

Winter Trail

⑥ Turn sharp left at the road junction and walk down the steep hill. On the right is **Friary Land** that Hilfield acquired in 2016 where we are working to create a 'wildlife corridor', and create more ponds in and around the wet woodlands of Hermits Wood.



Pond creation

⑦ You can continue down the sunken lane or ancient **Holloway** or turn right and walk through our fields back to the Friary. This alternative route is shown as orange dashes on the map. See all the changes being made.



Covered winter beds

⑧ When you arrive back at the Friary you could visit the **Kitchen Garden**.

We practice no-digging on our vegetable beds. Most of the soil surface will be covered over the winter by organic mulches and compost, or green manure, to foster the soil microbes, protect the soil from frost and rain damage, and prevent release of CO2 from the soil into the atmosphere. Please ask if you'd like to know more about this method of gardening. The garden produces some food for our meals all winter—kale, cabbage, sprouts, but we feed a lot of people and we are not self-sufficient.



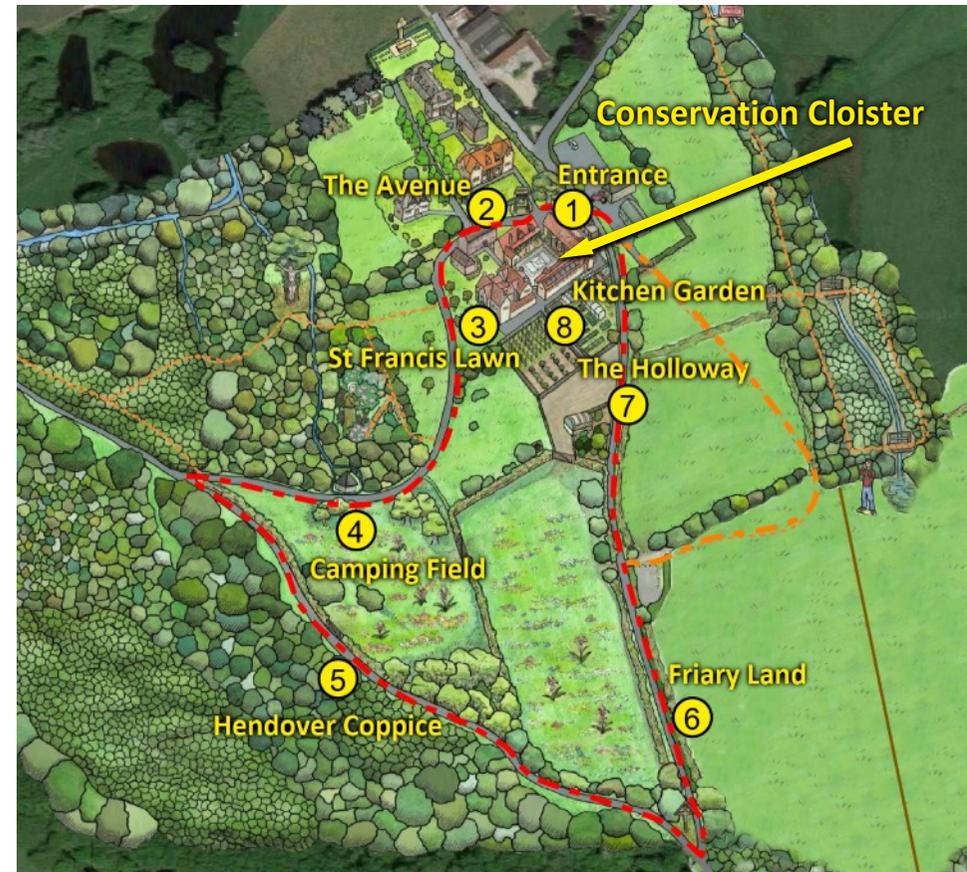
Lettuces grown in our polytunnel

Please return this trail to the Conservation Cloister when you've finished. Map your sightings and keep in touch with Hilfield's Facebook Conservation Group page, and website: www.hilfieldfriary.org.uk



Winter Trail

Hilfield Friary Trails



This trail follows our 'Triangle Route'. It's paved and the length is 2/3 of a mile. It focuses on some surprising and sometimes colourful glimpses of the natural world that you might see within a few hundred metres of the Friary.

Follow the numbers in yellow circles on the map that match the numbers in the text. There is a choice of routes back to the Friary. You can stick to the lane or walk over the fields.

You might like to borrow a bird identification chart or book guide from the Conservation Cloister by the Chapel in the Courtyard.

Enjoy!



1 Start at the Entrance

If you are here in January or February at the entrance to the Friary from the care park you will see the hazel tree bearing showers of soft golden catkins. It has showers of soft golden catkins. If you look closely you might find the tiny bright red female flowers that will become cobnuts in the autumn. There are many hazel trees around our grounds.

Continue on the Friary lane and pass the 'German Oak' on your right. You will see leaf buds developing. See the **Canticle Garden** on the left.

- 2 Walk past **The Avenue** where you will see snowdrops in January and February, and primroses and crocuses in February. Look out for many species of bird such as blackbirds, robins, finches and tits.

When you reach **Francis Lawn** take a look at the many different species of snowdrop on the land on the opposite of the lane and by the path to the Secret Garden.

Br Vincent lovingly tended the Secret Garden and the Friary's snowdrops until his death in 2020. His work is being carried on by Community members.

Look at the diversity of tree shapes all around; revealed by their lack of leaves. See the varied type of bark. Some colours are vibrant like the dogwood.



Tiny red female Hazel flowers



German Oak



Hazel catkins



Galanthus Brenda Troyle

- 4 Continue along the lane to the **Camping Field** on the left. More trees and bushes lie to the right. There are tree identification books in the library. Two helpful websites are: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods and www.discoverwildlife.com/plant-facts/trees

The Camping Field is preparing for its amazing spring growth.

- 5 Turn left at the top of the Friary lane and continue along the public lane. On the right is Dorset Wildlife Trust's **Hendover Coppice**. The woodland is also preparing for its spring growth.

See plants such as Hart's tongue fern and in this shady, north-facing area.

On the left you can see some of the Friary's successful hedge laying. We use the 'Dorset style' cutting the stems of the hedge near ground level. The stems are then bent over at an angle and weaved into each other without using stakes. The stems regenerate from ground level and create a living, thick and stock-proof barrier. The hedges provide a wonderful habitat for creatures living there.

Continue along the lane until the road junction. Turn sharp left and down the lane.



Colourful Hilfield trees



Hart's tongue fern



Old man's beard



Hedge laying