



# Scar House Reservoir & Lodge, Lofthouse, Upper Nidderdale



**Nidderdale**  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

## Introduction

The four mile route featured here is a circular trail, starting at the Yorkshire Water car park adjacent to the remains of Scar Village. This is the former Navy camp associated with construction of the reservoir, with lots of the remains of the village still visible and interpretation boards explaining more of the story. The route is very easy to follow and circles Scar House reservoir, crossing both Scar House and Angram dams. It also passes through the remains of Lodge Village.

## Map

OS Explorer 298:  
Nidderdale and/  
or Explorer OL30: Yorkshire Dales  
Northern & Central Areas

## Distance/Time

4 miles (6.5km)  
2-3 hours

## Starting Point

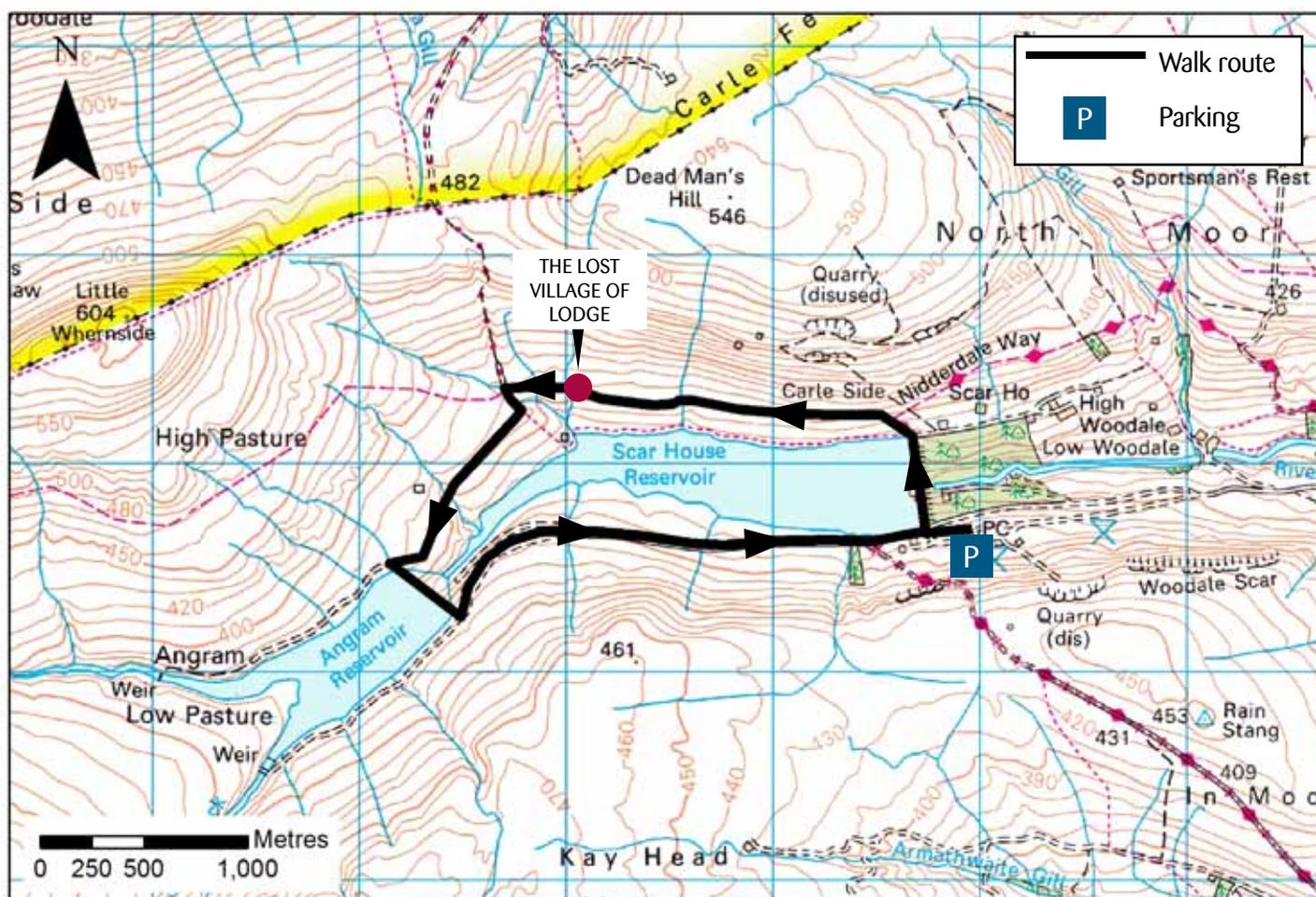
Scar House Reservoir car park. It is free to park here.

## Terrain

This is a moderate route with tarmac roads, gravel tracks and fields. Walking boots are advisable as some parts of the trail can be wet, muddy and rough underfoot.

## Useful Information

There are toilets at the car park.



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## The Lost Village of Lodge

High up on the border between Nidderdale AONB and the Yorkshire Dales National Park the River Nidd rises at Nidd Head Spring on the slopes of Great Whenside 595m above sea level. In its first few miles the river is dammed three times to create Angram Reservoir, Scar House Reservoir and Gouthwaite Reservoir. Although today the area has a wonderful feeling of peace and isolation, this hasn't always been the case.

The 'lost village of Lodge', near Scar House Reservoir was the focus for a fascinating research project carried out in 2016 as part of the Upper Nidderdale Landscape Partnership. Work is also currently being undertaken to improve the walking routes around the reservoir, which includes a good section of 'accessible for all' footpath.

Combine the intriguing heritage of Lodge, the remote and beautiful landscape and well signposted and maintained footpaths and you have the makings of a great trip out!

In 2016 the Landscape Partnership's Historic Project Officer, Louise Brown coordinated a project to learn more about the village of Lodge, which included an archaeological dig.

Local archaeologist, Jim Brightman explains,

“Although people have been in Upper Nidderdale since at least the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age)

period, some 10,000 years ago, the first mention of Lodge is from the Middle Ages or medieval period. Lodge was a 'grange', a kind of estate farm that provided produce and wealth to a large monastery or abbey which owned it.

Today, the ruins at Lodge are very remote, and it is easy to assume that this has always been the case. The track that runs through Lodge, however, would have been a well-travelled packhorse route to Coverdale and Wensleydale. Up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were many more people living and working in this landscape, though the remains of their farms are now beneath the water of the reservoirs.

The remains that survive at Lodge are the low rubble walls and foundations of the last farmhouses, finally abandoned in the 1920s. Pieces of dressed stone can be found among the rubble, however, and these suggested to archaeologists that evidence for medieval Lodge may lie waiting to be discovered.

Following a survey of the ruined buildings in 2011, a community excavation took place in Summer 2016. Volunteers from the local area and further afield worked with professional archaeologists to excavate part of one of the farmhouse complexes and find out more about the people who lived and farmed at Lodge.

The results were fascinating and provided a great deal of information about how the last inhabitants lived. The excavations recovered a huge amount of the pottery, glass and metal everyday artefacts of 19<sup>th</sup> century life, as well as some special items such as a nearly complete pocket watch. The presence of medieval farmers at Lodge was confirmed by a handful of pieces of distinctive pottery, though the exact location of the medieval grange remains a mystery to be solved.”

As you walk along Carle Fell Road, take the time to stop and explore the ruined village of Lodge. Imagine the generations of people who lived and worked here, from the medieval grange workers who would have cleared the surrounding woodland, to the last inhabitants in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century looking out at the construction of the dams and reservoirs.

The Landscape Partnership scheme has also been funding work to improve the footpaths around Scar House Reservoir. Nine new finger posts have been installed as well as improvements to gates and surfacing and drainage works.

The HLF funded Upper Nidderdale Landscape Partnership is a £1.8 million scheme to look after and help people get involved with Upper Nidderdale's historic landscapes, cultural heritage and wildlife habitats. The Partnership is led by Nidderdale AONB and brings together a wide range of organisations who are working with land managers, farmers and local communities.