The Walk

Accessibility:
On the west side of the River Derwent, there is generally good level access for walkers throughout. There is wheelchair access from Froggatt Bridge southwards, as far as the footbridge over Stoke Brook. On the east side of the River Derwent, there is largely resurfaced path from Froggatt Bridge to New Bridge, providing level riverside access for walkers, although there are stiles and steps to negotiate at each end of this section. From New Bridge to Calver Bridge, the path as far as Calver Weir provides good level access. After the weir, access is more challenging, and muddier underfoot. This section includes some steep steps, (partly without handrails); steep or narrow paths; a large drop to the river, and a narrow plank bridge without handrail. On both sides of the river, care must be taken when crossing the busy A625 at New Bridge.

WALK DETAIL:
Calver Bridge to Froggatt Bridge and back is 2.5 miles.

Starting at Calver Bridge (1), cross to the west side of the river, and turn immediately right next to Calver Mill Gallery. Follow the Derwent Valley Heritage Way northwards, passing the entrance to Calver Mill (2) on your right (the mill is now private apartments). At Stocking Farm and Caravan Site you will see the Old School House (3). The track is to the right of the farm. Go through the gate and cross the field. You will see the goit (4) on your right. Follow the footpath through the woodland. There is a small quarry face (5) on your left as you reach the Shuttle House (6). Pass the Shuttle House and arrive at the road at New Bridge (7).

If you wish, you can turn left at this point and walk about ¼ mile into Calver Village (8). To view Calver Weir, turn right across New Bridge and take the footpath on your right along the east bank.

To continue along the Derwent Valley Heritage Way, stay on the west side of the river at New Bridge and cross the A625 to the footpath that continues beside the River Derwent. This area is known as Calver Marshes. On your left you will pass some ponds, before crossing the footbridge over Stoke Brook, and then continuing next to an area of wet woodland (9). Continue along the footpath until you reach Froggatt Bridge (10).

If you wish, you can cross the bridge to go and look at Froggatt Village (11). The walk now leaves the Derwent Valley Heritage Way and returns in the direction of Calver Mill along the other side of the river.

Cross Froggatt Bridge, turn right, and walk a short way down the road until you find a step-over stile on your right. Take this, then continue along the riverside path until you reach the A625, with New Bridge to your right. Cross the road, and carry straight on beside the river, passing Calver Weir (12) on your right. At the end of the path, exit onto the road via a gate. After about 250 yards you will come to the Bridge Inn. Turn right to your starting point at Calver Bridge.
Welcome to the Calver Weir Restoration Project’s guided walk, a chance to discover a beautiful and tranquil part of the Peak District National Park.

The Walk
Taking in both sides of the River Derwent, the walk is a circular route between Calver Bridge and Froggatt Bridge, and includes a section of the Derwent Valley Heritage Way. The complete route is a distance of 2.5 miles, although the walk can be shortened by crossing New Bridge and then turning back towards Calver (a distance of 1½ miles). The complete route takes in Calver Mill and the Old School House, the unusual S-shaped Calver Weir, the mill race (or goit) that channels water to Calver Mill, and the wetlands of Calver Marshes. See overleaf for walk detail.

The Weir
Calver Weir is a Scheduled Monument, and was built in the 19th century to provide water to power cotton spinning at Calver Mill, under licence from Richard Arkwright. There had been two earlier weirs, but neither survive. The first weir, built in the 1770s, was swept away in the Derwent floods of 1799. The second weir, built upstream at the Shuttle House, was demolished in the 1840s and replaced by the present weir, constructed from gritstone from the local quarry.

Wildlife
The quietness of the river means that there are lots of opportunities to see wildlife. You should see moorhens, coots and mallards on the water and sometimes kingfishers, dippers and goosander might be spotted. Under the surface, there are brown trout, bullhead and grayling. The river banks, lined with willow and alder trees, are home to the shy water vole.

History
From the 1770s, water was used to power the old mill at Calver, a cotton mill that was part of the new industry sweeping through the Derwent Valley, pioneered by Richard Arkwright. Children were used as workers, partly because of their small hands. Children’s families were housed nearby in homes that can still be seen to this day. Cotton production changed the face of the Derwent Valley. Eventually though, changes in technology meant that industry became less dependent on water as a power source, and there was no longer a need to build mills on rivers like the Derwent.

Calver Weir Restoration Project
Calver Mill ceased operating as a cotton spinning mill in the 1920s, by which time Calver Weir was already in a poor state of repair. Calver Weir Restoration Project (CWRP) was set up as a registered charity in 2004, with the objective of saving the weir from collapse. Restoration work began in October 2009 and was successfully completed in August 2010. CWRP is now working hard to attract a greater range of visitors to the area, improve access, and carry out important conservation work. The total cost of the project will exceed £1.8 million, and has been largely funded by Heritage Lottery Fund.