ENJOY WALKING IN TEESDALE

Walk 1 - Barnard Castle & Abbey Bridge Circular
Walk 2 - Abbey Bridge & Whorlton Circular
Walk 3 - Barnard Castle & Lartington Circular
Walk 4 - Barnard Castle to Cotherstone
Walk 5 - Cotherstone to Barnard Castle
Walk 6 - Cotherstone East Circular
Walk 7 - Cotherstone West Circular
Walk 8 - High Force Circular
Walk 9 - High Force & Upper Teesdale Circular
Walk 10 - Staindrop Circular
Walk 11 - Bowes East Circular
Walk 12 - Bowes West Circular
Walk 13 - Barnard Castle & Stainton Circular
Walk 14 - The Nabb Bridge Walk - Barnard Castle West Circular

Walking In…

Teesdale

HIGH FORCE CIRCULAR

START AT: BOWLEES VISITOR CENTRE
DISTANCE: 3.5 MILES
TIME: 2.5 HOURS

Series Walk…

N°8

A leisurely circular walk through the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with rich flora, rare bird life, ancient juniper woodland and fascinating geology. Including impressive Wynch Bridge, Low Force gentle waterfalls, Holwick Head Bridge and High Force Hotel there are options to see High Force waterfall from above or from the base.

The Witham would like to thank Allan Rayner and Jamie Mc Bain for all their help in the production of this leaflet.

PART OF THE PENNINE WAY
A leisurely circular walk through the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which includes important flora, rare bird life, ancient juniper woodland and fascinating geology. From Bowlees car park the path leads over the River Tees by the impressive Wynch Bridge, then passes Low Force, a series of gentle waterfalls. Reaching Holwick Head Bridge you pass back across the river, then uphill to High Force Hotel from where you return to Bowlees car park. The walk includes options to view High Force waterfall from above or to walk to its base.

From the free car park at Bowlees, cross the bridge over Bowlees Beck and go up the steps to the Visitor Centre in the converted chapel, which offers refreshments, information and displays (1). Head south down the lane and diagonally across the B6277 road, then through the gate sign-posted Low Force. Follow the well-made path to the squeeze stile (or gate if you prefer) and down through the woodland to Wynch Bridge (2), a swaying structure over a ravine. This was built in the 1800s. It replaced a span built 100 years before, which at that time was the first suspension bridge in England and was used for access by lead miners. Crossing here you will get pretty views both up and down the river.

Turn right and head upstream along the Pennine Way National Trail past the sheep sculpture and alongside the River Tees and Low Force, a series of gentle waterfalls and rocky pools. The flowers alongside this section of the route are very important and include the yellow globe flower and pink birds eye primrose. Continue along the path, which is within the Moor House – Upper Teesdale National Nature Reserve, to Holwick Head Bridge (3). For impressive views of High Force, England’s largest waterfall, stay on the same side of the river and continue up the slope through juniper woodland.

The waterfall plunges 70 feet (21 metres) over the hard Whin Sill, a dolerite rock found throughout Teesdale, which formed 295 million years ago. Return the same way – this diversion will have added 1¼ miles to the walk. Cross Holwick Head Bridge and turn left through the kissing gate, following along the side of the river to the far end of the field. Go through the gate and then uphill through the woods to the main road at High Force Hotel where you can get refreshments and information (4).

For a short additional extension to the route, from Bowlees car park you can also take the footpaths by the beck to Gibson’s Cave and Summer Hill Force waterfalls (0.5 mile return).