

# Welcome to Hamsterley, the largest forest in County Durham. Explore right into the heart of beautiful wooded valleys on foot, bike or horse with our extensive trail network.

The trails start at various car parks along the **Forest Drive**, a 4 mile (6km) vehicle route that winds its way up the valley providing plenty of opportunities to stop off along the way to walk in the forest or have a picnic. Access to the **Forest Drive** can be gained with a valid car park ticket.

**Did you know?** During the 1930s and 40s, **Hamsterley Forest** was used first as a venue for a Ministry of Works labour camp and latterly as a prisoner of war camp.





# Explore on foot...

Three walks start from the notice board in the main car park and from the Visitor Centre. These trails are signed in a clockwise direction.

#### Riverside Trail •••

Easy - 1.5 miles circular route (linear all-ability trail to Low Redford 0.75 miles) Markers - White arrows/blue background

The first <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> mile is a level trail that follows the Bedburn Beck to Low Redford Picnic Site and is suitable for unassisted wheelchair users. The terrain on the second half of the trail is steeper and the path surface rougher but is useable by wheelchairs with assistance. On the way, look out for the beautiful wildflower meadows (best time for flowering season is May-June) and the Gruffalo and Green Man sculptures.

### Three Becks Walk •••

Moderate - 4.5 miles Markers - White arrows/orange background

This is the longest and most rewarding of the Bedburn walks. Initially following the same route as the Yellow Walk, descending into the valley near The Grove and picking up the line of an old

Discover the freedom of the forest...

# ...and support Hamsterley Forest Buy an annual Discovery Pass for a whole year of savings! Join now at the Forest Cafe, information point or join online: forestry.gov.uk/pass

## Bedburn Valley Walk •••

Moderate - 2.5 miles Markers - Black arrows/yellow background This walk follows the Riverside Trail along the Bedburn Beck for a short distance before crossing the beck and climbing through beautiful mixed woodland high above the valley floor. The route rejoins the Bedburn Beck at Low Redford, returning to the start through an oak wood that was planted in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of George VI. The walk has some steeper inclines than the Riverside Trail and has a narrow bridge crossing. drover's road. This road passes the ruins of Metcalf's House, once a coaching inn with stables. Once back at the forest drive, watch out for the 'Green Man', a sculpture showing the faces of the three ages of this mythical forest dweller. The route has several narrow, rougher sections as well as some steeper ascents and descents. The trail also crosses two roads with vehicular access.

## Viking Wildplay

If you love climbing, scrambling, balancing, hiding and generally having a great time, then this trail is for you. Looping around the Bedburn Beck, this ½ mile trail has loads of fun play opportunities, from balance trails to boulder scrambles. Of course, nothing beats nature's own playground with plenty of trees to climb, dens to build and beaches to play on (yes, beaches!). **Please keep your dogs on a lead on this trail**.



spooked so it is important you let the rider walkers and both should give way to horse on the trail network. Please show respect cyclists and horse riders somewhere out chances are you will meet other walkers, Forest trails are open to all users but we see you before proceeding past. riders. **Remember**, horses can be easily for other users – cyclists should give way to

walkers are not required to use a lead in As long as dogs are under control, dog ride your bike or horse. paths may not be the appropriate place to Also be aware that at times very busy encounter mountain bikes at high speed. bike trails as you are highly likely to mountain bike priority sections of mountain

County Durham

to be one of the most beautiful corners of

That way, Hamsterley Forest will continue

Code and take all litter home with you.

warning signs.

machinery. Please respect all

For all visitors, please follow the Forest parts of the forest 'stick and flick' off paths are provided in this area, while in other is encouraged.

> replanting over 50000 trees each year. producing 20000 tonnes of timber and vehicles, timber lorries, and other All forest users should look out for

Spurlswood Walk Blackling Hole is a deep pool into which and finishes, you can also car park here, the Whisky Gill Walk starts plunges a picturesque waterfall. From the Markers - White arrows/green background Located at the west end of Drive, four miles from the visitor centre, pick up the the Forest

> the forest, set off and explore the miles of areas of the forest. Once you get to know

opportunity to explore deep into the quieter

unwaymarked forest road and trail.