

Farndale



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The beautiful valley of Farndale lies at the heart of the North York Moors. Each spring, its glorious daffodils put on one of nature's most spectacular shows – a dazzling display of colour that carpets the meadows and river banks along a seven-mile stretch of the River Dove. It's often said that medieval monks from nearby Rievaulx Abbey planted the first daffodil bulbs here. But the petite wild daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*) is one of our native plants and is protected within the Farndale Local Nature Reserve, established in 1955 to safeguard the valley's famous flowers.

Working with nature

Wild daffodils love riverbanks, grassland and woodland – especially woodland with partial shade at the edges and no encroaching vegetation. Luckily, that describes Farndale to a T, with the River Dove snaking through the meadows of a lightly wooded agricultural dale. The daffodils spread either by their seed falling on the ground or by their bulbs being carried downriver. Weather also has a part to play, as extremes of any kind – from drought to overly wet autumns or cold springs – affect bulb growth and flowering.

There's also one more factor that makes Farndale fab for daffs, and that's the work of local landowners and the National Park Authority, who look after the local habitat together. Maintaining the footpaths keeps visitors on the straight and narrow, avoiding damage to the leaves or roots while growing; while cutting back scrub and branches lets in the light that the daffodils need to thrive.



Enjoy a classic spring walk in the so-called 'Daffodil Dale' to see Farndale's glorious wild daffodils. It's a straightforward 3½-mile linear route alongside the enchanting River Dove, from Low Mill to Church Houses and back, though there is an alternative return route that climbs through farm fields for some lovely valley views. Depending on the weather, the daffodils are usually out between mid-March and mid-April – and numbers do vary from year to year – but this is a charming walk at any time of year.

Did you know?

Up to 40,000 people visit Farndale during the short period of the daffodil season. By way of contrast, the local population of the dale numbers around 200 people.

Great for:

nature nuts, riverside rambles, easy access

Length:

3 ½ miles (5.6km)

Time:

2 hours

Start/Finish:

Low Mill car park, 4 miles (6.4km) northeast of Hutton le Hole

Grid Reference:

SE 673 952

Map:

OS Explorer OL26

Refreshments:

High Mill and Church Houses

Toilets:

Start/Finish of walk



The Daffy Caffy at High Mill has a tea-garden – it's open daily in daff season, and then Friday to Sunday, May to September. There's also the Feversham Arms at Church Houses. There are other cafés and a pub in nearby Hutton le Hole.



National Park mobile information point at Low Mill in daffodil season.

... Farndale's famous daffodil walk ...

Route instructions

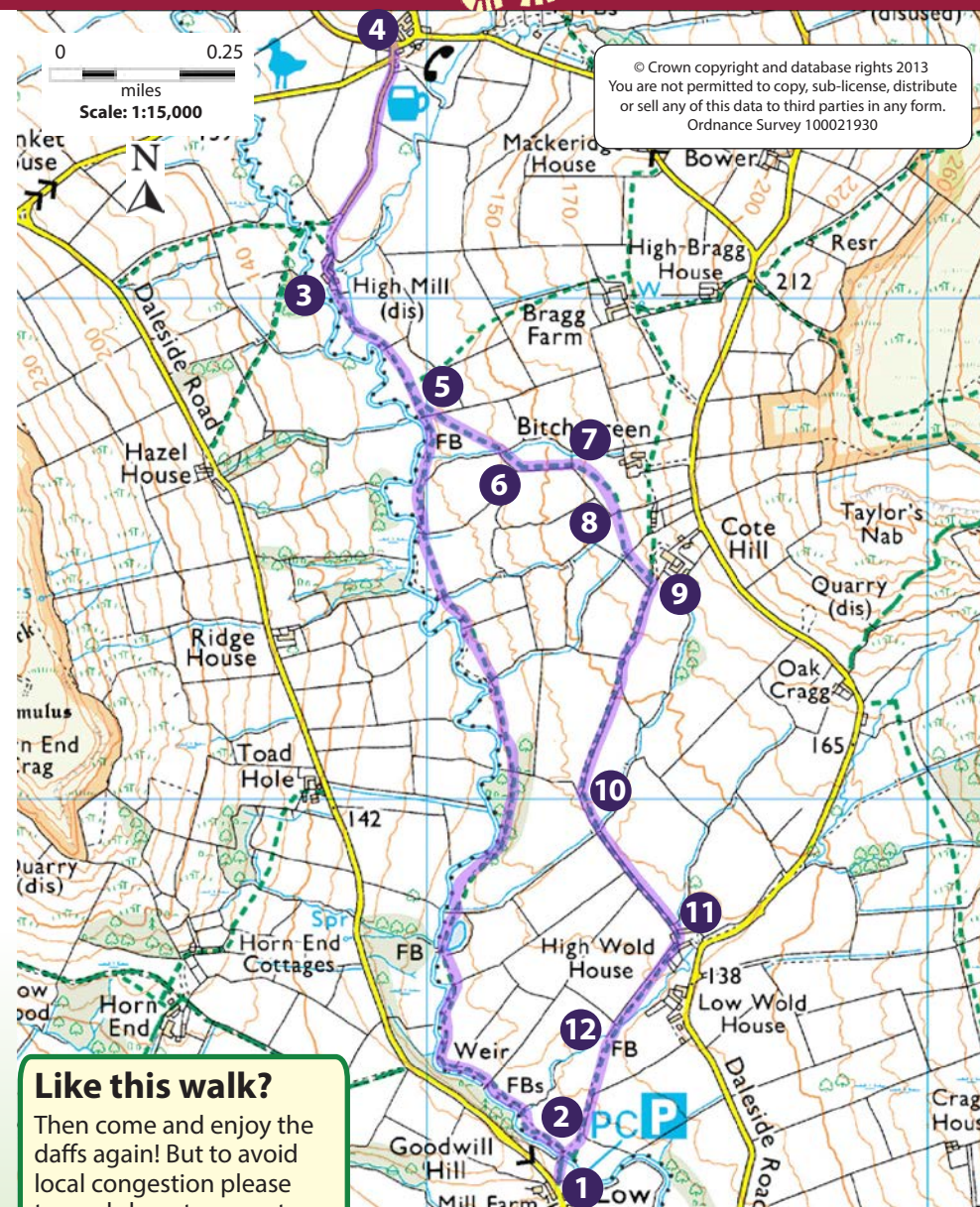
- 1 From Low Mill car park, follow the path ('Public Path to High Mill') down to the bridge.
- 2 Cross the bridge and turn left to follow the river.
- 3 Pass between the buildings at High Mill and follow the track straight ahead to Church Houses.
- 4 Before returning, turn right to enjoy the daffodil display in the churchyard (a short walk up the Hutton le Hole/Gillamoor road).
- 5 Where the path re-enters the trees close to the river, take the upper route through the bridlegate on the left.
- 6 Cross the field to the top right-hand corner, go through the bridlegate and bear uphill with the wall on the right.
- 7 At the field gate just below the farm, bear right, keeping the wall to your right, the farm up to your left.
- 8 Pass through the next field gate between two prominent oak trees, and bear slightly right to the field gate.
- 9 At the 3-way signpost, turn right and go downhill with the hedge/fence on the left.
- 10 At the bottom corner of the field bear left. Go through the gate and straight on to the farm.
- 11 Go into the farmyard and turn right through a field gate and continue downhill (wall on right).
- 12 Go through the gate close to the stream, over the bridge and straight on along the remains of a paved way to Low Mill.



The path along the River Dove is clearly marked, from Low Mill to Church Houses. It's mostly on the level, with just two short inclines, and is largely surfaced. There are several gates but no stiles. The field paths have steeper sections, and pass through farmland and farmyards; there are occasional stiles.



Please keep your dog under close control (preferably on a lead) at all times.



Like this walk?

Then come and enjoy the daffs again! But to avoid local congestion please try and share transport whenever possible.