



Elephant Trees

A circular walk between
Wolsingham, Hill End and
Frosterley via the Elephant
Trees.



This leaflet was prepared by
the Wolsingham Wayfarers, an
independent voluntary group,
dedicated to monitoring, looking
after and promoting the 140 miles
of designated footpaths in the
Wolsingham Parish.

 wolsinghamwayfarers.co.uk

 [WolsinghamWayfarers](https://www.facebook.com/WolsinghamWayfarers)

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Walk information

DISTANCE - 12.7 miles (20.5km).

MINIMUM TIME - 5-6 hours.

ELEVATION GAIN - 398m (1305ft).

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY - Hard.

PATHS - Farmland field paths, riverside
tracks, uneven moorland track.

STILES - 5 stiles.

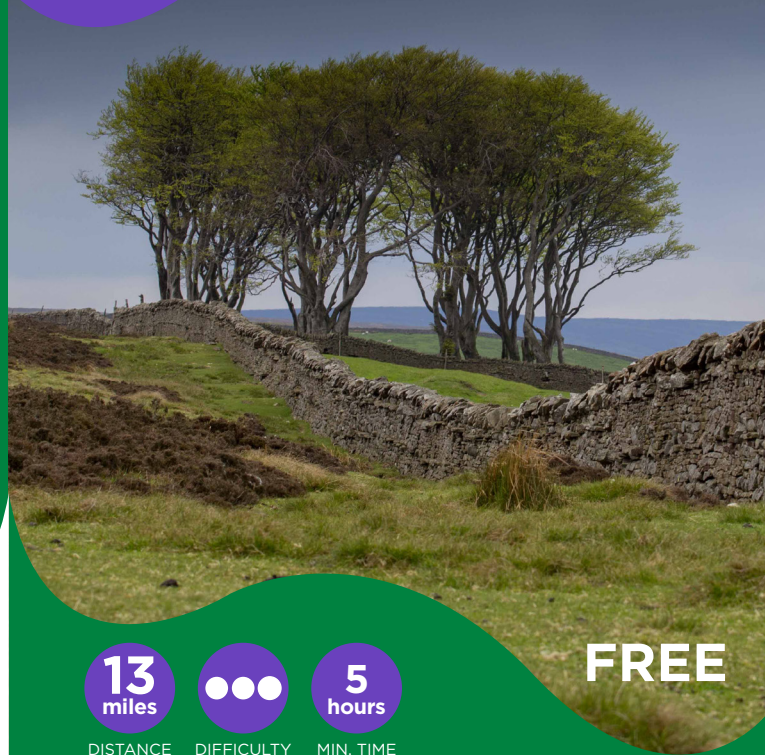
PARKING - Demesne Mill Picnic Area.
Nearest postcode DL13 3DB.

PUBLIC TOILETS - At the junction of
Market Place and Angate Street.

 **Please follow the
Countryside Code**

Prepared on behalf of the people of
Wolsingham by the Wolsingham Wayfarers.

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13
miles
DISTANCE

●●●
DIFFICULTY

5
hours
MIN. TIME

FREE

About the walk Elephant Trees

Wherever you are in Weardale, the chances are you can see the local landmark of the Elephant Trees, high up on Pikeston Fell. This clump of trees has looked over Wolsingham for decades and was named locally due to its uncanny resemblance to an elephant. However, not so long ago a few of the trees were brought down in high winds and now the resemblance is left a little to the imagination.

This walk has two very steep climbs, however they are both rewarded with fantastic views of Wolsingham, the valley and beyond.



Welcome to wonderful Wolsingham



This is one of a series of walk leaflets produced by the Wolsingham Wayfarers, created to showcase Wolsingham's extensive public footpath network. With more than 140 miles of designated footpaths, most of them interlinked, there are plenty of opportunities for creating your own circular walks. A map showing all the footpaths in Wolsingham Parish can be found on the wall of the Town Hall in Wolsingham Market Place. Walks from Wolsingham are covered by OS Explorer maps 307 and OL31.

Ample parking for walkers is provided at Demesne Mill Picnic Site (off the B6296 Tow Law road) and at the Recreation Field (off the A689 Stanhope road). Visitors are asked to keep the market place in Wolsingham clear for local shoppers and library users. The amount of time you can park in the market place is also restricted. For information on public transport ring Traveline on 0871 200 22 33.

Several tea shops, cafes and pubs are shown on the map below. They offer good food and a very welcome drink at the end of a long walk. A few also offer accommodation.

The Wolsingham Wayfarers run regular free guided walks, a great way to discover new paths and routes. Check out our website and social media pages for up-to-date information on walks and activities (information on back page).

Wolsingham's parking and facilities

- 1 Number 10 Coffee Shop
- 2 Peggottys Bakery
- 3 The Black Lion (Pub)
- 4 The Black Bull (Pub)
- 5 The Bay Horse (Pub)
- 6 Buon Appetito (Italian)
- 7 Little Free Library



If you have parked at Demesne Mill off the B6296 (Wolsingham to Tow Law road), start your walk by heading back out of the car park through the main entrance and turn right, heading down Angate Street until you reach Wolsingham Town Hall in the market place.

A From the market place turn right and head down Front Street (A689) in the direction of Stanhope (right, if you are facing the Black Bull pub). Turn left down The Causeway, signposted to Hamsterley. Continue down The Causeway and over the Wolsingham Bridge. Once over the River Wear follow the path up the hill. The pavement stops suddenly, at this point take care on the road but continue up hill for a short way and then onto a path that leads you into the trees on your left, which follows the road up the hill. Once at the end of the path go right and cross the road onto the farm track leading to Towdy Potts and Ashes Farm.

B Follow the track past the first farm entrance, continuing up the hill and through two gates. Follow the track around the field, ignoring the gate on the left leading to Carrs Farm. Continue on the track to the entrance of Towdy Potts. Walk through the farmyard and as you exit through the gate turn immediately left through another gate. Turn right and through yet another gate into a field.

C Follow the track to a gate, once through the gate keep the fence to your right and follow it uphill and through another gate. Continue on the track as it turns left uphill towards a gate in a dry-stone wall. Through the gate, turn left and follow the wall up to the next gate (ignoring the path leading off to the right), and continue on the track to another gate. Through this gate follow the boundary wall all the way up to a gate in the top right corner of the field. Go through the gate and grab a moment to get your breath back.

D Turn right and go through the gate onto Pikeston Fell. Stay on the main track as it sways and undulates along Sunnyside Edge. Eventually the Elephant Trees will come into sight (although they're still about 1.5 miles away). About 200 yards before you get to the trees, you'll see two gates that you will need to come back to when we head back downhill, but for now continue on to the Elephant Trees, our four-mile mark and a great place to have a rest and admire the view.

E When you're refreshed, head back to the gates. Take the one on the left, waymarked Weardale Way and start back

downhill. The footpath generally follows the wall on the right downhill, but it's worth heading to the right of the mound at the bottom, the path cuts around there to the gate. Through the gate, continue straight on following the farm track downhill to another gate in the far-left corner of the field. Through this gate follow the path as it first follows the wall and then swings to the right in the direction of the farm at West Biggins. Take the gate at the end of the track and follow the footpath as it takes you to another gate into the farmyard. Go straight on through the farmyard (ignoring the path leading up to your right), then turn left over a cattle grid and follow the road down the hill, over two more cattle grids, looking for the next farm entrance on your left. Take the left into the entrance of Gill Barn farm. Keep on this track, and just before it starts to bear left towards the farm, go over the stile on your right.

F Once over the stile, head down the hill and then left just a few yards later towards a charming bench in the shape of a pair of walking boots. Continue on past the bench, through a kissing gate and follow the path straight on into a wooded area with a stream running through it. Go straight on across the stream and through a gate into a field. Head across the field to a gate, through the gate ignore the stile and stay on the right-hand side of the fence. Follow the narrow path along the stream, and then over the stile at the end. Head over the field to a gate and follow the path to another gate, passing the old lime kilns on your right. Through the next gate head across the field to a gate taking you onto the road.

G Turn right and follow the road down to a stile on your left over a gated entrance behind White Kirkley farm. Follow the path around the old slag heap hills and cross the stream by means of a wooden bridge. Continue on the path and through a stunning break in the quarry walls that leads you through to a pathway that meanders along the banks of the Bollihope Beck. Continue on this path, taking the right fork to stay on the right-hand side of the beck. Go through a kissing gate and as the woodland disappears you will come out at a house. The footpath runs between the house and its outbuildings. As you pass the house turn right up the road and through the caravan park.

H The steep climb up the road will take you all the way up to the house at High Bishopley, follow the path across the grassed area and onto the main road. Cross over the road and head up the footpath. Follow the path up the hill and past the house. The views from here are nothing short of stunning,

with Stanhope to your left, Frosterley down to your right, Wolsingham further in the distance and the Elephant Trees still visible to your right. Turn right and follow the track down to the road. Go over the cattle grid and walk down past the houses until you reach an access point to your left that will take you between the first row and second row of houses. Ignore the gate in front of you and go behind the houses and through the kissing gate. Keep the wall to your left and follow it, and then a fence, down the field to a stile. Once over the stile follow the fence (heads right and then left) to the very end. Go through the gate and head down to another gate taking you into the back yard of the two houses at the bottom of the hill. Head on to the road and turn left, crossing over the Frosterley Bridge, marking the nine-mile point of our walk.

I Continue up the road and as you get to the top of the road turn right and through a gate into a signposted path. Follow this path as it takes you behind a row of houses, past a church and through a kissing gate onto a road. Continue along the road as it bears right towards the river. Turn left at the railway line following the path over a grassed area and onto the road. Follow the road as it swings right, and just before it heads up to the main road, take the small cut that runs alongside the two houses on your right. Walk through the small industrial site and go over the stile next to the barrier entrance to the site.

J Turn right and cross the bridge, then turn left through a kissing gate and then over a stile into a field. Follow the footpath along the length of the field, crossing the stream over a small bridge. Follow the length of the riverside path as it brings you out into the caravan park. Follow the road and exit the caravan park by the main entrance. Turn left and simply follow the road. At the bridge take the footpath straight ahead of you that continues along the riverside.

K The riverside path brings you out onto a long field that runs alongside the railway track. Follow the footpath the full length of the field, eventually crossing a stream, then head into the trees on the right, through a kissing gate and up some stairs and back onto the road at the foot of Wear Bank. Turn left and cross back over the road and across the Wolsingham Bridge. At the end of the bridge turn immediately right and down to the River Wear. Take the path to the left and follow it behind the houses, through a large kissing gate and through a caravan park. On exiting the caravan park turn left at the main road which will return you to the centre of Wolsingham.



PLEASE NOTE, we recommend that you carry an **OS Explorer map OL31** when walking this route.

- - - Circular Walk
- - - Alternative Routes
- Wooded Area
- ⋈ Moorland
- - - Railway