

Strolling Whitworth

Simply lovely little Walks

STROLL 4 UP THE STEPS AND ALONG THE RIVER

START Snack bar opposite Oakenshaw Avenue

DISTANCE Short BUS STOP Oakenshaw Avenue

NATURE OF WALK A bit of up at start and finish. A mix of paved surface and potentially muddy paths, so don't wear ballet shoes. This is a short, hidden walk, with lovely surprises to enjoy.



Snack Bar and the Path Opposite by Peter Williams. You can sample after your walk!

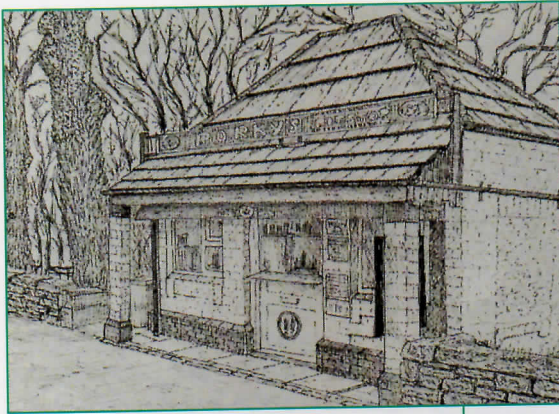
Across the road from the snack bar is a footpath sign leading to a set of steps. Please cross with *extreme* care, watching to your left especially – don't dawdle! OK - that's the most stressful part of the walk done, so now relax, and climb the steps through the houses, emerging at the top onto Tonacliffe Road. Cross again – easier this time, unless it's school-run time – and walk left, in front of this wonderful school.

Just past the school is a raised terrace of stone houses and, just beyond, kink right then left, to walk the flat road in front of the brick terrace: stop and look to your left to see the glorious purpose of this little detour. What can you pick out?

At the end of the terrace a footpath, with a handrail, descends to rejoin Tonacliffe Road at its bottom end. Cross it, then prepare for the re-crossing of the main road – again, take care, though your sightlines are better here. Once over, go straight down the gap between the houses, and left, around the back of the left-hand terrace. Walk past garages to a kissing gate beneath the houses.

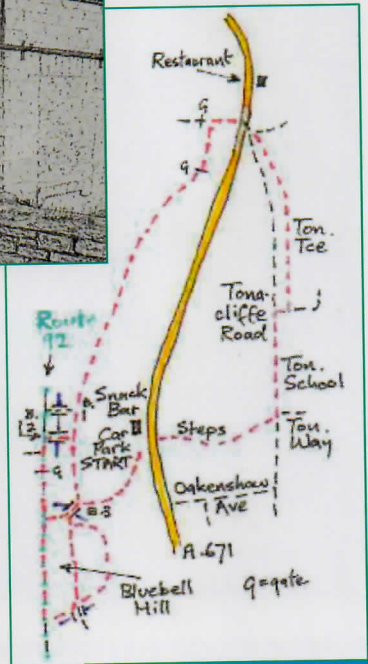
This footpath, although a bit muddy to begin with, is a little delight. Very soon you'll pick up the sound of the river and, as you reach the blackberries and the path improves, the sound will be amplified by a weir, and then a bend in the river which brings the river closer to you.

Soon you'll come to two bridges: don't cross. The first, near the bench, is a little uncared-for; the second is broad and well-used, being, as the signpost says, part of the Pennine Bridleway, which you'll now use on your side of the river. At first the path gets a real upgrade, but there are a couple of places which tend to bogginess: however, you're not wearing ballet shoes, so you'll cope. Another bench, a pond and a third bridge mark the point where you'll swing left and follow the path back up to the snack bar!



POSSIBLE WALK EXTENSIONS

1. Cross at bridge 2, stay on the main path beyond Bluebell Hill, then turn left, returning on the east side of the little hill to bridge 3, and up.
2. You can further extend your riverbank pleasure by following the semi-circular path past the picnic tables east of Bluebell Hill.



This is not a route to reverse. The crossing of the main road *from the steps towards* the snack bar is horribly perilous. Also the climb up to Tonacliffe Terrace is steep, and you'd lose the lovely surprise of the westward panorama. JF

