

PWN6 Allen Banks, Haydon Bridge

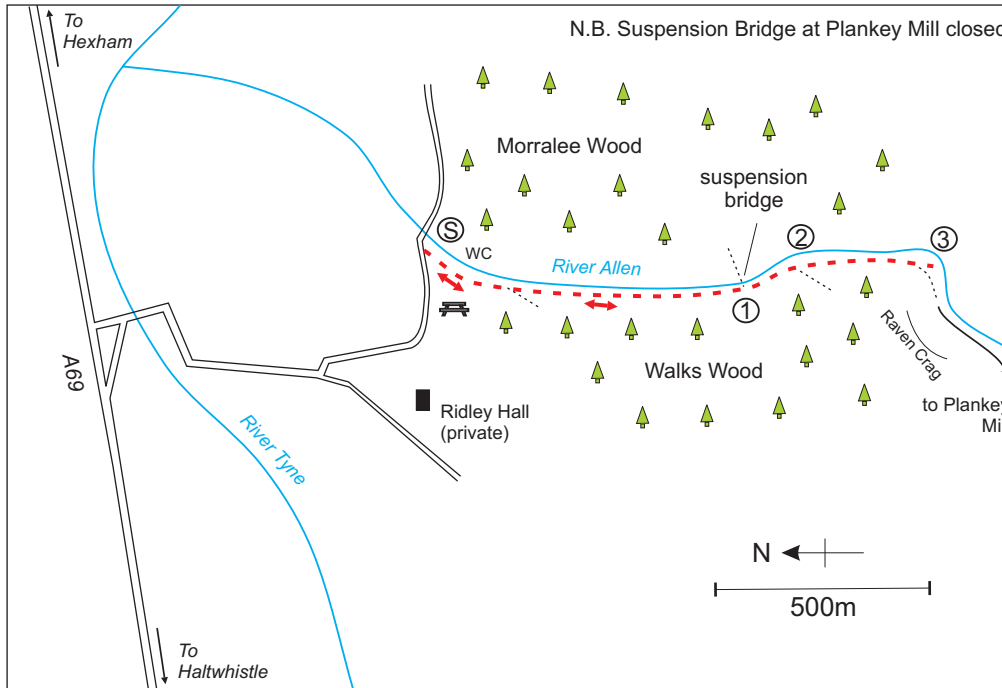


Outline Information

Distance: 1.5 miles (2 km)
Time: 1 hour
Grade: Easy
Map: OS Explorer OL43
Grid Ref: 797639

Allen Banks is an area of varied woodland along the banks of the River Allen near where it joins the River Tyne. Now owned by the National Trust, the woodland was once owned by the Ridley Hall estate and many of the walks present today were established back in the mid-1800s by Susan Davidson who lived at the Hall.

Our route takes you to a lovely picnic/paddling spot at a bend in the river about half way to Plankey Mill. The path is good going all the way but gets bumpy and narrow at times after the suspension bridge. There are free leaflets available in the car park including a family tree trail.



Getting there

From the A69 between Hexham and Haltwhistle, turn off at the Ridley Hall Allen Banks sign. Keep following the lane past the Ridley Hall entrance and park in the Allen Banks National Trust car park.

S. From the car park, go through the gap in the fence and join the gravel path across the grass heading into the woodland.

The car park and grassy area were once the walled kitchen garden for Ridley Hall; you can still see the brick wall. There are toilets and picnic tables by the car park and a stall selling excellent ice cream and drinks in summer.

Continue along the path into the trees. When you come to a fork, stay on the left hand path following the river bank. *There are benches along the route if you need a rest or want to admire the scenery.*

1. Continue to the suspension bridge. Pass the bridge staying on the same side of the river. There are steps up onto the bridge, but feel free to head onto it for a bit of excitement!

The path on the other side of the river is not suitable for pushchairs. Double buggies should turn back here.

2. Continue along the river bank as the path starts to climb. At a T-junction at the top of a short steep section take the left hand path to continue above the river along a pleasant woodland path. Drops down to the river are unprotected, so keep walking children under strict control.

You are now in Walks Wood, so named due to the walks created here in the mid-1800s. This is ornamental woodland once the Wilderness area of Ridley Hall's gardens, and trees were planted and walks created by the former owners.

3. Continue to the brow of the hill and drop down to the grassy area at the bend in the river which is the end of our walk. *ATPs can continue further along the path but it is rough going and the path deteriorates so much you can't get all the way to Plankey Mill. Just above the river here on both sides are sheer sandstone cliffs which are the source of the boulders in the river! Keep away from the water when the river is in flood or after heavy rain as the currents are strong.*

Once you have picnicked and played, return to the start along the same route.

Enjoyed this walk? Then why not try **PWN12 Durham Cathedral and River** or **PWN4 Tower Knowe, Kielder** ?