# Newtondale

**Explore the forest tracks of Newtondale on a 6-mile circular route that combines easy valley-bottom walking with a climb into the trees for a lovely woodland wander. The upper section includes a magical route around a deep woodland cleft overflowing with mosses, ferns and grasses. Keep your eyes and ears open – the line of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway is never far away and you'll often hear the whistle of an oncoming train and even see wisps of steam rising above the trees.**

## North Yorkshire Moors Railway

The railway line through Newtondale dates back to the earliest days of steam in the 1830s, when famous railway engineer George Stephenson planned a line between Whitby and Pickering. The line finally closed in 1965 – a victim of the 'Beeching axe' – but the 18-mile section between Pickering and Grosmont was brought back to life in the 1970s by a determined group of volunteers. The North Yorkshire Moors Railway is now the most popular heritage railway line in the country, and steam trains once again run all the way through to Whitby.

## Levisham station

All the stations on the line have their own character, but Levisham is quirkier than many. It's been restored to the way it looked in 1912, while during Pickering's annual October 'Railway in Wartime' event the station and surrounding area is transformed into the occupied French village of 'Le Visham'. Finally, ever wondered why Levisham station is a steep mile-and-half's walk below Levisham village? It's thought that when the line was planned in the 1830s, the local landowner, the Reverend Skelton, allowed the station to be built – provided it was handy for his house down in the valley, rather than up in the village.

### Did you know?

The ruined stone tower you can see across the valley from Kale Pot Hole Farm is Skelton Tower – built in around 1830 and formerly used by shooting parties on the moors.

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| **Great for:** | woodland wanders |
| **Length:** | 6 miles (9.8km) |
| **Time:** | 3 hours |
| **Start/Finish:** | Levisham station car park (honesty box for payment) |
| **Grid Reference:** | SE 818 910 |
| **Map:** | OS Explorer OL27 |
| **Refreshments:** | Levisham (1.5 miles/2.4km), Lockton (2.5 miles/4km) and Pickering (8 miles/13km) |
| **Toilets:** | None on the route |

There are refreshments at Levisham station's Weighbridge tea-hut, but only on weekends and bank holidays. Otherwise, there's a pub in Levisham village (Horseshoe Inn) and one on the A169, just outside Lockton (Fox and Rabbit), and plenty more pubs, cafés and restaurants in Pickering.

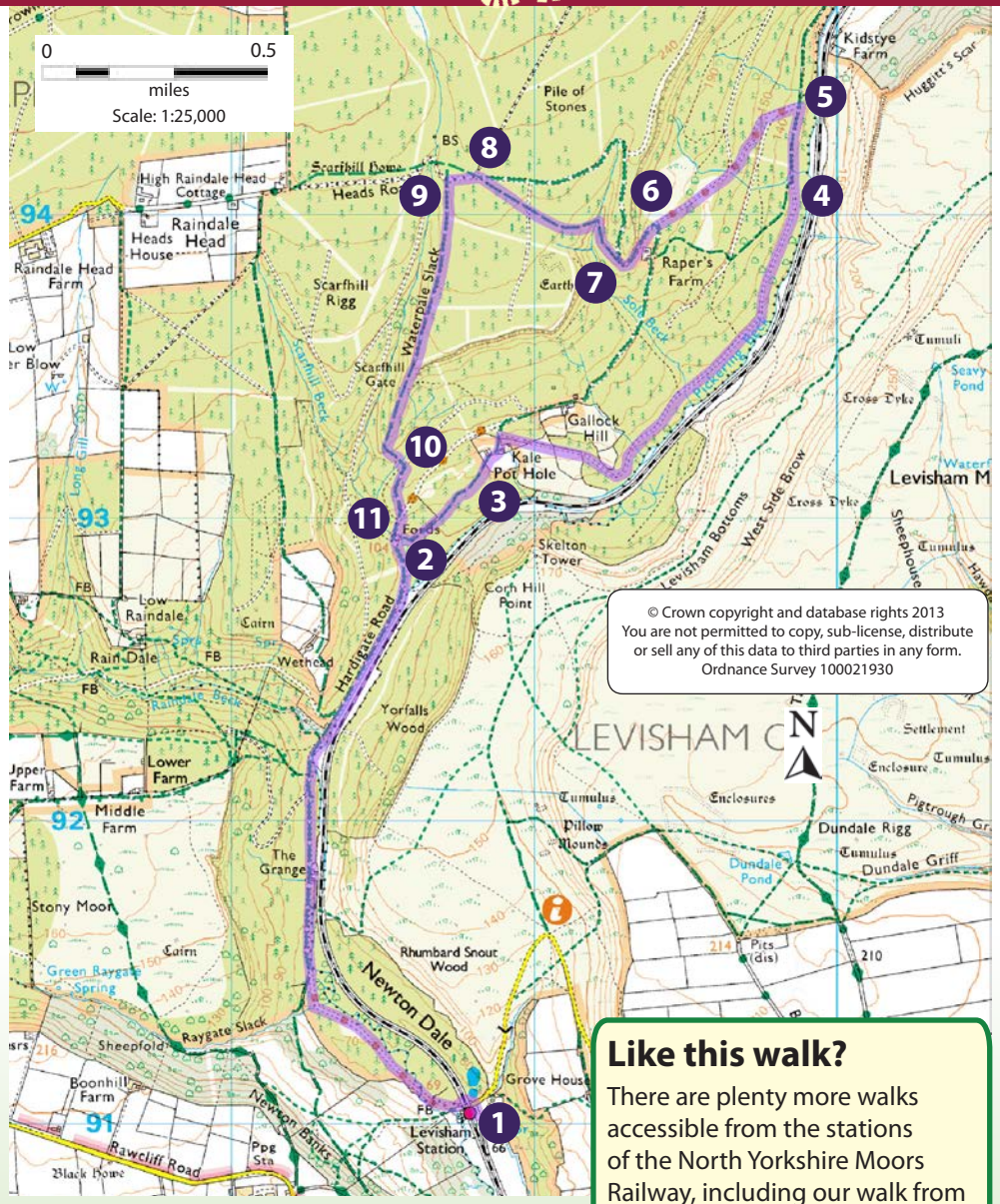
# . . . forest tracks, signs of steam . . .

## Route instructions

1. From the station yard, turn left over the level crossing and follow the stone track ahead and around to the right. The track soon becomes a tarmac lane (Hardigate Road – there's occasional forestry and local traffic, so take care).
2. Turn right onto a narrow bridleway into woodland (it's waymarked as 'Levisham Station Walk') just before the right-hand bend in the road. Cross a wooden bridge and follow the winding woodland path.
3. Go through a gate into the field before Kale Pot Hole Farm. At the far side turn left in front of the metal gate and leave the field through an upper wooden gate. Turn right past a barrier and follow the track.
4. Continue straight on when a bridleway turns left.
5. At the track junction, turn left uphill. Keep straight on up the stone track to reach an open area (Raper's Farm Picnic Place).
6. At the hairpin left bend, turn right (uphill) on the tarmac road (houses below you on the left).
7. At the next bend, just after the chevrons turn left on a bridleway into woodland. Follow the path around the head of a small valley and continue uphill and then straight on through the forest.
8. Turn left at the stone track.
9. Before the hairpin bend, turn left on a grassy bridleway – look for the waymarker post. The path heads gently and then, eventually, steeply downhill.
10. Turn right at a grassy track and continue downhill.
11. Pass a barrier, turn right on to Hardigate Road and return to Levisham station.

The route follows quiet lanes, forest tracks and paths, with several ascents and descents which are steep, uneven and rocky in places. There are two gates at Kale Pot Hole Farm, but no stiles en route. Parts of the walk are on paths and tracks over Forestry Commission open access land. Some of these tracks are occasionally closed for tree-felling or other operations, although the land is usually always open at weekends.

You can let your dog off the lead in Forestry Commission woods, but always make sure that they are under control. Please keep your dog on a lead in the field near Kale Pot Hole Farm as livestock may be present.

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**You will need OS Explorer OL27 map for this walk.**

### Like this walk?

There are plenty more walks accessible from the stations of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, including our walk from Goathland to Mallyan Spout and Beck Hole.