

# John O'Gaunt Challenge Walk

## A 25 mile route around Norwood Edge and the reservoirs of the Washburn Valley

1. Start at Bland Hill Community Centre (SE207531) leave the hall, turn left and take the first footpath on the left after 50 yards. Cross two small fields and then diagonally across the third field to a gate. Through the gate and ahead with a wall on the right. At the next field boundary go through the wall and cross two more fields to a minor road.
2. Turn right up the road and as the road turns right, straight ahead onto the drive for East End / Sandwith House. Follow this drive as it turns left and crosses 2 cattle grids, approaching East End Manor.
3. Just before the houses turn right over a ladder stile into a field. Keep to the left and pass through the first gap at a yellow 'footpath' arrow. Keep left, cross the field & then a stone stile. Straight ahead for 100 yards then turn right, cross the field, exit via a stone gateway into a walled lane. Turn left, follow the lane through a gate. Note: the ruins on the promontory to your left are the remains of John O' Gaunt's Castle, actually a hunting lodge of John O'Gaunt.
4. Circle the farm, keeping the buildings close to your left, then follow a path downhill and cross a causeway between 2 reservoirs. Cross a wooden stile, turn right to follow the signposted Dalesway link along a track / path with the wood and reservoir on your right. Follow this path to the first farm, Long Liberty Farm. (SE231548). Ahead into the farm area passing barns to your left.
5. Immediately before the farmhouse, turn right through a wooden gate (chalk arrow) & go downhill, through a second gate, & down again to join a clear track.
6. Turn left and follow the metalled track alongside a wood, past Scargill reservoir, & finally uphill to the road (Norwood Lane). Turn right along the road to Stainburn Moor Car Park, SE236522. Distance 4.4 miles.
7. From Stainburn Moor Car Park, join the track heading South into the plantation area. The route for the next 1.35 miles is almost a straight line Southwards.
8. As the plantation track swings right, straight ahead through a metal gate, with a 'footpath' arrow. Straight ahead with wall or fence close on your left. Pass through 2 gates, cross a stream, pass through a 3rd gate, straight ahead to a fourth, wooden, gate & pass through. (SE237500).
9. Almost immediately, turn right through a wooden gate with a 'footpath' arrow.
10. Cross the fields, keeping the wall or fence immediately to your right: bearing initially 324 deg, then 280 deg. Cross a wooden stile, pass through a gap in a wall, and finally go through a stone stile by a lone tree.
11. Turn left here, and with a wall or fence immediately on your left come onto the road at Buttoner House Farm (SE225500)
12. Turn right along the road. After 0.3 miles as the road bends right, turn left into an enclosed lane with ruined walls. Follow this to its end at SE220501.
13. Turn right over a stone stile & follow a path, keeping a wall or fence immediately to your left, cross a stream & a stone stile. Still straight ahead with the wall, then swing left with the wall. Now watch out, near the wall, for a footpath sign directing you to turn right, past gorse bushes, & down to join a minor road. Turn left on the road and pass through a gate.
14. Follow the road for 300 yards, then turn right onto the concrete track for Prospect House Farm. Follow this farm track until it swings right, & here turn left towards a gate with a 'footpath' sign. Pass through this, head towards the right of 2 trees, to find a second gate, also with sign. Pass through, turn left towards Norwood Edge plantation. (298 deg) and walk 150 yards to the bottom of the slope. From here, head for the right hand boundary wall of the forest, where it runs down the hill towards you. For the first 150 yards, the driest ground is to the right, alongside a broken down wall.

15. On reaching the forest boundary wall, walk uphill, with wall & wood on your left, and then turn left through a gate into the plantation area. Almost immediately, turn right up a rough track, and go straight ahead along this for a while, through the wood, finally exiting the wood at a rough car park/ turning area, next to a metalled road.
16. TAKE CARE: The road (the B6451) has a blind summit to your left.
17. Turn right onto the right hand verge, after 50 Yards, cross the road to go down a metalled lane (Top Lane). After 200 yards, turn right down a metalled drive with mature conifers to your left.
18. At the end of the drive, turn right through a wooden gate and follow the marked path around the property. Exit at the back via a wooden gate on your right, head downhill with trees, hedge, or fence on your left. Cross a single strand wire fence (RUNNERS: BEWARE!), ignore a sign, 'footpath', on your left, continue gently downhill, cross a stone stile and a field, then exit via a stile to the road.
19. Turn left along the road, take the 1st right down a bridleway to Scow Hall farm. NOTE: the bridle path through the farm & the fields is marked by a series of red and metal gates. These take you between the buildings, left & away from the property, and then right at a signpost into a walled lane. After a 5th & final red gate, go ahead along a path to the metalled road at Swinsty Reservoir. Turn left to Swinsty Cottage. Distance 10 miles
20. From Swinsty Cottage cross Swinsty Embankment then turn right with the reservoir on your right on the main track until you reach a metalled road. Here turn left into the Swinsty/Fewston Reservoirs Car Park. Distance 11.4 miles.
21. Leave the car park and turn left along the road signed for Timble and Otley. Watch out for the first house on the right and immediately after it, turn right into the walled lane signed as the Dalesway Link. You may well follow this without the detailed guidance below.
22. Follow this path down the short lane, cross a field, pass through a wooden gate in the far corner, and turn left. Pass over a wooden stile and then through a narrow stone stile onto a level track. Go straight ahead along this track and at a T junction with a second track at SE178538 turn left & immediately right (so keeping the same line) . Follow this second track for 220 yards and then watch out on the right for a post with a yellow top, indicating a waymarked path. Turn right here. Follow this path, on a bearing of 335 deg, for one mile. This takes you through a wood, over a small bridge, through a stile into a walled track and out again into a field. In this field keep right, with a wire fence close on your right, watching for a waymark on a fencepost which directs you to the left. Pass a tree, enter a field via a stone stile, and go ahead, through fields, stone gateways, and waymarked stiles, walking parallel to the reservoir. Finally pass through a stile in a stone wall and head down to Fewston reservoir car park, SE169553. (13.2 miles)
23. Leave the car park by steps opposite, up to the A59. Turn right along a short footpath until clear of the Armco, and then cross with care and turn right to a road signposted for Dacre and Pateley Bridge.
24. Turn left up this road, keeping to the left. Turn left along the drive for Scaife Hall Farm. Follow the track through the farm and keep straight ahead until you enter, emerge from, and re-enter a small wood. Now watch out, half way down the next slope, for a raised path on your right leading in the same general direction as the track you are on. Take this raised path and stay on it until it rejoins the main path close to a small river which is planned to have white water canoeing on the day of the walk. The dam wall is clearly visible ahead. Go ahead on the main track, with river on your left, for 125 yards. Cross the river at a small footbridge (SE157568), go uphill on the track for a short distance and then turn through a hairpin left up to a minor road. Turn right, towards the dam, follow the road to the end, and then climb steps, keeping left at the top, to Thruscross Reservoir Car Park, SE154574. Distance 15 miles
25. Leave the car park, cross the dam causeway. Keep to the LHS of the road and 300 yards after the end of the wall, bear left into the wood at the start of the water board path. This is initially at the level of the high-water mark, close to the water's edge but then climbs to the edge of a plantation. Climb the hill alongside the wood, emerge via a stile & head to the

- left. Ignore a signpost indicating a left turn towards the wood. The way ahead is the wider route, indicated by round but unmarked, posts. Drop down to the head of the reservoir by steps leading down, alongside the wood, to a bridge of scaffolding poles at SE138593. Climb the hill alongside the wood and at the top turn left, following the sign post, climb over a ladder stile and go ahead to a second signpost.
26. Follow the signed path: swing right and head for a stile next to a gate, where you turn right ,heading alongside the wall for a stile and access to the metalled farm track on which you turn right for the road.
  27. At the road, turn left. As you approach the top of an incline down to a stream, note, but do not cross, a stile for the 'Pub Walk'. Immediately afterwards swing left to take a path leading to a footbridge over the stream. Follow this path, cross the bridge, climb the slight incline, and after 100 yards find, on your left, the Yorkshire Water path around the reservoir. Turn left into the wood, along this path, and follow it back to Thruscross Reservoir Car Park. There are no real alternative paths, but where there appear to be any, keep to the main path and closer to the water. 19.5 miles
  28. Leave the car park, go back down the steps. At the road end, cross the turning area and pass through a gateway. This gate is normally closed but may be kept open for the canoeists on the day. Head down the track, and cross the stream by the first bridge, immediately in front of you. Turn right, and walk on the path which runs close to the stream, with the water close on your right until you reach the A59. Here leave the stream and ascend the steps to emerge on the verge of the main road. Take care: traffic will be fast moving! Turn left & walk until opposite the blue 'Fewston' sign & clear of the Armco.
  29. Cross the A59 with care and head for the blue Yorkshire Water sign. Go down the steps and follow the main path clockwise around the reservoir. Keep on this path until very close to the end of the reservoir, at which point follow it up to the left as it bypasses a private garden. Staying on this path, descend stone steps to the road, cross, and pick up a similar path around Swinsty reservoir.
  30. Follow the path around Swinsty until it leads past a car park and out to the minor road. Turn right , cross a causeway over the water, and go straight ahead along the road until the first minor road on your right, signed as a cul de sac. Take this road, and follow it for 200 yards until, at the top of the slope, you find on your left, a stone stile by the side of a gateway. Note: there will probably be no 'footpath' sign here.
  31. Cross the stile into a walled lane and follow uphill briefly, then exit via a stile so as to continue straight ahead, ruined barn on your right, and up the hill. Straight ahead up to the next stone stile. (ignore the inviting gateway in the top right hand corner!) Up the next field, wall immediately to your right, to find a stile 25 yards to the left of the corner of the field. Over this, then head for a stile which is to the right of a gate seen ahead, adjacent to the property on the right. Exit the last field by a stone stile to the road. Cross with care, and turn right along the footpath opposite and then left to the community centre and the finish. 25 miles. Well Done.

**On completion you may obtain a woven rucksack badge and certificate from Andy Ward, 64 Granny Avenue, Churwell , Leeds, LS27 7SN for £4. Please make cheques payable to West Yorkshire LDWA.**