

SILSDEN CIRCUIT

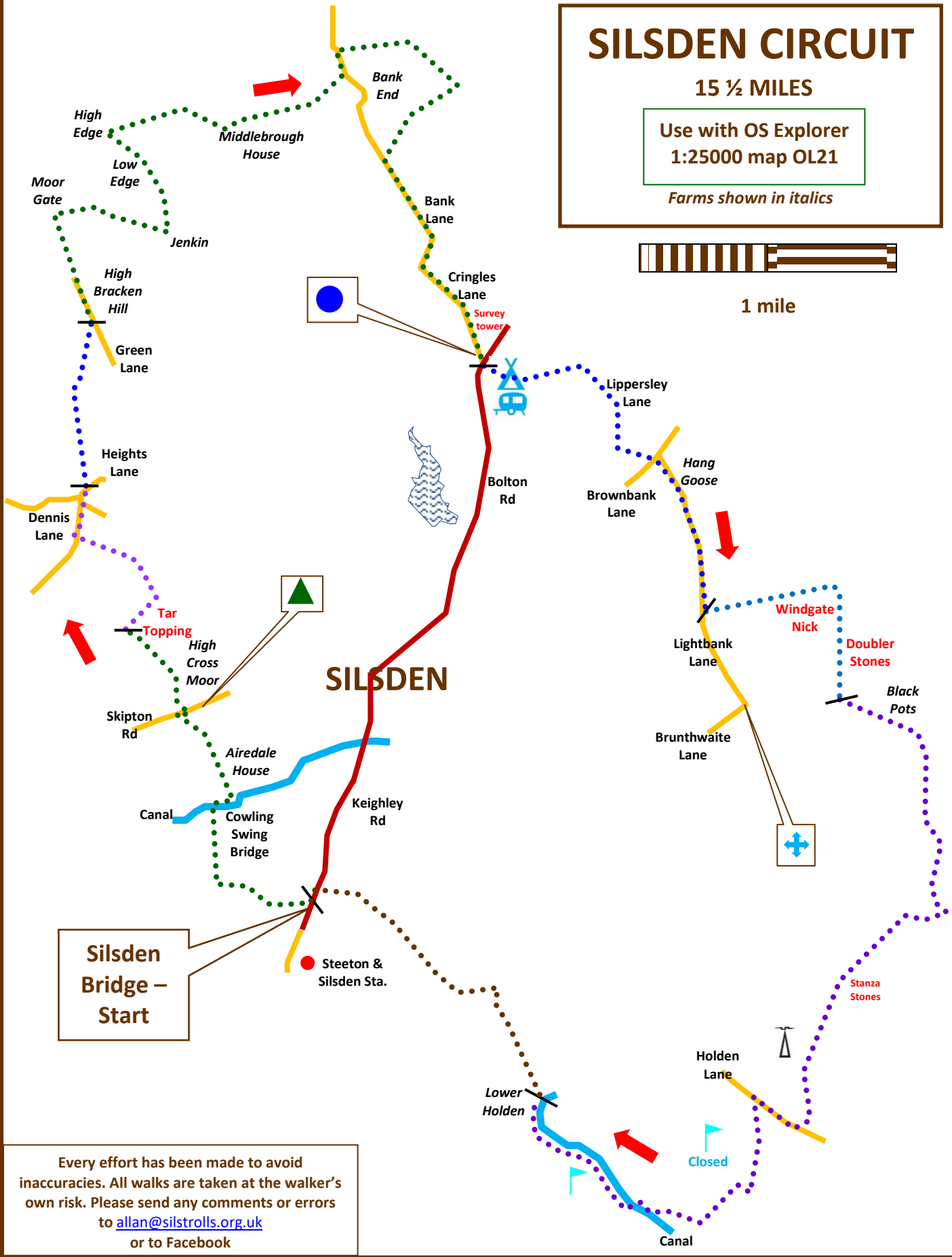
15 ½ MILES

Use with OS Explorer
1:25000 map OL21

Farms shown in italics



1 mile



Silsden Bridge – Start

Every effort has been made to avoid inaccuracies. All walks are taken at the walker's own risk. Please send any comments or errors to allan@silstrolls.org.uk or to Facebook

Silsden Circuit (15½ miles)

Follow (as near as dammit) the parish boundary and experience the full range of scenery, topography and terrain that this lovely parish offers. Hills, slopes, meadows, river and canal, quiet country lanes, secretive paths, woodland, river, canal and becks. And the Smallest Bridge in Yorkshire. Most of the Circuit is high level on the rims of the valley, and the wonderful views of the town and Airedale make the distance worth every step. Four start points are suggested; I have started the directions at Silsden Bridge. Woodside Road off Skipton Rd is west; the junction of Brunthwaite and Lightbank Lanes is to the east; and Cringles to the north. The usual caveats apply: make sure all gates are left as you find them; take plenty of water and something to give energy such as bran bars or chocolate; and wear both sun cream and hat in hot weather. And the necessary rainwear if not! On a long walk like this good walking boots are essential.

The Circuit does not have its own discrete waymarks. Instead each section follows those of a Stroll / Stride / Circle as indicated at the start of each. So look out for those and note when they change to a different name and colour.

From the “car park” on the immediate left as you enter Keighley Rd from the bypass, turn left over SILSDEN BRIDGE to path with steps down.

(Circle) Cross this long field to far right corner. Stile/gate, then another two stiles to corner of field. Turn right, go upfield along edge via stiles and gates to canal. Cross Cowling Bridge, over stile on right and follow field edge with canal. At second signpost follow track up towards Airedale House farm, passing via stile and then following the field edge steeply up. Another stile takes you up along the edge of third field and to step stile on to Skipton Road. Right, and immediately left along track to High Crossmoor farm. (▲ If you start from Woodside Rd, turn left on Skipton Rd. and walk to this point). Turn right from the track, over stile to its companion diagonally left in corner. Turn left, follow wall uphill to Tar Topping barn.

(Stroll 7) Right, behind barn; follow wall to beck at bottom (v. slippery followed by v. steep steps!). At stile, go right, to gap where you turn leftish, making for stile at this end of wall. Walk down side of house, left over stile and keep ahead following field edge. Cross three fields to Bridge House Farm. Pass in front, arriving at New Lane. Turn right on Dennis Lane. Forward into Heights Lane.

(Stroll 2) Turn immediately left along drive of Stakehill fishery. Ahead through Bradford waymarked gate. Right at 1 o/c to step stile in corner (often blocked with a tyre!) in general direction of distant wind turbine. Sharp right, following wall for 200 yards to step stile. Make for stiff gate in front of house; pass across house front, turn left and cross stile by multi-waymarked post. Cross field, keeping power poles on left, to gate / stile. Maintain this line to corner of field and stile on to Green Lane.

(Stride 1) Left up Green Lane for about ½ mile, making for Moor Gate farm, crossing cattle grid in increasingly wide-open countryside. At the farm go right (NOT in the farmyard!), and follow track to right-hand gate. The obvious track leads you past Crow Trees Farm to Jenkin. Drop left to a small wooden gate. The “bowl” of the terrain is now opening up before you. Go down the l/h field edge to a similar gate, then cross at 11 o/c to concrete track. Left, up to Low Edge Farm via a cattle grid (no gate!). Here you pass between the lions, go right, across lawn and up, following wall the length of the house to stile in r/h wall, facing wind turbine. Turn sharp right, exit via gate and climb to High Edge Farm. Pause – look at that view! Cross barred step stile on right, and take that on left about 50 yards along. Make for gate up on right, then straight ahead up to stile in corner.

Crossing some boggy ground, walk to obvious gate ahead, then descend the two fields' edge via a gate and take stile on left. Ahead to gate at Middlebrough House Farm. Walk round house front, following track to gates, where you pass through yours and the right hand one, making for Haygill Farm. There, take gate on the right (NOT ahead!), and cross over field with ditch on your right to stile in mid-wall, then to stile at Haygill Nook, passing an old barn on your right.

Go left up Bank Lane and after 150 yards, at the bench on right, follow bridleway to the end of a long field. The corner stile is not only unsafe but boggy – best to use gate to the left. Turn right, follow r/h wall over stile and then to ladder stile. Climb this and follow l/h wall to two gateways. Go through gate in r/h wall, then to stile behind dead tree. After passing over this it is best to leave the official path, so climb, keeping the heaps of spoil on your left, then strike out ahead for corner of field and Bank Lane. Turn left and follow Cringles Lane to Bolton Road. (● - the very small but safe parking area is just on the right, at the end of the Lane)

(Stroll 5 / Stride 2) CROSS BOLTON ROAD WITH GREAT CARE and take unmarked track up through trees, along wall, keeping ahead and left through caravans to gate in corner. Through house yard to stile. Ahead to gate in corner. Climb via metal gates to very top, and take wayposted slightly awkward step stile on left in wall ahead. (I go via gate on right.) Walk through trees to stile, follow path ahead to track. Turn right and walk ½ mile to end of Lippersley Lane. Go ahead up Lightbank Lane, passing Hang Goose farm, to reach the second path on left. (From the ↗ start, you need to walk back ½ mile to reach this point).

(Stroll 6) Climb the Nab's slope and follow r/h wall. 100 yds after large boulder wall-side, take stile and climb slope, with bench up on left giving superb views of Wharfedale. (Also RAF memorial plaque). Don't exit here: forward on path to arrive soon at second stile, with obvious moorland path leading away downhill; through gate, continue ahead (Doublers Stones high on left), to exit on to track at left of bungalow. Turn left.

(Stride 3) Forward to Black Pots. Go through gate and climb slope to woods, where you plunge in, following obvious track. Exit on to a broad track, and turn immediately right, back into wood. You soon leave trees again, to be confronted by evidence of much felling and planting to your left, but with a now much opened view across to Silsden and Airedale, a view which steadily broadens as you descend. Stay to admire and read the Stanza Stones,

which also benefit hugely from having trees' former lowering presence now removed.

A gate leads you down to another close to a TV relay mast, where you follow track left all way down, ignoring tempting stile in corner, to gain Silsden Road. Right, then after 300 yards take stile at nearer of two footpath signs.

Drop diagonally left across three more stiles on this line. Continue dropping right, to reach outbuildings and gate; then, with your back to gate, walk ahead keeping wall on left, to drop to small metal gate on edge of trees. *The path proper continues ahead through overgrowth to ladder stile where it drops left even more obscurely, following wall to arrive by one of the greens.* Far easier, on the other hand, literally a few paces after the gate, path divides, (both arms pretty obscure), and you drop left to leave trees immediately and enter top of former golf course. Go downhill, following wood's edge and occasional white boundary posts.

At bottom follow round right, and at once drop left under single power line to track. Right, and follow this to pass a bouldered-off carpark and boarded up clubhouse, where track on left takes you over canal. Turn right and follow towpath for just shy of ½ mile. *(Keep an eye open for heron who frequents opposite canal edge where large field replaces trees).* Just after corrugated reinforcement of canal bank take the stile just before the accommodation bridge and drop down the track to the farm gate where you turn right to immediately exit. Follow Low Lane for ¼ mile, and turn left along signed footpath through wooden gate.

(Stroll 1) Forward. Ignore the pair of stiles either side, but follow track round to left; take stile a few yards on your right, then the one about 50 yards along right hand fence. Cross field at 11 o'clock, passing under power lines, to reach gated stile by small tree. Ahead to the l/h end of the wall before you. Ahead, keeping fencing on your right. Gate. Cross field at 2 o'clock to the stile by a power pole, passing concrete waymark post. Turn left along wall to small metal gate near corner. Keeping ahead brings you to wall with stile, but go left round this and just keep ahead following fence on right, passing through a gate. You reach another "half wall" with stile, but again simply go past on its left. *(Be careful – the beck on your left has a large drop).* The footbridge is visible. Cross it; cross track and make right for The Smallest Bridge in Yorkshire by main road. *Cross road with great care* and return to your car.

