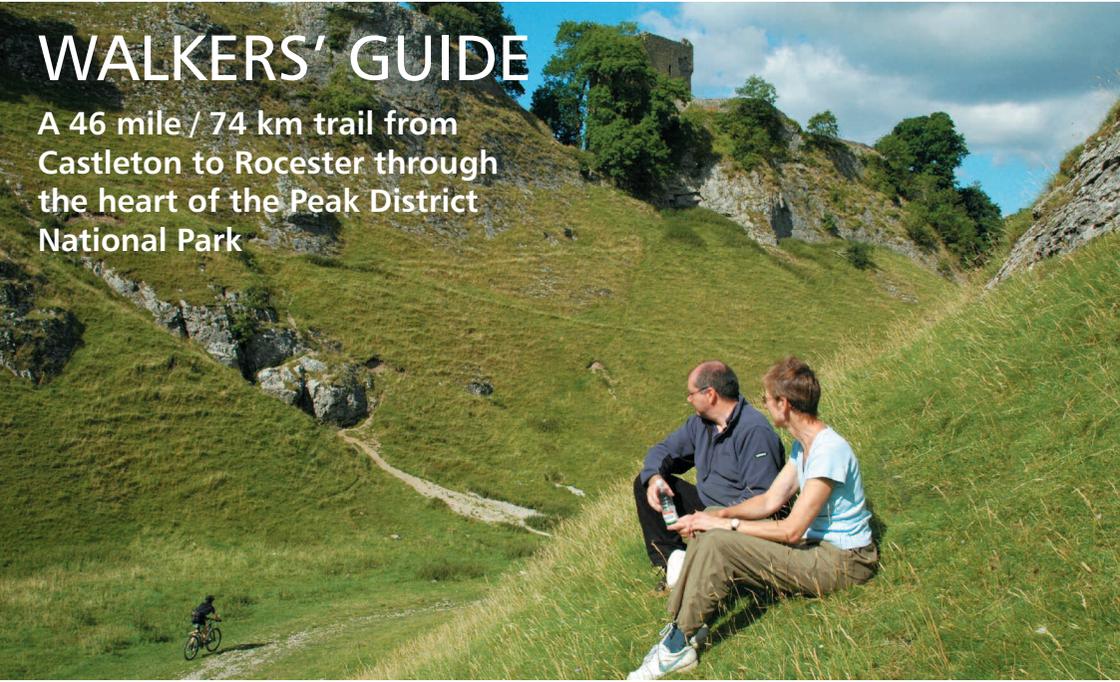


The Limestone Way

PEAK
DISTRICT
& Derbyshire

WALKERS' GUIDE

A 46 mile / 74 km trail from
Castleton to Rocester through
the heart of the Peak District
National Park



The Peak District lies at the heart of England and offers superb walking along miles of paths and open countryside. The Limestone Way is a waymarked long-distance route which goes south from the village of Castleton in the Hope Valley, through dramatic dales and green rolling landscape, to Rocester on the banks of the River Dove. Enjoy this trail as a four or five day walk, taking in the spectacular scenery and views along the way and passing through several picturesque villages.

The white limestone rocks of the dales and drystone walls are the remains of a vast tropically warm sea of the Carboniferous period some 330 million years ago. Here, by water and other natural forces, the overlying gritstones and shales have worn away to expose rocks which are the remains of countless millions of tiny creatures which lived in that ocean. These limestone uplands and dales were among the first places to be settled by man and they are rich in prehistoric remains. Today most of the meadowland, except in the gorge-like dales, has been improved for livestock rearing and the sight of herds of black and white dairy cattle is typical of the area.

Planning your walk

Information on quality-assured accommodation along the Limestone Way can be found in the Peak District and Derbyshire Accommodation Guide (available from Tourist Information/Visitor Centres - see back cover for details) and on the website www.visitpeakdistrict.com



Winnatt's Pass, Castleton

In addition a self-guided holiday package is available for walkers on the Limestone Way, including all accommodation bookings, maps and transport for yourself and/or your luggage, where necessary. Please contact one of the Tourist Information/Visitor Centres (see back cover) for details.

It is recommended that this leaflet should only be used as a rough guide, in combination with the 1:25000 scale Ordnance Survey maps.

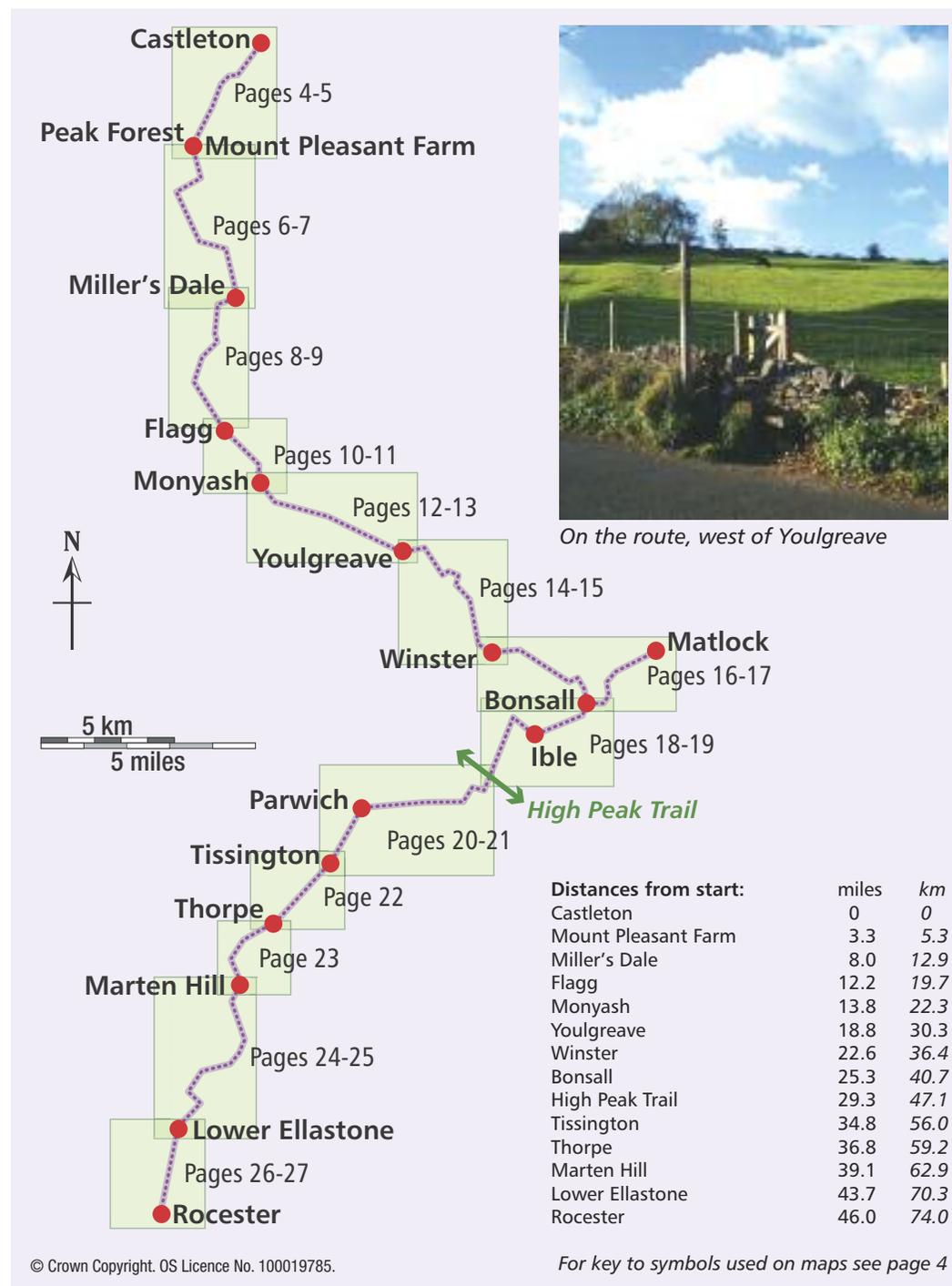
The route is marked on three Ordnance Survey Explorer maps:

- OL 1 **The Peak District - Dark Peak Area**
- OL 24 **The Peak District - White Peak Area**
- 259 **Derby - Uttoxeter, Ashbourne & Cheadle**



Not all stiles and gates are described in this publication, directions are concentrated on the most complex sections of the route to help you find your way. The route is also waymarked using standard yellow arrows, supplemented by fingerposts and by the Limestone Way 'ram' logo.

There are a number of pubs, shops and cafes en-route, however you should always take some food and plenty to drink with you.



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For key to symbols used on maps see page 4



From the centre of Castleton walk up the hill past the War Memorial. Take the track on the right up Cave Dale, signposted as the Limestone Way. This rocky limestone track eventually turns to grass at the head of the dale below Peveril Castle. Continue on and pass through a hand gate and the path leads across fields to a lane.

◀ The track to Cave Dale

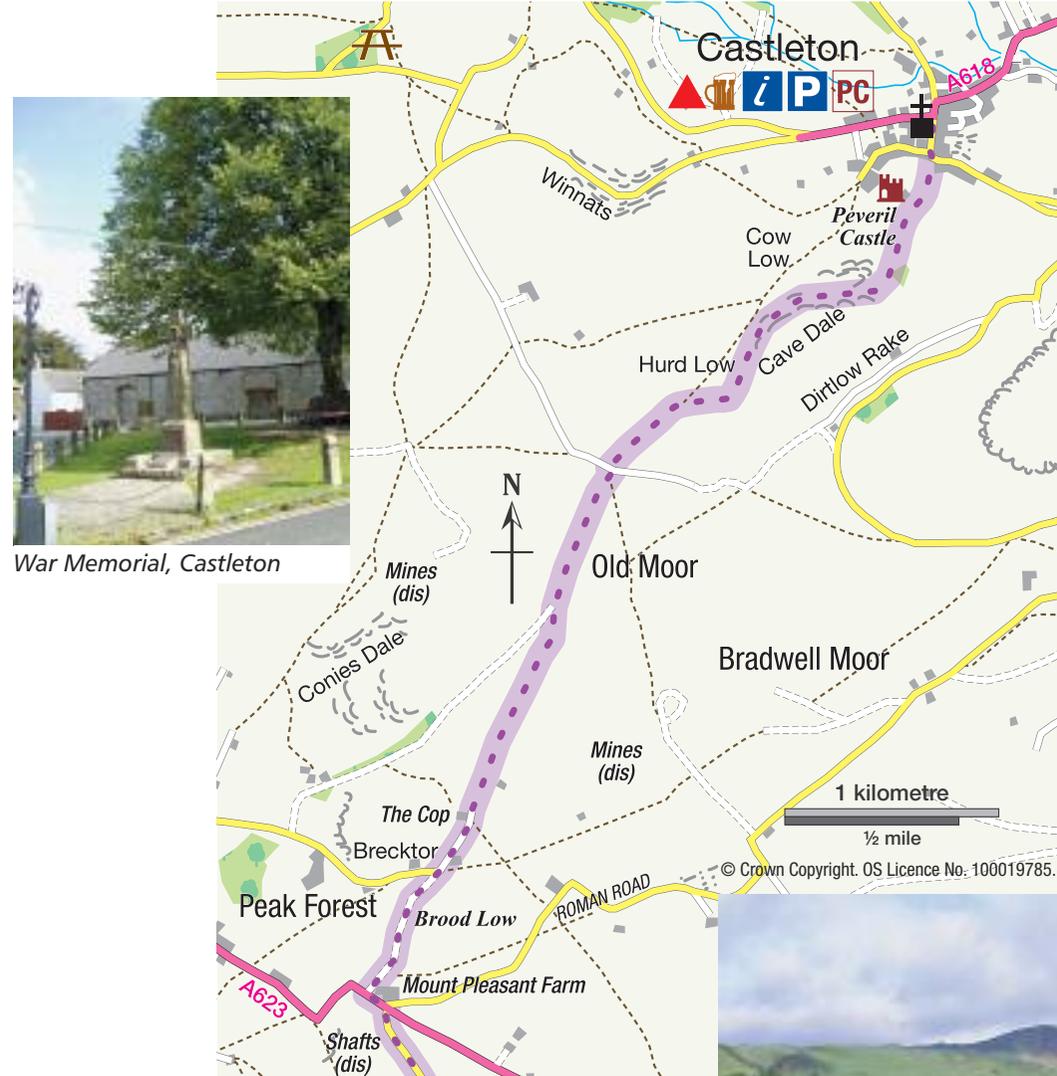
Cave Dale was most probably formed as the result of a collapsed cave system. The limestone is riddled with caves and passages caused by water dissolving the permeable rock. Peak Cavern, the gigantic showcave, lies beneath the dales. Above it Peveril Castle, built by the Normans, uses the natural defences of the rock walls and slopes to good purpose.



Cave Dale, Castleton

Key to symbols used in maps

-  Limestone Way
-  Camp Site
-  Car Park
-  Caravan Site
-  Castle
-  Churches (steeple)
-  Church (tower)
-  Church/Chapel
-  Nature Reserve
-  Picnic Site
-  Pub
-  Public Toilets
-  Railway Station
-  Tourist Information Centre
-  Youth Hostel



War Memorial, Castleton

Continue directly on the bridle road to the next field boundary. Just before a gate bear left over a stile; keep the wall on your right to a walled track, which eventually leads to The Cop and onto a minor road.

Where the road turns right continue on over a stile along Green Lane to the junction with the A623 at Mount Pleasant Farm. Carefully emerge onto the main road, go left along the verge and cross to Wheston Road on the right.



Peveril Castle, Castleton



Cattle near Mt Pleasant Farm

Follow road for 1 km, past the appropriately named Limestone Way Farm, and turn right on a limestone track. At the bottom of the dale where track bears right go over a stile and down a tree lined path leading into Hay Dale.

There are remains of mine workings here - do not be tempted to enter the open adit.



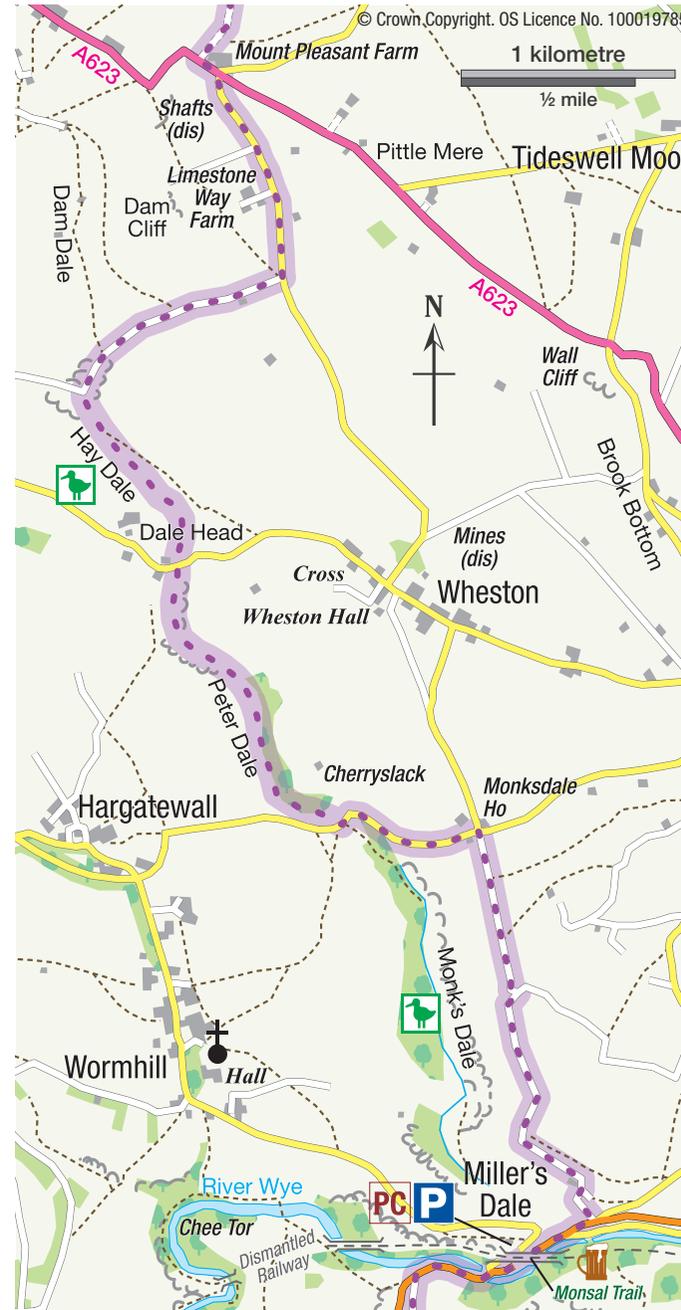
Mount Pleasant Farm on the A623

At the next road bear right then left after approximately 40m and into Peter Dale. Like many limestone dales, this may be flooded at times in winter. Continue down the dale to meet another road.

Directly ahead is Monk's Dale, which may be an interesting detour for the adventurous. This slippery boulder-strewn dale is an important nature reserve and eventually leads to Miller's Dale to rejoin the route.



Peter Dale



Near Monksdale House ▶

Turn left up the steep hill to reach Monksdale House. Go right down Monksdale Lane on a narrow walled track. Bear right at junction after 750m. After a further 1km enter the farmyard through a gate and bear right down hill to a minor road. Turn right along the road under two most impressive viaducts (once carrying the Buxton to Matlock railway, now the *Monsal Trail*). There is no footway on much of this section of road.

At the next junction a road on the right leads up to the former station buildings at Miller's Dale, where there are public toilets.





Miller's Dale viaducts



Near Priestcliffe Ditch

200m past the junction an unclassified road leads off to the left at a bend on the main road. After approximately 1.5km uphill (you'll know why its called Long Lane!) go straight ahead at the road for 150m, then turn right at crossroads to the A6 and the Waterloo Inn.

Continue on Sough Lane (the track to the left of pub) uphill 1.5km to a minor road. Parts of this path may be extremely muddy in winter months.



The Waterloo Inn on the A6



Sough Lane



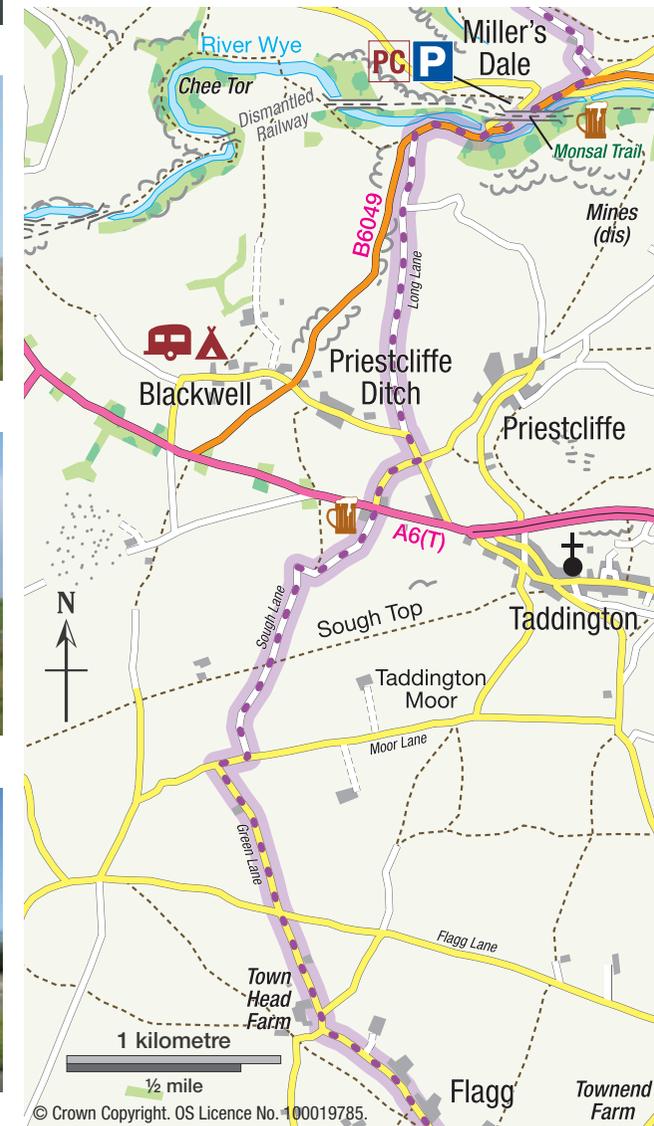
Green Lane



Flagg

Turn right along road then left at the junction. Another 2km of pleasant road walking brings you to the village street of Flagg. The field walls hereabouts are some of the best examples in the Peak District landscape.

Edge Close Farm tearooms at Flagg are open weekends in winter and Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday in summer.





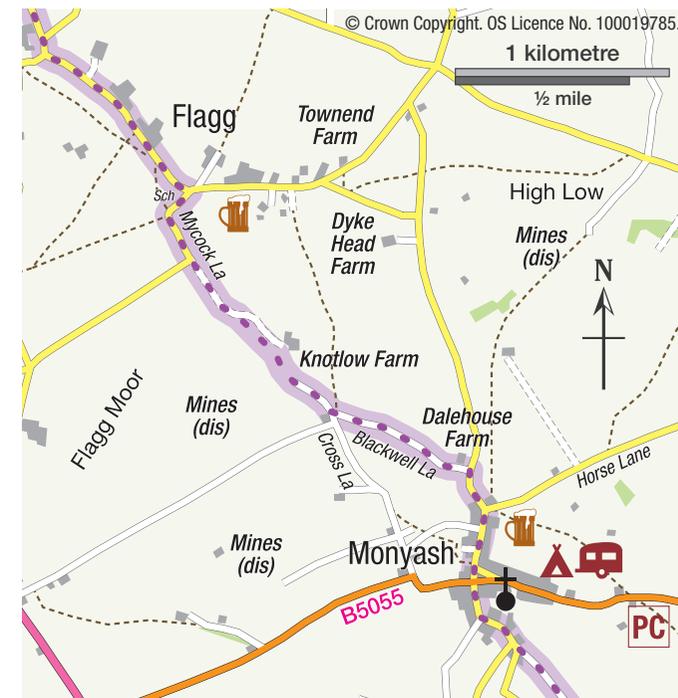
Flagg



Bull's Head, Monyash

At the end of the street turn right at the junction and where the road bears sharp right continue along a farm track towards Knotlow Farm. After about 250m take the well waymarked path to the right. Cross two fields, avoiding the farm to rejoin the walled track. At a barn bear slightly left and continue on the track to a minor road, eventually turning right to reach Monyash.

Monyash was once an important centre of lead mining and its broad village street illustrates its past as a market place. It has a pub (The Bull's Head) and a café next door.



Monyash



Looking towards Calling Low

Go up Rakes Road opposite the village green and where the road bears sharp right carry on along a track for approximately 1km. Cross the head of Fern Dale and a succession of stiles with the wall first on your left then on your right to reach One Ash Grange. On entering the farm bear left at the camping barn. The path leads towards Cales Dale.



Old stone slab bridge over the River Bradford, near Youlgreave

One Ash Grange was founded by monks from Roche Abbey in Yorkshire in the 12th century when wool was an important part of the local economy. There is a superb example of traditional stone built pigsties and an ice house to the left of the footpath.

Descend the steep path to the next path on the right, this leads up some steps and across fields to skirt Calling Low Farm. Go through a copse then through a field to a stile. On entering a large field go diagonally to the right over the brow to another stile, then bear left to the road.

Cross to Moor Lane and turn right at the car park, where a path leads to another road. Turn left then right again over a stile leading to the Youlgreave to Middleton road. Turn right and after 400m at a sharp bend go through the gap in the stone wall and descend to Bradford Dale. Turn left and follow the pleasant riverside path approximately 1.5km to a road.

(If you wish to take a short detour into Youlgreave, where there are shops, three pubs, a Youth Hostel and B&B accommodation, go left up the lane at the point where you cross a stone footbridge over the river)



YHA at the old Co-op in Youlgreave



Where the Elton Road crosses the river go right for 50m to a stile on your left. Follow the path over fields, crossing Bleakley Dike, then uphill to a gate. Harthill Moor Farm can be seen above. Take the waymarked path over a stile and double back left into the wood and round to the road. Turn right uphill and take the path opposite a farm drive to reach Robin Hood's Stride.

The twin rock crags of Robin Hood's Stride, also known as Mock Beggars Hall, are the root of many local legends. Below Cratcliffe Rocks is a hermit's cave with carvings believed to date from the 14th century. Standing stones and a stone circle add to the historic nature of the area.

Near Castle Ring ▶



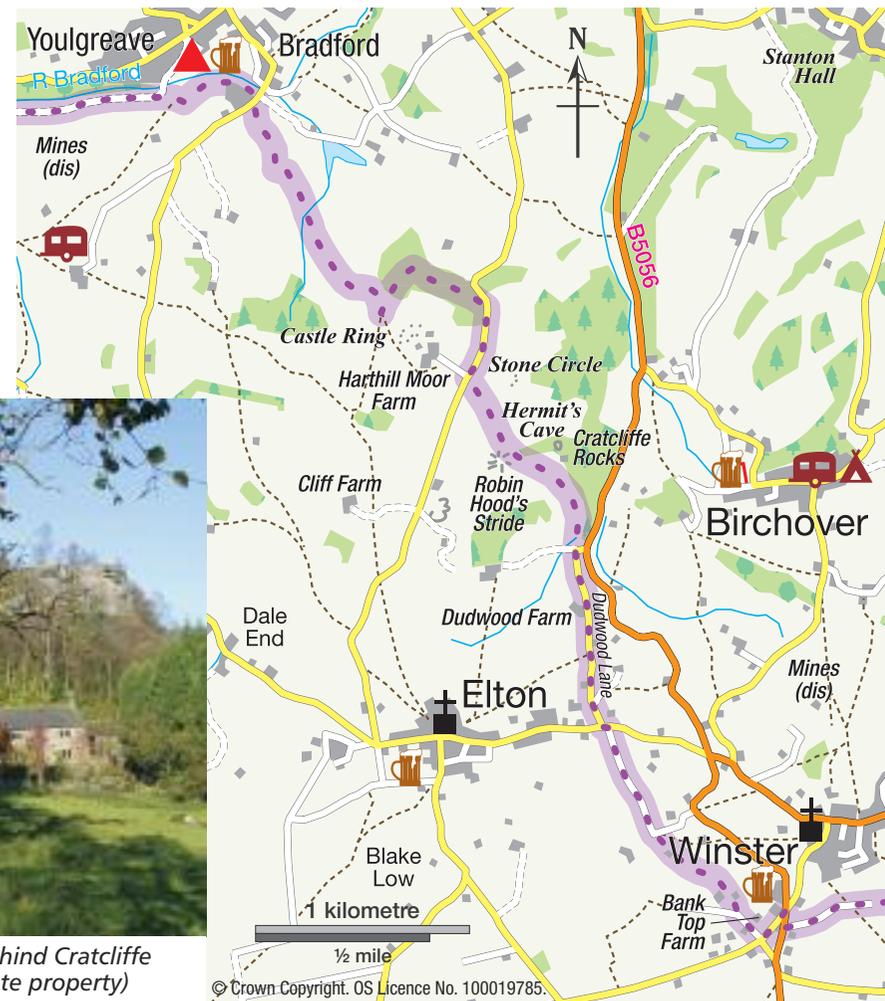
Robin Hood's Stride



Stone Circle near Harthill Moor (circa 1600 BC to 1000 BC)

The path passes between Robin Hood's Stride and Cratcliffe Rocks and on down a track to a stile at a minor road. Go straight ahead up Dudwood Lane to the junction. Cross the road and continue on a track for just over 1km to Winster Bank Top. Bear left along the road to the next junction. (On the right next to the main road is the Winster Ore House where lead ore was once stored).

Winster was once a thriving market town and by the 17th century was an important centre for lead production, the ore being smelted nearby. Many of today's footpaths originated as miner's paths and it was not unusual in those days for men to walk from Bonsall to Winster, or even further, to work.



Rocks seen behind Cratcliffe Cottage (private property)

Take the broad walled track opposite the Ore House. At the end of the track bear left down hill over stiles to skirt below Lun Tor Rocks and up again following a well-waymarked path through a succession of narrow fields. It is necessary to bear diagonally right over the final large field to reach Bonsall Lane. Turn left along the road for 80m and take the stile on the right diagonally across fields to Blakelow Lane. Turn right then almost immediately go through a stile on the left. Strike diagonally right through stiles to reach Moorlands Lane.

These lanes are again remnants of old trade routes and miners tracks. Lead mining has now given way to limestone quarrying which is evident in the immediate area. Old workings are now opencast for fluorspar as well as limestone.

Turn left on Moorlands Lane for approximately 300m. Ignore the first footpath on the right and take the second waymarked path. Follow the path through a succession of stone squeezer stiles to an old building. Bear right on the path towards Bonsall Uppertown, which is in sight. On joining the road go straight past Hollies Farm Shop to the crossroads at the top of Bankside.

Mentioned in the Domesday Book, the village of Bonsall is an area with a rich lead mining history. The Church of St James dates from the 13th century and has a fine tower and spire. In the centre of the village is a market cross and next to this the King's Head dating from 1677; this and the Barley Mow at Bonsall provide opportunities for refreshment.



The route from Winster to Bonsall

Bonsall to Matlock

If you wish to visit Matlock, at the crossroads at the top of Bankside carry straight over along Bell Lane and follow the walled path down to the village square by the Kings Head. Follow the walled lane up from the market cross climbing steeply at first. The way narrows and levels out before reaching a junction at a sunken lane. Turn right uphill 200m to a stile on the right before the second gate. Go through the stile and diagonally across a small field to a barn, then follow field boundaries across to a track.

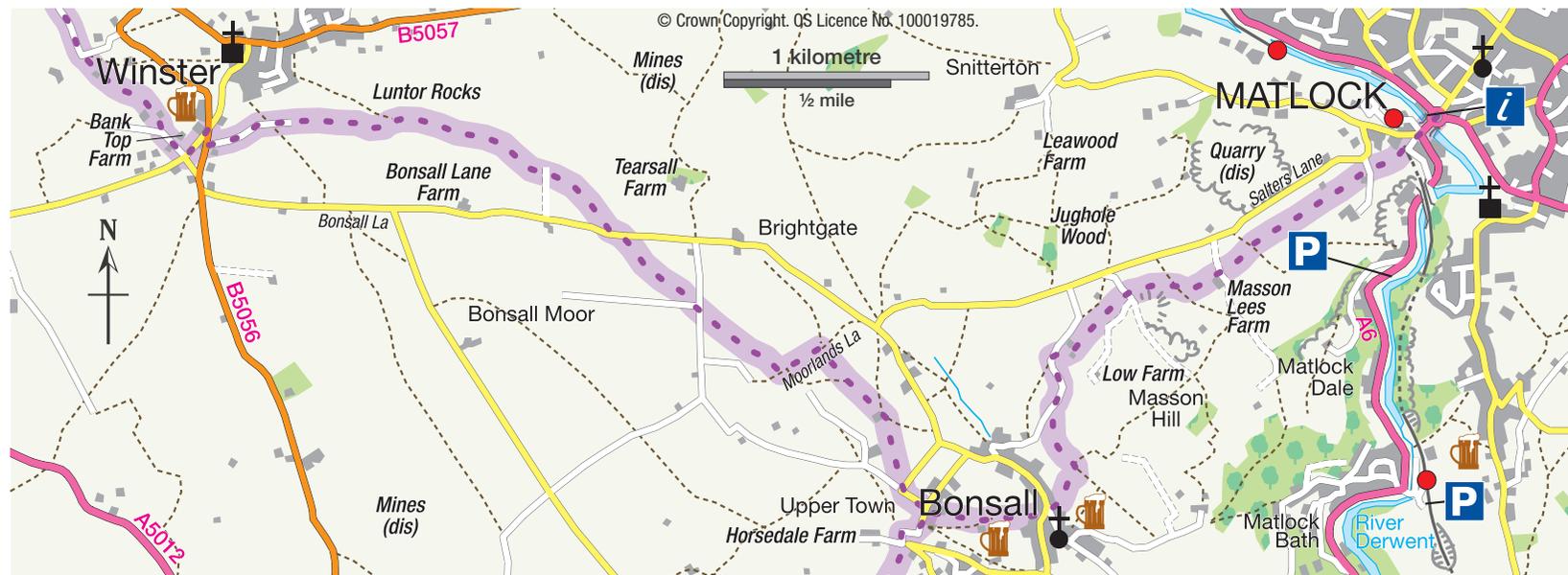
Go straight over the track and diagonally across the corner of field over a stile and downhill to another track. Turn right to a stile and continue downhill to the left of Masson Lees Farm. The Way then continues downhill parallel to Salters Lane on a well worn path to reach the town of Matlock. Through the last field it will be noted that the path follows a depression. This was once a continuation of Salters Lane, presumably re-routed as it is so steep.

Matlock to Bonsall

From Matlock bridge follow the waymarked routes from the bottom of Snitterton Road. The path leads uphill through a series of fields to Masson Lees Farm. Bear right along field boundaries over the crest of Masson Hill. Keep left to join the walled lane leading down into Bonsall, then follow the walled lane opposite the Kings Head to the crossroads in Uppertown.



Hall Leys Park, Matlock



Turn right down Bankside and continue downhill to the postbox at the junction with Horsedale. Take the path up the bank to the right of the Chapel, bearing half right to reach a walled track. Go uphill, then straight ahead through a series of stiles, before crossing rough pitted ground to carefully locate a crossing point over a deep 'rake'. Now bear right to a stile, then half left to a road. Go ahead above Leys and Whitecliffe Farms, and through closely spaced stiles, before dropping to the road into Ible. Turn right along this road.

Ible is a remote hamlet consisting of scattered farms, high on the valley side above the Via Gellia and was apparently the setting for D.H. Lawrence's story 'Wintry Peacock'. On the roadside below the old chapel which is now a house are 12 stone watering troughs sometimes called the '12 apostles'. One of the troughs has a hinged lid - this at one time was the only source of drinking water for the residents.

Continue on towards Grangemill, then as the road descends, take a path on the left. On reaching the lane turn left and continue to the Holly Bush Inn at the crossroads of the Via Gellia. Keep left on the pavement and cross the busy road to a bridleway.

The Via Gellia is a road named after the Gell family of Wirksworth and from whence originated the trade name 'Viyella' which was originally made at Courtaulds textile mill once operating in the valley. The remains of an old water mill can be seen near Grangemill.

This bridleway was once the route of the ancient Portway, a road which ran from Manchester to Nottingham along which



The King's Head and old cross at Bonsall passed salt from Cheshire and lace from Nottingham.

Go through the gate and follow the track to a second gate; bear slightly left skirting around the quarry boundary and through a gateway. Bear half right up a large field to a gate at the brow of the hill. Leave the bridleway and keep on uphill. Climb to further stiles on the skyline. Bear half left across the brow of the hill, descending a shallow valley, before climbing through the higher of the two field gates to cross the High Peak Trail.



The hamlet of Ible



Harborough Rocks to the east are outcrops of magnesian limestone on the top of which is an ancient burial chamber.

The High Peak Trail follows the route of the Cromford and High Peak Railway. Completed in 1831, this was one of the world's first long distance railways. It carried minerals and goods between the



Highland cattle near Ible



The Holly Bush at Grangemill Cromford Canal at Cromford Wharf and the Peak Forest Canal at Whaley Bridge. Originally a canal was proposed for the route, but the number and steepness of the hills made this impractical. The railway was originally powered by horses on the flat sections and stationary steam engines on nine inclined planes. It took around two days to complete the 33 mile journey.



Rainster Rocks

Climb through stiles, before doubling back left in a rough pasture, through Roundlow farmyard to the road. Bear right a short distance to a junction above Brassington then right again uphill for 25 metres. Leave the road at a gate on the left and go through another gateway, crossing the brow of the hill to a stile, then straight across rough ground to a small gap in the wall opposite. Bear right then immediately left around a limestone outcrop.

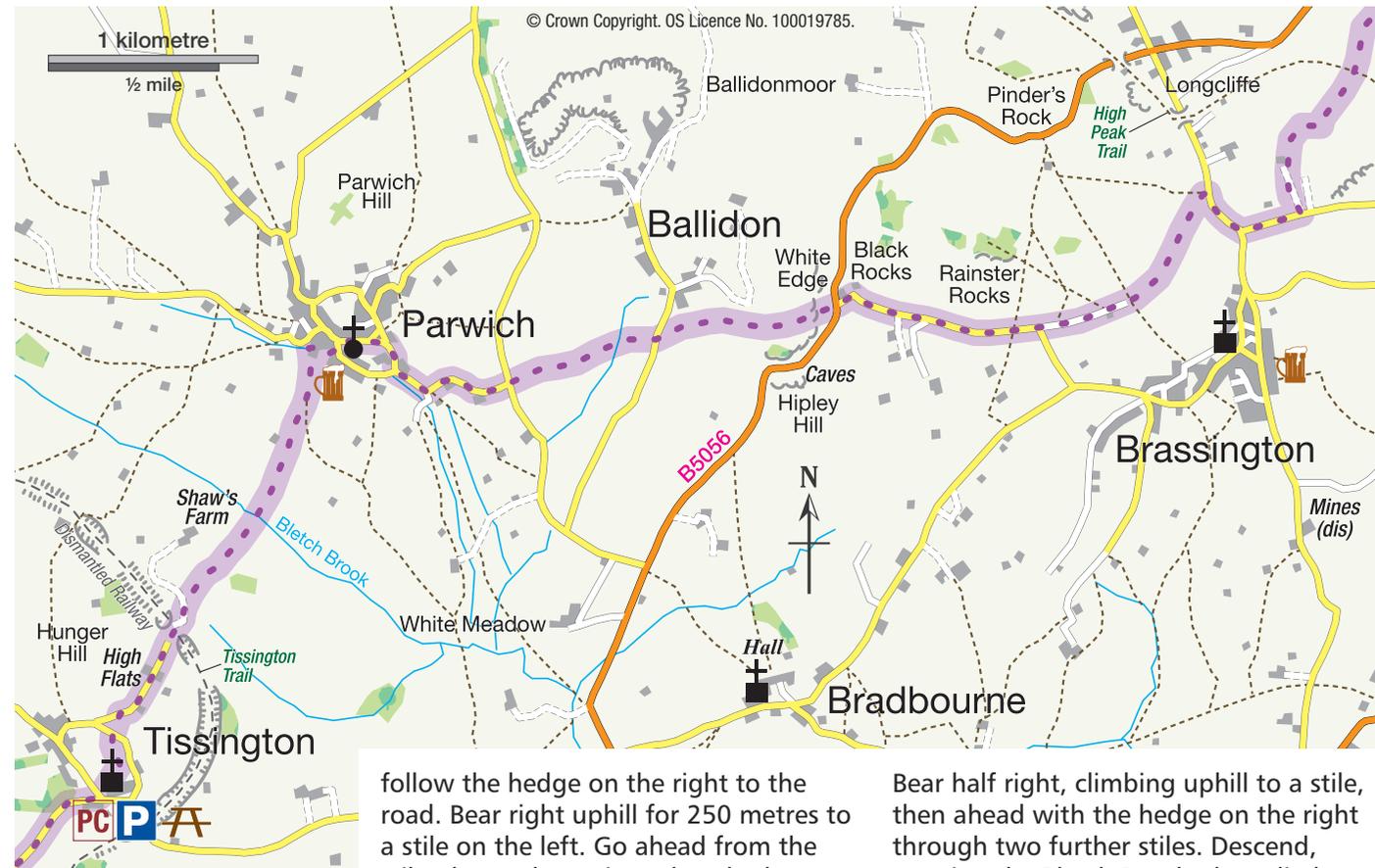
Descend to join a walled lane which then joins a minor road below Rainster Rocks. Cross the B5056 to a gate and climb a trackway to the brow of the hill. Bear left passing a solitary stone post and descend again just right of a church to the road at Ballidon.

Just south of the Limestone Way is the typical limestone village of Brassington. Once an important lead mining centre, many of the buildings date from the 16th century. It may be worthwhile taking a detour into Brassington where there is a village shop, two inns, and a range of guest house and farmhouse accommodation.

Bear left, then immediately right leaving the road at a stile. Go ahead, crossing a small brook, then bear half left to a stile. Go half left to cross another ditch, then



Sycamore Inn and St Peter's church at Parwich



follow the hedge on the right to the road. Bear right uphill for 250 metres to a stile on the left. Go ahead from the stile, descend crossing a brook, then climb slightly right before bearing left to enter Parwich. Go past the church, then left at a green, to the village pond.

The north doorway and chancel arch of the church of St Peter in Parwich are all that remain of the Norman church which was demolished in 1872. This is another picture-postcard village where refreshments and accommodation are available. Opposite the Sycamore Inn is the village pond, once the village sheep wash.

Cross the green opposite the inn and take a path to the right of garages. Go uphill to a stile in the wall on the left.

Bear half right, climbing uphill to a stile, then ahead with the hedge on the right through two further stiles. Descend, crossing the Bletch Brook, then climb to a trackway. Follow this track left, crossing the *Tissington Trail* (This 21km/13 mile route runs from Parsley Hay to Ashboune).

The track bears to the left to pass High Flats. Shortly after the track has led right take a stile left, crossing a lane, then ahead to a field gate. Bear half right to a stile entering the churchyard, then half left to a gate leading to a green.

Tissington Hall, which is a focal point for the village, dates from the 17th century. The village was the first to revive the now popular tradition of well dressing.

Take the road to Ashbourne uphill to cross the A515. Descend the minor road, turning left off the road in the valley bottom. Climb the field, recrossing the road to bear half left through a series of squeeze stiles to join a lane just south of Pike House.

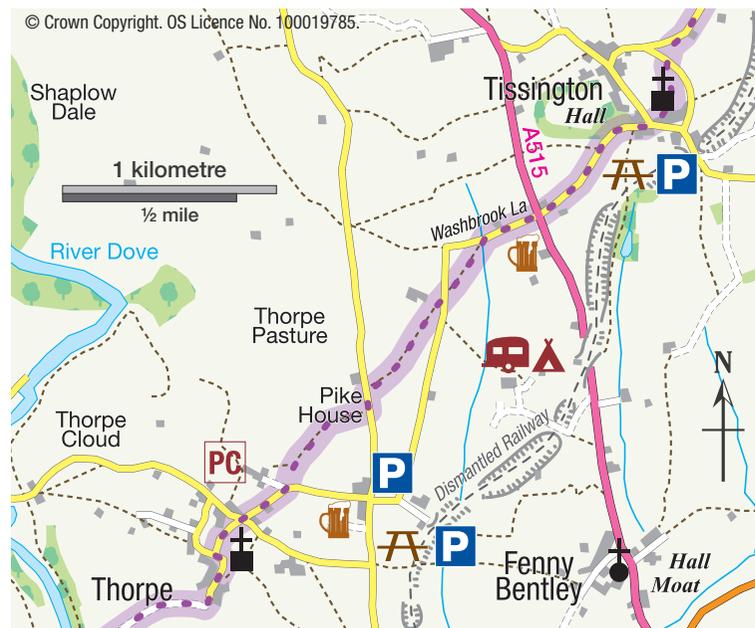


Tissington Hall

Bear left, then bear right off the lane after 50m, descending through a series of stiles to emerge by the entry to the Peveril of the Peak hotel. Follow the road downhill for 300m, then descend across The Green. Bear right, up Church Lane and follow this to rejoin the road at a T junction.



Thorpe Cloud ►



Thorpe is situated near the southern entrance to Dovedale.

One very noticeable feature is Thorpe Cloud, a strange conical shaped hill (942 ft/287m high) which towers over the village. It is a limestone reef and takes its name from the Old English word 'Clud' meaning a rocky hill.

There are public toilets in Thorpe.



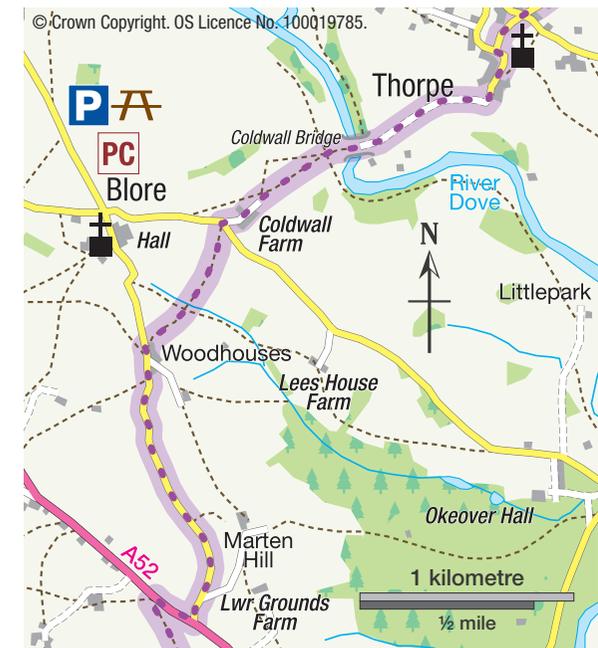
Thorpe's fine church has a squat little tower which is Norman

Ilam Hall, a mile to the west of Thorpe is a beautiful National Trust property which houses a Youth Hostel.

Turn left along the road, then quickly fork right, descending a lane to join a track crossing at right angles. Descend the track to reach Coldwall Bridge.

Coldwall Bridge, built in 1726 to carry a turnpike linking the Potteries with Ashbourne and Buxton, but later abandoned, marks the boundary between Staffordshire and Derbyshire. A milestone from the turnpike era still stands on the bridge.

Cross the bridge and climb the hill, passing through a field gate and Coldwall Farm to reach the road. Cross to a squeeze stile and descend the fields ahead, climbing from the stream to a field gate just north of Woodhouses.



Bear left following a road to the brow of Marten Hill.

A burial mound marks this spectacular setting, with sweeping views to the south and east.



Entering Lower Ellastone

Descend through a gate to the A52. Cross the road and turn right, to find an obscured stile 150m on the left. Bear left through the right hand of two field gates to the foot of the field. Turn right to a stile in the corner of the field, then left to head south through a series of stiles and then gateways to the road at Lordspiece.

At this point there are views all along the ridgeway ahead to Stanton and the Weaver Hills to the west. To the east there are views to Mayfield and Ashbourne.

Cross the road to a squeeze stile then follow a path south along this ridgeway, at first parallel to the farm track, then to the left away from it. Rejoin it until almost reaching Ashfield Farm.

Bear right 150m before the farm and then pass above Dydon, through a series of stiles above Gold's Wood, to cross a stile at the southern tip of Far Wood. Bear left uphill to a gate, then follow the trackway

through the Hutts farmyard to another gate.

Go ahead skirting Aldercarr Wood then follow the boundary of another wood to your right, then cross open fields through a stile alongside a gate, to a gateway on the B5032.

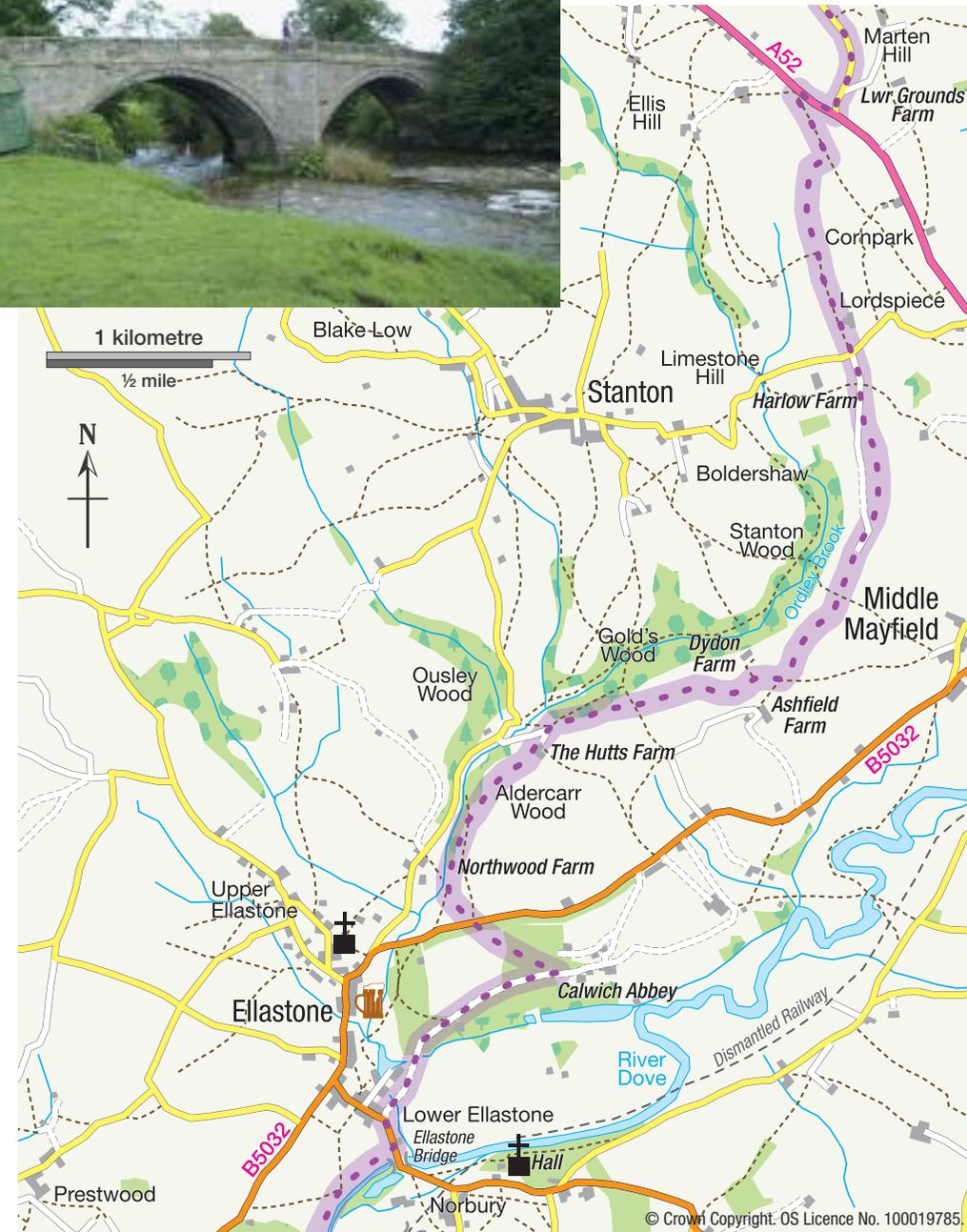
Turn right for 150m then go through a stile on the left, then go ahead to a trackway. Follow this to the left on level ground, then bear right at a pool, to reach a lodgehouse at Lower Ellastone.

The village of Ellastone has an inn and 16th century church and was the setting for 'Hayslope' in George Eliot's 'Adam Bede'. George Eliot, whose real name was Mary Ann Evans, grew up in the village.

Calwich Abbey to the east was originally a monastery. A later house on the site was visited by Rousseau and Handel. Today only the lodgehouses, stable block and a fishing temple survive.



◀ Ellastone Bridge over the River Dove is on the Staffordshire - Derbyshire border



Bear left towards Ellastone Bridge, then right at a stile, following the path along the riverside to Doveleys. Climb uphill to Dalesgap then cross the road carefully and descend via a footpath to the left of Barrowhill.

Barrowhill is the site of an Iron Age camp. Excavated fertility symbols were said to leave little to the imagination!

Cross this road, with a slight dog-leg to the right to a stile, then go straight ahead to reach a footbridge. Bear half left to join Dove Lane and follow this to the lych gate of St Michael's Church.

Rocester is the home of JCB, the international excavator manufacturing company. 'The Fossa', a sculpture made entirely from JCB parts, lies close to the route.

Archaeological finds at Rocester date from 2000 BC. They include a celtic brooch and coins, spearheads and skeletons. A fine 13th century cross can be found in the churchyard, with the site of an

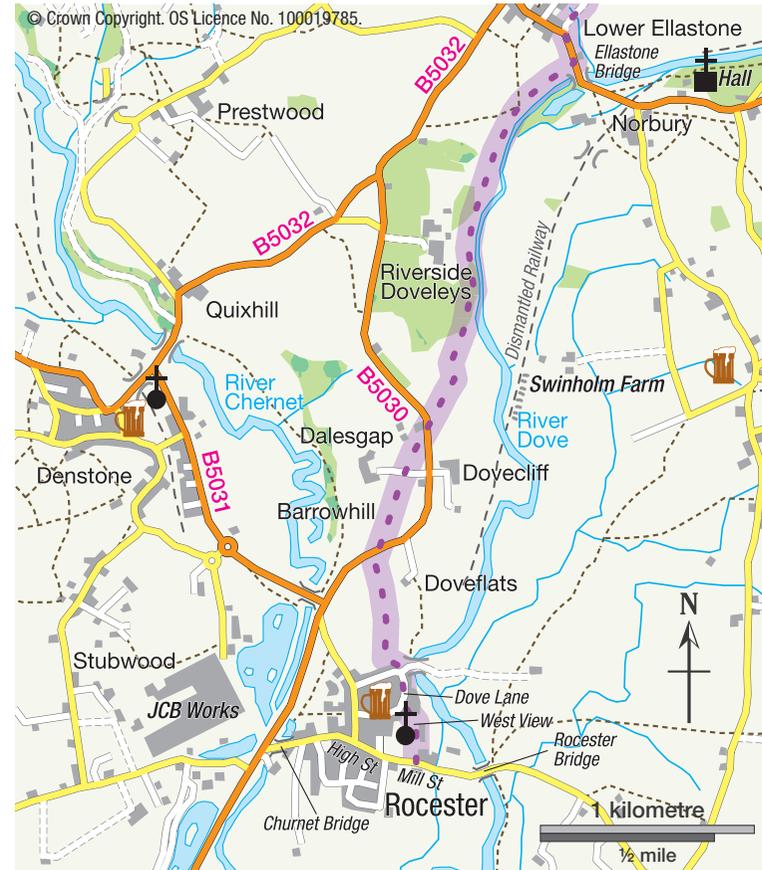


The Fossa, Rocester

Augustinian abbey lying in the field to the south.

Bear left along the valley, then right along West View, to reach the end of the Limestone Way where it joins the Staffordshire Way at Mill Street.

CONGRATULATIONS - YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE LIMESTONE WAY!



The publishers wish to record their thanks for the co-operation of landowners and farmers. Parts of the route pass close to farmhouses and farmyards. Please respect the owner's privacy and keep to waymarked paths.



Churnet Bridge, Rocester

Remember the Country Code

- Please take care to keep to public rights of way to avoid damage to livestock, crops and wildlife habitats.
- Take particular care when crossing stiles not to damage drystone walls.
- Guard against all risk of fire.
- Fasten all gates.
- Keep dogs under close control.
- Do not interfere with livestock, crops or machinery.
- Make no unnecessary noise.
- Take special care on country roads.

Mine Shafts

There are mine shafts, remaining from the days of lead mining in the area, near the route. Whilst most have been capped, all are in a hazardous condition due to their age, so be careful.

The Limestone Way

For public transport information

Traveline 0870 608 2 608 www.traveline.org.uk

National Rail Enquiries 08457 48 49 50 www.nationalrail.co.uk

National Express 08705 80 80 80 www.nationalexpress.com

Tourist Information and Visitor Centres

If you need any help in planning your walking holiday along the Limestone Way contact one of the Tourist Information/Visitor Centres listed below.

Castleton Visitor Centre

Buxton Road

Castleton

Hope Valley

Derbyshire S33 8WN

Tel: 01629 816558

Email: castleton@peakdistrict.gov.uk

Matlock Tourist Information Centre

Crown Square

Matlock

Derbyshire DE4 3AT

Tel: 01629 583388

Email: matlockinfo@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Ashbourne Tourist Information Centre

13 Market Place

Ashbourne

Derbyshire DE6 1EU

Tel: 01335 343666

Email: ashbourneinfo@derbyshiredales.gov.uk



Peveril Castle, Castleton

[photo: English Heritage]

This guide is produced by the

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www.visitpeakdistrict.com

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