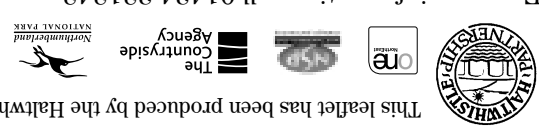




For further information on things to do in and around Hadrian's Wall Country call 01434 322002
 Or visit www.haltwhistle.org or www.hadrians-wall.org
 In planning your transport, please refer to:
 Journey Planner – www.planner.org.uk
 Traveline – www.traveline.org.uk
 Walks designed by Mike Swan (www.walkinghadrianswall.com) Tel: 01434 382620
 Photography by David G. Prkel – 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

HADRIAN'S WALL
 COUNTRY

Walk 17
 Bardon Mill - Henshaw
 5 miles
 8 km
 Moderate Difficulty

The Haltwhistle Rings

22 Walks in the Historic Parishes of Haltwhistle, Northumberland

A 5-mile walk across the heather, fern and rock-clad Thorngrafton Common to the magnificent views and history on Barcombe Hill, down to the Roman fort at Vindolanda and along the secluded wooded valley of Chainley Burn.

O.S. Explorer OL 43 Bardon Mill – Thorngrafton Common – Crindledykes – Vindolanda

‘The Most Uncommon Common’

Start Point: By Car, Bus, Train.

Start: From Haltwhistle take the A69 east towards Newcastle and turn right after 4 miles to Bardon Mill. There is limited parking opposite The Bowes Hotel and the village green beyond. 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! There is also the chance to visit the superb Roman Fort and Museum at Vindolanda.

1. From The Bowes Hotel walk east past the entrance of the pottery and through the village to the war memorial. Turn left up the road under the bridge, signposted 'Westwood & Thorngrafton', past the recreation ground on your left, straight on at the 'T' junction and up the hill. As the road bends left turn right over a stone stile by a telegraph pole – not signposted – and walk straight on, down and then up the field ahead, aiming for the right hand side of the last house on the left ahead of you. When you arrive in front of the house turn right, through a metal kissing gate to the left of a stone barn and gate, keep left through the white gate of 'The White House' and straight on up the farm track ahead of you – not sign posted. (Not left into the farmyard or right on the tarmac road through West End Town.)

2. Keep on the track, (ignore a path over a ladder stile on your right), over a ladder stile by a gate and on to where the wall on your right turns right. This is Thorngrafton Common.

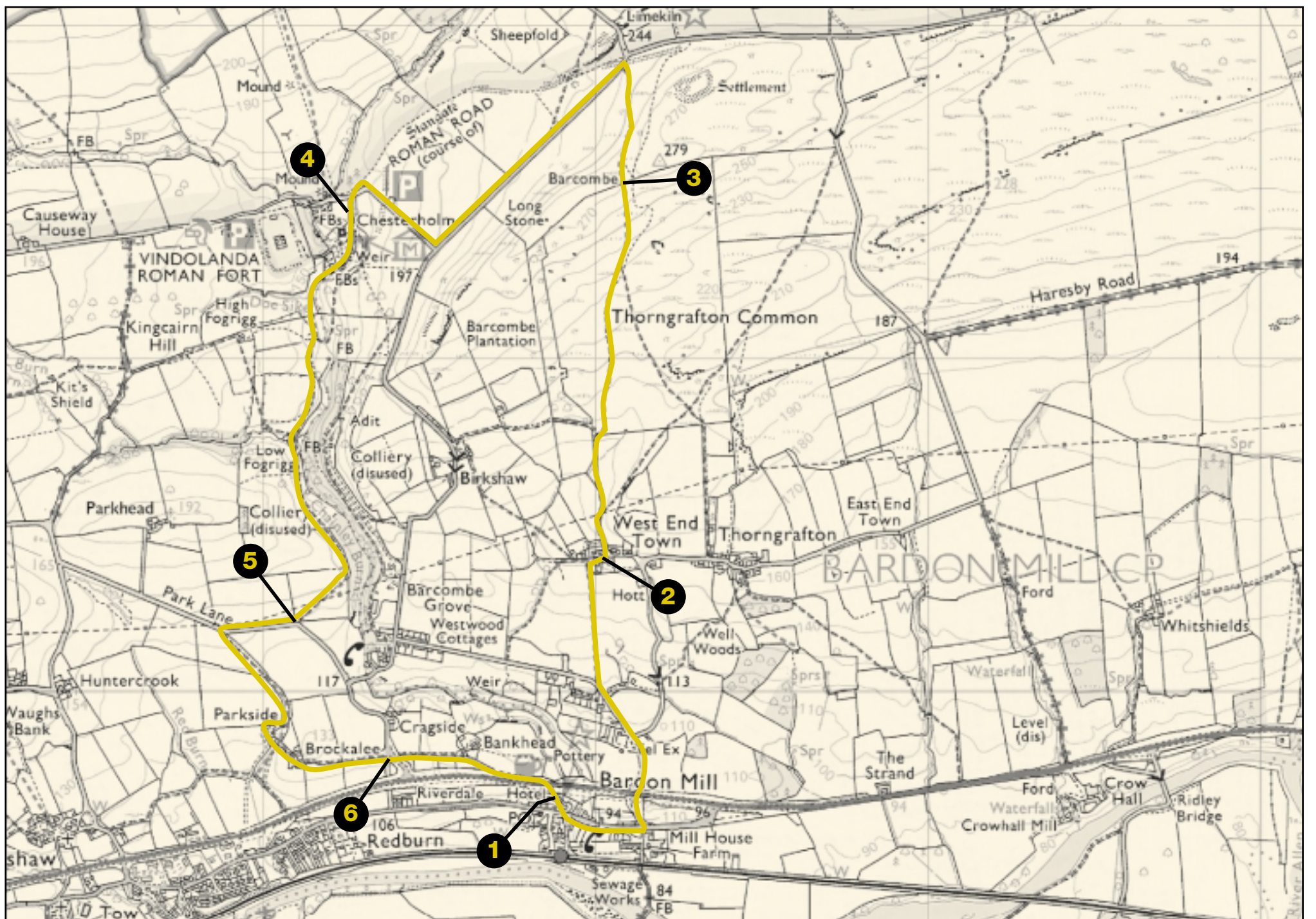
Did you know: In 1837 a group of workers in a quarry near to the site of the Long Stone discovered a bronze container which held sixty-three Roman coins, mostly silver but some gold. Elated at their find they entrusted Thomas Pattison, one of their number, to do his best to sell them. Off to Hexham he went, hawking round the pubs and with each offer he was made, his opinion of their value rose until no offer was enough and he became obsessed by the very possession of the trove. As his workmates became more and more frustrated by his obsession the Duke of Northumberland was made aware of the find and claimed the coins as treasure trove on behalf of the Crown, thinking they were of much greater value than in fact was the case. Pattison hid 'his' coins and refused to give them up. Taken to court he was instructed to give up the find and pay £18 pounds damages. Penniless, friendless and deranged, Pattison defied the law and was sent to prison. After a year he was released and, miserable and depressed, wandered the country as a vagrant until sinking into a paupers grave, the victim of the plighted trove.

Your path goes up right and then left and then becomes a grass track. Ahead of you on top of the ridge you can see the OS trig point of Barcombe Hill above a wall near to a gap in the wall. Your route is to aim just to the left of it following the track ahead.

Did you know: The site of a Celtic hillfort is just below the summit of Barcombe Hill and the ramparts, circular dwellings and enclosures can still be made out in the heather. It probably gave the common and the village below its name as 'Thors graf' or dyke. The famous Long Stone nearby is not linked to the hill fort. The shaft is not that old and was erected in the 19th century as a memorial to nine miners who died in the colliery at Chainley Burn below, but the base is older and may have been part of a cross dating from the 8th century. The trig point was the site of a Roman signal station, one of many dotted on high points along the line of the Wall, which enabled very speedy communications.

Notice the deep track ways over the common where stone was taken down to the valley. It was not just the Romans who used stone from here. Your path becomes narrower as the trig point disappears from view temporarily and you will see a marker post to your left. There are many tracks here. Walk on, with the marker post to your left, to a gate opening in a stone wall and on to meet a wide grass track going left and right.

3. You are now spoilt for choice. Turn left here to visit 'The Long Stone' and a great birds-eye view of Vindolanda and the Stanegate road going west away from it. Turn right here to the trig point. At the trig point look north towards Hadrian's Wall. You will see two farms one above the other at 11 o'clock. The nearer one is Bradley Hall.



Copyright: Ordnance Survey (Explorer OL 43)

Did you know: The Hall that once sat on the site of the present buildings must have been quite a large and dignified place in the 14th century, for in 1306 it housed the court of King Edward I. In that year the old King, having spent much of his reign 'hammering the Scots' (he was not too kind to the Welsh either!) and now looking forward to a quiet retirement, had to come north once more to do a bit more hammering as Robert Bruce was the new Scottish King and was stoking the flames of independence. He was not a good traveller and feeling his age so on the night of 5th September he and his entourage stayed at the Hall. He then stayed at Henshaw and Haltwhistle before returning for another night at Bradley Hall on the 11th. Perhaps he had left his hammer behind. Eventually the court spent the whole winter at Lanercost Priory before setting off to cross the Solway from Burgh-on-Sands. Much to the Scots' delight, the old man did not make it and died, of what we are not quite sure, on 7th July. In the field just north of Bradley Hall a survey of 1988 discovered the remains of Easter Bradley, a hamlet that served the Hall. Traces were found of cottages, a corn kiln, a drainage system and at least one 'bastle' – a fortified farmhouse.

Still looking north but about 175m away at 1 o'clock is the outline of a Celtic settlement, worth exploring. Behind you at 4 o'clock are the Roman quarries; go and see if you can find the phallic symbol etched by some soldier to bring good luck to the garrison of Vindolanda.

To continue your route go straight on to a marker post and down diagonally right to cross a stone stile onto the road. As you approach the stile notice the old mine wagon way to the right that goes through a tunnel under the road. The wagon way used to go down Chainley Burn to Bardon Mill carrying stone, coal and lime. (Go right and then left to visit the lime kilns of Crindledykes.

Did you know: One non-Roman man-made feature you will see often in this area is the limekiln. You will see one today at Crindledykes. Lime was the universal remedy for sour or acid soil and in the late 17th and 18th centuries farmers were encouraged to build their own. The kilns, stone-built and shaped like an inverted cone, had fires at the bottom and alternate layers of limestone and coal were fed through a hole at the top. This was left to smoulder for a day or two, the powdered lime then raked out of the bottom and scattered over the land. Today lime in the form of ground magnesium limestone is still used as a fertiliser, along with manure and imported phosphates.

Turn left on the road and continue until turning right down to the entrance of the museum and fort at Vindolanda.

Did you know: There is not room here to do justice to the outstanding work being done at Vindolanda; you must go there yourself and see. Suffice to say that the writing tablets brought home to me a real feeling for the everyday life of the inhabitants and, whatever the purists may say, the reconstructions gave to my young children a meaning for the piles of stones! This is a 'must' for visitors and worth every penny.

4. Turn left into the entrance – signposted 'Bardon Mill' – and after the first building on your left take the way-marked path up left and then fork down right to pass on the left of the museum buildings, café and grounds (those wishing to use the café of this world class museum will need to pay the entrance charge). Cross the footbridge, turn left following the Chainley Burn, through a 'V' stile, along a thoughtfully placed planked walkway beneath the south walls of the fort and over a step stile in a fence. The path goes up a grassy bank, passes a clearing and footbridge down to your left by the burn and on up to a small gate. Go straight on, through a metal five-bar-gate, descend past Low Fogrigg on your right and continue on the track, with the remains of the colliery across the burn on your left, until ascending to the parking area at Craggside Stables and go right down to the road. At this point you will have a lovely view of the South Tyne Valley, with Willimoteswick Castle on the south side of the valley.

5. Turn right for 150m and then left – signposted 'Parkside and Henshaw' – to follow the farm track down to pass the farm buildings of Parkside on your right. Come to a wooden gate, with a metal five-bar-gate beyond it with the farmhouse to your right. Go through the first gate and immediately left through a way-marked door-sized wire gate – say hello to the turkeys and geese – and straight on to a marker post and follow the low wall to a five-bar-gate between two buildings. Go through the gate, across the courtyard and left through a five-bar-gate to follow the track down to the road.

6. Cross the road, straight on – signposted 'Bardon Mill' – through a five-bar-gate, over a cattle grid and as you near the white gate of 'Bankhead' keep to the wall off the track up to a kissing gate. Go through the gate, turn left and follow the wall to go through another gate and down to cross the busy A69. Follow the track down past the back of the pottery, through the gate at the bottom and out onto the road by The Bowes Hotel. The area that you pass on your right was, until the 1920s, a waste heap for the Bardon Mill Colliery – now all traces have gone.

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.