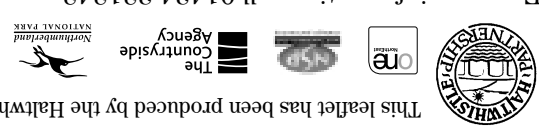




For further information on things to do in and around Hadrian's Wall Country call 01434 322002
 Or visit www.haltwhistle.org or www.hadrians-wall.org
 In planning your transport, please refer to:
 Journey Planner – www.planner.org.uk
 Traveline – www.traveline.org.uk
 Walks designed by Mike Swan (www.walking-hadrianswall.com) Tel: 01434 382620
 Photography by David G. Prakeel – PhotoWorkshops Partnership
www.photopartners.co.uk Tel: 01434 322595
 This leaflet has been produced by the Haltwhistle Partnership and part-funded by:

 For more information call 01434 321242

Walk 16
 Bardon Mill Parish
 8 miles
 12.9 km
 Moderate Difficulty
 HADRIAN'S WALL
 COUNTRY

The Haltwhistle Rings

22 Walks in the Historic Parishes of Haltwhistle, Northumberland

An 8-mile walk through the charming village of Beltingham, by Ridley Hall and up the spectacular gorge walk of Allen Banks by Plankey Mill to the site of a fairy tale castle, Staward Pele.

O.S. Explorer OL 43 Bardon Mill – Ridley Hall – Allen Banks – Plankey Mill – Staward Peel

'The Queen Mother and Dicky of Kingswood'

Start Point: By Car, Bus, Train.

Start: In Bardon Mill, signposted off the A69 east of Haltwhistle. Limited parking opposite The Bowes Hotel and the village green. Bardon Mill can also be accessed by train and bus. (Contact 01434 322002). Don't forget to use the hotel and the shop – and the pottery is well worth a visit!

1. Start at The Bowes Hotel in Bardon Mill.

Did you know: Bardon Mill is said to derive from a woollen mill built here in the 1800's yet there are a number of buildings which are at least two hundred years before that. Perhaps it was a village before 1800 but its name changed; strange that we have no records.

Walk along the road – east – and turn right at the war memorial to cross the level crossing and on to cross the footbridge over the South Tyne. Turn left onto the road and follow to the green in the centre of Beltingham (1k)

Did you know: Beltingham is a classic Northumberland village on the Ridley Estate. Settled first by Scandinavians – the village of Boltr's People – it was acquired by the Ridleys of Willimoteswick in the 16th century; the church is the only building of that age remaining. The Royalist Ridley lost it to the Commonwealth government during the Civil War. After a succession of owners it ended up in the hands of a junior branch of the Ancient Scottish line whose chief was the Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne in the 1880's. Otherwise known as the Bowes-Lyon family, the fourteenth Earl was the father of the late Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, who visited here frequently and enjoyed the paths up the Allen that you will walk today; indeed most of them were laid on the instruction of the family. The Bowes-Lyons also renovated the church, which they used as their chapel and had their own private graveyard, built a new Ridley Hall, converted the farm into a luxury mansion, Beltingham House, and converted the farm building into cottages for their retired servants. They created a model village! One of the Yew trees in the churchyard is 900 years old – they did not create that!

Turn right at the green and immediately left down a grassy bank between two houses – signposted 'Ridley Bridge 3/4 Allen Banks 1 1/4' – and follow the footpath to a kissing gate at the end of a wire fence. Continue on with the field boundary on your right to the road.

2. Turn right and go through Ridley and after a double bend turn left on to a path – signposted 'Allen Banks Estate' - and follow first a farm track and then a moated mound – called a Ha Ha – on your right to enter Allen Banks. Ridley Hall is on your left.

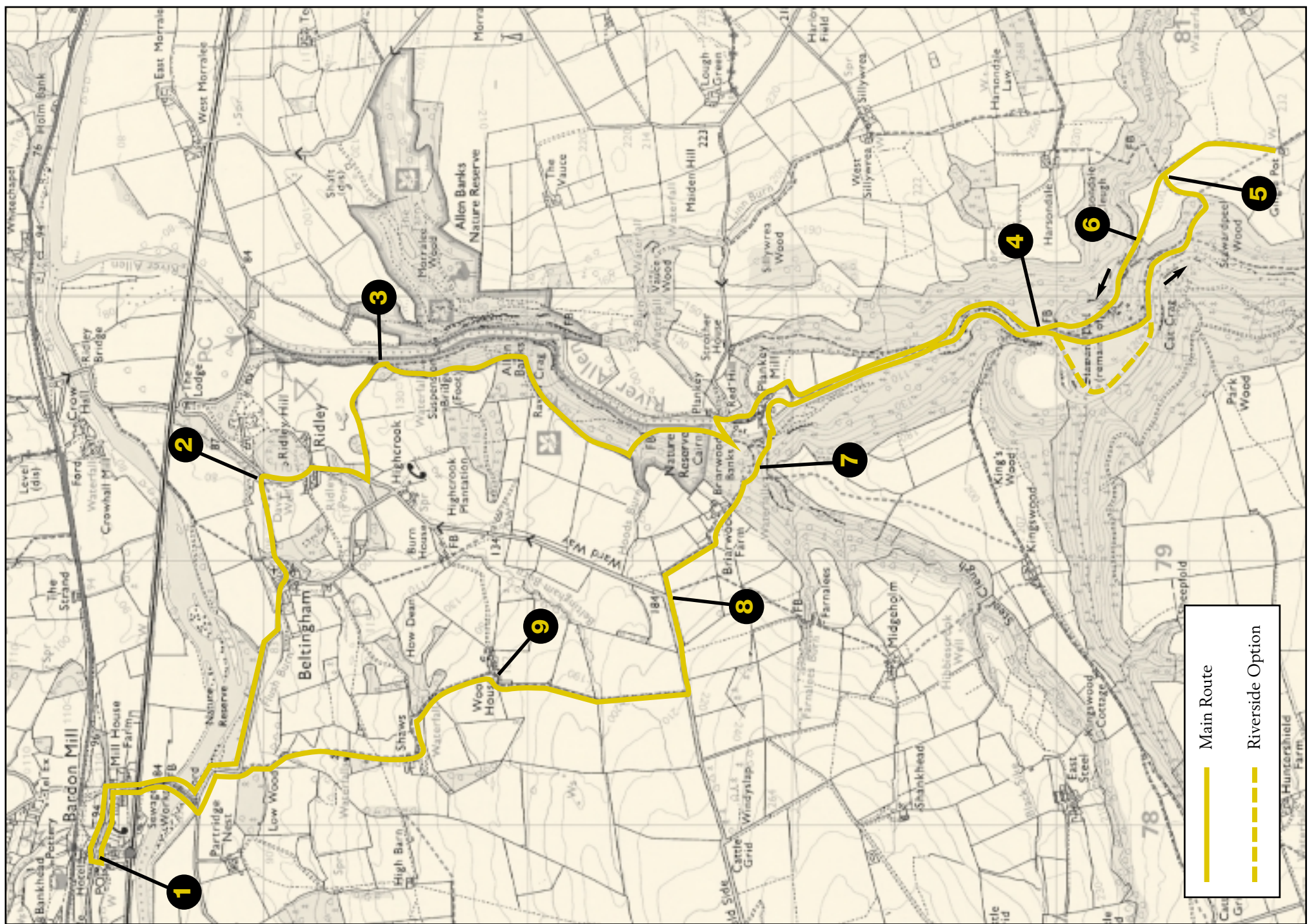
Did you know: Once a village with a dozen houses but now with only a farm, Ridley Hall and a 'bastle' – a fortified house from the time of border reiving. Once called 'Ivy Cottage' it is now called Ridley Bastle – note the upper door and the corbels that once supported a chimney stack.

Keep your eyes and ears open for a glimpse of the rare red squirrel as you walk through the woods from here. Also, deer can be seen.

3. Turn right after the stile and keep right on the main way-marked path up to the top of Allen Banks; at a promontory with views up the valley, continue right for about 1k. When you reach Hoods Burn, look right at the remains of a summer house made of sheep bones, and turn left to descend to the river, right over a footbridge and follow the path beside the river through Briarwood Banks. Cross the white footbridge over Kingswood Burn (note this for your return) and ascend the path ahead to then drop down to the footbridge over the river to Plankey Mill. Turn right over the stile and follow the path beside the river – through the caravan site – to enter Staward Gorge by a stile and turn right along an obvious path through the trees which undulates beside the river. Cross the next footbridge over the Harsondale Burn to a marker post.

4. Follow the yellow way-mark straight ahead through the trees beside an old stone wall (note this for your return) – a permissive path to your right is an option for a walk by the river – until a way-mark beside a pair of gate posts takes you left – straight on if you took the riverside option – and after a short ascent keep left at the fork and on to a stile into a field. Follow the way-mark diagonally left across the field to a stile at the entry into a wood.

5. Don't enter the wood. Turn right up a grassy track to follow a stone wall on your left to the ruin of Gingle Pot Farm. A good place for a snack and to enjoy the views. Return to the stile – but don't cross it – and continue on the track to enter Staward Pele Wood.



Copyright: Ordnance Survey (Explorer OL 43)

6. Continue on the path to the first remains of Staward Pele – the gate house- and on to the right of the north wall and follow the path round to descend to the old stone wall (noted earlier).

Did you know: Just a few ruins stand on one of the most impregnable sites in Northumberland which has been, in its time; a Roman temple to Jupiter, a fenced enclosure for Anglian settlers, a barracks for forty 'hobilar' or light cavalry in the 14th century, a castle for Edward II that he never had time to occupy as he was deposed and murdered, adored by Queen Philippa as her 'secret hideaway' until she returned south to produce eleven children, held by the canons of Hexham until King Henry turned them out and, as a declining ruin, became the headquarters of a cattle thief called Dicky of Kingswood! Dicky was full of cheek. Having stolen two oxen from one farmer he drove them fifty miles, sold them to another, stole the second farmer's best mare and then, returning to the scene of his first crime, sold the mare to the first farmer, who was seeking his two stolen oxen, and told him where he had last seen them!

Turn right to cross the footbridge over Harsondale Burn and return on your earlier path to cross the footbridge at Plankey Mill to the footbridge over Kingswood Burn (noted earlier).

7. Cross the bridge and turn left onto an un-way-marked path to ascend a steep bank, keeping right at a fork, to the kissing gate with Briarwood Farm on your right. Go straight on to meet the track out of the farm and turn left up to the road.

8. At the road turn left for 250m to a gate beside the second field boundary on your right. This is not way-marked (As at December 2002) but does have a 'Beware of the Bull' sign – which is as good as a sign post if you get my meaning! Go through the gate and follow on with the wall on your left, cross a small burn, through the left hand of two gates and with the stone wall now on your right descend to a gate at the end of that wall and turn right into the farmyard of Wool House.

9. Turn left out of the farmyard and descend on the farm track towards a copse. After a wooded ravine on your right go left at a fork to Shaw's Farm. Turn right over a ladder stile at the entrance to the farmyard and pass the farmhouse and then conifers on your left, over a stile (a permissive path goes right and left here) and straight on down to a five-bar-gate with a way mark on the right. Through the gate and straight on, then diagonally left to the far left hand corner of the field by a copse. Cross the stile and footbridge and then on to the road. Turn left and return to Bardon Mill.

Whilst Walking in and around Hadrian's Wall Country please remember that "every footstep counts" particularly during the wet winter months. You can help protect Hadrian's Wall Country and one of the great wonders of the world by following the simple advice below:

- Many of the routes are permissioned by landowners - enjoy the countryside and respect the livestock and the land
- Always follow the signed paths
- Guard against risk of Fire at all times
- Fasten all gates
- Keep dogs on a lead
- Remember walking on Hadrian's Wall can cause it to collapse
- Try to avoid walking alongside the wall in very wet conditions.