

Bolton by Bowland Nature Walk

OS Explorer
OL41



Start Point



Public Car Park,
Bolton by Bowland

★ SD 7841 4931

Distance/Time



5.3 km/3.3 miles
1 Hr 30 Mins

Terrain

Metalled roads, gravel/hardcore tracks and footpaths, some stiles. Generally good ground conditions, although patches can be muddy/boggy in the winter or after prolonged rainfall. Boots or wellingtons are the ideal footwear. Livestock in fields, please keep dogs on leads

Key to Facilities

🛒 Shop, 📮 Post Office, ☕ Cafe,
🚻 Pub, 🚽 Toilets, 🅇 Car Park
(all in village)

Walk Description

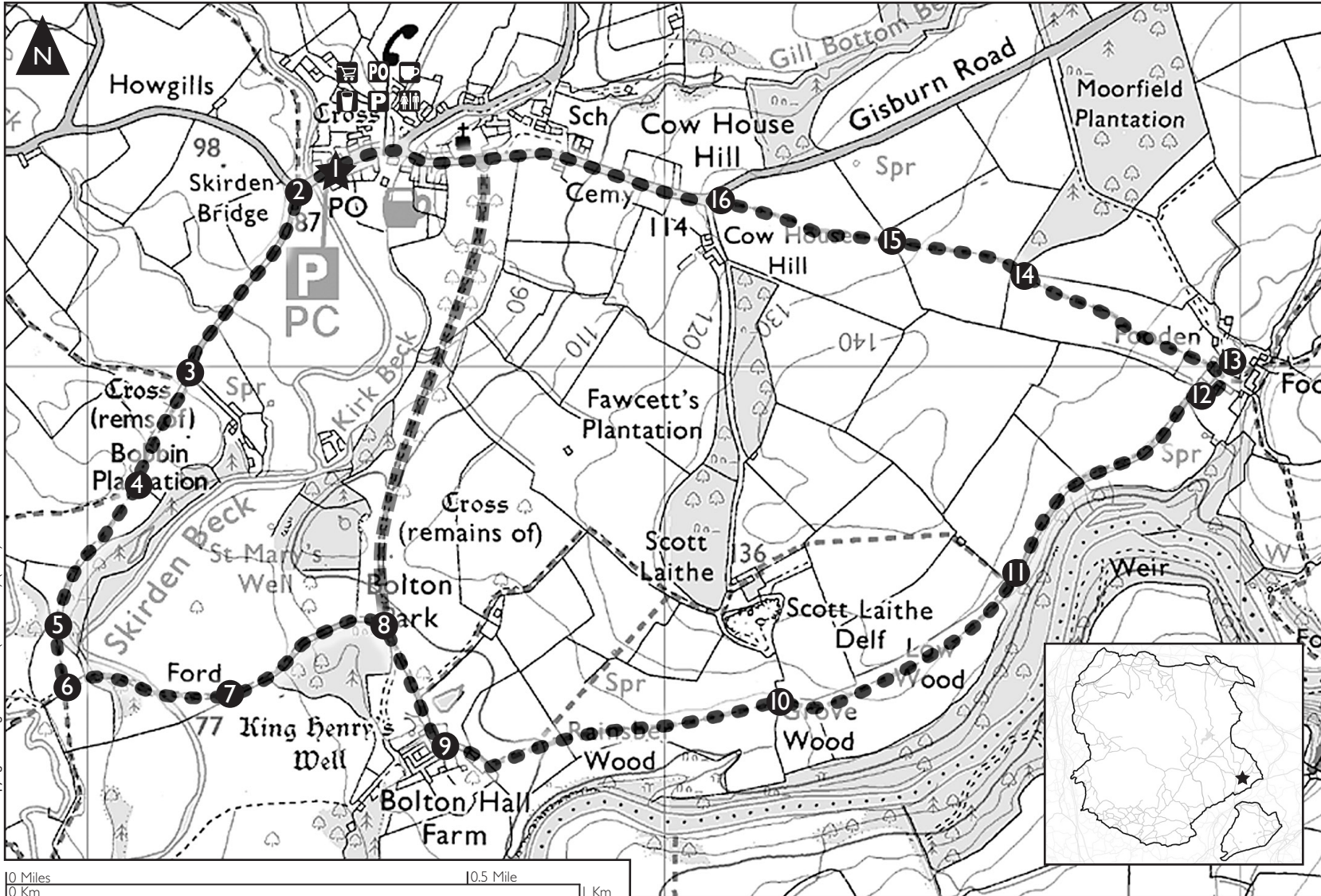
★ GPS: SD 7841 4931

The walk begins at the public car park and information centre. Go left out of the car park and cross the bridge over Skirden Beck. Look out for a blue flash below as a kingfisher passes beneath the bridge on its way upstream.

② GPS: SD 7837 4930

Turn immediately left down Mill Lane and continue ahead.

Observe the water trough set in the wall on the right beneath the lime tree. This was one of two troughs that supplied the village with drinking water until the early 1930s. The cricket field on our left, donated to the village, provides a restful Sunday afternoon for the spectators. Look out for an herb rich meadow on your right which leads down to a small bridge which crosses Bier Beck. Here a small spinney of trees has now been planted, their leaves a picture when the autumn tints take over, followed by berries for the birds. The next field on the right is a favourite nesting place for the curlew whose song delights us in season.



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Walk Description Continued

3 GPS: SD 7817 4897

Leave the farm road as it bends left and take the stile in the wall ahead, and continue straight ahead across the field.

4 GPS: SD 7808 4878

Go through a kissing gate, and follow the fence edge on the left along the woodland edge and over a stile in the left corner.

This is Bobbin Wood, so named due to the fact that nearby Bolton Mill Farm was also used for the manufacture of bobbins in the past.

5 GPS: SD 7795 4856

Continue to follow the edge of the wood and on to a kissing gate.

The erosion in the bank on the left is extensive due to winter flooding. Here good views can be had upstream to Mint Cottage and Wybersey Hill, a favourite haunt of the Sika deer which frequent the area. A visit on a late October evening at dusk when the stags are rutting is a memorable experience.

6 GPS: SD 7796 4843

Through the kissing gate, and turn left along a track to a further kissing gate.

This takes you down a track to Skirden Beck where you cross over a bridge.

Here it is worth lingering to take in the views. Note the paved ford crossing on the upstream side of the beck, for this was the tradesmen's route when Bolton Hall was in its heyday. Looking south from the bridge herons can be spotted on their nests in the top of the Scots Pine trees in the nearby wood.

7 GPS: SD 7824 4843

Over a stile and continue along the track, then through two further kissing gates. Follow the fence line on the right to reach a drive.

In season you can admire a wonderful Rhododendron display up ahead. Underfoot as we rise up Hippings Brow, we can note the wood laid across the track in days long gone by to help the horses as they toiled up the hill on their way to the hall.

8 GPS: SD 7852 4854

Join the drive and either turn left down the drive and return to the village, ■■■ or continue to do the full circuit. Turn right and over the cattle grid, then keep left down the track.

This passes the round roofed building over King Henry's well on the right. The relatively new settlement of the Mews incorporates many of the buildings associated with Bolton Hall, although the hall itself was demolished in the 105-s. It was at Bolton Hall that Henry VI sought refuge for a year following his defeat at the Battle of Hexham in 1465.

9 GPS: SD 7861 4834

Pass the houses on the right and turn left onto a cobbled track and soon after left, through a wooden gate (in front of the The Old Joinery house). Head diagonally right to a kissing gate and straight across the next large field. Over a wooden footbridge and through a kissing gate.

In spring and early summer the birdsong is a delight with willow warblers and blackcaps. As we progress the name of the wood to your right changes. Starting with Rainsber Wood, it then becomes Grove Wood and finally Low Wood. Good views can be had of the river below.

10 GPS: SD 7920 4841

Continue ahead across a large field to a metal gate.

11 GPS: SD 7960 4862

Through the gate and up the grassy bank then through a kissing gate and straight ahead to a kissing gate in the right field corner. Continue ahead keeping to the right field edge.

As you approach the quiet settlement of Fooden, you can perhaps pick up a whiff of sulphur from a spring below the old hall, its mineral waste attracting much attention in days gone by.

12 GPS: SD 7992 4895

In the field corner go right through a kissing gate, skirting the farm buildings, then left through a kissing gate.

13 GPS: SD 7996 4899

Turn left onto the drive, past Otterswell Barn and ahead through a metal gate. Head slightly right towards a kissing gate.

Through the kissing gate and continue ahead across a large field, heading to the top right corner and to the highest point of the walk next to Moorfield Plantation, then through a kissing gate.

14 GPS: SD 7960 4917

Bear slightly left and across the field to a further kissing gate.

15 GPS: SD 7939 4921

Head diagonally right towards the white house.

16 GPS: SD 7909 4929

Join Gisburn Road and turn left and return to the village.

Just past the green is the wonderful old Church of St Peter & St Paul. A quiet few minutes can be spent inside the church to examine the tomb of Sir Ralph Pudsey who gave refuge to Henry VI at Bolton Hall. Sir Ralph was a prolific sort of chap having three wives and fathering twenty five children. On the slab of limestone all the individuals are shown. On the lower folds of the women's dresses, shown in Roman numerals are the number of children each one bore. The most startling one being the seventeen which Edwina, his third spouse bore him!

Nature walk description written by Roger Dewhurst.

