

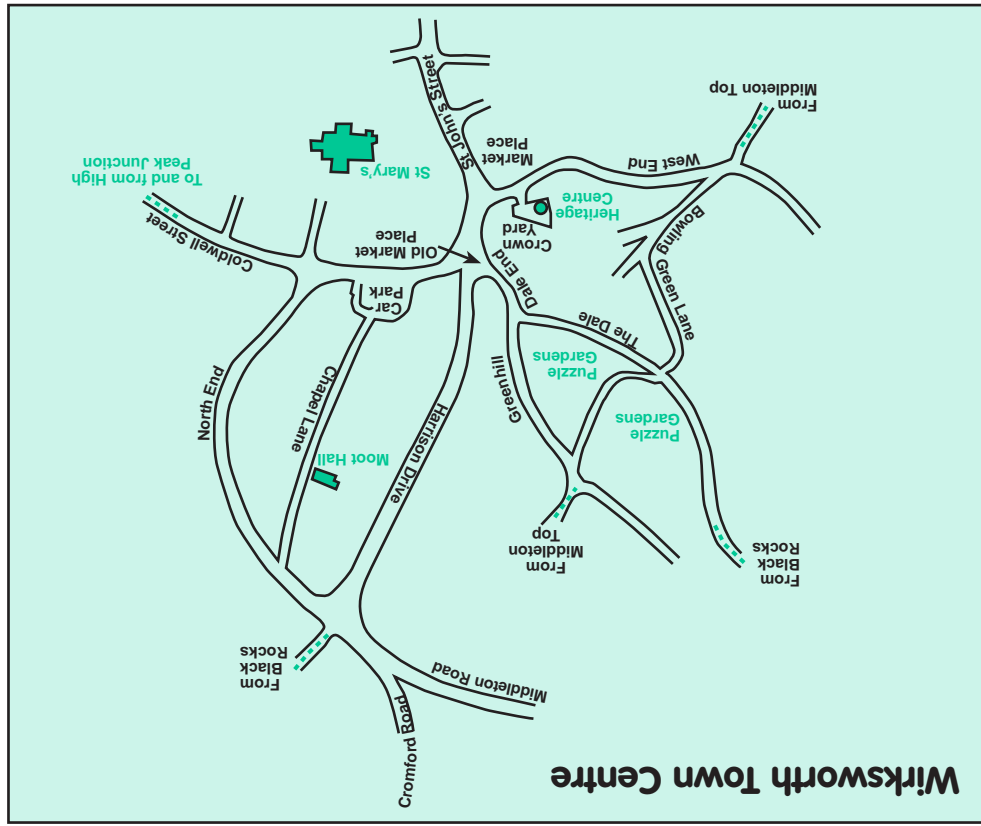
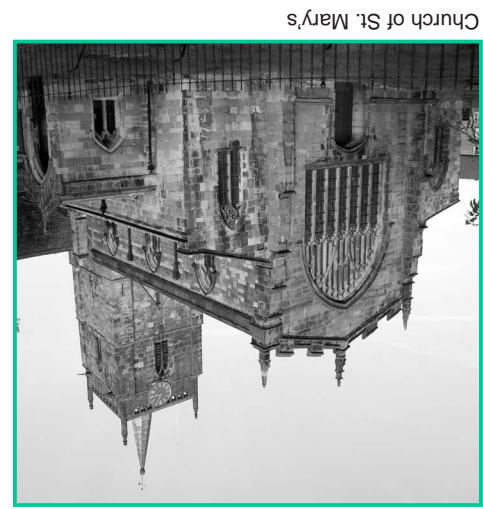
As the lead mines became exhausted, quarrying became the main industry of the town. For over a hundred years stone was extracted, almost up to the centre of the town. Today, most of the quarries have closed but are being used in imaginative ways, for example the National Stone Centre and Stoney Wood.

The area around the Parish Church of St. Mary's is well worth exploring, with the Elizabethan Gell Almshouses and the former grammar school perfectly complementing the ancient church.

As well as many historic buildings, Wirksworth also boasts two famous ancient traditions. Spring Bank Holiday sees the town bedecked by well dressings - the art of constructing beautiful floral designs on a clay base. In September the ceremony of 'clipping' is performed by the parishioners who link hands and circle the church.



A Short History of Wirksworth



Walking around Wirksworth

The area around Wirksworth is criss-crossed by many little-known footpaths passing through some of the most beautiful countryside in Derbyshire. This series of four circular routes is designed to introduce the casual and experienced walker to the delights of both lovely countryside and the historic town of Wirksworth.

This walk from High Peak Junction is about 7.25 kms (4.5 miles) long taking in the superb views of the Derwent and Ecclesbourne valleys and a short walk along the popular High Peak Trail.

The route should be easy to follow, but your enjoyment would be enhanced by carrying the Ordnance Survey Outdoor Leisure Map 24.

Please wear appropriate footwear. Paths can be very muddy in places. Whilst on the walk please remember to respect the countryside, wildlife and farmland. Stay on the footpaths, which have been waymarked in places to help you - look for a yellow arrow on a green disc bearing the legend 'Circuit Walks Around Wirksworth'. Keep all dogs on a lead.



Cromford Canal

Finding Out More

More information about this wonderful old town can be obtained from the Heritage Centre situated in Crown Yard just off the Market Place, phone 01629 825226.

Any Problems?

Please report any problems with this walk by calling 01629 823204 or via our website www.derbyshire.gov.uk

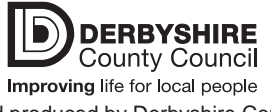
Follow the Countryside Code

- Enjoy the countryside, respect its life & work.
- Guard against all risk of fire.
- Leave all gates as you find them.
- Keep your dogs under close control.
- Keep to public paths across farmland.
- Use gates and stiles to cross fences & walls.
- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone.
- Take your litter home.
- Help to keep all water clean.
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees.
- Take special care on country roads.
- Make no unnecessary noise.
- No cycling on public footpaths.

Contacts

If you need to find out more please contact 01629 823204 (Middleton Top) or 01629 822831 (High Peak Junction), alternatively Call Derbyshire on 08456 058 058.

If you have difficulty in reading this leaflet it is available in other formats. Please contact us for more details.



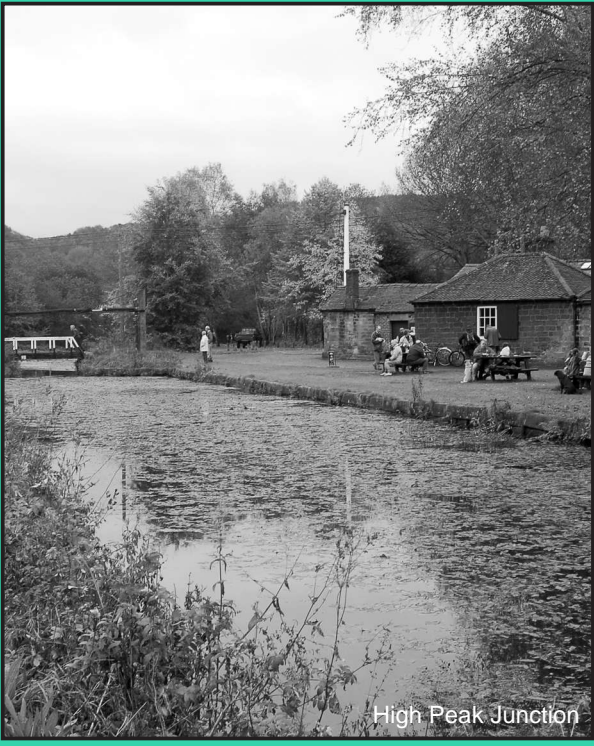
Designed and produced by Derbyshire County Council, Environmental Services Dept., Countryside Service, County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3AG.

Circuit Walks Around Wirksworth

2

High Peak Junction - Wirksworth - High Peak Junction

7.25 km (4.5 miles)



High Peak Junction



Improving life for local people

High Peak Junction - Wirksworth - High Peak Junction

From High Peak Junction to Wirksworth

From the Workshops take the footpath to the left of the brake vans which rises up to the A6 road. Very carefully cross the road and then turn left before climbing over a stile into the field.

Head up the hill, slightly to the left, to find a gate into the woodland. The path is now an ancient sunken way rising steeply through the woods until it is crossed by another path near the summit, which you must ignore. Carry straight on and go through the stile ahead of you.

The path now leaves the woodland behind and goes directly ahead across the field to meet an old track - Intake Lane. The name Intake originates from where land was enclosed in the eighteenth century. Go over this lane through a stile and keep straight on ahead for 2 more fields. Go through a stile into a third field and walk on about 20 metres, keeping the wall to your left, to the next stile. Straight ahead now and through the 'granny stopper' (or 'knee trapper' as they are aptly called locally) stile on the right - there are several stiles here so make sure you head up the hill, not down the track!

It is worth looking back here for a fine view of the Derwent Valley overlooked by Crich Stand - a monument to the fallen of the Sherwood Foresters Regiment - on the cliff above the quarry.

A rutted path leads up the hill away from this landmark - your way is now almost in a straight line for the next 1.5 kms. Follow this path across 3 fields until a patch of gorse is reached. Go through this and after approximately 100 metres you will come to a large track.

Follow the left track for about 1km, still keeping straight ahead, past Wigwell Nook Farm to emerge onto the Bolehill Road. Cross very carefully and turn left.

The road runs along the top of a ridge called Spitwintter (if you take this walk on a cold, windy day you will find out why). The view to your right gradually opens to give fine panoramic views over Wirksworth and the Ecclesbourne Valley. Take care on this stretch as in places there is no pavement.

After 0.5kms, turn off the road down Stoney Hill and after about 180 metres look for No. 2 the white house; then after No. 3 the entrance to Ash Farm House's drive is on your left. Go down the driveway a few steps and then turn right down a steep path eventually leading to a stone stile. Go through this and head towards the farm in front of you for only a short distance until a stile is reached on your left.

Head off down the field a short way until the hedgerow (which for a short distance is a stone wall) on your right turns at 90 degrees. From this corner walk to the solitary oak tree standing alone in the field slightly to your right.

From here go straight down the hill across 2 fields, with Wirksworth church standing prominently ahead, until you reach a grassy track. Turn left here and follow the track through a boggy stretch until it eventually emerges between some dwellings onto the tarmac road.



Enjoying the scenery from Sheep Pasture Incline

Returning to High Peak Junction

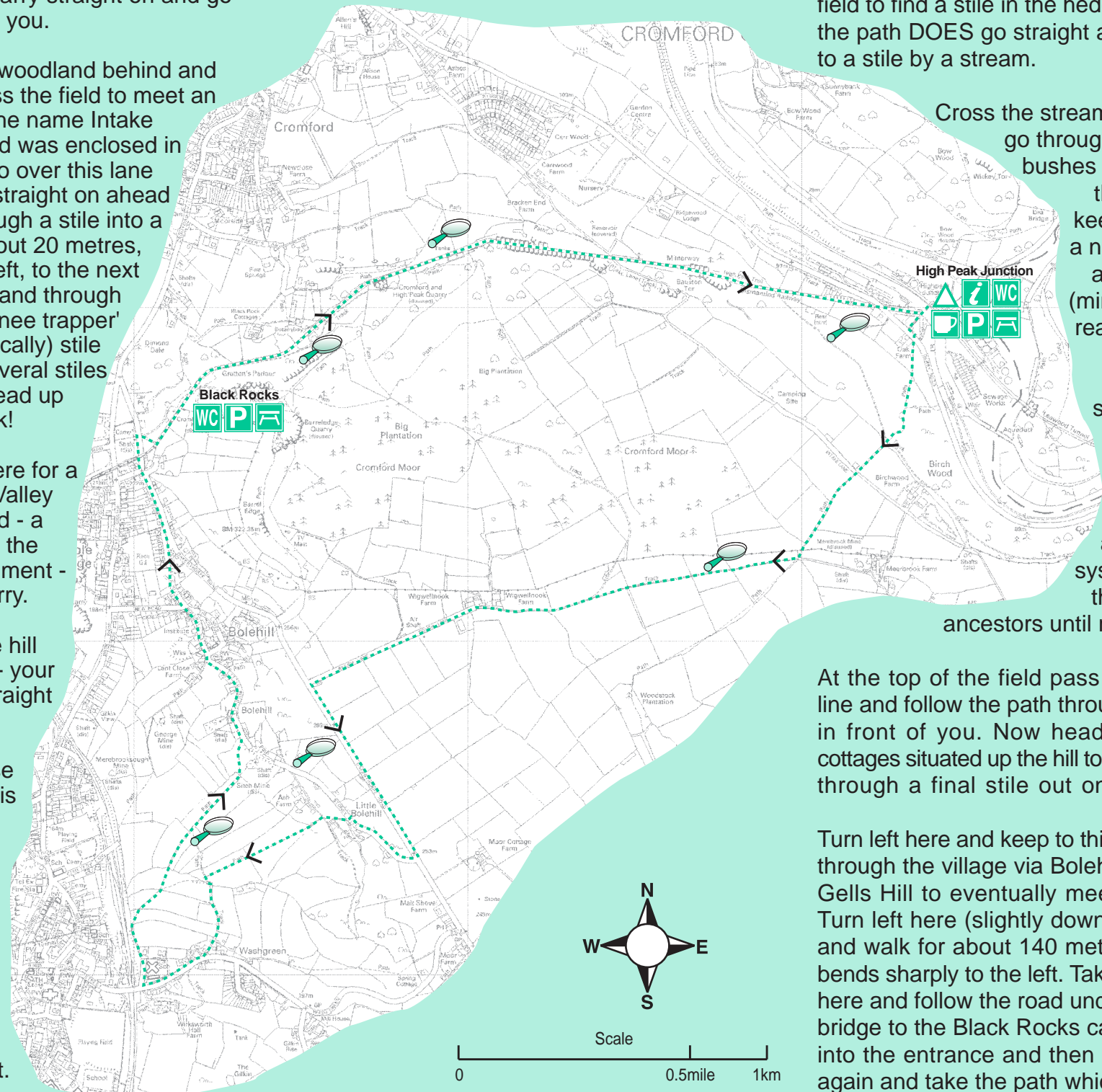
When you are ready to leave the town walk up the Washgreen road to the Junior School and go up the road to its left. At the end of the cul-de-sac stand 2 houses facing you, the path lies to the left hand side of these.

You take this path as it firstly goes down and then uphill to a stile into a field. Ignore the well used path that stretches ahead of you and instead head off diagonally right across the field to find a stile in the hedgerow. From here the path DOES go straight ahead to descend to a stile by a stream.

Cross the stream via a bridge and go through a patch of thorn bushes into the open and then straight uphill keeping to the left of a narrow field. When a pair of gateposts (minus the gate!) are reached, go through the gap and keep on uphill this time staying to the right hand side of the long field. These pastures are the remnants of the ancient open field systems which were the lifeblood of our ancestors until relatively recently.

At the top of the field pass under the power line and follow the path through the hedgerow in front of you. Now head off towards the cottages situated up the hill to your left emerging through a final stile out onto a small road.

Turn left here and keep to this lane as it climbs through the village via Bolehill Road and Nan Gells Hill to eventually meet the main road. Turn left here (slightly downhill for a change) and walk for about 140 metres until the road bends sharply to the left. Take the turning right here and follow the road under the old railway bridge to the Black Rocks car park. Turn right into the entrance and then immediately right again and take the path which leads on to the High Peak Trail.



Key

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Information | | Walk |
| | Toilets | | Start/finish |
| | Refreshments/Snacks | | Direction of walk |
| | Parking | | Features of interest |
| | Picnic site | | |

Into Wirksworth town

This is the Washgreen area of Wirksworth. A short walk down this road will bring you to the town centre, but on the way be sure to locate the Junior School as this will be the start of your walk back to High Peak Junction.



View of Crich Stand from Spitwintter



The view from Black Rocks

Turn left on the trail which runs along the track bed of the old Cromford and High Peak Railway back to High Peak Junction. Along the way are many features of interest including the impressive Black Rocks on your right, extensive views to your left, especially at Sheep Pasture Top and the magnificent railway incline. This was one of the 9 inclines of the Cromford and High Peak Railway and was by far the longest at 1207 metres long at a gradient of 1 in 8.5. Near the bottom is a very unusual railway feature - the Catch Pit. This caught runaway wagons destined for High Peak Junction not far below and the finishing point of your walk.