

Walks around Allendale

Local History on this walk

Brides Hill School This school was established in 1704 in a building that was erected at a cost of £50. It was founded through various legacies, principally that of Christopher Wilkinson who directed in his will *'a free Grammar School for the educacon of youth to be sett up and settled in such a proper and convenient place on the west side of the East Allen Water'*. Now a cottage, it stands about one hundred yards north of the later schoolhouse (visible from the road) that replaced it in 1851. The school closed in 1887 when the Board School in Allendale Town was expanded and absorbed the pupils who had attended Brides Hill.

Racecourse A flat area of land to the north-west of High Broadwood farm was used as a local racecourse in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It was still marked on Ordnance Survey maps in the mid-1800s.

Allen Smelt Mill Scattered over this old lead-mining district are many indications of ancient smelting places, consisting of small quantities of slag. By the 1600s several smelt mills had been constructed - including one at Allen Mill. By the 18th century this mill had undergone many additions and improvements. In 1825 it contained two roasting furnaces, fire ore hearths, two refining furnaces, and one reducing furnace. Two flues were constructed up to the fell about three miles away. The mill closed at the end of 1896 and some of the buildings now house the Allendale Brewery.

Thornley Gate This hamlet was, until 1845, sited on the only road to Allendale Town from Hexham and the east. Five roads meet there - including the Carrshield turnpike road constructed from 1826. Ashleigh Lodge was the toll cottage for travellers, and was later converted to a lodge for 'Ashleigh' a large and elegant Victorian house and gardens built for the local Philipson family.

This pleasant walk to the north-west of Allendale Town takes in pastureland, woodland and the riverside.

A shorter version goes through the hamlet of Thornley Gate before returning via the river.

Distance

5.6 km (3.5 miles).

For a shorter walk, follow the road out of Allendale to Thornley Gate - 3.2 km (2 miles).

Terrain

Gentle incline up roads and footpaths on the west side of the valley, before descending to the river East Allen. The Peth bank by the village is the steepest section.

Parking

General parking in Allendale village square.

Ordnance Survey Explorer Map OL43



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Walks around Allendale

Brides Hill



Brides Hill

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- 1** From Allendale (NY839558), walk down the Peth (the steep bank by the Hare & Hounds Inn) and cross the river, following the road to the right.
- 2** At Bridge End (the corner by the post box) turn left up the small lane, taking the right fork 30m further on. The road passes houses at Low Broadwood.

- 3** Continue left up the hill when the lane merges with the larger Carrshield Road and pass Wager House to your left.
- 4** 50m past Wager House the road forks again. Take the signed footpath across the fields to your right. Continue across two fields towards the farm of High Broadwood.

- 5** Keeping the farm to your right, continue on the footpath over a track that marks the route of the old lead flue, and towards the corner of the field on the Juniper road.
- 6** Climb the wall and turn left onto the road, turning right after 10m onto the footpath to Oakeydean. Continue along the wooded path with the Oakeydean burn to your right.

- 7** Turn right onto the Allendale-Whitfield road. An old lead flue runs alongside the right of the road. Pass the gates to Bishop Field on your left.
- 8** After a passing a small wood, take the footpath to your left towards a small cottage. This was built in 1704 as 'Brides Hill School'. The later, larger schoolhouse is on your right as you walk down the path. Once you have passed the cottage, continue down the track until you rejoin the Thornley Gate-Catton road above Allen Mill.
- 9** Turn left onto the road, and over the Allen Mill bridge (passing Allendale Brewery - the old lead smelt mill - on your right). On the other side of the bridge, take the footpath alongside the river on the right that is signposted to Allendale.
- 10** After half a mile, cross the footbridge and continue along the path with the river to your right. Rejoin the road to Allendale at the Peth and turn left to return to the village.

Alternative shorter route

At **Point 2**, instead of turning into the lane, stay on the road as it veers to the right. Continue on the road up the hill past the entrance to The Riding, then down toward the five roads end at Thornley Gate.

- (i)** Thornley Gate cottage, where the roads meet, was a blacksmith's and then the Fiveways filling station until the 1980s. Continue past it (to your left) on the road to Whitfield.
- (ii)** After passing a long cottage (the second Brides Hill school) in a field to your right, turn off the road and onto footpath to the right alongside the edge of the wood. Continue to Point 9.



The second school built at Brides Hill



The stone bridge at Allen Mill replaces an earlier wooden structure that was washed away in the floods of November 1771



Thornley Gate Cottage had an adjoining forge (right, pictured in the 1960s) that was subsequently replaced by a filling station. Both are now demolished and have been replaced by a house.