



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Narrow band of elevated gritstone moorland, falling north and south from a central highpoint and forming the western edge of the much larger Nidderdale Millstone Grit plateau.
- The main plateau comprises gently rounded hills with occasional stepping, giving way to more pronounced, lumpy knolls in the south of the area. Appletreewick Moor drains internally, feeding Grimwith reservoir.
- Gritstone crags and screes punctuate the rounded landforms, and are most prominent on the western edge of the plateau.
- An exposed pocket of limestone geology forms a miniature karst landscape at Trollers Gill, with cliffs, screes, limestone grassland and ash/sycamore tree cover.
- Steep-sided or rocky gills are cut through the gritstone, exposing underlying limestones and forming small waterfalls where rock ledges are crossed. In areas of deep drift deposits frequent erosion gulleys give hillsides a ribbed appearance.
- Streams are shallow and rocky with steep, eroded sides of grass/heather covered banks, broadening to small rocky rivers at lower elevations.
- Landcover is primarily acid grassland with extensive areas of upland heath, which are managed for grouse shooting and of international nature conservation value.
- Tree cover is absent from the open moors, with scattered oak, mountain ash and birch on lower slopes or contained within sheltered gills. Linear stands of alder line watercourses at lower elevations. Conifer plantations create an alien effect at the northern and southern ends of the area.
- Settlement is sparse primarily comprising farmsteads along road corridors, and also around Grimwith Reservoir and on the dales fringes. Buildings are a mixture of traditional and modern with associated tree cover, walled pasture and meadow and infrequent field barns
- Grimwith Reservoir forms a large-scale man-made feature in the centre of Appletreewick Moor but is broadly in sympathy with the open character of the moors.
- The remains of lead mining, in the form of waste tips and disturbed ground, are strongly evident on Grassington and Conistone Moors and to a lesser degree in other areas at Trollers Gill and along the B6265 corridor.
- With the exception of the busy A59 and, to a lesser extent the B6265, roads and footpaths are isolated in character with panoramic views of the eastern dales, southern dales fringe and east across the Nidderdale AONB.
- Drystone walls enclose the dale fringes giving way to larger areas of moorland enclosure or open moor, which is contiguous with the Nidderdale Moors. Walls are constructed from gritstone except where exposed limestone geology is crossed where limestone is used.

