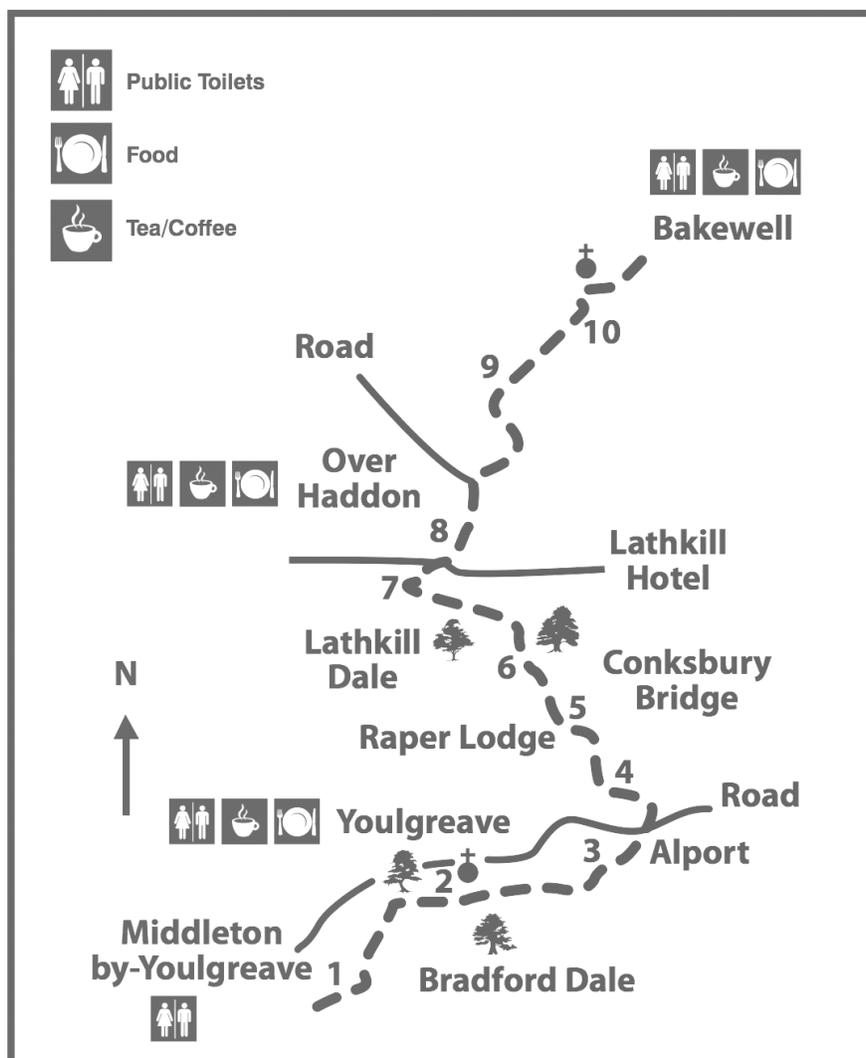


A series of 6 walks in the Peak District, researched and published by Transition Chesterfield, that can be reached by public transport from Chesterfield, for people without cars, or who want to leave the car at home. Unfortunately constant changes to the bus timetable, ticket costs, in some cases routes and even bus numbers make keeping this information updated impractical. Instead, we suggest you check the current status online at: <http://www.derbysbus.info/times/>. For the other walks see: www.transitionchesterfield.org.uk.

Walk No. 5: Middleton to Bakewell via Bradford and Lathkill Dales

Summary: a generally easy walk through the tranquil and lovely Bradford and Lathkill Dales, with plenty of paddling spots, then through the village of Over Haddon and descending over fields to Bakewell. Distance 9.5 km/6 miles; about 3 hours.



Walk description:

1: The bus stops in a “square” in Middleton. From here walk back (down the left hand road) in the opposite direction from which you arrived, for about 50 metres. At a small grassy road island opposite the playground, turn left and walk downhill, until the road swings left and changes to a track, which leads down to the river Bradford (this can be very low, regardless of the weather). Turn left here and walk down the dale; note the poetry carved into rocks on the way. Pass a low stone bridge (carved with more poetry) and go straight on, keeping the river on your left, following the signposted Limestone Way, into Bradford Dale.

2: Follow the river until the path crosses it on a low stone slab bridge (the road here leads up to Youlgreave). Continue through a gate with the river now on your right.

3: When the path reaches the minor road, continue straight over and through the gate opposite, signed ‘Lower Greenfields Farm and Caravan Site’, with the river still on your right. Shortly, the track veers left and the river passes underneath it, so it is now on your left. Where the track forks, stay on the left, go through a gate and follow it to the road at Alport.

4: At Alport, cross the road (by the telephone box) and take the path (signposted Conksbury) that is immediately opposite; the Lathkill river is on your right. Follow this path through a series of fields, with the imposing Raper Lodge on your left, and a wonderful tree canopy stretching out to the right.

5: After passing Raper Lodge cross the track and continue in the same direction past a wildlife conservation meadow. When you reach the road, turn right. This is a designated ‘Quiet Lane’ which is intended to pay special attention to the needs of walkers and other non-car users. Cross the wonderful Conksbury bridge.

6: Pointing to the left on the other side of the bridge is a path signposted “Lathkill Dale, Over Haddon”. Follow this, with the river now on your left. Later on there is a short section where the underlying rock forms the surface of the path, making some steps; this can be very slippery so take special care.

7: When the path meets a lane coming from the right, walk up this into Over Haddon - it is fairly steep, but there are seats about halfway up to rest on. At Over Haddon you can wait for a somewhat infrequent bus, or carry on to Bakewell; the path is generally easy and is mostly downhill – it should take about 45 minutes to get there. To do this, at the top of the hill turn right along the road opposite the car park and then follow it round as it turns sharp left (Bakewell Road). A short diversion down Wellgate Lane, on the right just before the main road turns left, leads to The Lathkill Hotel, and has wonderful views back along the Dale. To return to the road, take the sharp turn back on the left, which meets the main road as it turns left; turn right here (into Bakewell Road).

8: This road is sometimes busy, but there are wide grass verges to walk on. Stay on it for about three hundred metres until the public footpath sign pointing right (on the brow of the hill). Take this path, and, just through a gate, turn right onto another path. Follow it down the dale, keeping the wall on your left.

9: As the field narrows near the bottom of the dale, there is a gate in the wall on your left (opposite a gap in the wall on your right). Go through the gate and continue straight on (not right). Later the wall changes from your right to your left. Go beyond this until you meet a gate leading into the next field. Do not go through this, but turn right and take the indistinct path along the field boundary of trees and bushes to the steps over the wall in the corner of the field.

10: Go over the steps and straight along the path ahead. This path gradually improves in quality as it heads straight down into Bakewell, crossing some roads en route. It finishes just after some well-worn steps (which can be avoided by taking the slope to your right). At the road turn left and then right, down into Bakewell town centre.

Some paths may be rough or, if it has been wet, slippery, so wear appropriate clothing, especially footwear. Where there are steep or long hills this will be mentioned in the route description; however, it should be borne in mind that this is the Peak District and descriptions of conditions are relative to the area. The route map is very simplified so we recommend that you also carry an OS map, either Explorer OL24 (1:25,000) or Landranger 119 (1:50,000), which both cover all the walks in this series - maps can usually be borrowed from public libraries. Remember the Countryside Code: leave gates and property as you find them, protect plants and animals, take your litter home, keep dogs under close control and please consider other people.