘The Barns’ is close to here, which means a place where corn was stored. The farmers needed mills to grind the corn and there were mills at Burnstones, Lintley, Barhaugh and Kirkhaugh; not much left of them to see now.

2. Through the five-bar-gate and turn right following the sign beside a fence to a stone stile in a wall to the right of a stone barn. This takes you through the back yard of the houses, over another stile in a wall across a lawn, left by the garage and then immediately right over a stone stile in the wall. (How would you like people traipsing across your lawn – this should be changed!) Continue north across the fields to a wooden gate in a stone wall, a ladder stile, a stone stile, a footbridge and then a gate to take you onto the road. Turn left up the road and take the first track – an old drove road – on the right by a copse. (This is not signposted.) This climbs steadily west for about 1km until you turn left down another drove road towards The Hill. When you reach The Hill (the track from The Hill joins from your left), go straight ahead across a cattle grid, through a gate, turn left onto a road, pass a great wc at Barnston Head and over a cattle grid to the road.

3. Turn right here, past Slate House, and where the road bends right just after it turns to gravel, go left through a gate onto the bridleway to the Knar – this is the real Knarsdale.

Did you know: It is impossible not to quote the following from Hodgson’s ‘A History of Northumberland’ published in 1840: ‘... this sweet solitude was difficult of access; and its population with few opportunities of acquiring the amenities and mental enjoyments of better informed districts: and hence a cunning and vindictive spirit lingered long within its limits. Its people lived far from law and justice; and with them, to drive the best bargain they could, and drink deep of the cup of revenge, were amongst their soul’s best enjoyments. Education in morals and religion, as well as in the commonest school learning, had been much neglected ...’

Follow the track diagonally right towards a gate opening but, before it, bear right to a metal gate in the corner of the field. Go through and continue on up the valley through many fields and gates – mostly way-marked – until descending a grassy track to where the footpath from Hanging Shaw joins your path from the right at a marker post above The Knar Farm.



Copyright: Ordnance Survey (Explorer OL 31 & 43)

4. Follow the track down and through the gate between the farm and the barn, turn left and follow the road down to the bridge. Continue up the road, over the cattle grid at Luzley and on to the next house on the left, Longdyke Head. Opposite this house take the footpath right, signposted 'Low Thornhope', and straight across the field to cross a stone stile. Walk towards a gate in the stone wall on your right – don't go through it – but join a track down and through a gate, turn right and through another gate and on to a marker post. Go diagonally left here to the far left corner of the field and over a stile at the end of a grassy track. Take the stile to the left of a gate ahead of you, follow the track to cross a burn and then diagonally right across rough pasture, in the direction of a farm to the left of a wind generator. Go over the stile in a stone wall – way-marked – to pass Intake Farm on your right to a stone stile by a group of trees.

5. Continue across the field ahead, over a ladder stile, past a barn and follow the stone wall on your left to a gate at the far end of the field, ignoring the gate on your left just past the barn. Go diagonally left to the ladder stile visible just to the right of the railway bridge, turn left to the road and then right down the road to the sharp right hand bend opposite Lintley Farm.

Did you know: Lintley Farm derives from 'lint' or flax and 'lee' meaning pasture. Hence a field where flax was grown.

Turn left off the road here and follow the track over a cattle grid.

6A. To return to Slaggyford:

Approximately 20m after the cattle grid turn left onto the Pennine Way – signposted – and descend to cross a footbridge, turn right under the viaduct and over a stile. Ascend the bank ahead and follow the bank high above the burn on your right and follow it round the edge of the field to descend to a step stile. Go down the stone and mud track ahead and at the bottom follow the left edge of the meadow with the wooded slope on your left to come to the bank of the river. Climb the steps and cross a footbridge to descend to a meadow and follow the bank of the river on to a half gate. Go on to join the road from the road bridge to your right, turn left and then right on to the main road to return to Slaggyford.

6B. To extend the walk via Kirkhaugh and Barhaugh:

Continue on towards the bridge under the railway line. Just before the bridge go through a gate on your left and ascend the embankment. Turn right and follow the track south – until you pass under the second of two bridges and come to a stile on your left opposite the platform at Kirkhaugh Station.

Did you know: The farm nearer the railway, Kirkhaugh, suggests a church. The farm above it, Temple House, is often associated with the Knights Templar, that Christian brotherhood linked to the crusades. However, neither seems to be the case. The church is on the other side of the river anyway. And there is no evidence of the Knights Templar; perhaps it was once the property of the church at Underbank. Kirkhaugh became the property of Greenwich Hospital after its former owners, the Velponts lost it because of their support for the Jacobites in the Jacobite rebellion.

Cross the stile and go straight on down the field down to the stone stile onto the footbridge over the river. After the bridge turn left and then keep right on a track up to a gate and onto the road. (Turn right here if you want to visit Kirkhaugh Church – worth the visit.

Did you know: One reason is that it is the only church in England dedicated to the 'Paraclete' or the Holy Spirit'. The other reason is that it has been modelled on a Bavarian church – steep sloping roof for the snow to slide off and a narrow spire. Please leave a donation.

Turn left, climb the road and after about 250m turn left onto a footpath – signposted – and go straight on to cross three ladder stiles. After the third go diagonally right to ascend to the road. Turn left, follow the road past an old coal mine entrance on your right and cross the first stile over a fence on your left – signposted. Go diagonally right to descend Barhaugh Park passing the Hall on your right. You eventually descend into a clearing with steps up to a footbridge ahead. Cross the bridge, left on the road and follow the road down past Williamston Farm, over the bridge and turn right to return to Slaggyford. Passing the Hall on your right, you eventually descend into a clearing with steps up to a footbridge ahead. Cross the bridge, left on the road and follow the road down past Williamston Farm, over the bridge and turn right to return to Slaggyford.

Did you know: Originally known as 'Berehalgh' from the Saxon 'bere' for barley and 'halgh' meaning flat land by a river. What was described as 'a modest country house' in Victorian times, Barhaugh Hall reflected the new landed aristocracy; 'incomers' with their wealth in mining and industry in the North East who liked their parks landscaped.

Whilst Walking in and around Hadrian's Wall Country please remember that "every footstep counts" particularly during the wet winter months. You can help protect Hadrian's Wall Country and one of the great wonders of the world by following the simple advice below:

- Many of the routes are permissioned by landowners - enjoy the countryside and respect the livestock and the land
- Always follow the signed paths
- Guard against risk of Fire at all times
- Fasten all gates
- Keep dogs on a lead
- Remember walking on Hadrian's Wall can cause it to collapse
- Try to avoid walking alongside the wall in very wet conditions.