

Upper Hulme to Macclesfield			Leek Start		
1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check	1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check
19 th May 2021			19 th April 2021		
Current status	Document last updated Wednesday, 07 st September 2022				
<p>This document and information herein are copyrighted to Saturday Walkers' Club. If you are interested in printing or displaying any of this material, Saturday Walkers' Club grants permission to use, copy, and distribute this document delivered from this World Wide Web server with the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The document will not be edited or abridged, and the material will be produced exactly as it appears. Modification of the material or use of it for any other purpose is a violation of our copyright and other proprietary rights. Reproduction of this document is for free distribution and will not be sold. This permission is granted for a one-time distribution. All copies, links, or pages of the documents must carry the following copyright notice and this permission notice: Saturday Walkers' Club, Copyright © 2021-2022, used with permission. All rights reserved. www.walkingclub.org.uk <p>This walk has been checked as noted above, however the publisher cannot accept responsibility for any problems encountered by readers.</p>					

Upper Hulme to Macclesfield (via Hen Cloud, Roaches, Shutlingsloe)

Start: Upper Hulme, Old Buxton Road Bus Stop

Finish: Macclesfield Station

Upper Hulme, Old Buxton Road Bus Stop, map reference SK 013 607, is 16 km southeast of Macclesfield, 245m above sea level and in **Staffordshire**. Macclesfield Station, map reference SJ 919 736, is 237 km northwest of Charing Cross, 133m above sea level and in **Cheshire East**.

Length: 24.9 km (15.4 mi).

Cumulative ascent/descent: 784/892m. For a shorter or longer walk, see *below* **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 8 out of 10

Time: 6 ³/₄ hours walking time.

Transport: Upper Hulme is served by two buses a day (Mon-Sat) on Line 108 Ashbourne – Leek – Buxton. Macclesfield Station is on the Stafford to Manchester branch line off the West Coast Main Line from London Euston. Travel time to London is from 108 minutes Mon-Fri, but longer on weekends. Leek is served by line 109 from Macclesfield (5 buses a day Mon-Sat), as well as by frequent buses from Hanley (lines 16 and 18). Stoke Station, closer to London on the Macclesfield line, has frequent buses to Hanley, which is a 2.3 km walk away.

Saturday Walkers' Club: Only the long walk starting in Leek is currently doable as a daywalk from London due to the lack of a morning bus service to Upper Hulme.

OS Landranger Map: 118 (Stoke-on-Trent and Macclesfield) and 119 (Buxton & Matlock)

OS Explorer Map: 268 (Wilmslow, Macclesfield & Congleton) and OL24 (The Peak District – White Peak Area)

Walk Notes:

A tour de force of highlights in the Staffordshire/Cheshire borderlands within easy reach of London. You rise through the tight valley of an arm of the Upper Churnet River to then ascend the quite sensational Hen Cloud, a tilted standalone rockface, for stunning views of the Staffordshire Plain as well as the route ahead over the famous gritstone escarpment of the Roaches, part of a 6-kilometre curved ridge which you follow all the way to the fascinating viewpoint of the Hanging Stone. From there drop steadily through Back Forest into the very scenic Dane Valley by Gradbach Mill and enter Cheshire.

Ascend out of the valley up across a modest hill with quiet pastures and cross into the scenic Wildboardclough, with fine views ahead of the hardest ascent of the day: up the imposing 'Cheshire Matterhorn': Shutlingsloe. An easy descent down the other side leads to a crossing of High Moor (on a good path) to the rim of the wide bowl of the Macclesfield Forest. Descend through the enchanting wood, then pass a string of reservoirs fed by the Bollin Brook and commence one last climb up The Hollins, a modest hill with fine views over the Cheshire Plain and down into Macclesfield before the drop into the historic Silk Town, with its many tea options.

A bus from Langley cuts out the last ascent. An Alternative Start in Leek makes for a longer walk.

Walk Options:

An Alternative Start in Leek (buses from Stoke, Buxton or Macclesfield) **enables a longer walk:** add 5.8 km/3.6 mi and 140m ascent (**9/10**). **If you travel to the start at Leek via Stoke-on-Trent Station and a subsequent bus journey from Hanley Bus Station:** there are frequent buses linking Stoke Station to Hanley Bus Station, but a **pleasant 2.3 km walking route is described** in text and available as a gpx file.

Omit the ascent of the striking hilly outcrop of Hen Cloud: cuts 1.0 km and 50m ascent.

Cut the out-and-back to the Hanging Stone (cut 880m).

Cut the out-and-back into Lud's Church Chasm, a unique deep mossy cleft (cut 800m).

An Alternative Route on Shutlingsloe avoids the last rough and steep bit of the ascent by skirting the summit (cut 45m ascent).

Bus Line 14 (Langley – Macclesfield, about hourly Mon-Fri, every two hours Sat, last bus (as of 09/2022) at 17.27 Mon-Sat) **enables a finish in Langley** (cut 3.6 km/2.4 mi and 95m ascent).

Elenvenses Upper Hulme Start (details last updated 07/09/2022)

Ye Olde Rock Inn Old Buxton Road, *Upper Hulme, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 8TY (01538 300 324, <https://www.yeolderockinn.com/>)*. Open Wed-Sun from 12.00 to late. Food served to 20.00.

Elenvenses Leek Start (details last updated 09/11/2020)

Numerous options in Leek; some of the ones on the route are mentioned in the pdf.

The Abbey Inn Abbey Green Road, *Leek, Staffordshire Peak District, ST13 8SA (01538 382 865, <https://theabbeyinnleek.co.uk/>)*. The Abbey Inn is located 2.4 km/1.5 mi from the start of the walk. Open Wed-Fri from 17.30 and all-day Sat-Sun, food served from 17.30 Wed-Fri, all day Sat and to 17.00 Sun.

The Lazy Trout Meerbrook, *Leek, Staffordshire Peak District, ST13 8SN (01538 300 385)*. The Trout is located 5.8 km/3.6 mi from the start of the walk. Open all day, food served from 18.00 Mon-Thu and all-day Fri-Sun.

Elenvenses all options (details last updated 30/10/2020)

Roaches Tea Rooms and Restaurant Paddock Farm, *Roach Road, Upper Hulme, Leek, Staffordshire Moorlands ST13 8TY (01538 300 345, <http://www.roachestearooms.co.uk/>)*. The Roaches Tea Rooms are located 820m off route, 3.6 km into the walk, on the lane coming up from Upper Hulme. Open daily 09.00-17.00.

Lunch (details last updated 30/10/2020)

The Outdoor Café Gradbach Mill, *Gradbach, Quarnford, Staffordshire SK17 0SU (01260 227 000, <https://www.gradbach.co.uk/outdoor-cafe/>)*. The Outdoor Café is located 11.7 km (7.3 mi) into the walk, on the banks of the River Dane. Open Easter to October 11.00-17.00 weekends and Bank Holidays, but 7 days during summer school holidays.

The Crag Inn Wildboarclough, *Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 0BD (01260 227 239)*. The Crag Inn is located 15.0 km (9.3 mi) into the walk. Open Fri 12.00-15.00 and Sat-Sun 12.00-16.00.

Tea (details last updated 06/11/2020)

The Forest Snug Food Van Trentabank Reservoir Car Park, *Macclesfield Forest Visitor Centre, Langley, Cheshire, SK11 0NS (07743 909 339)*. The Forest Snug is located 6.0 km (3.7 mi) from the end of the walk. Open weekends and school holidays.

The Leather's Smithy Clarke Lane, *Langley, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 0NE (01260 252 313, <https://www.leathersmithy.co.uk/>)*. The Leather's Smithy is located 4.9 km (3.1 mi) from the end of the walk. Open from noon daily. Selling hot drinks earlier, on weekends.

St. Dunstan's Inn Main Road, *Langley, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 0BU (01260 252 615, <https://stdunstaninn.co.uk/>)*. St. Dunstan's is located 3.7 km (2.3 mi) from the end of the walk. Open 17.00-21.00 Mon, 17.00-23.00 Tue-Wed, 17.00-24.00 Thu, 12.00-15.00 & 17.00-01.00 Fri, 12.00-00.30 Sat and 12.00-22.30 Sun. Food served Thu-Sun.

The Dolphin 76 Windmill Street, *Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 7HS (01625 616 179, <https://www.robinsonsbrewery.com/pubs/the-dolphin-macclesfield/>)*. The Dolphin is a freshly renovated Robinson's pub and located 1.0 km from the end of the walk. Open all day every day.

Numerous options in Macclesfield; some of the ones on the route are mentioned in the pdf.

Notes

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 km² (550 mi²) 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.

The Roaches

The Roaches (from the French *les roches* - the rocks) are the central part of a prominent curving rocky ridge above Leek and Tittesworth Reservoir, which extends for 6 kilometres from Hen Cloud in the south to Back Forest and Hanging Stone in the northwest. The rock formations of the Roaches rise steeply to 505m, and along with the adjacent Ramshaw Rocks and Hen Cloud they form a gritstone escarpment popular with walkers, rock climbers and fell runners. They are formed from a thick bed of coarse sandstone ('gritstone'), which occurs widely across the Peak District and takes its name, the Roaches Grit, from this location.

In clear conditions, views stretch out over much of Cheshire to as far away as Snowdon and Winter Hill/Lancs.

Lud's Church

Lud's Church is a deep chasm penetrating the Roaches Millstone Grit bedrock on the wooded hillside of the Back Forest above Gradbach, in Staffordshire, in the Dark Peak. Over 100m long and 18m deep, it was created by a massive landslide when all but the upper third of the slope has slipped forward towards the River Dane.

The thick bed of coarse Carboniferous sandstone here dips northeastwards and the rocks of this area are traversed by numerous roughly northwest-to-southeast-oriented faults and fracture planes. In addition, weak layers of mudstone exist within the sequence. It is along such lines of weakness that a large mass of the Roaches Grit has slipped slightly downhill into the Dane Valley resulting in the open rift. The age of the movement is unknown but is likely to be post-glacial.

The chasm is mossy and overgrown from top to bottom, and wet and cool even on the hottest of days.

The Lollards (followers of John Wycliffe, an early church reformer), are supposed to have used this as a secret place of worship during the early 15th century, when they were being persecuted for their religious beliefs. Lud's Church may have been named after Walter de Lud-Auk who was captured here at one of their meetings.

It is also believed by some to be the "Greene Chapel" of the medieval poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Dane Valley/Dane River

The River Dane is a tributary of the River Weaver (and therefore the Mersey) that originates in the Peak District at Dane Head on Axe Edge Moor, close to the source of the River Goyt just to the south west of Buxton. Flowing southwest, it forms county borders for around 16 km (Cheshire/Derbyshire, then Cheshire/Staffordshire), before flowing west through Congleton. The point on the river where the three counties meet, at Panniers' Pool Packhorse Bridge, is called Three Shire Heads. The bridge and the waterfalls on the River Dane southwards are very picturesque, and frequently feature on calendars.

The name of the river (earlier *Daven*) probably derives from the Old Welsh *dafn*, meaning a "drop or trickle", implying a slow-moving river.

Shutlingsloe

Shutlingsloe is a hill to the south of Macclesfield Forest, on the edge of the Peak District and within the Peak District National Park. A steep-sided hill with a distinctive profile, it is sometimes referred to as the 'Matterhorn of Cheshire', and it is the third highest peak in the historic county with an elevation of 506m, commanding a wide panorama across the Cheshire Plain and over the Peak District. In clear conditions the view extends as far as the Mersey Estuary and the Welsh Clwydian Hills more than 60 km to the west, and the cooling towers of the power stations on the banks of the River Trent 80 km to the south southeast.

The name of the hill derives from old English 'Scyttel's hlaw' meaning 'Scyttel's (personal name) hill' and is one of several 'low' names in the Peak District, from the same Old English root that gives rise to the name "Law" for many hills in southern Scotland.

The hill is formed from alternating layers of mudstones and coarse sandstones (referred to as 'gritstones'), which were laid down in a delta system in the Carboniferous period. The summit tor is formed from Chatsworth Grit and the lower slopes from Roaches Grit. Several geological faults run through the hill. Shutlingsloe is believed to be a Nunatak, a hill whose peak stood above the surrounding glaciers during the Ice Ages, and therefore did not get eroded by them.

Peak District Boundary Walk

Created by the Friends of the Peak District, the Peak District Boundary Walk is a 307 km (191 mi) waymarked circular long-distance footpath which broadly follows the boundary of the National Park along existing footpaths, tracks, quiet lanes, former railway lines and a canal towpath. A guidebook and an extensive website help in breaking the journey into stages. <https://www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk/boundary-walk/>

Macclesfield Forest

Macclesfield Forest is the last substantial remnant of the Royal Forest of Macclesfield, a once-extensive ancient hunting reserve on the western edge of the Peak District, although it is nowadays predominantly conifer plantation managed for timber. The hills of Tegg's Nose and Shutlingsloe stand to the north west and south east, respectively; the moorland of High Moor lies to the south and the Goyt Valley lies to the east. The area ranges in elevation from around 225m to 475m and includes two hills itself: Toot Hill in the east and Nessit Hill in the south. Two reservoirs, fed by the Bollin Brook, supply water to Macclesfield: Ridgeway Reservoir was constructed in the late 19th century, with Trentabank Reservoir following in the 1920s. The latter contains a large heronry.

Gritstone Trail

The Gritstone Trail (or Cheshire Gritstone Trail, as there are other, less well established, routes in the Peak District under the same moniker) is a 56 km (35 mi) waymarked linear long-distance footpath which follows the most westerly hills of the Peak District from Disley Station via Macclesfield and Congleton to Kids Grove Station. Managed by Cheshire East (although partly in Staffordshire), the trail involves 1,800m of ascent and is mainly outside the National Park. Most through-walkers take 3 days (stopping at Macclesfield and Congleton) to complete the trail, but an unofficial extension from Kids Grove to the mainline station at Stoke-on-Trent, *The Kids Grove to Stoke Ridgeway*, is described in a free ebook.

Bollin Brook/River Bollin

The River Bollin is a 49 km (30 mi) major tributary of the River Mersey. The Bollin Brook springs on the hills surrounding Macclesfield Forest on the western edge of the Peak District, and it feeds a string of reservoirs that supply water to the town and the Macclesfield Canal. Downriver from the reservoirs it is called River Bollin. Further along its course it forms the boundary between Cheshire and Greater Manchester. It is culverted under the southern runway of Manchester Airport and joins the Manchester Ship Canal east of Warrington.

Macclesfield

Macclesfield is a market town in Cheshire East on the edge of the Cheshire Plain with about 50,000 population. It lies on the River Bollin, with Macclesfield Forest to its east, and is around 26 km south of Manchester. The medieval town grew up on the hilltop around what is now St Michael's Church. It had a silk-button industry from at least the middle of the 17th century, and became a major silk-manufacturing centre from the mid-18th century, for a while being the world's biggest producer of finished silk, with 71 silk mills operating in 1832. To this day, "Silk Town" is Macclesfield's nickname.

The town is also the original home of Hovis bread makers, produced in Publicity Works Mill on the Macclesfield canal. *Hovis* derives from the Latin "homo-vitalis" (strength for man) as a way of providing cheap nutritious food for mill workers and was a very dry and dense wholemeal loaf very different from the modern version.

No proof exists that Macclesfield was ever a walled town, and the various streets with the suffix 'gate' in the name are believed to be derived from 'gata', Scandinavian for road, which became gate in Middle English. During the Civil War, in 1642 the town was occupied for the King by Sir Thomas Aston. And in the Jacobite Rising of 1745, Charles Stuart and his army marched through Macclesfield as they attempted to reach London.

Macclesfield is said to be the only mill town to have escaped bombing in World War II.

A person from Macclesfield is sometimes referred to as a "Maxonian"; these include Blues Musician John Mayall and Ian Curtis and Stephen Morris of Joy Division.

Since 1997, Macclesfield has hosted the annual British Lawnmower Race, held in December.

WALK DIRECTIONS

=====

Stoke-on-Trent Train Station to Hanley Bus Station

If arriving from London on Platform 2, use the subway to walk across to Platform 1 and leave Stoke-on-Trent Station there. There are three cafés in the station: **BOD Café**, the **Gourmet Coffee Bar & Kitchen** and the **Coffee Room**. The bus stop for services to Hanley Bus Station is located outside of the main station exit on the left-hand side.

But for a pleasant walking route (2.3 km, mostly along residential roads and through Hanley Park): *turn right* along **Station Road**. In 150m at a four-way major road-junction, and with the **Station Car Park I** on the left, *turn left* along the A52 **Leek Road**. In 130m *fork left* along **Boughey Road** (15°), away from the busy A road. Ignore all residential roads off, **passing two stores en route**, and eventually cross **Avenue Road** and enter **Hanley Park** through a pedestrian gate to the side of a car gate, and continue in the previous direction along a tarmac path. In 75m you pass the **Park Lake** on its right and in 40m *fork right* and in another 50m by some fenced tennis courts, ignore a right turning tarmac path to a park exit.

The path curves up to the left to cross the **Caldon Canal** in 120m and you curve further to the left with the main path through the upper part of the park. In 150m walk between the **Main Pavilion** on the right (with its **Pavilion Café**) and a **bandstand** on the left. *Curve to the right* with the main path and in 80m and another 50m ignore a couple of left forks. In 110m ignore a narrower tarmac path to the right uphill and 25m *fork right* towards a metal gate through which you leave **Hanley Park** in 60m. *Turn left* across a main road and then *turn right* uphill along **Regent Road**'s left-hand pavement. You pass the **City Central Mosque** on the left and in another 200m *turn left* along **Lower Bethesda Street**. In 110m cross the A5008 **Potteries Way** at a set of lights to the right and *turn right* along the opposite pavement. In 50m *turn left* up some steps and through a doorway into **Hanley Bus Station** and *turn right* through the building.

Bus Line 18 to Leek usually leaves from **Stand G** and **bus Line 16** to Leek, Upper Hulme and Buxton usually leaves from **Stand C**.

=====

The Upper Hulme, Old Buxton Road bus stop is not marked by a signpost or a shelter and Old Buxton Road is a crescent-shaped road off the A53 Leek Road, i.e.: **there are two possible drop off points**. Bus drivers seem to be unsure as to where the stop is (although online maps suggest it is meant to be at the lower end of the crescent), so here are directions from both ends of Old Buxton Road:

Alighting from the bus in Upper Hulme in the west of the **Peak District National Park**,

- **if dropped off at the lower end of Old Buxton Road**, turn in a westerly direction along the road and curve up to the right with it, and in 160m *turn left* downhill along **Roach Road**, signed 'Tea Room' and 'Peak Climbing School';
- **if dropped off at the upper end of Old Buxton Road**, turn in a westerly direction along the road and curve down to the left with it, soon passing **Ye Olde Rock Inn** and in 110m *turn right* downhill along **Roach Road**, signed 'Tea Room' and 'Peak Climbing School'.

In 80m, by a left turn of the road, with one of the arms of the **Upper Churnet River** cascading down the hillside to the left, you *fork right* uphill along a concrete drive to the

right of **Carriage House** with a Concessionary Footpath marker on a wall on the left and in 30m go through a metal field gate ('Dains Mill') with another Concession Footpath marker and keep ascending the drive. In 80m you go through some farm buildings and in 50m pass a brick barn and go through a metal field gate. In 80m go through a wooden field gate with a **Churnet Way** marker post. In 40m by **Dains Mill**, *bear left* with a gravel car wide track to cross the **Churnet River** and in 40m go over a stile to the left of a wooden field gate with a yellow marker. [!] In 10m *bear right* along a grassy track with a wooden fence on the right, ignoring the continuation of the gravel track further uphill.

In 40m ignore a wooden gate on the right and *turn left* with the fence, in 10m entering **Access Land** through another wooden gate. The next 100m are mud-prone and only partially covered by boardwalks, but eventually the area opens out to a wide grassy area with a house visible above on the left. In 50m go through a crumbling drystone wall by a marker post (the rocky ridge ahead is **Ramshaw Rocks**) and in 50m go through a wooden gate with a footpath marker. You follow a path through a grassy tussocky area and in 70m cross a stream (a Churnet tributary down from **Well Farm**) and *turn left* immediately along it with a Concessionary Footpath, ignoring the continuation towards a **picturesque half-ruined shed** (the Churnet Way continues that way further upstream). In 50m go through a wooden gate **out of the Access Land** and *turn left* along a public footpath along the fence on the left. In 60m you go through a wooden gate in a fence and *turn right* along a gravel car wide track, the drive to the house on the left.

The track turns to the left immediately and steadies out on 340°. Ignore all gates and faint paths off the track (some are public footpaths, others aren't) and walk all the way to Well Farm. **Hen Cloud** is rising on the left, **The Roaches** are ahead and the grassy **Summerhill** sits on the right. [!] At the farm, by the first barn and just *before* a double metal field gate, where a public footpath turns right, you [!] *turn left* with a signpost on the left by a wooden gate in a drystone wall ('Concession Footpath to the Roaches'). Cross a sloping pasture to a stile at the bottom of Hen Cloud. Go over the stile to re-enter **Access Land**, cross the stream and *bear up to the left* along a clear path (a public footpath). In 50m by a marker post on the left ('Roaches Estate, Hen Cloud. Please keep to footpath'), you reach a T-junction of public footpaths by a marker post.

Here you have a choice:

To cut out the ascent of Hen Cloud (cut 1.0 km and 50m ascent), *turn right* along the path and contour along the hill, eventually curving to the left with the path. You ignore a left fork slightly uphill (which links to the descent route from the top), and head for a wooden gate in a drystone wall and *turn right* through the gate, briefly leaving the **Access Land**. Pick up the directions below at the asterisk *).

For the Main Walk up to the top of Hen Cloud, *turn left* along the narrow path through tussocky heathery ground and in 100m cross a stream in a dip. In 50m go through a crumbling drystone wall into trees and in 50m *fork right* gently uphill, ignoring a path descending to the left. The path curves to the right in 15m and in 40m you can spot a pond down below through the trees by a two-storey house and ignore a path steeply up to the right. In another 50m you can see the more imposing, multi-storey **Roaches Hall** ahead on the left. In 75m, just before the path bears to the left downhill past some large boulders 30m away on the right to the Hall now dead ahead, you [!] *turn hard right* uphill back on yourself (350°), with a rockface looming above on the left.

In 70m pass a rocky nose and *bear left* with the path, now with an easier gradient (fine back views of Roaches Hall from here) and in 20m you pass a rocky bowl on the left. In 35m, with a drystone wall visible ahead, *turn left* uphill with the path, in 25m emerging

from the trees and continuing along (or at times on top of) the wall through the heathery and partly boggy hillside to the obvious ridge ahead. In 230m at the top, *turn left* for 40m to the very highest point of **Hen Cloud** at 410m above sea, and enjoy **views across the plain** and to Tittesworth Reservoir and Leek (on 210°), the Bosley Cloud (290°) and the BT Tower on Croker Hill (310°, SWC Walk 3xx Macclesfield Circular). Return the way you came but continue along the dramatic scarp, with the drop on your left, into the green saddle between Hen Cloud and The Roaches and in 470m go through a wooden gate in a drystone wall to briefly leave the **Access Land**.

*) Cross a pasture to another gate opposite and in 80m go through the gate, re-entering **Access Land**, and at a signed four-way footpath junction ignore left and right turns, to start the ascent of **The Roaches** (signed 'Roach End') along a clear and intermittently engineered path to the left of a wooden bench, with fine views on the right of **Ramshaw Rocks**. In 80m ignore a right fork and continue uphill towards the left of the obvious steep rockface ahead, a **rock-climbing and bouldering venue as famous as any other in the UK**. In 100m the path levels out and in 30m you go through a gap in a drystone wall and *turn right* along it initially (ignore a left turn steeply down some steps). Pass under the dramatic rockface along a level earthen path with some scattered boulders and then continue through the top of a wooded area, with the steep rockface above you on the right. In 300m, at a T-junction of forest paths, *turn right* uphill along an engineered path heading over 70m steeply up a stepped rough path through a cleft in the rocks.

At the top, *turn left* along the edge of the Roaches. The route along the ridge is always clear, but try to **follow the flagged or otherwise engineered paths** where possible to prevent further erosion of this very popular route. You head gently uphill, for a while along a sandy path, to in 400m pass the 15 x 10m sized **Doxey Pool** and continue without much more height gain over another 1.1 km to the **trig point at 505m above sea level**. This top is 1m lower than **Shutlingsloe** (visible on 340°), which you cross later. Also, in view are **Shining Tor** (due N) and **Kinder Scout** on 10°. In another 350m you pass the last of the many magnificent gritstone outcrops. On the right you have grand views across to **Gradbach Hill** with its rock outcrops and beyond it and slightly to the left, the higher upland moors of **Axe Edge**, leading to **Shining Tor**. In 470m you complete the descent from the 3-kilometre-long Roaches ridge at a bend of a road by **Roach End, between the Roaches and the Ridge**, by a signpost for 'The Roaches Main Path'.

Cross carefully and continue in the same direction through a squeeze wall gap by a two-way footpath signpost ('Lud's Church', 'Swythamley') and in 25m go through a wooden gate and follow a clear path along a drystone wall on the left gently up the **Ridge** (this is also a Concessionary Cycleway). In 800m you go through a dip and soon after – at a fork by a two-way signpost – continue in the same direction away from the wall along a concession footpath ('Swythamley via Ridge'), where the public footpath forks left along the wall. In 270m, in another dip, at a signposted four-way junction of concession footpaths, you continue in the same direction along the ridge line, signed 'Swythamley, Danebridge'. In 10m you go through a wooden gate in a drystone wall and in 170m pass a rockface on the left. The Ridge curves away to the left towards its end by the **Hanging Stone** while half right ahead you can see the upper part of the **Dane Valley** beyond Gradbach Mill, as well as **Shutlingsloe**, the 'Cheshire Matterhorn'.

In 380m go through a wooden gate in a fence and in 550m at a signposted three-way path junction with a public footpath (also a concession bridleway), *turn left* ('Swythamley') for 40m and *turn right* over a stone slab stile into a pasture and follow a clear grass path ('Concession Path Hanging Stone') in a westerly direction to the **Hanging Stone** 380m away (go over a low wall in 200m and in 180m *turn left* to the Stone). Return to the three-way signpost and continue in the same direction ('Gradbach, Lud's Church'; i.e.: *turn right*

from the previous direction along the ridge line), with fine views into the **Dane Valley** to the left. In 700m you enter trees and in 100m by some gritstone outcrops on the left (**Castle Cliff Rocks, a fine viewpoint up the Dane Valley**), you reach a fork in the path by a three-way signpost.

For an out-and-back to Lud's Church chasm [Note: the chasm is famously rarely touched by sunlight, so will almost always be **wet and slippery**], *fork right* along a public footpath ('Lud's Church'), with the sloping wood rising up on the right. In 200m *turn right* to one of the entrances to **the chasm known as Lud's Church**. You *turn left* down some steps into the chasm and initially cross a boardwalk section, with a money tree on the ground on the left, then in 80m the chasm forks into two branches, both of which are **well worth exploring** all the way to the end (there is also a tight walkable gap linking the two branches). **Return to the three-way signpost in the wood**, where you *turn hard right*, back on yourself, along a public footpath (also a concession bridleway) to 'Gradbach'.

You gently descend through the enchanting wood and in about 500m at a three-way footpath junction at the top of some steps, *turn left* down the steps towards the level of the **Dane River** ('Gradbach'). In 25m ignore a signposted left turning concession footpath ('Danebridge') and *bear right* to a signposted four-way footpath junction in 40m. Cross the **Black Brook** on a concrete bridge and go through a wooden gate to follow a clear path to the right gently uphill. In 40m *turn left* up a stone slab stile to go through a wall gap and - ignoring a right turn uphill, signed 'Scout Camp' - *bear left* downhill along a broad gravel path, broadly along the Dane River. In 250m *turn right* up through a wall into a pasture and *turn left* along its left-hand boundary (i.e.: continue in the previous direction). In 90m go through a wooden gate and down some steps past the early lunch stop, **The Outdoors Café**, and pass a picnic area by the grassy riverbank towards **Gradbach Mill**, a former silk spinning mill and youth hostel (now a hotel specialising in conferences and weddings).

Just before the mill building, this side of a drystone wall, notice the **county boundary marker** on the left. *Turn left* in front of the mill to cross the Dane River on a two-railed steel bridge **into Cheshire**. You go through a metal kissing gate and *bear left* uphill with a marker post along a clear path. In 180m at the top of the rise, go through a drystone wall gap a little to the left and *turn left* along the wall in a steep grassy boulder-filled hillside. In 50m in the bottom-left corner, *turn right* along a wall with a marker post, staying as close as possible to the left-hand boundary, and in 130m leave the hillside through a wooden gate to continue uphill along a drive joining from the left from two houses. In 120m go through a metal field gate with a footpath signpost and cross a road to continue in the same direction uphill a car wide track between walls, a public footpath along an **Unclassified Road**, and as such also used by off-road motorbikes and cars.

In 100m go through a metal field gate (a public footpath joins from the right) and in 60m through another one to continue uphill through the open pasture land **out of the Dane Valley**. In 200m go through a metal field gate and in 180m the track levels out and you continue along the track with occasional Unclassified Road markers and through several gates, without any tracks or paths off it. In about 550m, you have Shutlingsloe visible ahead on 340° and Shining Tor on 10°. In 120m, by a wall on the right and a farm on the left below, you start to descend along the flank of **Tagsclough Hill** into the **Wildboardclough** towards the audible **A54** and in 170m *bear right* along a tarmac drive from the farm, marked on the left as an **Unclassified Road**. In 75m, where the drive turns down to the left to a field gate on the A road, you continue in the same direction along a signposted public footpath, down to a stile by the A road in 40m.

Cross the road a little to the right and go over another stile by a two-way signpost and down some steps to follow a clear path downhill, which in 30m joins a track coming down

from the left from a metal field gate. In 60m you ford a stream and continue towards some ruined farm buildings. In 80m pass a part-ruined barn on the right-hand side to *turn left* at the far end of it towards a metal field gate in a drystone wall. In 30m go over a stone slab stile with a yellow marker into a pasture and *bear right* (330°) across it towards a wide gap (a missing gate) in a crumbling drystone wall 80m away.

In the next field *bear left* (300°) across the pasture's corner towards the corner of a walled wood, and in 60m continue along the wall with a marker post. In 90m in the field corner go over a slab stone stile in a drystone wall with a yellow marker and follow a car wide track downhill to the left of a wood. In 140m go through a metal field gate. The next 25m can be very muddy indeed as a stream meanders down it, **the driest route** tends to be just to the left of the track. At a marker post in another 25m *bear left* diagonally (5°) across a large pasture towards a two-railed footbridge over a muddy area 120m away and continue in the same direction over a small rise and down to another two-railed footbridge over a stream and *turn left* downhill along the stream, between low walls. In 70m ignore a public footpath turning right to a farm, but continue in the same direction further downhill along the stream (**the best route** curves a little to the right to avoid some boggy sections).

In 80m go over a stepless stile into a wood and follow a drystone wall on the left downhill, with the stream now on your right. In 50m cross the stream (this may require a jump) and in 12m go either way around a large tree and cross the lively **Clough Brook** by its confluence with the stream on a two-railed wooden footbridge. In 20m you reach the road through **Wildboarclough** (according to legend the place where the last wild boar in England was killed). For the only pub lunch stop, **The Crag Inn**, *turn left* along the road for 50m. [If you do, perhaps try the mineral water bottled from a spring in their grounds: <https://cragsspringwater.co.uk/>]. Else, *turn right* along the road, with **Clough Brook** to the right of the road and in 40m **[!]** *fork up to the left* with a public footpath signpost with a **Peak District Boundary Walk** marker along a car wide tarmac drive.

There are copious bluebells in season on the wooded slope on the right. In 450m you pass a Peak & Northern Footpath Society sign for the 'Public Footpath Shutlingsloe to Langley' and cross a cattle grid or a stile to the left, and continue in the same direction along the tarmac drive where a track and a public footpath fork right. In 220m, just before the track continues through a wall gap towards **Shutlingsloe Farm** ahead, you *turn left* uphill with a **Peak District Boundary Walk** and footpath marker post, starting the ascent of **Shutlingsloe**. In 40m go through a wall gap and then follow a clear and well-marked path uphill, in 60m across a boardwalk past a spring (on the OS map) and through a metal kissing gate and ascend further along a clear grassy path. In 170m you go through another metal kissing gate in a drystone wall into **Access Land**.

Here you have three choices:

For an easier route, avoiding the ascent to the exposed mountain top, **as well as for the most direct route up to and over the top**, following some rough paths at the top of the ascent, you *veer right* (315°) along a clear path and in 50m at a fork:

- **for the easier route**, *turn right*, contouring along the flank of the hill, broadly along the wall on the right below. In 180m, by a metal field gate, you continue along the wall, and in 120m go through a metal kissing gate and *bear left* with a marker post along a clear path uphill. In 90m the terrain kind of levels out and the path veers left towards a clough. Pick any of several paths up this eerie boggy clough and at the top of it continue along a clear and mostly firm path through the open upland moor, with Shutlingsloe's top away on the left. In 170m *turn left* over a plank bridge across a stream and *turn right* towards a metal kissing gate 60m away. The Main Walk route

joins from the left along a flagged path and you go through the gate and pick up the directions below at the double asterisk **);

- **for the direct route over the top**, continue in the same direction and in 320m at the top of the ascent emerge right by the trig point on the grassy plateau with a toposcope 10m to the right (pick up the directions two paragraphs below: "You are at 506m above sea level..."),

For the recommended gentler route up to and over the top, (the steep part of this route is shorter and mostly up a grassy slope rather than a rocky earthen path), *veer left* (285°) along a clear grassy path and in 300m at the top of the path, *turn right* further uphill for the last steep ascent onto the grassy plateau. The trig point is 110m away, a toposcope another 10m.

You are at **506m above sea level** (i.e. 1m higher than on the Roaches) and the top plateau provides for stunning views of the surrounding tops (MorrIDGE, the boundary to the White Peak area of the Peak District, Shining Tor, Cats Tor, the **Sutton Common BT Tower** on **Croker Hill** on 170°, conceived in the 1950s as part of the 'Backbone' communication chain in case of Nuclear War), as well as back down into the **Wildboarclough**, towards the **Roaches** and to parts of **Tittesworth Reservoir** just beyond them, with **Leek** just beyond that. Also, on view is the World Heritage Site of the **Jodrell Bank Observatory** (on 280°).

Descend from the summit plateau by *turning down to the left* at the trigpoint (seen from the recommended route up the grassy plateau) along a clear engineered path, which turns right immediately, and at the bottom of the steep part of the descent you go over a stone slab stile with a wooden gate on top and continue in the same direction along a paved path along a drystone wall and in 300m reach a metal kissing gate in the wall, where another paved path joins from the right. This is the route avoiding the top. *Turn left* through the gate by a Peak & Northern Footpath Society sign for the 'Public Footpath Langley'.

******) You follow a paved path (310°) initially gently ascending across the large open **High Moor** and in 20m pass a sign just off path on the left for the Piggford Moor Nature Reserve **moorland restoration project**. In 200m you start to descend gently and in 60m pass a sign to remind dog owners **to keep dogs on a short lead** during bird nesting season (01 March – 21 July). In 280m leave the moorland (and the **Access Land**) through a wooden kissing gate with a signpost for the public footpath to **Wildboarclough via Shutlingsloe** following it. Continue in the same direction through a grassy area and through trees past a bench-with-views, ignoring a left turning gravel path. In 40m you reach the rim of the huge bowl of the **Macclesfield Forest**, with **Nessit Hill** nearby on the left and **Toot Hill** opposite, with Tegg's Nose inbetween (the latter two passed on SWC 3xx Macclesfield to Buxton). [The clear-felled area below is re-planted with broadleaves, replacing conifers.]

Turn left ('Trentabank') along a broad gravel track and in 100m at a signposted three-way junction, the other path from the gate joins from the left. In about 200m, at a signposted three-way junction of tracks and by the top of the treeline, you *fork right* along a public footpath ('Trentabank'), ignoring a forest bridleway forking left. In 30m go through a bike-and-horse squeeze gate and descend through the enchanting wood along the flank of **Nessit Hill**, with a steep drop on the right. Eventually the path continues along a drystone wall on the left and in another 130m you continue in the same direction at a track junction ('Trentabank'), ignoring the left turn towards 'Trentabank via Gritstone Trail'. In 120m the descent continues more steeply along another wall section and in 70m another path joins from the right behind. In 70m *turn left* with a signpost, with a tarmac lane to the right below and the **Trentabank Reservoir** beyond it.

You have left the **Peak District National Park**. In 50m ignore a left turn (a permissive path according to the map) and go through another squeeze gate and continue between rows of mature trees, in 40m passing an oversized map of the forest and its paths. You enter a car park by the **Trentabank Ranger Centre** (toilet facilities), with **The Forest Snug Food Van** away on the left (weekends and summer school holidays). Continue in the same direction (in 40m through another squeeze gate) along an earthen track to the left of the lane, passing the reservoir dam on the right and after 200m of gentle descent go through another squeeze gate at a three-way tarmac lane junction and cross a lane joining from the direction of **Wincle** and go through another squeeze gate and *turn right* along a gravel path parallel to the lane on the right (bluebells on the left in season).

In 70m you pass the drive to the **Forest Office** on the other side of the lane and start to descend and in another 80m go through a squeeze gate to continue along the lane. In 40m the lane levels out, with the dam of **Trentabank Reservoir** on the right and **Ridgegate Reservoir** on the left. Continue along the lane and *turn left* with it, and in 80m *turn right* through another squeeze gate ('Footpath Only'). You pass another map of the **Macclesfield Forest** and follow a gravel path parallel to the lane but separated by a low wall for a good 400m (bluebells on the right in season), before *turning left* through a squeeze gate onto the lane. In 70m, at a three-way lane junction by **The Leather's Smithy** pub, *turn left* along **Clarke Lane** and immediately ignore a footpath turning left along the reservoir dam. In 230m pass **High Low Farm** and continue steeply downhill along the lane and in 100m pass a car wide tarmac lane from **Green Barn Farm** on the left (the **Gritstone Trail** joins along it).

In 30m you continue along **Bottoms Reservoir**, the last of a string of reservoirs supplying drinking water to Macclesfield as well as water for the **Macclesfield Canal**, and in another 220m by a signpost for **Tegg's Nose**, the Gritstone Trail turns right. The lane drops below the water level of the reservoir behind an earth wall and in 180m you pass **Clarke Lane Farm** on the outskirts of **Langley** on your left. Continue downhill along the right-hand pavement and in 140m ignore Holehouse Lane on the right and in 80m Teggs Nose Mount (residential road) on the left. You pass a row of cottages in **Langley** village and in 100m **St. Dunstan's Inn** and in another 100m at a three-way junction, a **bus stop for services to Macclesfield** is 40m away on the left. *Turn right* along **Langley Road's** pavement and in 70m by the village hall you ignore the right turning **Coalpit Lane**. In 90m, cross the drive leading to **Langley Hall** and in another 20m cross a stream on the road. In 100m [!] *turn right* through a metal kissing gate and continue between a wall and a fence. In 70m you go through another metal kissing gate and continue between fences.

In 120m *turn right* with the path over a couple of bridges to cross first the **River Bollin** and then a tributary stream. You now follow a clear grass path gently uphill a sloping pasture and in 200m *veer to the left* with it, further uphill. In 100m go through a metal kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate and continue in the same direction uphill. In 125m, by a two-way footpath signpost, *turn left* ('To Macclesfield'). You get fine views on the left through a couple of breaks in the trees of the Radio Station on the hill opposite the valley of the River Bollin and down into the valley, before the path continues between trees. In 100m you curve to the right and in 150m you emerge from the trees to continue gently uphill through a grassy area. In 170m at the brow of this rise, in the back you get last views (in all but the worst weathers) of the top of **Shutlingsloe** (on 115°), although from this side it doesn't look much like a 'Matterhorn'. You are on **The Hollins**, the hill **overlooking Macclesfield** (the centre of which is still out of sight though). Descend to a wooded area and in 130m go through a metal kissing gate with a footpath marker and follow a clear path through the trees.

In 100m, at a four-way junction, cross a track leading on the right to a green at **Macclesfield Golf Club**, and in 40m pass the fenced **Hollins Service Reservoir** away on the left. In 60m enter trees, cross a service track and start to descend a little and in 20m pass a footpath marker post with a bin attached to it! In 40m *veer right* with the path, with some fairways of the golf course on the right. In another 120m you leave the trees and continue along a narrow earthen path past a farm, after which you enjoy far views across the **Cheshire Plain** and down to the southerly parts of **Macclesfield** on the left below, as well as several holes of the golf club. In 120m you cross a gravel track by a large transformer mast on the right and in 40m *turn left* down some steps by a signpost through a wall gap onto a track. Continue a little to the left down some more steps to descend between walls. In 100m *bear right* and at a three-way junction, *turn right* along a car wide gravel drive (a signed 'Public Path'), ignoring the public footpath ahead. In 120m, ignore the signposted public footpath re-joining from the left and cross the **Macclesfield Canal** on the lane and continue downhill along the cobbled **Richmond Hill** (road). In 60m, by **Black Road Stores** on the right, cross **Black Road** and – 20m to the right – go down some steps into **Windmill Street Park and King George Playing Field** and cross it towards its far-right hand corner (**The Dolphin** pub is away on the right).

Leave the park onto **Windmill Street** and *turn left* downhill along it. You pass **St. Peter's Church** on the right and a bus stop (line 58 from Buxton) and **St. Peter's Working Man's Institute** on the left and cross the road at a convenient point. Immediately after passing Knight Street on the right and then crossing the railway line on a bridge, **[!]** *turn right* downhill along **Waterside** (road). In 140m go under the viaduct of the raised dual-carriageway A523 **Silk Road**, cross **Lower Bank Street** and continue in the same direction along **Waterside**. In 80m by **Storm Brewing**, *turn left* across the **Bollin** on a car wide bridge, go through some bollards and continue along a cobbled road (**Park Green**) between industrial buildings. In 80m, by a fenced green and a war memorial on the left, *turn right* along **Sunderland Street**. En route to the station 300m away, you pass various pubs, bars and restaurants: **The Jolly Sailor**, the **Treacle Tap**, **The George & Dragon**, **Spanish Caravan**, **The Queen's**. Continue past the station for **more pubs, bistros and restaurants**, either along the crescent in front of the station or up to the left along **Waters Green** or up along one of the narrow lanes or flights of steps rising up towards the **Old Town and Market Place**.

London bound trains depart from Platform 2.

Alternative Start in Leek (add 5.8 km/3.6 mi and 140m ascent)

Alighting from the bus at **Leek Bus Station**, *turn left* from the direction of travel out of the station between rows of shops through a paved pedestrianised area. In 50m *turn right* at a T-junction with **Haywood Street**, the A53. In 35m *turn left* across the road at a set of lights and *turn left* at a major road junction, with the **Nicholson War Memorial** on the right (at 27m one of the tallest in England), to continue along **Derby Street**. Leek's main shopping street has **Getliffes Yard Victorian Arcade** branching off to the right, as well as several cafés, bakeries and pubs, and in 280m, at the corner of **the historic Market Square**, you *turn right* to cross the square. In 80m, at the top of the market, cross the busy **Church Street** and *turn left* along the opposite pavement. In 40m *fork right* to enter the churchyard of **St. Edward the Confessor, Leek** and pass the church on either side to leave the churchyard in the diagonally opposite corner and *turn right* along the cobbled **Church Lane**. In 30m *bear right* to continue to the right of St. Edward Cottage along a tarmac path downhill through **Brough Park**. Briefly, from the very top of this path, you have the **first views of the tops of The Roaches and Hen Cloud** ahead.

In 100m another tarmac path joins from the right and you follow the path through the bottom of a dry grassy valley, ignoring a left turn into a residential area, and start to re-ascend along the tarmac path, generally uphill over the next 180m (fork left near the top of the rise). At a T-junction with another tarmac path, continue in the same direction across a grassy area and in 50m cross a tarmac path to walk alongside some trees on the left across a grassy area (in the trees on the left: daffodils and bluebells in season). In 120m, by a map of the **Brough Park Fields Local Nature Reserve**, you *turn left* into a wood and in 80m go through a wooden kissing gate into an open area. You have the lush green **Churnet Valley** down on the right below and follow a clear path past a wooden bench in 50m. Continue through a mud-prone stretch and on the right over your shoulder you can spot the gritstone edges and outcrops walked along later: parts of **the Roaches** as well as the distinctive **Hen Cloud** (on 30°) and **Ramshaw Rocks**, as well as the **Morridge**, the high moors separating this area from the **White Peak** part of the Peak District.

In 110m you go through a wooden kissing gate, in 60m continue between fences, in 75m go through a metal gate and follow a fenced path downhill, and in 75m *turn left* with the path to pass the back of a large shed. *Turn right* downhill with the path (and down some steps) to emerge on **Abbey Green Road** and *turn right* long it. You cross the **Churnet River** on the road and continue along the road's pavement. In about 400m the pavement switches to the right-hand side and in another 60m you ignore a left turning footpath over a stile into a pasture. In 70m follow the pavement ahead towards **The Abbey Inn** and in 50m *turn right* to pass its front. Stay to the right of a cottage in 30m and in 40m go through a metal kissing gate into a large, gently sloping pasture. You *veer left* along a clear grass path gently up the pasture (35°) and in 180m the terrain levels out, with the **Churnet Valley** down below to the right and the high moorland ridge beyond. In 280m at the top-left field corner, go through an elaborate wooden gate (notice the stencilled dedication to Tony Squires) and continue in the same direction through **Abbey Wood**.

In 50m continue along a car wide track and in 80m go through a wooden gate to the left of a metal field gate and follow a clear car wide track gently uphill through a large pasture. In about 300m the gradient eases and in another 170m you pass a distinctive clump of trees at the top of the hill (**Hillswood**). There are very fine views to be had from here, towards **Shutlingsloe** (due N), the **Roaches**, **Hen Cloud** and **Ramshaw Rocks**, as well as to **Morridge**. You continue in the same direction to in 120m go through a squeeze gap in a drystone wall and in 40m start the gentle descent from the hill, with some trees and a drystone wall on the right. In 220m go through a metal field gate and continue in the same

direction along a gravel track and in 100m *turn right* with the track. In 30m *turn left* downhill at a track T-junction by **North Hillswood Farm** and a footpath signpost on the right. In 160m you start to re-ascend and in 110m pass **Hillswood End**. In 200m you cross a cattle grid and continue in the same direction along a road at a bend.

In 350m, by a tarmac drive on the right leading to **Tittesworth Watersports**, a pavement starts and in 770m at a three-way lane junction in the village of **Meerbrook**, you *turn right* ('Blackshaw Moor 1 ¼, Leek 3 ¼'). You have entered the **Peak District National Park**, pass an info panel and in 60m, at a three-way road junction by **The Lazy Trout** pub, *turn left* ('Roche Grange 1 ¾'). In 170m the road crosses a stream and in 30m **[!]** you *turn right* with a footpath signpost along a tarmac drive towards **Lower Lee Farm**. In 90m continue in the same direction along a gravel car wide track to the right of the house and in 20m go through a wooden field gate and cross a small paddock diagonally to the left with a signpost. In 50m go over a stile with a signpost and *turn left* in a pasture along its boundary. In 130m go through a boundary gap (a missing gate) into the next field and in another 70m pass a footpath signpost on the left. In 5m go over a stile to the right of a metal field gate (may be seasonal) and in 50m through a metal gate onto a gravel car wide lane and *turn right* along it. Go over a cattle grid and descend with the farm track to cross a stream in 160m. In 75m ignore a right turning public footpath towards a stile and continue in the same direction towards a farm (**Frith Bottom**).

Go through the farmyard, with a couple of yellow markers on the barns on the left, and at the far end *turn left* through a metal field gate to pass a small barn and then an open shed on the right to enter a large pasture through another metal field gate and follow its right-hand boundary. In 160m *turn right* over a stile and through a wall squeeze gap to the left of a wooden field gate into another pasture and follow its right-hand field boundary, immediately ignoring a right turning public footpath over a stile. In the far-right field corner *turn left* along a stream and in 50m *turn right* to leave the field across the stream on a mossy and tilting (and therefore **very slippery**) two-railed footbridge and through a wooden gate. Go through another pasture along its left-hand boundary and in 175m you reach a signposted four-way footpath junction. *Turn left* over a stile and through a wall gap ('Windygates, Roaches') and follow a left-hand field boundary. In 280m you go through a squeeze gap to the left of a metal field gate and continue in the same direction along a right-hand field boundary. In 290m go through a squeeze gap to the right of a metal field gate and continue uphill through the next field towards some farm buildings 200m away.

At **Windygates Farm**, you cross a concrete track and *turn right* to continue *to the left of the barn* facing you (i.e.: not *through* the barn), past a footpath signpost in 10m and in 15m you go through a wooden gate and down some steps to continue through the farmyard along a car wide track. In 75m go through a metal field gate and in 30m **[!]** *turn left* up some steep steps and continue steeply uphill to the left up a pasture. In 50m you converge with the left-hand field boundary wall and follow it uphill to leave the field in its top-left corner through a wall gap by a two-way footpath signpost onto a tarmac lane. The **Roaches Tea Rooms and Restaurant** are 650m away to the right along the lane. Cross the lane and go up some steps and through a wooden gate and ascend a pasture along its right-hand boundary wall, with the **Roaches** up on the left and **Hen Cloud** up on the right. The BMC's **Don Whillans Memorial Hut** can be seen on the left under the buttresses. In 170m you reach a wooden gate in the wall on the right. The Main Walk joins from the right.

For a short out-and-back up Hen Cloud, *turn right* through the gate and go up the obvious path ahead, then return back here (add 500m each way with 66m ascent).

For the Main Walk, *turn left* this side of the gate and pick up the directions above at the asterisk *).