



Fountain Pond and The Ruin

Organisations Involved

The Woodland Trust is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity. Founded in 1972, it is committed to playing a leading role in conserving, restoring and re-establishing our country's native woodland. The Woodland Trust purchased Hackfall in 1989 as it was clear that this important ancient woodland was under threat.

Further information, stories and podcasts about Hackfall and the Woodland Trust can be found at woodlandtrust.org.uk/wood/Hackfall or contact Woodland Trust, Autumn Park, Dysart Road, Grantham, NG31 6LL. Tel. 01476 581111.

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The Hackfall Trust is a registered charity whose primary aim is to conserve, protect and improve the 18th century woodland garden and buildings at Hackfall. The Trust was founded in 1987 by a group of concerned local people in response to the advertisement for sale of Hackfall on the open market when the site was already much neglected, risked falling into unsympathetic hands and faced a very uncertain future. The Hackfall Trust was successful in finding the Woodland Trust as a sympathetic purchaser for the site and, having raised funds for its acquisition and management, has been the lead organisation in the restoration of the landscape.

The Landmark Trust, a building preservation charity, has restored one of the buildings. The Ruin is now let for holidays for two people throughout the year. Further details can be found at www.landmarktrust.org.uk.



The Landmark Trust



Vorventure



Hackfall Walks

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Path to The Ruin



Rustic Temple

Walk 4 - Hackfall Explorer

Time - 2-3 hours Distance - 4.5 miles

For those who want to enjoy the full Hackfall experience. This is a strenuous but enjoyable circular walk including steep hills and steps, taking in all the main features of the Aislabie woodland garden.

Leave the car park and take the public path downhill following the left edge of Limehouse Field. Enter the wood at the bottom of the field and follow the public path signs to the top of Limehouse Hill. Take a moment to find the views to Masham Church, The Ruin and Mowbray Castle then continue down the hill and through the stone gate piers. Just past the Sandbed is the ruin of Sandbed Hut. From this seat you can admire the view of Mowbray Castle as painted by Turner. Continue until the path forks. Take the right hand path away from the river. After a steady walk uphill, turn right again beside a bench to reach the Grotto where you can sit and admire Forty Foot Fall. Continuing on, you reach the Rustic Temple and Fountain Pond with its magnificent reflections of The Ruin. Retrace your steps back past the Grotto then cross the cascading stream and head downhill to Fisher's Hall. Descend the steps or path to reach the riverside, then turn right to follow the river downstream for about half a mile. Climb a steep flight of steps to the high path above Raven Scar, taking care of steep slopes and sheer edges. Take time to admire views from Mowbray Castle including The Ruin and Masham Church. Continue along the path to the top of Alum Spring and then on along the valley enjoying views of the Grewelthorpe Beck cascades to your right. After crossing a bridge over the beck climb a few steps to enjoy the Top Pond from the wooden bridge before returning back to the main path. Continue along the other side of the valley parallel with the beck. Go past a private track on your left to Hackfall Farm, then take the next left, slightly uphill to reach The Ruin and viewpoints. Note access to The Ruin terrace is between 11am and 3pm only. The path continues to the top of Limehouse Field, then back to the car park.



Top Pond

To Grewelthorpe and Ripon To Grewelthorpe



Images courtesy of Harris Museum & Art Gallery Preston, Lanarca, Marianne Majerus, J. Ramsden, Woodland Trust Photo Library (Michelle Davies, Dennis Johnson, Phil Lockwood & David Rodway).



- Walks**
- Walk 1 - A Glimpse of Hackfall (30 mins)
 - Walk 2 - Cascades & Follies (1 hour)
 - Walk 3 - Riverside Rambler (1.5 hours)
 - Walk 4 - Hackfall Explorer (2-3 hours)

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Hackfall woodland

Walk 1 - A Glimpse of Hackfall

Time - 30 mins

Distance - 0.75 miles

A short overview of Hackfall with panoramic views.

A relatively level, linear, easy route with few steps.

Leave the car park by the kissing gate and bear left following the sunken track downhill as far as the gate to Limehouse Field bearing the Hackfall name board. Before the gate, turn right and climb three steps to a kissing gate. Follow the path across the top of the field, entering the wood through another kissing gate and continue along the top edge of the wood. Panoramic views over the Ure Valley and prominent Hackfall features can be enjoyed along this path. The Rustic Temple, Fountain Pond, Fisher's Hall and Mowbray Castle can all be seen from here. Six steps lead up to The Ruin terrace (accessible only between 11am and 3pm while guests are staying at The Ruin; a holiday property leased by the Landmark Trust). Please respect the privacy of guests and keep to the path at the edge of the field to the west at all other times. Originally built as a ruined eye catcher, this was William Aislabie's banqueting house where dinner guests could admire views across the Hambleton Hills, Vale of York and down to the river. Staff prepared meals in the separate kitchen, the remains of which can be seen beside the path just south of The Ruin. Return along the same path back to the car park.

View from The Ruin



Walk 2 - Cascades & Follies

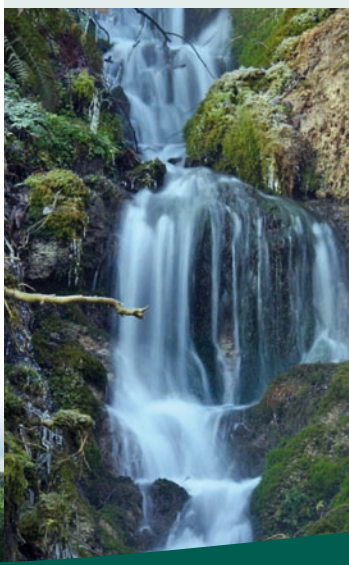
Time - 1 hour

Distance - 1.5 miles

For those with a little more energy, the chance to see some of the water features and buildings at close hand. A circular route with some steep parts which may be muddy.

Set out as for Walk 1. Just after entering the wood turn left and walk down the steep hill to Fountain Pond and the Rustic Temple. If you had walked this way as Aislabie's guest in the 18th century, you may have seen a fountain on the island. This was probably controlled by a gardener releasing a sluice on the hillside above, timed to impress passing guests. Remains of the original Elm pipework were discovered during restoration in 2008 and removed for preservation before being put back on display. Continue onwards past the Grotto and Forty Foot Fall, then admire the view of Fisher's Hall before stepping over the stream, and heading right, uphill. Fork left off the main path to the beautiful Alum Spring. A lovely addition to the walk from here is to cross the stepping stones over the weir and bear left to follow the quick ascent to Mowbray Castle and back.

Forty Foot Fall



The Fountain, Devis c.1800



Sandbed Hut



View from Sandbed, Devis c.1770

From Alum Spring return to the main path above Kent's Seat and continue left uphill. At the next junction turn sharp right and follow the path to the viewpoint at The Ruin (please respect the privacy of any guests staying at The Ruin and use the path at the edge of the field to the west if you visit before 11am or after 3pm). Continue on the woodland path to the top of Limehouse Field and back to the car park.

Walk 3 - Riverside Rambler

Time - 1.5 hours

Distance - 2.5 miles

A longer circular walk taking in most of the features of Aislabie's picturesque landscape, with some steep sections to reach the riverside path.

Leave the car park as for Walk 1. Just after entering the wood, turn left and walk down the steep hill to Fountain Pond, the Rustic Temple, the Grotto and Forty Foot Fall. Continue across a cascading stream then turn left down to the River Ure past Fisher's Hall. Turn left following the river upstream past Sandbed Hut and the Sandbed. Just beyond the stone gate piers, follow the zigzag public path to the top of Limehouse Hill, where you can find the same views to Masham Church and to the distant follies that William Aislabie's guests would have enjoyed. Finish with a steady climb up Limehouse Field to the car park at the top.