



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Gently graded winding semi-enclosed gritstone valley landscape with occasional outcropping limestone contrasting with wild open moorland beyond, which is dominated by rocky outcrops.
- Colour contrast between the greens of the pastures and woodlands within the valley, the darker greens of coniferous trees on the valley side and the dark patchwork of purple and browns mixed with greys and tans that make up the moorland areas.
- River Wharfe alternates between flowing swiftly through narrow shallow wooded rocky gorges occasionally opening out to meander across open terraced floodplains.
- The regularly spaced v-shaped tributary valleys are narrow, steep, rocky and well wooded, often with waterfalls.
- Frequent linear ancient deciduous woodland fringing the river and within the valley floor is supplemented by often abruptly edged medium scale coniferous plantations on the upper valley sides.
- The valley floor and lower valley sides are given over to grazing of sheep and cattle and occasional hay meadows within medium sized gritstone walled fields in the central parts of the area and smaller, irregularly shaped stone enclosures in the north and south with occasional boundary trees and field barns.
- Pattern of walls generally stops abruptly at the moorland edge; moorland vegetation types occasionally spill over into the valley sides.
- Settlement limited in the south of the area to that around the Bolton Abbey and at Bolton Bridge, with occasional estate farms on the lower valley sides; to the north small farmsteads are more frequent around the gritstone hamlets of Drebley and Howgill on the lower valley sides.
- Present influence of Devonshire Estate is evidenced by tree-lined roads, remnant parkland landscapes and modern development of low key visitor facilities and associated parking at the abbey, Strid and Bolton Bridge.
- Focal points within the valley include the ruins of Bolton Abbey, the Cavendish Memorial, Barden Tower and medieval bridges at Bolton Bridge and Barden, and the rocky outcrops including Earl's Seat and Simon's Seat on Barden Fell to the east.

