

Trail Guide:



A spectacular all day circular drive from Castleton south to Foolow, Ashford in the Water, Tideswell and the Peak Forest

The 'Wow' Factor

See where the retractable umbrella was born

Marvel at the Monsal viaduct which caused uproar both when it was built and when it was closed!

Learn what caused 'Derbyshire Neck'

See the town where Sir Laurence Olivier lived

Ghostly tales of murder and mayhem

Bottomless potholes and messages in shoes

Leave Castleton and drive east to Hope on the A6187: a pretty village dominated by the unmissable cement works where over 250 people work. The huge limestone quarry is hidden from view as its entrance and subsequent planting schemes were designed by the landscape architect Geoffrey Jellicoe.

North of Hope are **Win Hill and Lose Hill** – where legend has it that the two hills held the opposing armies of King of Mercia and Northumbria for a 7th century battle. Win Hill's stone pinnacle is said to be made of the stones not needed for the catapults. Mercia won – hence the names of the hills! The area in between is the road to Edale where you can pass over the cheerfully-named Kill Hill Bridge, where the bodies are supposed to be buried!! The **Pennine Way** starts in Edale opposite the 13th century St Peter's church decorated with great gargoyles.

The Woodroffe Arms is named after the forest officers or woodroffes who roamed this former Royal Hunting Reserve. Come back to Hope to see its annual well-dressing on the nearest Saturday to St Peter's day – 29 June.

After Hope, turn right onto the B6049 to **Brough**, a former lead mining village, where Peveril of the Peak, a son of William the Conqueror and builder of the castles at Castleton and Bolsover is supposed to have been born – the hero of Sir Walter Scot's novel.

Brough is also the site of a Roman fort AD158, built to link to Buxton along Batham Gate, the Roman road near Peak Dale and also to Glossop's Roman fort Milandra.

Next is **Bradwell**: come rain or shine Bradwell has something to offer since Samuel Fox, inventor of the retractable umbrella frame, was born here. If the sun

Trail Key:



Walking



Car



Bus



Cycling



Scenic



Historic



Time



Distance

Difficulty Rating for walks:



Easy



Moderate



Strenuous

This trail is one of 44 exciting trails to explore in the Peak District & Derbyshire.

is shining what better than a creamy Bradwell's Ice Cream, still made here. And revel in village street names such as Hungry Lane or Salt Water Lane.

Just south of Bradwell is **Hazlebadge Hall**, a wonderful Elizabethan hall connected with the Vernon family from Haddon. Margaret Vernon rode to Hope to watch her lover marry another woman and legend is that she can be seen riding between Hope and Hazlebadge to this day!

Camphill Gliding club is on Bradwell Edge where unpowered flying activities thrive including hang-gliders, paragliders and the elegant gliders themselves.

Next you will arrive at picturesque **Foolow**. Place names with the word 'low' in them come from the Old English 'hlaw' meaning high point or burial mound. Much of the village dates from the 18th and 19th centuries but has a medieval cross next to the village green and pond and a bull ring at the base although this is not its original location. Bullbaiting was banned in 1835.

Foolow's well-dressing was revived in 1983 and takes place in the last week of August.

From here turn immediately right and then right again onto A623 towards Tideswell but then left again towards Ashford in the Water.

You will then go past **Wardlow Mires** which used to have a toll gate outside the Three Stags Head. Here in 1812 the lady tollkeeper was murdered and the culprit was found because he stole her shoes which were made in nearby Stoney Middleton. The cobbler there made his shoes and always put a personal message in each heel and so the culprit was hung for the murder in Cressbrook Dale - the large stone in the middle of the Dale, Peter's Stone, being the site of the gibbet. Now in the spring the banks of the Dale are full of spring flowers including masses of early purple orchids.

At **Wardlow** you will see long thin medieval field strips on either side of the road and **mine working** at the top of the hill - this was where the lead was taken from the surface leaving spoil heaps - all the bumpy ground around. These are now being turned over again by a new generation of miners who are looking for other minerals, chiefly barites and fluorspar. You will find fluorspar in your toothpaste and barites in Teflon coating on pans or in the reflective paint used on roads.

Next is Monsal Head overlooking the great Monsal railway viaduct which caused uproar when proposed

in the 1860's, John Ruskin being the chief agitator, and again when closed in the 1960's by Dr Beeching. Now open for cyclists and walkers as part of the Monsal Trail created in the 1980s, it is a listed monument with wonderful views across the Wye Valley and Monsal Dale!

'**Derbyshire neck**' was caused in this area by the poor intake of minerals through vegetables grown in poor quality soils. In the past this caused what was known locally as a 'Derbyshire neck', better known as a goitre. Better and more vegetables from the supermarket have changed all that, but some older ladies wear pearls to hide a scar.

Ashford in the Water is a very picturesque village on the Wye, much painted and photographed. Its medieval Packhorse bridge has an attached sheep wash still used until very recently.

Ashford was famous for its Black 'Marble' really a poor grade of polished dark limestone - and very popular with the Victorians who made inlaid tables, obelisks and vases. Examples are in the church and also in Chatsworth, and Old House Museum at Bakewell. Ashford church has "maiden's garlands" or "virgin crants" which are small bell shapes of lace or crepe paper which have a person's belonging hung inside instead of a clapper, usually a kid glove or lace handkerchief. They were put on the coffins of maiden ladies in the village, who had no husbands to bury them. It is a Scandinavian custom brought across by the Vikings. Ashford Hall, built in 1785 for the Cavendish family, now belongs to the Olivier family and Sir Lawrence lived there for a time. Well-dressings thrive in the village, revived 40 years ago, and over 12,000 visitors flock to the church to see them every June.

Turning **right** after the village onto the **A6** you will see a small mill on the left, built to supply ash bobbins to the cotton mills of Sir Richard Arkwright further downstream at Bakewell and Cromford. The A6 now follows the River Wye, a big fishing river with trout ponds for breeding stock just outside Ashford.

A good place to stop is **White Lodge** car park - at the far end of Monsal Dale, offering an easy flat stroll into the dale, ideal for evening, when there is an unusual colony of black rabbits to be seen.

After **Taddington** turn right onto the B6049 to the beautiful limestone valley of **Millers Dale** which originally had two mills, one of which is now an internationally known Craft supply centre. The two railway viaducts of the old Midland line, linking Buxton to London, dominate the area and the station

has a vast parking area and affords pretty walks along the old track bed. Here you will find a wildlife reserve full of wild flowers including old lime kilns where the rarer bee orchid thrives.

The road now winds up to **Tideswell**, granted a Market charter in 1251, whose wonderful church is known as the 'Cathedral of the Peak', dating back in part to the 11th century. The village was a mill town with two Velvet Mills and cotton and silk as a cottage industry as well as a mining industry. Oatcakes are still made here, previously the staple diet of leadminers locally.

After Tideswell turn **left** onto the **A623** and travel on to **Peak Forest**, often known as the Gretna Green of the Peak District. The church was built on crown land by a former Dowager Duchess of Devonshire and was thus beyond the jurisdiction of the Bishop. The priest, rejoicing in the title of "Principle Official and Judge in Spiritualities in the Peculiar Court of Peak Forest," married about 60 brides a year. In theory the 1753 Marriage Act stopped this, but in fact the latest couples were married in 1938 - Derbyshire folk not always taking notice of London!

The Royal Hunting Forest of the Peak was approximately 60 miles in circumference bounded by the Rivers Goyt, Wye, Etherow and Derwent. In the 1600's animals were being over-hunted so a park was created here at Peak Forest.

Continue up the A623 past the Donkey Sanctuary on your left, turn right at **Sparrowpit** back to Castleton and **Winnats Pass**.

The **Wanted Inn** is found at the corner of the **A623**. It used to be called The Devonshire Arms and was on the market for many years, christened by locals as the Unwanted Inn. So when someone bought it they

renamed it because they did want it! Its many historic photos show it totally snowed in not only due to heavy snow but because the prevailing wind regularly piles it up across the front of the pub to roof level. Ray Langton from Coronation Street used to live here.

The large 'quarryscape' on the right, **Eldon Hill**, was a limestone quarry providing road stone, now regenerating and replanted. At the rear is **Eldon Hole** the largest pothole in the Peak District and thought to be bottomless after several miners were lowered down on ropes and never touched the bottom. In the 18th century a goose flew into the hole and days later emerged from Peak Cavern in Castleton with its feathers 'singed by the fires of Hell'!

A legend tells of the murder of a rich couple who stopped in Castleton in 1758, eloping to Peak Forest. They were overheard talking that night of their plans by a group of leadminers. The following morning they were found dead in the pass with all of their money and belongings gone. Nothing was ever proven about who had done it however, mysteriously, all the leadminers who were in the Inn that night died individually during the following year, each in horrific circumstances. The couples' ghosts are still said to haunt the pass. 'Winnats' is a derivative of Windy Gates one of the toll-gated roads into **Castleton** where you will now end your day in much better circumstances!

Castleton Trail No. 40

Umbrellas and Oatcakes



48 km
30 miles

Key

