

Ladybower Inn Circular (via Alport C. & Derwent Reservoirs)			Ladybower Inn Circular (via Alport Castles & Win Hill)		
1 <sup>st</sup> walk check	2 <sup>nd</sup> walk check	3 <sup>rd</sup> walk check	1 <sup>st</sup> walk check	2 <sup>nd</sup> walk check	3 <sup>rd</sup> walk check
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## Ladybower Inn Circular (via Alport Castles and Derwent Reservoirs)

**Start & Finish:** Ashopton, Ladybower Inn Bus Stop

Ashopton, Ladybower Inn Bus Stop, map reference SK 204 864, is 16 km west of Sheffield City Centre, 233 km north west of Charing Cross, 221m above sea level, and in **Derbyshire**.

**Length:** 26.9 km (16.7 mi). **Cumulative ascent/descent:** 660m.  
For a shorter or longer walk, *see below* **Walk Options**.

**Toughness:** 8 out of 10

**Time:** 6 ½ hours walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 12 ½ hours.

**Transport:** Ashopton, Ladybower Inn Bus Stop is served by bus lines 257 and 273 from Sheffield Interchange to Castleton/Bakewell (journey time 25-29 mins from Sheffield (09/19: £3.50 one way, £5.50 return), and the SNAKE X57 from Sheffield to Manchester (30 mins). Sheffield is the terminus of the Midland Main Line from London St. Pancras, with up to two trains per hour (journey time from 118 mins Mon-Sat, longer on Sundays).

**Saturday Walkers' Club:** This walk can be done as a day walk from London, despite the infrequent bus service, but only Mon-Sat. Take a train no later than 8.00 hours.

**OS Landranger Map:** 110 (Sheffield & Huddersfield)

**OS Explorer Map:** OL1 (The Peak District – Dark Peak Area)

### Walk Notes:

You cross Ladybower Reservoir and rise through pastures to Crook Hill to follow a grassy ridge with fine views to Win Hill and the Great Ridge, out towards the Kinder Scout and Bleaklow upland peat bog plateaus and across the Derwent Valley to Derwent Edge. At Alport Castles, the fascinating site of Britain's longest inland landslip with its rocky pinnacles and debris, you turn down from the ridge along a good track through grouse moors into the wooded Derwent Valley and follow Howden Reservoir's shore to cross Slippery Stones packhorse bridge into the open wild countryside of the Upper Derwent Valley.

From there, the return route follows the famous Derwent Reservoirs (Howden, Derwent and Ladybower) back towards the start with ever-changing views across the large bodies of water, partly in open country, at other times flanked by enchanting woods.

Three variations of the return route break the long, nearly flat reservoir-side walk by climbing up a hill or ridge with fantastic views and descending back to the reservoirs further along.

A much shorter walk is possible by starting and/or finishing at the Fairholmes Visitor Centre bus stop.

An Alternative Ending from Alport Castles descends through the tranquil Alport Dale and crosses the Woodlands Valley to ascend Win Hill's ridge with a choice of finishes, back at the Ladybower Inn or at Bamford Station.

## Walk Options:

**An Alternative Start** at Fairholmes Bus Stop (Lines 273 and SNAKE X57, infrequent service) cuts 4.4 km/2.7 mi and 100m ascent.

**A Short Extension on Crook Hill** leads over its twin tops rather than skirting around its base.

**Three Variations in the Afternoon** break the long, nearly flat reservoir-side return route by climbing up a hill or ridge with fantastic views and descending back to the reservoirs further along:

- from the crossing of the Derwent River at Slippery Stones up to Howden Edge/Margery Hill and along the edges back down to Upper Derwent Reservoir (add 3.6 km/2.2 mi and 238m ascent).
- from Abbey Tip Plantation up to Pike Low and on to Derwent Village (add 30m and 123m ascent);
- up Grindle Clough to Whinstone Lee Tor and Lead Hill (add 1.3 km/0.8 mi and 152m ascent).

**A Shorter Ending** at Fairholmes Bus Stop (Line 273 and SNAKE X57, infrequent service) is possible (cut 4.9 km/3.0 mi and 65m ascent). [With this, only the first of the Afternoon Variations is walkable.]

**At the end of the walk**, you could retrace the outbound route (higher and a bit longer, but quieter) instead of following the A57 Snake Road to the Ladybower Inn.

**An Alternative Route** leads from Alport Castles down through the Woodlands Valley and up to Win Hill. This is 22.4 km/13.9 mi long with 768m ascent, and also **rated 8/10**.

**On the Alternative Route, a loop exploring the landslip area of Alport Castles** is described.

**On the Alternative Route, easier descent routes** avoiding some or all of the steep and potentially slippery descent through the beautiful **Parkin Clough** are described.

**A Shorter Ending of that Alternative Route** finishes **at the Yorkshire Bridge Inn** with its bus stop (on the same lines as the Ladybower Inn).

**An Alternative Ending of that Alternative Route** descends from Win Hill **to Bamford Station**, reverse-walking the start of SWC 302 (map-led).

## Lunch

### Picnic.

**Tea** (details last updated 05/11/2019)

**Derwent Café** Fairholmes Visitor Centre, *Bamford, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 0AQ* (01433 650 953, <https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/visitor-centres/derwent>). The Derwent Café in the Peak District Visitor Centre is located at the Fairholmes Ending. The Visitor Centre is open weekdays 10.00-16.30 (-15.30 in winter) and weekends 09.30-17.30 (16.30 in winter). The Café is essentially a hot and cold food kiosk with a separate entrance to the VC, and it is often open a bit longer than the VC.

**The Ladybower Inn** Bamford, *Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 0AX* (01433 651 241, <http://www.ladybower-inn.co.uk/>). The Ladybower Inn is a quaint stone pub with rooms (some offering views of the picturesque Ladybower Reservoir). Open 08.00-23.00 daily. Food served 08.00-21.00 daily.

**The Yorkshire Bridge Inn** Ashopton Road, Bamford, *Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 0AZ* (01433 651 361, <https://www.yorkshire-bridge.co.uk/>). The Yorkshire Bridge Inn is located 300m off route, 1.6 km from the end of the Win Hill Alternative. Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 17.30-20.30 Mon-Fri and 12.00-20.30 Sat-Sun.

## Notes:

### Ashopton

Ashopton was a small village in the valley of the River Ashop with a population of fewer than 100. In the early 1940s, the village (along with neighbouring Derwent) was demolished to make way for the filling of Ladybower Reservoir. The village was located near where the Derwent Valley joins the Woodlands Valley and the route of the current A57 Snake Pass to Glossop. The reminders of the village include the name of the Ashopton Viaduct which carries the A57 (the main part of the village was located immediately to the south of the viaduct) and Ashopton Sawmill and Ashopton Cottage. Unlike the remains of Derwent Village which have become visible when water levels have dropped, Ashopton will never re-emerge from the waters of Ladybower as silt has already covered the remains of its buildings.

### The Peak District (National Park)

The Peak District is an upland area at the southernmost end of the Pennines.

The Peak District National Park is one of the UK's most popular and is located within the boundaries of five counties (Derbys., Ches., Staffs., Yorks. and Greater Manchester). Founded in 1951, it was the first national park in England. The Park spans an area of around 1,440 km<sup>2</sup> (550 mi<sup>2</sup>) and – despite its name – its terrain consists mainly of rolling hills, farmland, moorland and some gritstone escarpments (the "edges"). It is however significantly higher than much of the terrain in the surrounding area.

The Peak District is formed almost exclusively from sedimentary rocks dating from the Carboniferous period. They comprise the Carboniferous Limestone, the overlying Gritstone and finally the Coal Measures, though the latter occur only on the extreme margins of the area. In addition there are infrequent outcrops of igneous rocks including lavas, tuffs and volcanic vent agglomerates.

The northern Dark Peak (whose geology is gritstone) is one of the most famous landmarks in the Peak District National Park, known for its exposed and isolated tracts of moorland, as well as its expansive rolling plateau which is covered by cotton grass bogs and heather moorlands. The soil of the area is composed of moorland peat which provides the perfect environment for the plant life in the area. The areas to the flanks of the high moorland host numerous copses which are composed of Oak and Birch.

The southern White Peak (whose geology is mainly limestone) is another distinctive area within the park due to its gently sloping Limestone plateau, crisscrossed by the Limestone Dales. The Dales provide the areas' drainage and vary in steepness throughout the area.

### White to Dark

The White to Dark Way is a 43 km (27 mi) waymarked multi-day path from the White Peak to the Dark Peak developed in 2012 by TrailZilla and Country Walking Magazine. It claims to be the first major walking trail dedicated to linking the Peak District's two 'halves', across terrain ranging from meadows, woods and farmland to wild moorland and gritstone edges, going from Bakewell to Hope. The route includes Monsal Head, Cressbrook Dale, Litton, Eyam, Stanage Edge and Win Hill. <https://www.livefortheoutdoors.com/whitetodark>

### Derwent Reservoirs

In 1899, the Derwent Valley Water Board was set up to supply water to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield, and the two Gothic-style dams were built across the River Derwent to create Howden Reservoir (1912) and Derwent Reservoir (1916). West of the Derwent a large village known as Birchinlee, locally known as 'Tin Town', was created for the 'navvies' – the workers who built the dams – and their families, many of whom came from the Elan Valley Reservoirs in Wales.

Over the decades, demand for water increased. Piped intakes were constructed from the rivers Ashop and Alport to the west to feed directly into the Derwent reservoir, but soon demand increased further to the point where another reservoir was required. The larger Ladybower Reservoir, built largely during World War II, necessitated the flooding of the villages of Derwent and Ashopton, with the occupants being relocated to the Yorkshire Bridge estate, just downstream of Ladybower dam. A packhorse bridge with a preservation order on it also had to be moved, and was rebuilt at Slippery Stones, north of Howden Reservoir.

The boundary between Derbyshire and Sheffield/South Yorkshire follows the River Derwent in its upper reaches and therefore runs through Howden Reservoir.

The topographical similarity between the Upper Derwent Valley and the Ruhr Valley of Germany led to the dams being used as a practice environment for the Lancaster bombers of 617 Squadron (Dam Busters) in 1943 before their attack on the Ruhr dams. *The Dam Busters* film was subsequently filmed at the Derwent Dams.

### Ladybower Reservoir

Ladybower Reservoir is a large Y-shaped reservoir, the lowest of three in the Upper Derwent Valley. The River Ashop flows into the reservoir from the west; the River Derwent flows south, initially through Howden Reservoir, then Derwent Reservoir, and finally through Ladybower Reservoir. The area is now a tourist attraction, with the Fairholmes visitors' centre located at the northern tip of Ladybower. The east arm of the reservoir, fed by the Ladybower Brook, is overlooked by Hordron Edge stone circle.

Ladybower was built between 1935 and 1943 by the Derwent Valley Water Board to supplement the other two reservoirs in supplying the water needs of the East Midlands. It took a further two years to fill (1945). The dam differs from the Howden Reservoir and Derwent Reservoir in that it is a clay-cored earth embankment, and not a solid masonry dam. Below the dam is a cut-off trench 55m deep and 1.8m wide filled with concrete, stretching 150m into the hills each side, to stop water leaking round the dam. During the 1990s the wall was raised and strengthened to reduce the risk of over-topping in a major flood.

Drinking water must be pumped to treatment works rather than using gravity flow as in the other two reservoirs, increasing costs. It is treated at Bamford water treatment works and then flows south down the 45 km long Derwent Valley Aqueduct to supply clean water to the cities of Nottingham, Derby and Leicester. The aqueduct passes through the park of Chatsworth House. A tunnel carries some of the water from the Derwent Valley eastwards through the hill and into the lower of the two Rivelin Dams to supply Sheffield.

The building of the reservoir resulted in the submergence of the villages of Ashopton and Derwent, including Derwent Woodlands church and Derwent Hall. Ashopton stood roughly where the road to the Snake Pass met the Woodlands Valley. The narrow stone Packhorse Bridge over the Derwent was removed and rebuilt at the head of the Howden reservoir. In 1976, 1995 and 2018, dry conditions caused the water level to drop and the village of Derwent to once again be exposed.

### **Crook Hill**

Crook Hill is regarded as an outlier of Kinder Scout although being separated by the long western arm of Ladybower Reservoir, covering part of the Woodlands Valley, as geologically the hill consists of Kinder Scout Grit, a kind of sandstone. The hill has twin summits, the highest of which reaches a modest height of 382m, while the secondary top (sometimes referred to as Ladycrook Hill, although this name does not appear on OS maps) reaches an altitude of 374m. Despite the modest height, the hill's summits give excellent views of the surrounding countryside including Ladybower Reservoir, Derwent Edge and Win Hill.

Between the two summits there is some evidence of an ancient megalithic standing stone circle. It originally consisted of five stones around a surviving mound, two of which are still upright.

### **Peak Horsepower – Kinder Loop**

Peak Horsepower has been created to extend and improve the Peak District bridleway network. Their Kinder Loop is an 88 km (55 mi) circular waymarked route through the dramatic scenery around Kinder Scout and provides an iconic, challenging long-distance riding route in the centre of the country. It starts from the head of the Ladybower reservoir and draws on existing bridleways, the Pennine Bridleway and the Trans-Pennine Trail.

<http://www.peakhorsepower.co.uk/>

### **Alport Castles**

The Alport Castles are a landslip feature in the Peak District National Park on the eastern side of Alport Dale, in the National Trust's High Peak Estate, north of the Snake Pass and north-west of Ladybower Reservoir.

At almost a km long, it is thought to be the largest inland landslide in the UK. The name "castles" comes from the debris from the landslide, which has produced several gritstone mounds that tower over the valley and appear from the distance to look like castles, with the largest of these, the "Tower", resembling a full-scale motte and bailey castle.

The exact cause of the landslide is unknown, but similar if less dramatic landslips occur all around the Dark Peak, notably on Mam Tor, where softer lower layers of shale give way under the heavy gritstone above. The rock faces and cliffs are unstable and unsuitable for climbing and scrambling but the site is accessible along some well-trodden public rights of way and is a popular site for walkers and birdwatchers, as ravens and peregrine falcons have been known to nest on the crags.

### **Derwent River**

The Derwent is a Derbyshire river of 106 km/66 mi length and is a tributary of the River Trent, which it joins south of Derby. Its waters ultimately reach the North Sea via the Humber Estuary. For half its course the river flows through the Peak District and for most of the first 10 km it forms the border to South Yorkshire. In the lower reaches between Matlock and Derby it was one of the cradles of the Industrial Revolution, providing power to the first industrial scale cotton mills. Today it provides a water supply to several surrounding cities, and its steeply sided valley is an important communications corridor through the uplands of the Peak District.

### **Derwent Valley Heritage Way**

The Derwent Valley Heritage Way (DVHW) is an 88 km (55 mi) waymarked Long-Distance Path along the Derwent Valley from Ladybower Reservoir via Chatsworth, the Derbyshire Dales area, and through the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site to Derwent Mouth where it flows into the Trent.

## WALK DIRECTIONS

Alight from the bus in **Ashopton** at **The Ladybower Inn** in the **Peak District National Park**, and follow the road's left-hand pavement past the Inn – away from the Ladybower Reservoir – in an easterly direction (i.e.: with the Inn behind you, *turn left*). In 20m *fork up to the left* along a car wide gravel path, a signposted public footpath and bridleway ('Cutthroat Bridge & Ashopton'), with an **Access Land** marker. In 80m **[!]** *turn hard left* back on yourself on the level by a three-way wooden signpost, along a signposted public footpath and bridleway signed 'Ashopton', with a **White to Dark** marker on it. You have a drystone wall and **Ladybower Wood** on your right and in 60m you can spot the Ladybower Inn on the left below, and Ladybower Viaduct over the easterly arm of the Y-shaped **Ladybower Reservoir** as well as the **Reservoir Dam** ahead to the left.

In 100m by a drystone wall corner on the left, you have **Ladybower House** on the left below. In 40m go through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate and keep the drystone wall on your left, now gently ascending. In 130m the gradient eases a little and you have fine views of the Reservoir on the left with the wooded lower slopes of Win Hill behind (SWC Walk 302 Bamford to Edale via Win Hill and Great Ridge) and Offerton Moor/Shatton Edge in the distance on the left (SWC Walk 343 Hope to Hathersage or Bamford via Castleton). In 80m – at an unmarked fork by an electricity pole – you *fork left* along the drystone wall on the level, ignoring the fork uphill to the right of the pole (the steeper of two return routes of SWC Walk 348 Ladybower Inn Circular via Derwent Edge and Strines). In 130m you get good views of the westerly arm of the reservoir, up the **Woodlands Valley**, which rises up to the high moorlands of the Pennine Watershed.

The path starts a gentle descent and in 90m you can see one of the twin tops of **Crook Hill** (on 280°), walked across soon enough. In 150m go through a wooden field gate by a signpost and continue along a car wide gravel track, gently downhill, having left the **Access Land**. In 20m ignore a right turning signposted public footpath through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate ('Whinstone Lee Tor'), the outbound route of the Derwent Edge and Strines walk. In 80m go through a wooden field gate and continue between drystone walls by some houses on the left (**Ding Bank Farm**). In 80m the track continues on tarmac by **Ashopton Saw Mill** on the right and another house on the left. You descend on the track with good views on the left of **Bamford Edge** and in 50m more views of **Win Hill and** its ridge. In 160m *turn left* with the tarmac track to the A road, ignoring a right turning bridleway through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate (the return route). In 65m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate and *turn right* along a shared cycle-/footpath along the A57 **Snake Road**.

In 20m pass the Ashopton Viaduct bus stop for services from/to Fairholmes (the Alternative Start and Finish) and in 50m cross the **Ashopton Viaduct** over the northerly arm of the reservoir (the flooded remains of Ashopton village are down to your left). In about 100m you get good views to the right along the right-hand bank of the upper arm of the reservoir, towards **High House** and the **Derwent Edge**, and of **Lead Hill**, over the shoulder on your right. In 200m – on the far side of the viaduct – *turn right* along a road, signed for 'Derwent Valley Dams'. In 30m ignore a right forking concession path ('To Fairholmes') through a double wooden kissing gate and continue in the same direction along the pavement. In 30m you pass the **Derwent/Snake Road bus stop** and in 30m *turn left* across the road and go up some steps and through a wooden gate past a National Trust **High Peak Estate – Crookhill Farm** sign ('Walkers Only') and follow the right-hand fence of a pasture steeply uphill up the flank of **Crook Hill**, soon passing a signpost ('Footpath to Crookhill Farm').

In 60m at a fence corner *bear right* and head towards a gate in the top corner of the field (320°), with **Toadhole Cote** on the right of the field and with fine views on the right across the reservoir to the ridge on its easterly bank, from Lead Hill and Whinstone Lee Tor to the Hurkling Stones (30°) and Wheel Stones (20°; all SWC 348) on the Derwent Edge. In 200m you walk through a metal gate and continue in the same direction to a metal field gate 130m away (not initially visible), about 30m to the left of the top-right corner. There **[!]** *turn right* with a signpost to a metal field gate 30m away (this is different from the right of way as shown on the OS map, as the footpath has been diverted). From the gate *bear left* in the adjacent pasture (340°) to a marker post 40m away and from there keep to the right of the farm buildings ahead. On the right on 10° is **Back Tor** and to its left the **Lost Lad viewpoint** (both SWC 348). In 80m pass the corner of the first barn and *bear left* to the far end of the farm buildings and in 40m go through a wooden gate by a signpost ('Footpath') and cross a car wide farm track to go through a wooden gate and *veer right* from the previous direction (310°) to cross this pasture diagonally to its top corner. In 190m *turn left* through a wooden field gate (i.e. do not turn right through a metal gate into another pasture) and in 10m reach a junction with a gravel track.

### Here you have a choice:

- **To avoid the climb** over the splendid viewpoints of **Crook Hill's** twin tops, *turn right* along a car wide gravel track with a bridleway signpost. You ascend gently with an earth bank and a ditch on the left and in 110m go through a metal field gate to leave the Access Land and continue in the same direction along a car wide farm track, with a drystone wall on the right. In 100m by a marker post on the left and a drystone wall corner on the right, you *veer left* with the track away from the wall and continue along a grassy track (300°), still gently uphill. In 60m you pass a low pile of boulders on the right (good **rear views** from here past Bamford Edge to **Stanage Edge**) and in 100m the terrain levels out, where the continuation of the earlier seen bank-and-ditch joins from the left. You now head for a metal field gate in the far-right field corner (295°), either initially along the track and in 110m passing a low footpath marker post and continue in the same direction. In 60m you can see a gate half right ahead (310°) and a path up the pasture beyond it. In 75m *curve to the right* towards that gate.
- **To go over the splendid viewpoints** of **Crook Hill's** twin tops (**Access Land**), you follow the suggested route shown on the route map (avoiding most of the tussocky grass and a boggy area). This involves some light scrambling on the descent from the tops. Eventually you head towards the far-right corner (viewed from here) of the walled Access Land and leave it through a wooden gate with a bridleway marker and follow a left-hand drystone wall to a metal field gate 30m to the right of the far field corner, en route ignoring a wooden field gate on the left.

Leave the walled field through a wooden gate to the left of the metal field gate into another pasture and *bear left* along a clear track through the field (320°) away from the right-hand wall, towards a wooden gate to the left of a metal field gate 300m away, gently uphill (good **rear views** from here past Crook Hill and Bamford Edge to **Froggatt Edge**). Go through the gate in a fence line and continue in the same direction across the highest part of **Bridge-end Pasture** (on the OS map) in 130m, with the **Great Ridge out to Mam Tor** as well as **Rushup Edge** and the **Head of Edale** across the valley on the left. Closer-by – and more prominent – is the easterly end of the brooding dark plateau of **Kinder Scout**. From the brow of this field *veer left* towards a wooden gate, slightly to the left of the left corner of a large wood beyond it (315°).

In 220m go through the wooden gate in a drystone wall and continue in the same direction along a clear grassy path to the corner of the wood 130m away and then along its boundary. In 230m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate and continue gently downhill along the wood. In 280m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate, ignore a bridleway turning right and in 10m go through a wooden gate into the **Access Land of Open Hagg** and follow the wood on your right (Hagg Side on the OS map), very gently rising. You now can see (side-on) **the northerly aspect of Kinder Scout**, along Blackden and Seal Edges to Fairbrook Naze to The Edge. In about 200m you have remnants of a crumbling drystone wall off to the right in the wood and in another 170m, just before the top of this rise and by a fence corner on the right, you have the beginning of a long, part-collapsed drystone wall running just inside the wood.

Over the brow, you get **vistas ahead** of the terrain rising via Rowlee and Birchinlee Pastures and Alport and Westend Moors, eventually **to Bleaklow**, the forbidding moor wasteland and watershed. In 140m the path starts to ascend gently again and in 300m you *fork left* with the main path, ignoring a faint path along the fence. In 40m go through a wooden field gate. You now **aim for a ladder stile** on a rising pasture 200m away (330°). **In more detail:** follow a rough gravel track downhill with a wire fence on the left and in 35m, by a signposted three-way track junction, ignore the right turning bridleway ('Lockerbrook, Fairholmes') with a **Peak Horsepower – Kinder Loop** marker, and a left turn ('Hagg Farm') and go up some steps and in 25m cross a car wide gravel track a little to the right to pick up a faint path through gorse up a steep bank initially. Head up the grassy hillside along a permissive path (on the OS map) towards the ladder stile seen earlier (330°). In 140m go over the ladder stile (or through a metal field gate 15m to its right). The Shorter Start Option from Fairholmes has joined from the right behind.

**\*)** Continue in the same direction through a narrow pasture with a wall on the left and **Woodcock Coppice** away on the right, still along the permissive path. In about 300m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate with an **Access Land** marker and *curve left* with a clear car wide farm track (good **rear views** from here **to the Hope Cement Works** and its large limestone quarry in the Hope Valley). In 25m you pass a National Trust High Peak Estate – Rowlee Pasture signpost and follow a general bearing of 310° for the next 1.5 km, gently uphill to near the highest point of **Rowlee Pasture**. At a fork in 20m take the left, more used path (290° initially, staying slightly to the left of the ridge, i.e. with restricted views to the right, but with fine views on the left across the Woodlands Valley to **Kinder Scout**. In 650m you finally get some views on the right and in 120m continue along an engineered section of the path on flagstones through a boggy section of this largely grassy moorland, slowly getting away from the noise of the A57.

In about 550m you reach the brow of the engineered path by the top of the pasture (at 483m above sea) a little away on the right and *bear left* with the path. Remnants of a drystone wall are about 100m away on the left. In 60m the engineered path ends for 40m and in another 90m you *bear right* with the path (315° initially). The 'other' upland peat bog plateau of the Peak District, **Bleaklow**, dominates the view ahead (SWC Walk Fairholmes Circular via Bleaklow and Derwent Head) and in 70m you get views on the right of the moorland dropping away towards the (out of view) **Upper Derwent Reservoir** and ahead of **Alport Castles** and the wooded **Alport Dale** on the left. In 400m the flag-stoned section ends as you go through remnants of a drystone wall and continue in the same direction along a drystone wall on the left (all those walls are shown on the OS map). This section can be boggy but there often is a drier alternative to the left of the collapsed wall.

In 430m the path converges with the drop on the left, revealing fantastic views of the large land-slipped area of **Alport Castles**, with a drystone wall running through it. Follow the top of the plateau along the drop and in 110m an unmarked public footpath forks down to

the left along a faint path – just as you get fine views of the most picturesque part of the area, **The Tower**, through a gash in the rockface.

### Here you have a choice:

**For the Return Route over Win Hill**, *fork left* down the footpath (for more views of the landslip area consider first continuing for 500m to the far end of the landslip area), and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Win Hill Ending**.

**For the Main Walk via Derwent Reservoirs**, continue in the same direction and in 500m at the far end of the landslip area, where **Alport Mere** (one of the few tarns in the Peak District) reveals itself past The Tower, and where you can see the meandering **Alport River** in the Dale below, and by perpendicular remnants of a drystone wall, by a three-way footpath sign, you **[!]** *turn right* ('Howden Reservoir'), ignoring the continuation of the path ('Footpath to Hern Clough and Bleaklow'). You follow a grassy path gently downhill and in 140m go through some boggy ground where you continue along a defined if rough car wide track. In 65m pass the first of many **Grouse Butts** and *bear to the left* with the track (there is no evidence on the ground of the straight continuation of the right of way as shown on the OS map). In 250m *bear left* again with the track, staying to the left of **Ditch Clough**, and in 50m *bear to the right* with the track.

You descend gently through the grass, heather, bilberry and gorse-grown hillside of **Birchinlee Pasture** with its multitude of colours, with **Westend Moor** away to the left, towards **Ditch Clough Plantation** below, and with **Howden Reservoir** filling the valley bottom and **Howden Edge** rising behind it. In about 700m leave the open hillside (and the Access Land) by a National Trust High Peak Estate – Birchinlee Pasture signpost through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate and follow a clear path down the wooded ridge of the plantation. In 300m at the bottom of the drop by a footpath signpost, you *turn right* at a T-junction along a car wide gravel track, with the **Westend River** about 40m away on the left below. In 30m you cross a tributary stream coming down on the right from Ditch Clough (and Green Clough) and in 60m ignore a left turning forest track. In 100m go through a wooden gate to the left of a double wooden field gate by a footpath signpost onto a tarmac lane and *turn left* along it to cross the Westend River.

In 70m ignore a wooden gate on the left and *turn right* with the rising tarmac lane along the westerly arm of **Howden Reservoir**, with the steep **Banktop Plantation** on the left. In 650m the lane curves inland where a stream joins down **Ridge Clough** and then turns right again to continue with **Ridge Wood** on the left. In another 650m *turn left* with the lane to continue along the main body of the reservoir, broadly northerly, ignoring a left forking rising car wide gravel track, signed as a 'Path to Access Land'. In 750m you reach the end of the road at a turning circle at **King's Tree**, with a small green and some steel planks surrounding a 'Royal Oak', planted 25/09/1945 by King George VI. Continue in the same direction through a wooden gate to the right of a metal field gate and along a car wide gravel track with a signpost ('Bridleway to Slippery Stones'). In 150m cross a stream coming down **Linch Clough** on a car wide bridge and ignore another 'Path to Access Land', this time a grassy track forking left uphill. You rise through a wood and in 150m level out on the path. In about 300m below on the right is the top end of Howden Reservoir where the **Derwent River** flows into it.

In 250m you pass a recently clear-felled hillside and in 220m you leave the cleared hillside behind and enter a wood on the track. In 40m ignore a right forking forest track and continue in the same direction along the bridleway (signed 'Slippery Stones – Cycle Route'). In 150m – now out of the wood – *fork right* through a wooden gate into **Access Land**, ignoring a wooden field gate 30m along. In 50m cross **Slippery Stones Bridge**



over the Derwent, which used to stand downstream in Derwent Village and – as it is listed – had to be moved before the Ladybower Reservoir could be flooded. You have crossed over **into Sheffield and therefore South Yorkshire** and have entered the National Trust Derwent Estate and *turn left* with the track into the wide-open **Upper Derwent Valley**, looking towards some prominent gritstone tors towering above **Howden Moor**.

In 120m, 20m before a bridge over a tributary stream down from **Bull Clough and Cranberry Clough**, you reach a T-junction with another gravel track. SWC Walk 350 (Fairholmes Circular via Bleaklow and Derwent Head) comes down from the left. **Slippery Stones**, a deep natural pool in the Derwent River with a small waterfall and **a renowned Wild Swimming spot**, lies about 200m along that way.

**Here you have a choice:**

**For a longer and higher return route**, *turn left* along the track ('To Langsett and Plough Inn') and pick up directions below under **Howden Edge/Margery Hill Variation**.

**For the Main Walk**, *turn right* along the track (a public footpath signed for 'Derwent Valley') with a **Peak Horsepower – Kinder Loop** marker, gently rising. You now follow the easterly edge of the Derwent Reservoirs for about 11 km back to Ashopton Viaduct.

**In more detail:** In 270m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate (fine views back from here up the Upper Derwent Valley) and the track curves to the left in 40m to contour along **Cold Side**, with **Long Edge** above. In 650m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate and ignore a stile on the left and continue in the same direction along the gravel track, with trees on the right below. In 320m ignore another stile on the left leading up into **Ronksley Wood**. Howden Reservoir is now visible through the trees, on the right below. In 200m – just after passing another National Trust – Derwent Estate sign – you go through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate to **leave the Access Land** and continue along the car wide gravel track.

The track curves to the left and – foliage permitting – you get glimpses of the **Howden Dam** on the right. In about 750m from the gate a car wide steep forest track joins from the left (that is the 'shortcut' route over the hill). **Nether Hey** hill is visible ahead and in 170m you *turn sharp right* with the track where it crosses a stream coming out of **Howden Clough**. Ignore a faint path joining from the left and in 75m a signposted public footpath joins from the left out of Howden Clough. In 650m you pass the Howden Dam (no access) and descend with the track. In 200m a service track from the dam joins from the right and you curve to the left with the track, with views on the right now of the Upper Derwent Reservoir. In 60m a steep forest track joins from the left ('Path to Access Land'). This is the first Variation.

**\*\*)** You continue gently downhill and in 110m walk through an often-open wooden field gate and *turn right* across a bridge over the **Abbey Brook**. In 125m from the bridge you pass some larch-clad buildings on the right belonging to the **Howden Hydro Power Scheme**. You are passing back into Derbyshire and in 80m a footpath joins from the left.

**Here you have a choice:**

**For a longer and higher return route**, *turn left* along the footpath ('Ewden via Broomhead, for Bradfield and Strines sharp right 40 yds ahead') and pick up the directions below under **Abbey Tip Plantation to Derwent Village Variation**.

**For the Main Walk**, continue along the track and in 170m by a bench on the right, *veer left* with the track as it joins the reservoir side. In 250m you get views down to the **Derwent Dam** – and opposite on the westerly bank you have an inlet where the inflow off Rowlee Pasture joins via Ouzeldene Brook and Alport Grain. In 450m you pass a bench on the right below near the water and in another 200m by another bench on the left, a signposted footpath joins on the left from 'Bradfield & Strines', just before crossing a stream out of **Walker's Clough**.

In about 800m you cross the stream coming out of **Hollin Clough** on a bridge (on the far side ignore a permissive path on the left into Hollinclough Plantation). Opposite on the westerly side you can see the outflow of the conduit diverting some of the **waters of the Alport and Ashop Rivers and the Lockerbrook** into the reservoir. In 150m – just before the Derwent Dam – a public footpath bears right through a wooden gate ('Walkers Only').

**Here you have a choice:**

**For the Alternative Ending at Fairholmes bus stop** (cuts 4.9 km/3.0 mi and 65m ascent, but check your timing: the bus stop is 750m away, last bus runs at 18.36 in summer and around 16.00 in winter [2019 schedule]), *bear right* through the wooden gate and descend gently along a fenced path. In 60m you pass the reservoir dam and **[!]** *turn right* down some steps, ignoring the continuation of the fenced gravel path. At the bottom of the first set of steps you pass the **East Tower** of the dam (and some info panels) and continue down a second set of steps (ignoring a left turning path). *Bear left* across a grassy meadow along a well-trampled path and in 200m *turn right* along **Derwent Lane**. You cross the Derwent River in 40m, in 60m ignore a left forking tarmac path to the **Derwent Café** and ascend along the road to a roundabout and *turn left* to the bus stop 70m away.

**For the Main Walk**, continue in the same direction along the track (a bridleway) and in 60m you pass the **Derwent Dam**. In 25m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate and continue on tarmac, by a house on the left. In 20m you pass a wooden gate on the right and in 180m a permissive path joins from the left above through a wooden gate in a drystone wall. In 220m a road joins from the right below from **Fairholmes** and you *bear left* along the road towards Derwent village. In 90m you pass **Jubilee Cottages**, the first of the few remaining houses (the ones not submerged) and in 100m get views on the right of the top of **Ladybower Reservoir** and the **Aqueduct** crossing it (this precedes Ladybower and channels water from Howden and Derwent Reservoirs to the treatment plant in Bamford) and in 70m you pass **Old House** on the left. In 200m you get views of the **Bamford Edge** on the right through the trees and in about 650m you pass the gates to the **Shooting Lodge** and in another 60m **St. Peter's** (formerly a school, now a private dwelling) both on the left. In 200m a public footpath joins from the left along a car wide gravel track. This is the second Variation.

**\*\*\*)** Curve to the left downhill with the lane. In 60m it continues as a gravel track by some old stone gate posts (the entrance gate of Derwent Vicarage, now flooded) and in 40m there is a pipeline on the right below. Cross **Mill Brook** on a car wide concrete bridge and in 30m pass an info panel on **The Lost Village of Derwent**. The track rises gently and levels out in 270m and you have the **Ashopton Viaduct** ahead. In 50m a bridleway turns left through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate along a stone slab path.

**Here you have a choice:**

**For a longer and higher return route**, *turn left* through the wooden gate along the bridleway ('Via Derwent Edge to Moscar') and pick up directions below under **Grindle Clough to Whinstone Lee Tor and Lead Hill Variation**.

**For the Main Walk**, continue in the same direction through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate. In 150m you cross the stream coming out of **Grindle Clough** while Win Hill and Cross Hill come into view on the right. In 450m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate and in 30m *turn right* to cross the stream coming out of **Grainfoot Clough**. You *turn right* with the track and continue through a widely spaced sloping beech wood (bluebells in season). You follow the track with the fenced wood on the left and eventually go through a metal gate to the left of a metal field gate back onto the outbound route.

**To get back to The Ladybower Inn and the bus stop, you now have a choice...**

- retrace the outbound route (higher and a bit longer, but quieter): *turn left* up the track;
- walk to the A road and in 80m cross it and *turn left* along the opposite pavement (a shared cycle-/footpath); in 730m cross the A6013 and continue in the same direction and in another 250m reach bus stop and inn.

### **Alternative Start at Fairholmes Bus Stop (cut 4.4 km/2.7 mi and 100m ascent)**

After alighting from the bus at **Fairholmes Bus Stop** near the top end of **Ladybower Reservoir**, walk back along the left-hand pavement of the road in the direction the bus travelled up from, i.e. southerly. In 70m you cross the exit from the main car park and ignore a right turning signposted permissive footpath across the road through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate to continue along the pavement. You cross the **Locker Brook** on the road and ascend gently with it. In 80m, just before a wooden fence commences on the left, you **[!]** *turn right* across the road and follow an easily-missed path steeply up into the **Lockerbrook South Plantation**, with a wooden footpath signpost ('**Hagg Farm**') set back a bit.

In 40m you pass a 'concession footpath' marker post (white arrow on black) and in 65m and another 50m some more. In 40m *turn up to the right* with another marker post at a T-junction of forest paths, now more gently uphill. In 170m the gradient increases and the path veers to the left. In 350m you pass a marker post, just before the gradient eases a little and you continue uphill through a mature conifer wood past several more marker posts. In 200m you walk through a part-collapsed drystone wall and past another marker post and in 50m pass a fenced part of the wood on your right. In 20m *curve right with the path* past a marker post and in 50m *turn left* away from the fence by another marker post towards a wooden field gate at the top of the wood.

In 50m go over a stile to the right of the wooden field gate by a signpost into an open area. You ignore a guide stoop and a signpost away to the left (the main walk joins from there) and aim for the ladder stile over a drystone wall to the left of a wooden field gate halfway up the sloping pasture ahead (310°): *veer right* down a grassy bank and cross a car wide gravel track at a fork and go up the opposite grassy bank and follow a narrow but clear path through a grassy area to the ladder stile. In 150m go over the ladder stile (or through a wooden field gate 15m to its right) and pick up the directions in the main text at the asterisk \*).

## Win Hill Ending

In 30m *turn left* with the path and in 20m *turn left* again and walk to the left of the landslip area (185°). In 40m you have a wire fence away to the right and in 90m go through some standing stones (a missing gate). You now follow a drystone wall on your right and in 180m *turn right* over a stile in the drystone wall into the landslip area. *Turn left* along the wall and in 60m you pass a National Trust High Peak Estate – Alport Castles sign and go over a stile in a fence and continue in the same direction to the left of the fence (the wall turns to the left). On the right beyond the fence you have the crumbling and tumbling rockface of Birch Hat, with boulders of all sizes strewn about, as well as remnants of a crumbling drystone wall. In 200m you reach a large cairn and a corner of the fence on the right, with **fine views up Alport Dale to Bleaklow**.

### Here you have a choice:

**For an excursion into the landslip area**, *turn right* to the fence corner and use a jumble of rocks to climb over the barbed wire fence into the fenced area. Follow the fence on the left initially and in 70m go through remnants of a drystone wall. You have an impressive rockface up on the right with a large rockfall tumbling down the hillside. Skirt to the left around a grassy hillock with a wall on the left and in 100m, where the path descends towards the bottom of **The Tower**, **either** follow it and explore the area further, **or** *turn up right* to the top of the grassy hillock on the right (the top is a bit higher up than it appears to be from the bottom) and *turn left* to follow its ridge (not without further ups and downs) towards the base of the final ascent up The Tower. The top of it can probably be accessed with a bit of scrambling. Return to the large cairn.

**For a direct continuation of the walk**, *bear left* downhill with the path along a fence on the left. In 120m you pass a footpath sign pointing onwards to 'Via Alport Hamlet to Snake Inn and Glossop also to Hope and Edale', and backwards to 'Via Westend and Slippery Stones to Hazlehead and Langsett'. In 15m you start a steep rocky descent, broadly along the fence on the left, with **Alport Castles Farm** visible in the valley bottom, on the other side of the **Alport River**, original site of the annual **Alport Love Feast** on the first Sunday in July (an ancient church tradition in a barn). In 40m from the bottom of the rocky stretch you pass a small pile of stones with a stake in it on the right and in about 130m and again in 110m cross streams on the path. Then follows a mud-prone stretch through bracken and in 70m you continue along drier ground again. In 80m at a fence corner on the left, you have the river steeply below and a footbridge off to the left. [This is a good picnic spot.]

*Turn left* along the fence and in 40m *turn right* along a clear grassy track towards the river level (ignoring a field gate into a pasture) and in 40m *turn left* along the river to the bridge. Cross the raised two-railed wooden footbridge and *turn right* on the other side along a fence. In 90m, by a yellow marker post away on the right, *fork left* along a grassy path, away from the river and up an earthen cliff towards a stile visible above (ignore a left turning earthen path to a fence corner). Go over the stile and *bear left* across a small pasture to a gate in its top-left corner to the left of the farm buildings. In 70m go through the wooden gate and continue between a drystone wall and a hedge and in 20m through a wooden gate into the farmyard, which you cross in the same direction and in 20m *turn left* through a wooden field gate and continue along the farm's drive, initially gently uphill.

You now follow the drive for 1.5 km. **In more detail**: in 300m you go over the brow of this gentle rise and have fine views through a hedge gap on the left back towards the landslip area; in about 500m you pass what looks like another small landslip area up on the right; in 200m you go through an often-open wooden field gate; in 260m go through a metal field gate in a drystone wall; in another 210m – just before the track curves to the right – by a

signpost on the left (backwards 'Howden Dam via Alport Castles'), [!] you *bear left* down across a small sloping grassy area towards a stile.

In 50m go over the stile and follow a clear narrow path with a barbed wire fence on the left. In 100m *turn left* over a stone slab stile in a drystone wall and *turn right* along a clear path, high above the **Alport River**. In 50m – just past a footpath sign ('To Hope and Edale') you go through a wooden gate onto the A57 Snake Road and cross it carefully, with Alport Bridge on the left across the Alport River. You cross a small tarmac slip and in 25m go through a wooden gate to the right of a metal field gate and follow a gravel car wide track, a signposted bridleway, with the **confluence of the Alport and Ashop Rivers** on the left. In 60m either ford the Ashop River on a car wide concrete track or use the raised railed footbridge 30m to the right to cross it. [The weir on the right is the intake for the Ashop Conduit, a diversion of the Ashop's and Alport's waters into Derwent Reservoir, preceding the building of Ladybower Reservoir, into which the Ashop now flows anyway.]

On the other side *turn left* along a car wide gravel track (i.e. not hard left along a grass track along the river) and in 130m pass a 'Private Land – No Access' signpost in a riverside pasture and continue uphill with the gravel track. In 240m ford a stream by **Upper Ashop Farm** up on the right and in 80m go through a wooden field gate in a drystone wall, entering the **Access Land** of the National Trust's **Blackley Hey**. *Turn left* along a car wide grassy track **along the north easterly flank of the Kinder Scout Plateau** and in 40m continue in the same direction along a tarmac drive coming from the farm. In 250m by a three-way signpost on the right and where the tarmac drive bears down to the left towards Rowlee Bridge ('Upper Derwent'), you continue in the same direction uphill along a rough, broadly car wide gravel track ('Hope Cross'), a bridleway. You rise steadily uphill Blackley Hey's flank with views down the valley of the Ashop, the **Woodlands Valley**.

In 750m, where there are remnants of a drystone wall some 40m away on the left, you start to see **Derwent Edge** ahead, rising beyond this valley in an easterly direction and in 300m, where the track almost levels out, ignore a grassy track turning right up the hillside (may be temporary). The whole of the Derwent Edge is now visible out to **Back Tor and Lost Lad viewpoint** and ahead on the half right you can see **Crook Hill's twin tops** and Bamford and Stanage Edges beyond them. The track curves to the right around the top of **Blackley Clough** and in 120m you go through a wooden field gate and ford the stream running down it. Follow the track to the left with a drystone wall on the left, gently uphill, and in 250m go over the brow, now with **Win Hill** prominent ahead, with the westerly arm of **Ladybower Reservoir** to its left. In 200m by a National Trust High Peak Estate – Crookstone Out Moor sign you **leave the Access Land** through a wooden field gate, now with **Lose Hill**, the easterly end of the Great Ridge on the right.

You follow a car wide gravel track with a bridleway marker and with a drystone wall on the left, at a slightly elevated level. In about 50m you can see all of the Great Ridge on the right, via Back Tor to Mam Tor, as well as parts of the **Hope Valley**. In 230m you continue in the same direction through a metal field gate or over a stile to the right of it at a signposted four-way track junction ('Hope & Brough') and in 250m go through a metal field gate in a drystone wall by a wood on the left and pass the **Hope Cross** on the left (a 2m-high guide stoop with a square capstone at an ancient packhorse route crossing on a former **Roman Road**, signed 'Hope, Glossop, Edale, Sheffield'. The carved date 1737 is thought to be the year the cross was repaired or replaced). You continue along the track with woods on the left and an open slope on the right offering **views straight up the Vale of Edale** to Rushup Edge and Brown Knoll, with Kinder Scout to its right and the Great Ridge to its left. **Hope Cement Works** are in good view, with Shatton Edge/Offerton Moor to the left of it. In 200m the car wide grassy track veers away from the wood and in 500m you go through a metal field gate **back into Access Land**.

[!] In 20m *fork up to the left* along a gravel car wide track, leaving the Roman Road, back towards the boundary of the wood. In 40m *fork either way* just before the gradient eases and in 200m where the forks re-join, you *bear right* along a grassy track joining from the left along a drystone wall. In about 400m, through the sparse trees on the left, you can spot **Crook Hill's twin tops and the Derwent Edge**. In about 200m the track bears to the right away from the wood as you pass **Wooler Knoll** on the left in the trees and in 200m the track leads through a crumbling drystone wall. The car wide gravel track gently ascends Win Hill's long ridge and in 200m you continue in the same direction at a signposted bridleway/permitted footpath junction, on a bearing of 165°. In about 400m you have heather on both sides of the track and can spot parts of the Ladybower Viaduct on the left below. In another 430m you go through a new metal kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate and continue with a drystone wall on the right towards **Winhill Pike**.

In 750m you cross a footpath by a signpost and a wooden kissing gate on the right ('Ladybower Reservoir' to the left, 'Hope' to the right) and continue in the direction of 'Yorkshire Bridge and Thornhill'. In 80m *fork left* up towards the Pike and in 40m you continue along an intermittently cobbled path to the top. The real top and trig point with its 360° views sits above you on the left when you pass it, so continue on the path to the top of the rise and *turn hard left* towards it. Retrace your steps from the trig point and continue along the path in the previous direction, descending gently. 130m from the trig point you walk through three wooden posts (a missing gate) in a decaying drystone wall and continue the descent towards **Win Hill Plantation** along a part-engineered path. In 350m you reach a barbed wire fence line at a T-junction with a public footpath in the trees and *turn right* briefly along it. In 20m you have a metal kissing gate on the left and a path leading down through the wood.

### **Here you have a choice:**

**For a Finish at Bamford Station**, continue in the same direction along the fence and follow the route map, reverse-walking the start of SWC 302 Bamford to Edale via Win Hill and Great Ridge.

**For the Finish at [The Ladybower Inn](#)**, *turn left* through the gate to **leave the Access Land** and in 20m a broad forest track forks left. [There are now four different routes described between here and the far side of the Ladybower Dam. The (for me) best route is also the most strenuous and steep and potentially slippery one, the easiest option starts right here.]

**This is the easiest** (if not the shortest) **route down to the Ladybower Dam**: follow the track until in 170m it meets another forest track at a T-junction, *turn left* along it and pick up the text in the second next paragraph after "This is the easiest descent route."

**For the second-easiest but a little steep and potentially a little slippery route, and for the third-easiest and best routes (both steep and potentially very slippery)**, follow the stream on the right down the atmospheric and beautiful **Parkin Clough** along an at times steep and potentially slippery path. In 150m you reach an unmarked public footpath crossing.

**For the second-easiest route to the Ladybower Dam**: *turn left* along the public footpath, initially gently uphill, in 10m passing a marker post (w/o a marker) on the right. In 30m a path joins from the left behind. **This is the easiest descent route**. Ignore all ways off: in 370m you pass a wooden barrier on the right (an attempt to block a steep descent straight to the reservoir dam). In 200m go through a wooden gate to the left of a

wooden field gate. In 250m by a low marker post on the left you [!] *turn hard right* along a signposted public footpath through a wooden gate (ignoring the path ahead towards a fork in 25m) and down the wooded slope towards the reservoir, your direction 'Ladybower Dam & Yorkshire Bridge'. In 350m you reach the tarmac lane along the reservoir and *turn right* along it. You pass one of the bell-shaped overflows and in 50m *turn left* along the path atop the **Ladybower Dam**. On the far side *turn left* along the **A6013** and pick up the text below in the last paragraph ("In 20m *turn right*..."). [**The Yorkshire Bridge Inn** is 300m away to the right though.]

**For the best but steep and potentially very slippery route**, continue in the same direction, always staying close to the stream and in 250m a path turns to the left.

**For the third-easiest route to the Ladybower Dam:** *turn left* along the path (this can be very muddy) and follow it for 470m and *turn left* along the track running up to the Ladybower Dam and in 20m *turn right* along the path atop the **Ladybower Dam**. On the far side *turn left* along the **A6013** and pick up the text below in the last paragraph ("In 20m *turn right*..."). [**The Yorkshire Bridge Inn** is 300m away to the right though.]

**For the best but steep and potentially very slippery route**, continue in the same direction, always staying close to the stream and in 130m you get to a T-junction with a car wide track. This was the old tramway from the railway main line at Bamford, transporting the rocks needed for the building of the reservoir wall. The **Derwent Valley Heritage Way** (DVHW) runs along it. [A left turn along the track towards and then across the reservoir dam is an option to avoid descent/re-ascent.] Cross the track and descend further along a railed stepped path and at the bottom of it *turn right* along a tarmac lane, with the **Derwent River** on the left below. In 80m *turn left* over **Yorkshire Bridge** to cross the river. On the other side of the bridge, in 20m *turn left* along a signposted footpath to 'Heatherdene'.

[The best route to the alternative tea-stop **The Yorkshire Bridge Inn** though is to follow the road uphill and *turn left* just before the A road along a residential road (Bemrose Gate) to the pub. From the pub it's 300m to Ladybower Dam. Pick up the directions below: "In 20m *turn right*...".] In 60m *bear left* along a broad track at a T-junction and in 140m, just before a padlocked wooden field gate, *fork right* along a gravel path through trees. In 180m ignore a faint path turning right by a large info panel ('Upper Derwent Valley and Ladybower Dam') and a viewing point at the base of the reservoir dam on the left. In 60m the trees end on the left and you get full views of the dam and keep rising steadily along the path to the level of the top of the dam. *Turn right* to the **A6013** and left along its left-hand pavement.

In 20m *turn right* to cross the road and – by a large memorial for the engineers and builders involved in the building of the reservoir – *bear right* up some steps. At the top of the steps *turn left* along a gravel path and in 40m *turn left* at a T-junction. You now follow the path (tarmac later on) for 300m to the official start of the **Derwent Valley Heritage Way** ('River Trent 55 miles') and into the car parking area at **Heatherdene**. Follow the path through the car park and in 150m *turn down to the left* along an approach lane to the A road. Cross the road carefully and *turn right* along the shared cycle-/footpath towards **Ladybower Viaduct**. Cross the viaduct and *turn right* at a T-junction with the **A57 Snake Road** to in another 250m reach bus stop and inn.

## Howden Edge/Margery Hill Variation (add 3.6 km/2.2 mi and 238m ascent)

In 30m you cross the railed wooden **Herdman's Bridge** (named after Fred Herdman, a local walker) over the stream out of Cranberry Clough and *bear right* with the clear gravel path. In 100m by a National Trust – Howden Moor sign *fork right* with the bridleway and a Peak Horsepower – Kinder Loop marker, ignoring the continuation along the valley floor, a public footpath. The earthen path follows the stream on its left-hand side and in 150m you get views of an edge ahead on a bearing of 120°. This is **Howden Edge**, the interim aim, with its highest stretch being **High Stones (the highest point in Sheffield)**. In 165m you ford a stream out of **Bull Clough** up on the left and **[!]** *turn left* immediately, away from the stream on the right, ignoring a continuation ahead. *Turn right* with the path in 10m and ascend the heather-and-bracken covered hillside (Cranberry Ness) along the engineered path. In 50m a path joins from the right below (the continuation of the path along the stream ignored earlier).

Up on the left you can see some rocky outcrops: **Bull Stones at Bull Clough Head**. In 70m you *fork left* more steeply uphill (the path ahead is for horses and will re-join shortly) and curve up to the left with the path. In 90m the other path joins from the right behind. You are walking along the rim of the hill, towering above Bull Clough, with views up to Bull Stones and the **Crow Stones Edge** some way to the left of it. In 220m *bear right* with the path, climbing further towards Howden Edge along a grassy track, which soon continues as an earthen track. You have **fine views back** across the Upper Derwent Valley **towards Bleaklow**, and your route is never in doubt. The path curves up the right, passes a (seemingly random) pile of stones and for a while you have a fence line running parallel away to the right. As you rise, the views in the back stretch to Kinder Scout, (the top of) Mam Tor and (parts of) the Great Ridge, as well as Win Hill (all between 215° and 175°).

Higher up the path runs to the left of a nascent stream (**Little Cut** on the OS map, but often dry) as it continues as a flagged engineered path for about 350m and the path then continues as grass and earth through the upland bog. In 140m you pass a large pile of stones on the right at **Cut Gate End** (on the OS map) and ignore a faint right turn (also on the OS map). You continue past a second cairn in 50m and reach a third cairn in another 150m at the top of the rise, where a boggy path turns left, at spot height 528m. **[!]** *Turn right* and follow the furthest right of several faint tracks through the peat bog on a broad bearing of 175°. In 30m you can see a fenced area some way ahead and follow indistinct paths towards the right-hand edge fence. In 280m you continue along the fence and in 60m continue in the same direction at the fence corner towards a fence line ahead.

You can see **Margery Hill's** trig point away a little up on the left, surrounded by the **Margery Stones**, and in 60m go over a stile in the fence and continue in the same direction (there is a path in 50m leading up left towards the trig point though). You follow **Wilfrey Edge** on a clear path and in 200m go through a dip to ford the stream at the top of **Little Cranberry Clough**. Now you have a sheer drop on the right as you continue along the edge. In 100m you pass a rockface on the right and in another 200m a little pond on the left (on the OS map). You can see a small sliver of one of the **Derwent Reservoirs** down below on the right. In 330m take the right-hand fork along the edge and continue towards the slightly higher area of High Stones. In about 300m you can see another part of the reservoirs and in 250m by a little cairn on the left, you have reached the highest point of the walk, and the highest point in Sheffield, at 548m above sea.

You continue in the same direction and in 120m you have a distinct cutting on the left (an old boundary ditch). In about 350m you have a nascent stream on your left (out of one the peat groughs) and in another 60m – at spot height 530m – you have some higher ground



on the left (**Featherbed Moss**, an indistinct path turns left here along a grough). The **Wet Stones** are visible on the far side of the moss on your left (as are three **grouse butts** either side of the stones), as the path now descends more steeply down **Howden Moors** into the scenic **Abbey Brook Valley**. **Lost Lad, Back Tor** (160°) and **Derwent Edge** are visible across the valley (SWC Walk 348 Ladybower Inn Circular via Derwent Edge and Strines). The path continues as a car wide grassy track and in 500m from Featherbed Moss you go through (part-overgrown) **remnants of a drystone wall**, just before the track curves to the right (spot height 465m). In 40m the track starts to descend again and in 70m turns left and then right. You are heading for a fence line and in 150m go over a plank stile to the left of a double wooden field gate into the grassy hill area of **Nether Hey**.

**At a fork immediately afterwards, take either fork**, as they re-unite in 1.1 km...

- the right fork (not walked yet) soon curves to the left and rises a little towards (but not quite to) the top of Nether Hey and should give some **views of Howden Reservoir**;
- the left fork gives better **views of the Abbey Brook Valley**: in 200m ignore a faint left fork and *turn right* with the grassy track, in 30m *turn left* with it, in 200m go through a wooden field gate or over a stile to the left of it and *turn right* with the track, in 65m fording a stream; in 50m go through a double wooden field gate in a fence line or over a stile to the right of it and gently ascend the flank of Nether Hey; in about 400m you go over the brow and in 180m the other track (gravel) joins from the right behind.

You continue along the gravel track through a dip where it fords a stream and in 120m go over a stile to the left of a wooden field gate in a drystone wall and continue with a fence on the left. In 180m (note the **CPRE Merit Award** plaque on the right) go through a wooden gate to the right of a double wooden field gate in a drystone wall and continue in the same direction downhill. In 380m you pass a National Trust High Peak Estate – Nether Hey sign and leave the **Access Land** through a wooden gate in a drystone wall and continue in the same direction down through **Hey Bank** plantation. In 125m you reach a car wide gravel track at a T-junction. The main walk route joins from the right. *Turn left* along the track and pick up the directions in the main text at the double asterisk \*\*).

### **Abbey Tip Plantation to Derwent Village Variation (add 30m and 123m ascent)**

You gently ascend with the grass-and-earth track and in 20m pass a footpath marker post with two yellow markers. In another **[!]** 10m *fork up to the right* steeply into the lightly wooded plantation. In 20m *turn right* with the path and in 150m go through a wooden gate in a drystone wall into **Access Land** past a National Trust High Peak Estate – Abbey Bank sign. Follow the clear path in the previous direction up the heather and bilberry-covered flank of the hill. In 230m you pass a viewpoint on the right by a signpost on the left ('Abbey Grange' back, 'Strines' on ) and *bear left* with the path, still uphill, if less steeply. In 30m you continue in the same direction to the left of a drystone wall. On the left you get views up to **Howden Edge** and its highest part, **High Stones**, the route of Variation 1.

In 80m you have **Upper Derwent reservoir** on the right below with fine views out to **Lose Hill** and **Win Hill**. In 150m pass a drystone running away to the right down towards the reservoir and you can now see the **Kinder Scout** plateau on the hard right. In another 150m take either fork: the right, lower fork leads past the (insignificant) ruins of Bamford House, the left, upper fork provides for better views. The paths re-unite in 270m by a small cairn where a drystone wall turns left uphill and by a signpost at a four-way footpath

junction. Ignore the left turn to 'Strines via Foulstone' and the right turn downhill ('Derwent Dams, Fairholmes') and continue in the same direction ('Ashopton'). The path is clear and you have **Shireowlers South Plantation** on the right below. You ascend ever so gently and in 400m go through a crumbling drystone wall.

In 120m go over a stile to the left of a wooden field gate in a fence line and continue in the same direction along the drystone wall on your right. **Lost Lad, Back Tor** and **Derwent Edge** are visible up on the left (SWC Walk 348 Ladybower Inn Circular via Derwent Edge and Strines) and you pass some grouse butts on your left. In 100m you pass remnants of a drystone wall on the left and in 140m by a three-way signpost on the left a track joins from the left behind from Derwent Edge. [**Note:** the right-of-way as marked on the ground differs from what is shown on the OS map for the next 1.2 km!] You continue in the same direction, signed 'Ladybower', and in 200m pass a footpath signpost by a drystone wall with grouse butts seemingly built into the wall (on the left). In 140m by another signpost *bear right* with the track along a drystone wall on your left.

You have fine views back over your shoulder on the left past **Near Deep Clough** and up **Far Deep Clough** to Lost Lad and Back Tor, the Derwent Edge with its famous rock formations up on the left and **views ahead to Bamford Edge and Shatton Edge/Offerton Moor in the Hope Valley** (on a clear day). As you go over the brow of this hardly perceptible rise, **Ladybower Reservoir and Ashopton Viaduct** come into view. After 630m along the wall at a corner of the wall, *bear left* by a two-way footpath signpost (with **Dovestone Tor** and the **Salt Cellar** rock formations up on Derwent Edge) and in 180m go through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate in a drystone wall past a National Trust High Peak Estate – Pike Low sign, **leaving the Access Land**, and follow the clear track to another drystone wall. In 110m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate and *turn right* with a yellow marker on the gate down **Briery Side**. You now descend to (what's left of) **Derwent Village** more or less in a straight line.

Dovestone Clough on the left behind carries a stream that – combined with the streams out of Near and Far Deep Cloughs – forms the **Mill Brook**, which runs through the village. In 210m continue in the same direction ('Ladybower') through a wooden field gate with a yellow marker by a three-way signpost where a permissive path turns hard left towards 'Dovestone Clough'. **Lanehead Farm** is on the right and you descend further along a rough car wide track between drystone walls, which narrows to a grassy path. In 130m go over a stile in a wooden fence and continue in the same direction between drystone walls. In 160m you pass a two-way signpost and in 20m continue in the same direction through a wooden field gate (ignore another wooden field gate on the right into a pasture). In 100m go through a wooden gate and continue in the same direction. In another 100m ignore some farm buildings on the left and *turn right* along a car wide farm track. In 80m pass a National Trust High Peak Estate – Wellhead sign and in 10m go over a stile to the left of a wooden field gate onto a tarmac lane. The Main Walk joins from the right along the lane.

*Turn left* along it and pick up the directions in the main text at the triple asterisk \*\*\*).

### **Grindle Clough to Whinstone Lee Tor and Lead Hill Variation (add 1.3 km/0.8 mi and 152m ascent)**

You follow the flagged path up through the grassy hillside and *curve left* with it to follow a barbed wire fence on the right, to the right of which runs a stream down **Grindle Clough**. In the back you have views of the twin-topped **Crook Hill**, walked along or across early in the walk. The path rises towards some farm buildings, where you walk through a wooden

gate and *turn right* with the flagged path between the buildings. Before continuing through a wooden gate out of the farmyard, you pass on the left the charming **Grindle Barn, a stone shelter with a bench** and worth studying (school children have created painted enamel inlets and carved bricks, which have been integrated into the build).

The now earthen path continues on the level with a drystone wall on the right and in 50m you ford the stream running through the clough. Ascend with the path along the wall and in 60m go through a wooden field gate in a drystone wall and continue in the same direction past a two-way footpath signpost towards 'Moscar'. In 100m go through a wooden gate in drystone wall and pass a National Trust High Peak Estate – High House Farm sign and continue uphill, curving with the path along the wall, and a plantation on the other side of it. In 230m you can see **White Tor up ahead on Derwent Edge** and in another 100m – with **Wheel Stones** up ahead – you go through a wooden gate into Access Land and *bear right* with the obvious path through the bracken-and -grass covered hillside. The path veers away from the plantation, with the developing **Grainfoot Clough** on the right, and in 450m you go through a metal gate in a drystone wall and *turn right* with the path, on the level along the drystone wall, passing a two-way signpost ('Moscar').

In 60m ignore a signed public footpath up to the left to 'Moscar' and continue in the same direction along the wall ('Whinstone Lee Tor', along a bridleway). In 800m continue in the same direction along the wall, ignoring a wooden gate on the right, with the **Whinstone Lee Tor** now rising up on your left. You have some fine views back along Ladybower Reservoir towards Derwent Village and a pipeline across the reservoir. You rise for 300m to pass a National Trust High Peak Estate – Whinstone Lee Tor sign and reach a **six-way path junction by a four-way signpost**. SWC Walk 348 Ladybower Circular via Derwent Edge and Strines crosses here. Ignore the left turn uphill and the path straight across, as well as the hard-right turn downhill and the half right turn to **a fine viewpoint over Ladybower Reservoir** 30m away, and *bear right* (200°, i.e. the third path on the right) along a sandy path atop **Lead Hill**, with Win Hill a little to the right across the reservoir and **Shatton Edge/Offerton Moor** dead ahead far away across the Hope Valley, and **Bamford and Stanage Edges** on the left.

In 170m you have the drop on your right and the wood walked along earlier below, and **Crook Hill** opposite. In 90m, just before a left turn in the path, all **three arms of the Y-shaped reservoir** and **Ladybower and Ashopton viaducts** are in view, as is **Yorkshire Bridge**, the settlement just beyond the reservoir dam to which the residents of Derwent and Ashopton were moved before the filling of the reservoir. You *turn left* with the path, with **Hurkling Stones** up on the left, and in 90m you can see Stanage Edge from its near end (Stanage End) to the far end. In about 550m, at the start of a steep descent, the westerly arm of the reservoir is fully visible on the right, with **Snake Road** winding its way up the Woodlands Valley to the Pennine Watershed. In 30m you reach a clear right turning path between earth banks, while another path continues ahead downhill.

#### **You can take either path...**

- the one straight ahead gets **very steep** and potentially very slippery: aim for some electricity poles visible below, going through a right/left-turn en route;
- turning right between the banks (240°), in 90m you *turn left* with the path and in 70m *turn right* at a T-junction. In 210m you reach the path along the wall at the bottom of the hillside (the outbound route) and *turn left* along it. In 310m the very steep descent route joins from the left by some electricity poles.

In 180m you enter **Ladybower Wood** through a wooden gate and in 200m *turn right* downhill by a signposted three-way junction and reach **The Ladybower Inn** in 100m (and a **bus stop for services to Sheffield** 30m further along).