



Get away for... THE WEEKEND!

Head for Yorkshire in the tracks of a regular visitor
who shares her enthusiasm – and tips –
for captivating Wharfedale

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: Carol Kubicki

My view as I sat on a picnic bench chopping vegetables for our evening meal with friends was over a patchwork of fields. Hens clucked and pecked around my feet, looking for titbits. I couldn't have been more relaxed; but then this is one of my best-loved campsites.

Howgill Lodge in Wharfedale in the Yorkshire Dales has been a favourite for many years. I adore the peace and quiet, the laid-back atmosphere and the terraced open aspect with great views. We felt lucky on this trip to grab our preferred pitch and positioned our Blue Bus so that the evening sunshine streamed into its interior.

Our friends chugged up the gravel track in their VW in time for dinner. We sat

outside as the sunset bathed our terrace in golden light before dipping behind the hills across Wharfedale.

It might seem a little unimaginative, but two of my top UK campsites are in Wharfedale. The other is the Caravan and Motorhome Club's (CAMC) Wharfedale site, just over seven miles from Howgill Lodge, a distance we could easily walk in a day.

Whereas Howgill Lodge is in Lower Wharfedale and about 4½ miles from the monastic ruins of Bolton Abbey, the Club site gives us access to the more remote Upper Wharfedale. In a dale with so much to offer, a short break at these two sites just doubles the pleasure!

We'd broken the drive at Clapham ➤

Why?... To enjoy walking among awe-inspiring limestone scenery, both in the dale and on the uplands

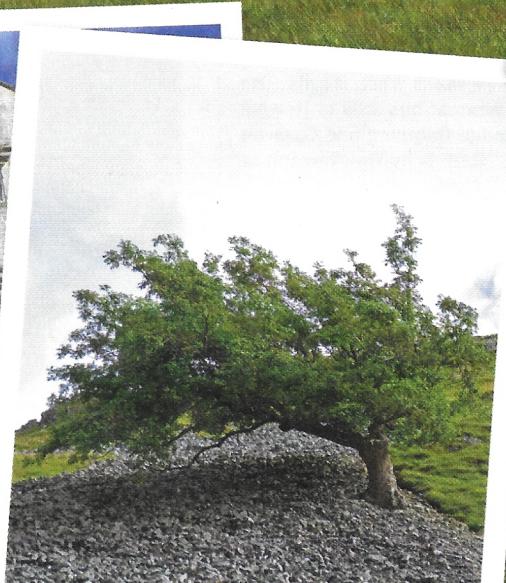
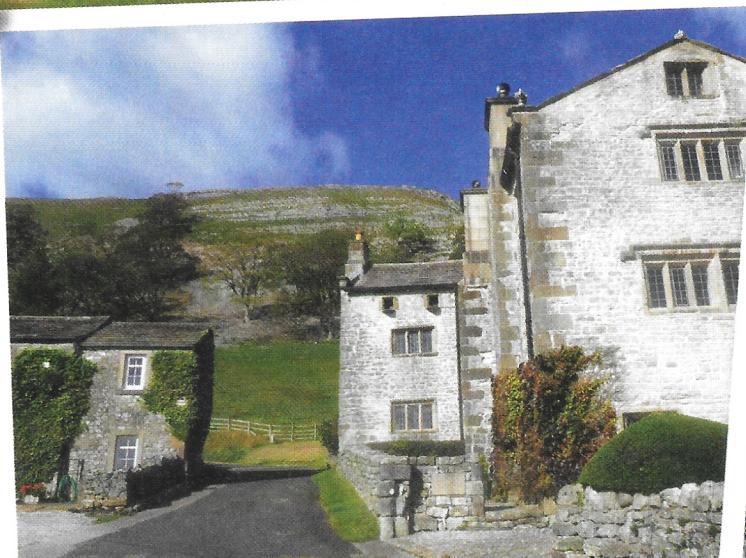


MAIN Looking across to Kilnsey

FAR LEFT Above Conistone, walkers will enter a narrow limestone gorge

BELOW LEFT Grey-stone houses in the village of Kilnsey

BELOW RIGHT A wind-blown tree in the limestone landscape above Conistone



US AND OUR 'VAN



Carol Kubicki...

and her husband, Anthony, use their Devon Tempest to pursue their hobbies of walking and cycling while exploring the historical and natural environments



2015 Devon Tempest on a Renault Master MWB 2.3-litre. This is our third blue campervan and we have called them all the 'Blue Bus'

TOP TIPS

Regular buses run along Wharfedale from Skipton as far as Buckden. These are useful for linear river walks in Upper Wharfedale and there is a bus stop outside the entrance to the Caravan and Motorhome Club's

Wharfedale campsite. The bus service for Bolton Abbey, Appletreewick and Burnsall is not daily, but useful for valley walks when it runs. The nearest bus stop to Howgill Lodge Camping and Caravan Park is by The New Inn at Appletreewick, under 1½ miles away

(Yorkshire that is, not London), an attractive village below Ingleborough, from where we took a short circular walk to the picturesque village of Austwick. We returned on a track below the Norber boulder field that is dotted with over 100 massive glacial erratics (swept far from their original site by glaciers in the last Ice Age).

Stopping in Skipton for supplies, we grabbed the chance to stretch our legs along the canal in this handsome market town. While admiring the colourful barges, we stumbled upon a statue of cricketing legend, Fred Trueman, who had lived locally.

The sunshine next morning encouraged an easy-going al fresco breakfast and it was almost lunchtime before we were climbing the rough track away from Howgill Lodge and into the gorgeous countryside.

There are so many walks from Howgill Lodge and we continue to find something new each time.

On previous trips we've climbed the steep hillside to Simon's Seat, a magnificent jumble of gritstone rocks and a great viewpoint over the dale. We have also discovered the isolated Grimwith Reservoir that sits on the high moorland.

On this occasion we chose an easier walk that included the splendour of Parcevall Hall Gardens. 'Hidden gem' is an overused

term but it might well be true of these gardens as this was the first time we'd visited, despite it being less than two miles from Howgill Lodge. The house and gardens are tucked away from the main Wharfedale road and nestle into a pretty limestone valley not far from Appletreewick.

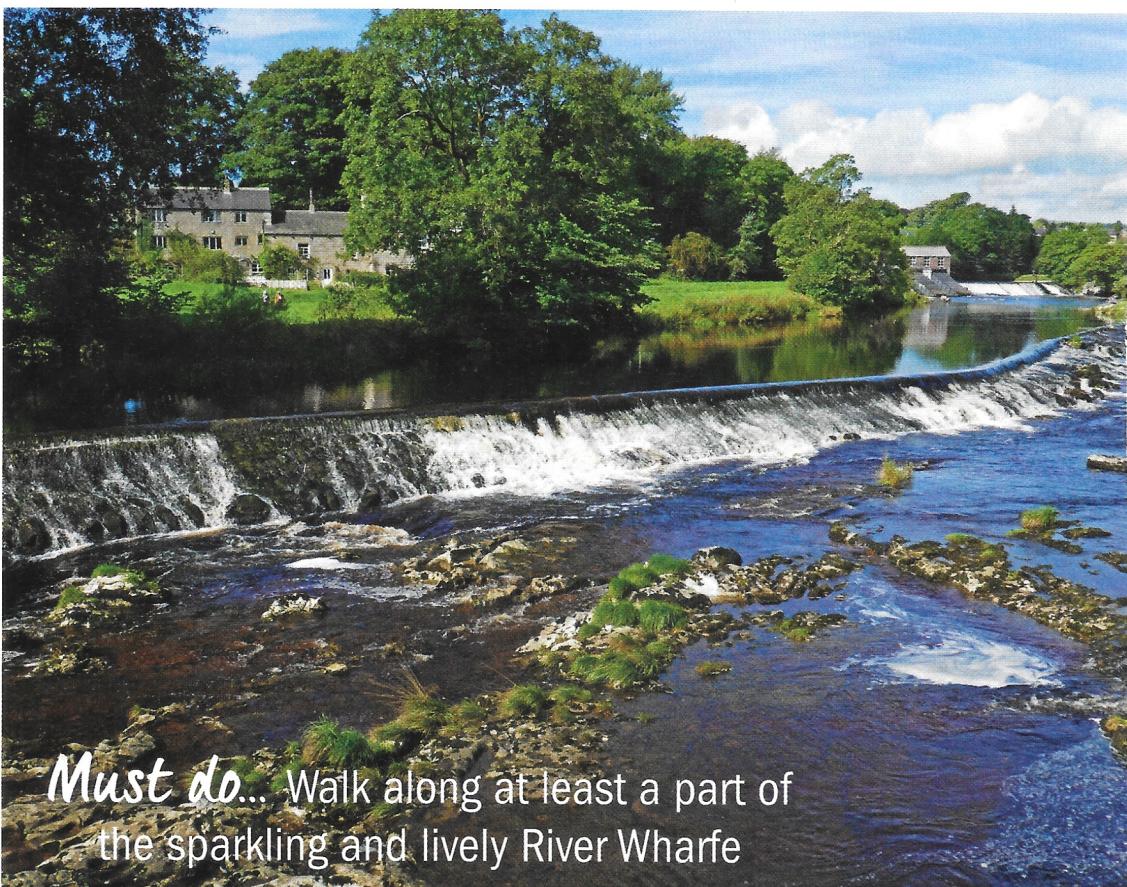
Built on land once owned by Bolton Abbey, the oldest parts of Parcevall Hall date from the sixteenth century.

By the early twentieth century, it was somewhat dilapidated.

Sir William Milner bought it in 1927 and rebuilt the derelict hall, taking care to preserve the original features. In those depression years, the work and good wages Milner paid were appreciated locally. He left the hall to the Church of England and the charming house now functions as a retreat.

Once the house was complete, Milner moved onto the garden, creating an outdoor space that makes the most of the local geography and topography and has year-round interest.

The abundant gardens are open to the public (see information), and are a superb mixture of woodland, a rose garden and an inspirational south-facing terraced garden with stone walls, water features and a feast of colours. I enjoyed exploring the garden's nooks and crannies and was most



Must do... Walk along at least a part of the sparkling and lively River Wharfe

RIGHT The River Wharfe at Linton Falls near Grassington

impressed by the outlook from the terrace across the eye-catching herbaceous borders to the rocky summit of Simon's Seat.

After a few hours at Parcevall Hall Gardens, we eventually continued walking towards Trollers Gill, a short limestone ravine. From this beautiful craggy dale, we followed the footpath above the ravine onto the fields above Appletreewick. Here, we all stopped in our tracks as a hare raced across our path, while the drawn-out 'peewit' call of lapwings filled the air.

The small village of Appletreewick sits above the River Wharfe and the houses and two pubs are strung along the one road. I downed a refreshing pint of Yorkshire brewery, Theakston's, Old Peculier outside one of these pubs before walking back to the campsite along the delightful riverside path.

The River Wharfe winds below Howgill Lodge; following it in either direction is highly recommended to see the river's different and changing characteristics. The next morning, we walked towards Bolton Abbey, following the crystal-clear, tree-lined river and spotting the distinctive white bib of a dipper as it bobbed on a rock and a goosander supervising tiny ducklings.

The large Bolton Abbey Estate is criss-crossed with footpaths, yet the crowds concentrate around the splendid priory

ruins and refreshment areas and there is plenty of space.

At Cavendish Bridge and the tearoom we turned back through Strid Wood.

This popular walk took us to The Strid, a remarkable narrow chasm on the Wharfe where the river is forced between rocks. It is said that the unusual name comes from the Anglo Saxon 'Stryth' (meaning turmoil). This became The Strid, perhaps referencing the challenge of striding across the chasm – and there are tales of those who have drowned from trying.

Driving upstream from Howgill Lodge, we were soon at the CAMC site near Grassington where, again, we were meeting up with campervan friends. This site doesn't have the outstanding views that Howgill Lodge has. However, there is very good walking from your doorstep. We have enjoyed both easy strolls to the River Wharfe and long days on the hills from here.

Rabbits hopped about as we sat outside our 'vans. Two friends had never visited the Yorkshire Dales before and were "blown away" by the beauty of the landscape. I smiled, knowing the delights they had yet to find and feeling slightly envious of their first-time enthusiasm.

It has become a bit of a tradition to treat ourselves at this Wharfedale campsite as ➤

ESSENTIALS

HOW LONG

Three nights

WHEN

We visited in June, but the sites are open March to winter

HOW MUCH

Fuel Average 34mpg North Lancashire – Wharfedale return 109 miles £17.30

Site fees £82.70

Entrance fees Two adults: Parcevall Hall Gardens. £14

TOTAL £114



INFORMATION

A beautiful village in Upper Wharfedale's stunning scenery

 grassington.uk.com

Skipton shares its favourite things, places you shouldn't miss, tucked-away secrets and local goings-on...

 welcometoskipton.com

The Yorkshire Dales National Park website has loads of ideas and inspiration to help you plan your visit

 yorkshiredales.org.uk

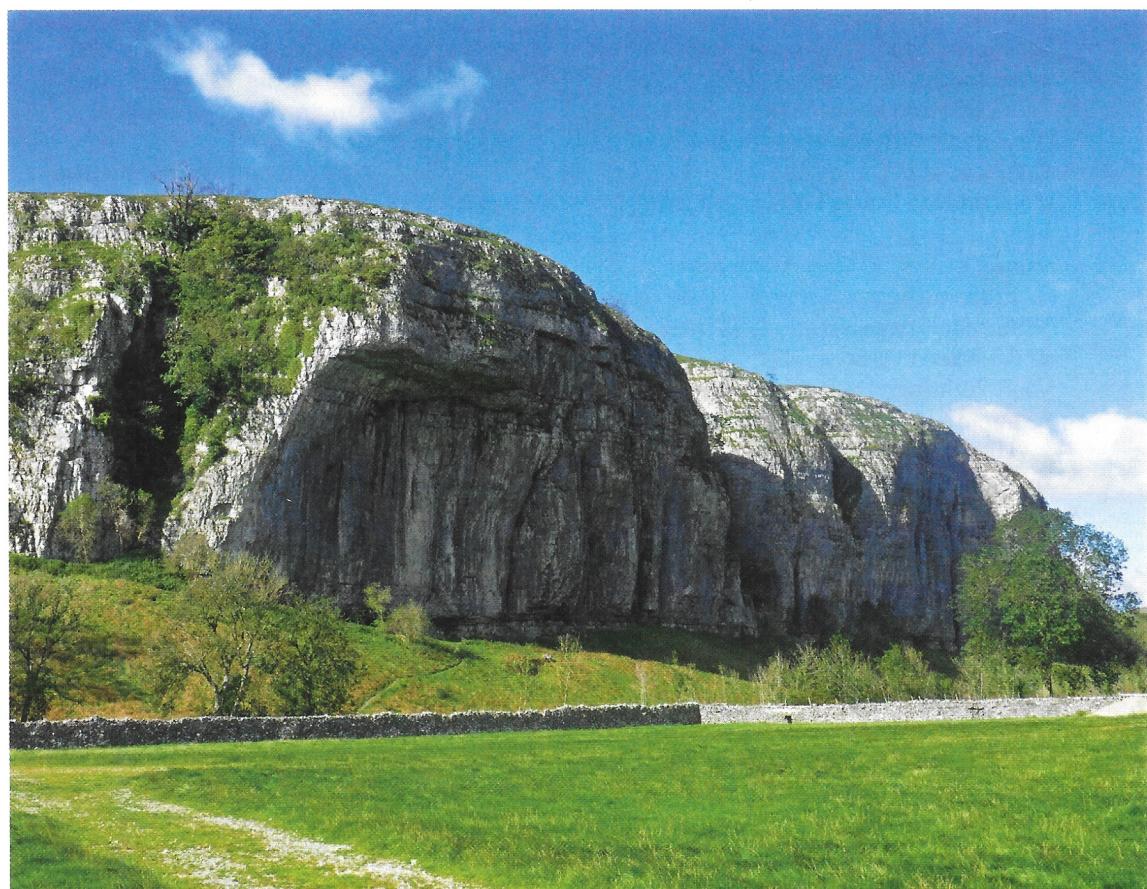
Parcevall Hall Gardens usually open daily 1 April – 31 October

 parcevallhallgardens.co.uk

Download a map of wheelchair and pushchair-accessible trails at Bolton Abbey from its website. Wheelchairs are available for use at certain times

 boltonabbey.com

BELOW Kilnsey Crag is a distinctive Wharfedale landmark





Must see... The splendour of the floral displays in Parcevall Hall Gardens

there are two good options for eating out. The nearest establishment is The Gamekeeper's Inn on the adjacent residential and holiday park and it serves great food and welcomes dogs.

As we were blessed with a fine evening, we opted to stroll across the fields for less than a mile to the traditional cosy charm of The Old Hall Inn at Threshfield. Well-behaved dogs are welcome here, too, and we thought the food was excellent.

In the morning, not quite ready to leave Wharfedale, we said goodbye to our friends and parked in Grassington for a favourite walk. Although this town is much-frequented by visitors, it oozes charm.

The cobbled square, narrow streets and traditional grey-stone cottages were transformed into Darrowby for the filming of the 2020 remake of *All Creatures Great and Small*.

We headed out of the village, crossing the river near the picturesque Linton Falls. From the narrow road that climbs up to Malham Moor, we turned into the fields and were soon on a grassy upland path.

It's the wide-open vistas over Wharfedale and to Kilnsey Crag that makes this such a glorious footpath.

Approaching the hamlet of Kilnsey, we joined Mastiles Lane, a historic drover's

road which, in the opposite direction, will take you to the site of a temporary Roman camp. The cluster of stone houses and cottages of Kilnsey has the Wharfedale landmark, Kilnsey Crag, as a backdrop.

This overhanging limestone cliff is a challenging climb.

It was too early for anything other than coffee in the welcoming Tennants Arms before we crossed the River Wharfe once again and climbed from the village of Conistone through an atmospheric and narrow limestone gorge.

Emerging from the confines of the cliffs, a group of volunteers cheerfully took a break from their conservation work on the path as we strode by.

Turning onto the Dales Way, we were once again high above the river, walking among dry stone walls and craggy limestone outcrops and stopping regularly to rest and take in the scenes along Wharfedale.

All too soon, Grassington and the end of our walk came into sight and we descended into the bustle of the village.

Other campsites are available in Wharfedale, yet, as we pointed the Blue Bus in the direction of home, I knew it wouldn't be long before we returned to both of these lovely sites to explore new and familiar corners of this wonderful Yorkshire dale. **mmm**

ABOVE Views to the hills from Parcevall Hall Gardens

THE CAMP SITE

Howgill Lodge Camping and Caravan Park, Barden, Skipton BD23 6DJ

01756 720655

howgill-lodge.co.uk

29 March - 4 November

Two adults, pitch and electric: From £29

Wharfedale Caravan and Motorhome Club Site, Long Ashes, Threshfield, Skipton BD23 5PN

01756 753340

camc.com

12 March - 5 January

Two adults, pitch and electric: From £23.60