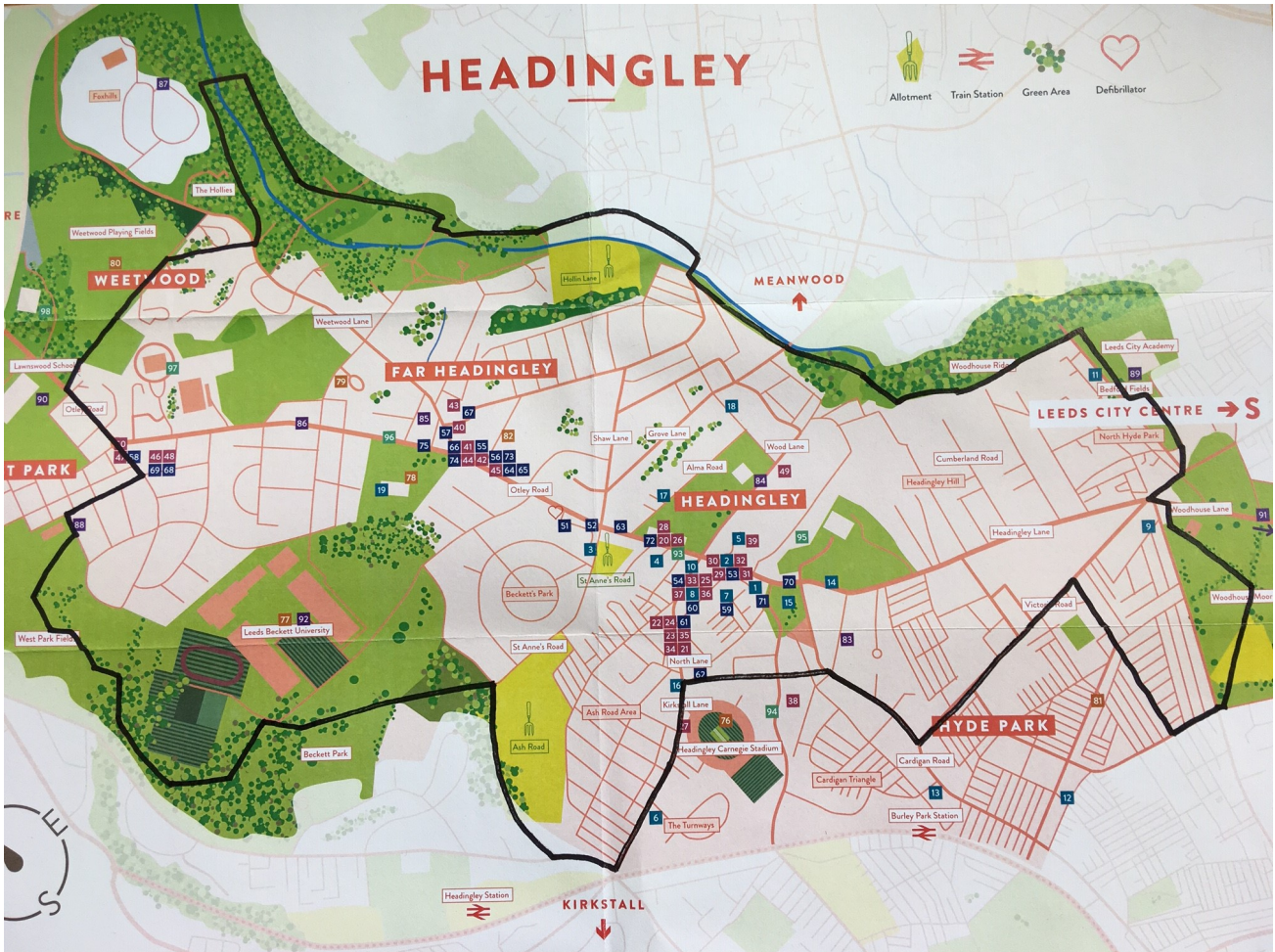


Headingley Bound

A Circuit of the Parks of Headingley



Headingley Development Trust
2017, revised 2019, 2021

Headingley Bound

A Circuit of the Parks of Headingley

Headingley is bounded by six parks. The Headingley Bound walk visits all in turn, Woodhouse Moor, Woodhouse Ridge, Meanwood Park, The Hollies, West Park Fields and Beckett Park (and passing Sparrow Park).

The walk travels widdershins, and is about seven miles overall, but you can start and stop at any section. It passes straight through each park – but of course, you may wish to detour and explore each! (The clock-wise alternative is appended.)



1 Woodhouse Moor

[Woodhouse Moor](#) was originally just that - a high desolate moor, between Leeds town and Headingley village. During the English Civil War, Parliamentary forces massed there before taking Leeds from the Royalists. The Moor was bought as Leeds' first public park in 1857, and laid out in the 1870s, predominantly open grass land, with avenues of mature trees. Currently, it includes tennis courts, a bowling green, a playground and allotments, and several imposing statues.

All bus services southbound from Headingley Centre (except X84 and X85) will bring you to Hyde Park Corner, by the Moor, where there are several cafes, should you need refreshment before you begin the walk!

Start in the centre of the Moor, where three avenues cross at a circle of seating. Take the northern avenue, past the skate park, to Hyde Park Corner. Cross Woodhouse Lane, and follow Woodhouse Street. To your right is Cinder Moor, and to your left, Little Moor, all part of the original moor. Cross at the pedestrian crossing, and take the lane opposite towards Leeds City Academy. As you approach the school, take the surfaced path bearing left, and follow this along a green corridor beside the school (on your right), until you reach Woodhouse Ridge.



2 Woodhouse Ridge

[Woodhouse Ridge](#) comprises the north-east edge of Headingley Hill, dropping steeply down to Meanwood Beck. Much of the Ridge was given to the city in 1876. Towards the east (right) there are remains of a bandstand, shelters, fountain and so on, laid out in the nineteenth century. Towards the west (left) the Ridge includes the oak woodland of Batty's Wood, and beyond, Cardboard Hill, with open views of Meanwood Valley. In the spring, the Ridge has a fine display of bluebells.

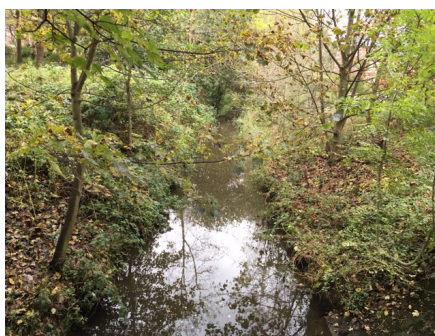
On entering the Ridge, through a pipe squeeze stile, turn left and follow the broad walk along the high wall on your left. There are a number of blocked doorways, and a narrow ginnel opens on the left (it leads diagonally back to the Moor). The Ridge drops down to your right, to Meanwood Beck, and is crossed by numerous paths. The path ends at a gate, with a group of boulders, a sign-post and a threshold sign for 'Woodhouse Ridge'.



Three options are now available.

- (1) Follow the left, surfaced path, to Ridge Terrace (along the top of Cardboard Hill). At the end, turn right into Wood Lane, and then left into Balbec Avenue, which takes you down to Grove Lane. This route is surfaced all the way.
- (2) Follow the middle path, across Cardboard Hill, and then down the back of Balbec Avenue gardens, to Grove Lane. This is un-surfaced, and can be muddy when wet.
- (3) Follow the right concrete stepped path, to the bottom of Cardboard Hill. At the bottom, turn left, just before the bridge over Meanwood Beck, and follow the un-surfaced track to Grove Lane, emerging by The Vale garden centre.

On Grove Lane, bus service 91 westbound (half-hourly) takes you to Headingley Centre, or it's 10 minutes walk, up Grove Lane.



3 Meanwood Beck

Meanwood Beck rises in Otley Chevin, passing through Golden Acre Park, and taking different names as it flows south. It becomes Meanwood Beck at Leeds Outer Ring Road, runs through Meanwood Park and along the foot of Woodhouse Ridge, and changes its name again at Sheepscar, before joining the River Aire. The silt it deposited in the Aire provided a fording place for a small community – which grew into the town of Leeds. The Beck powered corn mills in the 16-18th centuries, and supplied water for chemical works and tanneries in the 19th.

Cross Grove Lane, into a green corridor. Three surfaced paths run parallel, that on the right beside the Beck, passing a wildflower meadow and a pond, and several information boards. At the end of the corridor, follow the ginnel, and at the end, turn right into Monk Bridge Road (crossing over the Beck). Cross by the pedestrian crossing, into Mill Pond Lane, passing Mill Garth Hospital and a former tannery, now converted to apartments. Continue along the Lane, through a pipe squeeze stile, into Highbury Small Holding (note the handsome lions!), and then along a narrow unsurfaced path (the Beck is now on your left). At the stone posts at the end, turn right into a paved ginnel, and emerge opposite Meanwood CofE Primary School. Turn left into Green Road, which takes you to Meanwood Park Café, at the entrance to the Park.



4 Meanwood Park

[Meanwood Park](#) lies mostly on the east (left) bank of Meanwood Beck. Once owned by Kirkstall Abbey, after the Dissolution the land eventually passed into private hands. From 1825, it was acquired by Edward Oates (great uncle of Captain Oates), who landscaped the estate. It was bought by Leeds in 1954. The southern half remains open grassland, the northern half is woodland. There is a war memorial by the entrance to the 48 Meanwood men lost in the Great War, and in 2014, an avenue of 48 oaks was planted in their memory on the west bank of the Beck. The Park includes tennis courts, a table tennis table, a bowling green, a playground, picnic benches and a café.

Follow Green Road across the Park, through the open space sloping left down to the Beck, until you reach the edge of the woods, and Hustler's Row (a terrace of 1850s stone cottages built by John Husler, a quarry owner). Fork right at the bridle path signpost, along an un-surfaced track, with the Row and then the Beck on your left. The woods rise steeply to the right, pitted with former quarries. The wood ends at a stone wall, and the track passes through a gate. But shortly before the gate, turn left off the track and down the bank, via a half-dozen steps, to a wooden footbridge over Meanwood Beck.



5 The Hollies

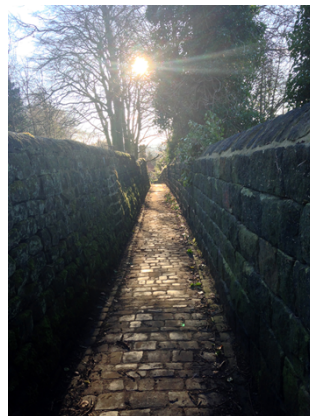
[The Hollies](#), on the left (west) bank of Meanwood Beck, was originally the site of quarries (much like the woods of Meanwood Park on the opposite bank). The site was bought in 1858 by William Brown, who developed the gardens. His son George presented these to

the City of Leeds in 1921 in memory of his own son, Major Harold Brown DSO, who was killed in the Great War. By the entrance, the park now comprises formal gardens, with island beds. The southern half of the park is a woodland garden, with numerous springs and pathways, and extensive collections of rhododendrons and azaleas, which make an impressive display in May. Also here are the National Plant Collections of Philadelphus and Deutzia, and several tennis courts. The northern half of the park is natural woodland, extending to Leeds Ring Road.

Cross the double footbridge over a dam on Meanwood Beck, into The Hollies. Climb the bank, bearing right, via a flight of some twenty rough steps, to a T-junction with a level path. Turn right and follow this path, which falls and rises, the bank dropping steeply down to the right, past a small bench on the left. At the second rise, bear left, up a steep path, past a brick buttress on the right.* At the top, turn left and follow the broad avenue. Through the trees to the right is the Foxhill estate. Pass the tennis courts over to the left, then the National Plant Collection, and then a block of flats, all on your left. Follow what is now a lane, through a rocky ravine, to The Hollies Lodge on the right, by the park entrance.

*If you miss your way, just keep climbing and bear left, until you reach the avenue.

Turn left along Weetwood Lane for the southbound bus service 28 (every 20 minutes) which takes you to Headingley Centre



6 Weetwood

Weetwood ('wet wood') lies between Meanwood Beck to the east and Otley Road to the west. Once owned by Kirkstall Abbey, after the Dissolution the area went into private hands, notably the Foxcroft family. The north end of Weetwood, alongside Leeds Outer Ring Road, now comprises Fox Hill, Leeds University's Sports Park Weetwood, and Weetwood Hall, built in 1625 by the Foxcrofts, now a hotel and conference centre. South of these is Weetwood Croft, built in 1898, now a university student residence, Oxley Hall.

From The Hollies entrance, turn left down Weetwood Lane. Cross the Lane (carefully, the bend is dangerous!) to a ginnel opposite (to the right of Bardon Hall Gardens). Climb the steep paved ginnel, between high walls. At the end, cross a lane to a step stile over a low stone wall, immediately opposite. Over the stile, turn left along a path through a wooded corridor, with Oxley Residences to the left (over the lane) and the playing fields and courts of Leeds University's Sports Park Weetwood to the right. Emerging from the trees, continue along the paved path between playing fields (Weetwood Hall is beyond the trees

to the right), until you reach Otley Road, opposite Lawnswood School. Turn left down Otley Road to West Park Roundabout.

At West Park, there are two cafes for refreshments, and all bus services southbound (except X84 and X85) take you to Headingley Centre.



7 West Park Fields

West Park Fields and Beckett Park, between Otley Road and the Harrogate railway line, together once formed part of the lands of New Grange, a farm of Kirkstall Abbey. The distinctive linear mounds of medieval ridge and furrow ploughing are visible over much of the parks. After the abolition of the monasteries, the land was leased to private individuals, and the house was renamed Kirkstall Grange. In 1910, Leeds Corporation bought the land for a Teacher Training College, now part of Leeds Beckett University, and the parkland to the south became Beckett Park, and the agricultural fields to the north became [West Park Fields](#). The Fields include two full-size grass football pitches, as well as a community orchard and a wildflower meadow.

Leave West Park Roundabout by Kepstorn Road, turn right into Welburn Avenue, and at St Chad's CofE Primary School, turn left into Northolme Avenue. Past the school, enter West Park Fields through the fence on the right. Cross the Fields, bearing left, towards the end of a hedgerow on the left (with a football pitch to the right). At the end of the hedge, turn left, and head towards the end of another hedge. Follow this hedge and ditch on your left, until it meets Queen's Wood (by a small bench). Turn right along the edge of the wood, to the far corner, where there are two stone posts.



8 Beckett Park

With West Park Fields (see above), [Beckett Park](#) was once part of the lands of Kirkstall Abbey's New Grange, and shows the distinctive ridges and furrows of medieval fields. The parks were separated when Leeds bought the land in 1910. The Park is named after Ernest Beckett, Second Baron Grimthorpe, whose family bought the land in 1834. Most is now owned by Wade's Charity, and leased to Leeds City Council, but parts lie within the

Headingley Campus of Leeds Beckett University. To the west, Queen's Wood (on the Campus) connects the two parks, and includes a memorial, originating in the 18th century, and modified to commemorate the opening of Leeds Town Hall by Queen Victoria in 1858. To the east, Church Wood (also on the Campus) is now separated by the Beckett's Park estate. To the south, Batcliffe Wood provides a green corridor from Beckett Park to Kirkstall Lane. The Park includes tennis courts, a skate park and a children's playground.

Enter Queen's Wood between two stone posts, fork left, and follow the path, between two more posts, through oak woods (with Queenswood Drive to your right, through the trees). When you come to a full-height turnstile in a metal fence, enter the Headingley Campus of Leeds Beckett University, turn right and follow the path. At a fork, bear left, to the Victoria memorial (the University playing fields are on your left). From the memorial, take Queen's Walk straight ahead, past the University's Grounds Maintenance and Landscape Resource Centre on the right. At the end of the Walk, turn right along a short road, and at a T-junction with St Chad's Drive, cross the Drive (by a sign-post and lamp-post) into woods. Through these, emerge into Beckett Park. Head across the Park, bearing left between two stands of trees, towards a fenced field. At the field, follow the fence, and at the far corner, continue ahead up the bank, between a bench and a lamp-post to a surfaced path. Turn left along the path to another lamp-post, and then turn right onto a path through Batcliffe Wood, with Ash Road allotments on your left (and a view towards Headingley Stadium). Follow the path through the beech woods, until you emerge onto Queenswood Drive.

On Kirkstall Lane, bus service 91 (half-hourly) eastbound takes you to Headingley Centre, or it's 10 minutes walk along Kirkstall Lane and North Lane.



9 Sparrow Park

South Headingley originally comprised fields sloping down from Headingley Hill towards the River Aire. As Leeds expanded in the 19th century, these fields were developed piecemeal as terraced housing, preserving (fossilising) the field boundaries (a few remaining spaces were in-filled between the wars). Ironically, among this development, Headingley's first park, the [Leeds Zoological & Botanical Gardens](#), was established in 1840, surrounded by a high stone boundary wall; but the Gardens failed and were developed as Victorian villas in large plots. However, the area still boasts one tiny park - when Cardigan Road was cut through the middle of the Old Gardens, a small triangle of spare land was left, between Cardigan Road, Chapel Lane and Spring Road - now known as Sparrow Park.

To return to the starting point, there are three options.

- (1) By train: cross Queenswood Drive, and a few yards along Kirkstall Lane, turn right into a path slanting down to Headingley Station. Catch a southbound train (half-hourly) to the next station, Burley Park. Leaving the station, turn right into Chapel

- Lane (with the Old Gardens wall on your left), past the Co-op, and cross Cardigan Road by the pedestrian crossing. Turn right, and follow Cardigan Road for about a quarter-mile, and turn left into Royal Park Road. As you climb the increasingly steep Road, you pass Makkah Masjid (mosque) on your left, the Royal Park pub on your right (with the famous Brudenell Social Club just beyond), and the Royal Park streets on the left – named after another 19th century pleasure garden. At the top, cross Hyde Park Road onto Woodhouse Moor, and follow the avenue between allotments to the starting point of the walk.
- (2) By foot: turn left into Kirkstall Lane, and follow the Lane to Headingley Carnegie Stadium, un-missable with its enormous stand and towering flood-lights. Beyond the Stadium, turn right at the junction, into Cardigan Road. Walking down the Road, you pass Sparrow Park on the right. The southern side is the boundary wall of the Old Gardens, with the former entrance gate. Further along, on the left, the turreted Bear Pit is another relic of the Gardens. Turn left into Victoria Road (laid down at the accession of the Queen), and follow this up to Hyde Park Corner, crossing Hyde Park Road onto Woodhouse Moor and the starting point of the walk.
- (3) By bus: on Queenswood Drive, catch bus service 56 southbound (every 10 minutes or so), which links the first two routes. The bus runs along Kirkstall Lane, Cardigan Road (passing Sparrow Park) and Victoria Road, until half-way up the last, it turns right into Chestnut Avenue. It crosses Brudenell Road into Queen's Road passing the Hyde Park Picture House on the right, one of the oldest cinemas in Leeds. At the next cross-roads, by the Royal Park pub, the bus turns left, up Royal Park Road. After it crosses Hyde Park Road, alight on Moorland Road, on the corner of the Moor, and follow the avenue between allotments to the starting point of the walk.

There are several cafes at Hyde Park Corner for refreshment, and all bus services northbound (except X84 and X85) take you to Headingley Centre.

The parks are maintained by the Parks & Countryside service of Leeds City Council (<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/leisure/Pages/Parks-and-countryside.aspx>), and they are cared for by the following groups:

- Friends of Woodhouse Moor
- Woodhouse Ridge Action Group, go to <https://woodhouseridge.org.uk/index.html>
- Friends of Meanwood Park, go to <http://meanwoodvalleypartnership.co.uk/friends-of-meanwood-park/>
- Friends of The Hollies, go to <https://friendsofthehollies.com/>
- Friends of West Park Fields, go to <http://www.westparkresidents.org.uk/index.php>
- Friends of Beckett Park, go to <https://www.beckettpark.org.uk/>
- Sparrow Park Ltd

Annex The Clock-wise Alternative

9 Sparrow Park

Start in the centre of the Moor, where three avenues cross at a circle of seating. Take the western avenue, to the right of the tennis courts, between the allotments, to the corner of Woodhouse Moor. Cross Moorland Road, and catch bus service 56 northbound (every 10 minutes or so), down Royal Park Road, along Queen's Road and Chestnut Avenue, down Victoria Road and up Cardigan Road (passing Sparrow Park on the left), into Kirkstall Lane (by the Stadium) and then onto Queenswood Drive. Alight here.

8 [Beckett Park](#)

Cross Queenswood Drive to a chicane in the fence opposite, and follow a path bearing left, up into Batcliffe Wood, keeping to the right hand path, beside Ash Road allotments. Follow the path through the Wood, emerging onto a surfaced path. From the lamp-post, descend the bank to a fenced field, and follow the fence with the field to your left. At the far corner, bear left across Beckett Park, until you meet St Chad's Drive. Turn left along the road, then take a turning to the right. After 50 yards, turn left into Queen's Walk, which heads straight towards the Victoria memorial at the far end. Take the path to the right of the memorial, and follow it to the full-height turnstile, and exit from Headingley Campus. Follow the path to the right (with Queenswood Drive to your left, through the trees) and pass between two posts, until you arrive at the exit from Queen's Wood.

7 [West Park Fields](#)

Leave Queen's Wood through two stone posts, turn right and follow the edge of the Wood, until you come to a hedge. Turn left and follow the hedge and ditch on your right. At the end of the hedge, bear right towards the end of another hedge. From there, bear right, towards the corner of the Fields (with a football pitch to the left). Leave the Fields through a fence, turn left along Northolme Avenue, and at the end, turn right into Welburn Avenue. Follow the Avenue to a cross-roads, turn left into Kepstorn Road, and emerge at West Park Roundabout.

6 Weetwood

From West Park Roundabout, go up the right side of Otley Road. Opposite Lawnswood School, turn right into a footpath (beside a sign, 'Public Footpath to Oxley Hall'). Follow the path between playing fields, and continue when the path enters a wooded corridor, by the entrance to Oxley Residences, to the right. Continue along the path, with the Residences to the right. When these come to an end, turn right, climb over a step stile over a low stone wall, cross a lane, and enter a paved ginnel immediately opposite. Go down the ginnel, which takes you to Weetwood Lane. Cross the Lane (carefully, it's a dangerous corner!), and turn left along the Lane, to the entrance between stone piers, to The Hollies.

5 [The Hollies](#)

Enter The Hollies between stone piers, and take the right fork into a formal garden. Turn left and follow the path, until you come to twelve steep stone steps. Down the steps, bear left again, past the tennis courts on your left. The Hollies slopes down to the right, crossed by numerous paths. Take any of these paths, leading down and to the left, until you reach a path at the bottom, beside Meanwood Beck. Turn left and follow this path until you reach a wooden footbridge over the Beck.

4 Meanwood Park

Cross the wooden footbridge into Meanwood Park, climb the bank to a track, and turn right, with Meanwood Beck on your right, and then Hustler's Row. Emerging from the woods, join Green Road, and follow this to the exit from the Park, between the playground and the café.

3 Meanwood Beck

Along Green Road, opposite Meanwood CofE Primary School, turn right into a paved ginnel. At a pair of stone posts, turn left, along an un-surfaced path beside Highbury Small Holding, until you join Mill Pond Lane. Follow the Lane out of the small-holding, through a pipe squeeze stile, past a converted tannery, to Monk Bridge Road. Cross the Road by the pedestrian crossing, turn right, cross Meanwood Beck, and after a few yards, turn left into a ginnel. At the end of the ginnel, take any of three parallel paths through a green corridor, with the Beck on your left, until you reach Grove Lane.

2 Woodhouse Ridge

Cross Grove Lane and take the track to the right of The Vale Stables. When this reaches a junction, beside a bridge over the Beck, turn right, and then climb the steps up the left side of Cardboard Hill. At the top, you encounter a gate, and boulders, a sign post and a threshold welcoming you to 'Woodhouse Ridge'. Through the gate, take the right fork, climbing beside the stone wall on the right. Pass an opening to a ginnel and several blocked doorways, until you come to a break in the wall, with a pipe squeeze stile.

1 Woodhouse Moor

Enter the surfaced footpath which runs along the side of Leeds City Academy (to your left) through a green corridor. Beyond the Academy, the path joins a lane leading down to Woodhouse Street. Cross at the pedestrian crossing, and turn right, to Hyde Park Corner. Cross Woodhouse Lane, and take the avenue to the right of the courts and skate park, to return to the starting point of the walk.