

Walk 1

Highfield, Lob Wood and The River Wharfe

Start: The Hen Pen Garden, Main Street, Addingham LS29 0NS, SE 077 498.

Alternative Start: Near Bolton Bridge SE 071 525 (see page 15).

Full walk: 4.5 miles (7.2km), height gain 584ft (190m).

Shorter walk: 4 miles (6.4km), height gain 584ft (190m).

Summary:

This is a fairly easy walk with lots of interesting features along the way, including fine views across to Beamsley Beacon (photo below) and up Wharfedale to Bolton Abbey and beyond, the dramatic (but almost hidden) Lob Wood railway viaduct, the ancient Farfield Friends' Meeting House, abundant wildlife and a lovely Dales Way river walk to finish. The route description includes an optional shorter link, which avoids the sometimes slippery steps and path in Lob Wood, and an alternative start point near Bolton Bridge.

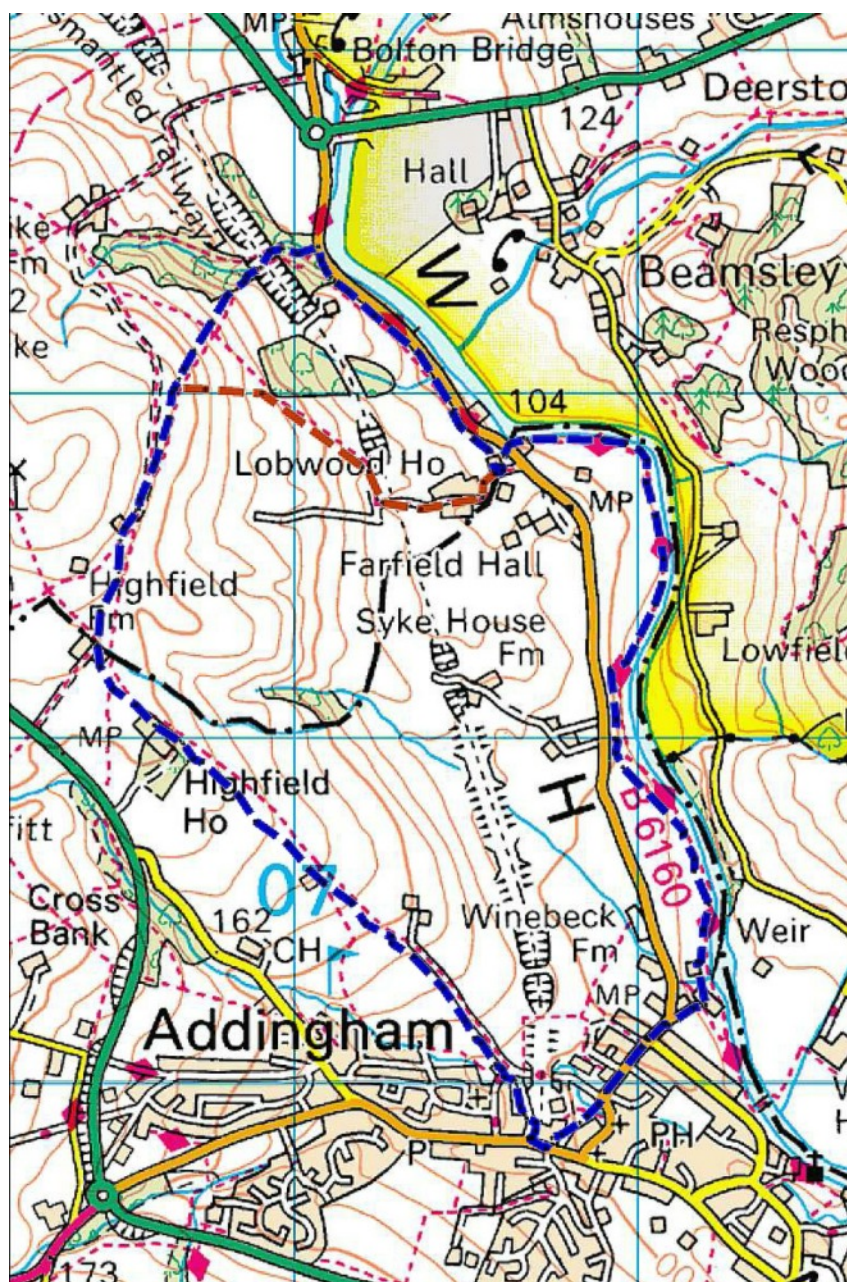
The Walk

The walk begins at the **Hen Pen Garden**, where Main Street bends in the middle of Addingham village, and it is usually possible to park on Old Station Way almost opposite. After admiring the flowers in the garden (maintained by the Addingham Garden Friends volunteers), the route **goes up** the adjacent Sugar Hill and **left** on Back Beck Lane before turning **almost immediately right** (north) up Long Riddings Lane. After a short distance the path **leaves** the lane through a gate **on the left**, by a tree, just after the ruin of Low Laithe .

The path now goes gently **uphill** across meadowland beside the overgrown Long Riddings Lane, there are fine views back over Addingham and up to Addingham Moorside and Rombald's Moor from here.

After three fields, the ruin of High Laithe (18th century barn) is on the left and the path now **crosses the golf course** (Bracken Ghyll Golf Club, watch out for flying balls!) and is marked by **coloured posts**. There are now great views of Beamsley Beacon across the valley. After crossing the first fairway follow a mown path (**left**) and, after passing a stone hut, go **left** over a stile into the field beside Highfield House. **Continue along**, left of the fairway, to the course boundary.

After leaving the golf course, **cross the field diagonally right** in front of Highfield Farm to the wall stile **in the corner** of the field and **continue** across a small valley and **up** to another wall stile, then **cross the field** to go round the end of the wall at this high point of the walk. The route **goes right** along a farm track but, after the metal gate, it **leaves** the track and **follows the wall on the right** to a wall stile in the **far right** corner of the field.



At the stile, take time to enjoy a fine view of Bolton Priory and the narrow old Bolton Bridge (beyond the modern road bridge).

For the shorter walk turn right after this stile, steeply down the field, and go **right again** through a stile in the wall near the corner of Eller Carr Wood and keep **diagonally downhill** toward the buildings. Cross another field, through the **gate** in the corner and **along the track** towards the Farfield Livery stables, going (left) through a gap where the railway line once crossed. After walking **through the stables**, the route **goes right**, down the track closed to vehicles by large stones, to rejoin the route of the **longer walk** at the metal gate (**see below**).

The full walk continues diagonally down the pastures in the direction of Bolton Bridge, in the distance, to another **stile** near the **bottom corner** of the field and into Lob Wood. In the wood, the path initially **follows the wall** (right) but then turns **left down steep steps (which can be slippery)** before revealing the spectacular Lob Ghyll Viaduct (Bridge No.47). After going under the viaduct (**with care!**), **the path bears right and down** through the mixed deciduous woodland to **steps down** to the road **near Bolton Bridge**.

This makes a good alternative start point for the walk; there is (limited) parking along the road and on the other side of the roundabout. **If starting from here**, Addingham provides ample places for refreshment at the halfway point of the walk.

The route goes **right**, up the road, (**take extra care on this steep, narrow, and busy stretch of road**) but forks **right** up a track about 150 metres up the hill .

After leaving the road, and now following the Dales Way (see Walk 3, p27, for details) **follow the wall** all the way to Farfield. **Keep right** of the driveway and up to go **left at the metal gate** behind Farfield Cottages.

The shorter walk re-joins the longer walk here.

The route now goes **left again**, behind the Farfield Meeting House, which is usually open and is well worth visiting, before again reaching and crossing Bolton Road (**take care!**) and going down steps to join the river bank.

The path **continues along** this delightful stretch of river, popular with anglers, (see the Introduction for details of the geology and nature), still following the Dales Way, along the **river-side**, across meadows and over stiles, for about 1½ miles (2½ km). The path leads to the caravan and chalet site before High Mill (photo right), which stands on the river beyond its long weir.

After the chalets, **turn right up High Mill Lane and turn left** onto Bolton Road, cross Bark Lane and After the school, **cross diagonally right**, over the cattle grid onto the track across Manor Garth and the walk finishes here, **back on Main Street**.