

Follow the Countryside Code

Respect, Protect, Enjoy!

Respect other people:

- consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths, unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment:

- leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors:

- plan ahead and be prepared
- follow advice and local signs

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code



Cycle Hire

Do you prefer to cycle rather than walk? Visit our Cycle Hire Centre at Middleton Top. The High Peak Trail offers 17.5 traffic-free miles of cycling through beautiful countryside, and connects with the Tissington Trail at Parsley Hay. www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/cycling/cycle_hire or call **01629 533294**.



Middleton Top Engine House

This Scheduled Ancient Monument contains a superb pair of beam engines. Built in 1829 and driven by steam, the winding engine raised and lowered waggons on the Middleton Incline of the Cromford and High Peak railway. The Engine House is open on some weekends during the summer months. Admission charges apply.

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/countryside_sites/visitor_centres

Walking Around Wirksworth

With a fascinating history, and a maze of back streets to explore, Wirksworth is a thriving, vibrant and welcoming place to live and visit. There are plenty of cafés, coffee shops and pubs to help revive the weary walker.

The paths on this route may be rough and muddy at times, so be prepared and wear appropriate footwear. The route should be easy to follow, and is waymarked with "Circuit Walks around Wirksworth" discs. Ordnance Survey Outdoor Leisure Map No.24 is recommended to enhance your walk.



How to Find Middleton Top

Middleton Top is easily accessed from the B5035 between Wirksworth and Ashbourne. Look out for the brown tourist signs. There is ample pay and display parking on site, as well as toilet facilities and a seasonal shop selling refreshments and drinks.

Public Transport

For details on public transport in Derbyshire, visit: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport_roads/public_transport



More Information

If you need to find out more, please contact: **Middleton Top** on **01629 533298**, or **Call Derbyshire** on **01629 533190**.

For information on all our Countryside Sites go to: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside

If you have difficulty reading this leaflet, it can be made available in other formats. Contact **Call Derbyshire** on **01629 533190**.

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Circuit Walks Around Wirksworth

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Middleton Top - Carsington Water - Wirksworth - Middleton Top 7.5 or 15.5 miles

Greenhill, Wirksworth



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County Council

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/countryside

Circuit Walks Around Wirksworth

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Middleton Top to Wirksworth

This walk is one of a series of waymarked and easy to follow walks around Wirksworth and the surrounding area. Allow 3 to 4 hours for the short route, 5 to 6 hours for the long route.

1 Start your walk by heading away from the Visitor Centre and Engine House along the High Peak Trail. If you start going down the steep incline, you've gone the wrong way!

2 After passing through a pair of gates and over a rough track that crosses the trail, you will soon enter Hopton Tunnel - which is 113 yards long. After the tunnel, look out for the remains of an old boiler on your left that once powered a winding engine on an old branch line to Hopton Wood Quarry. You will soon begin to walk up Hopton Incline. When the Railway was still working, at 1 in 14 this incline was one of the steepest gradients in the British Isles that locomotives were able to tackle under their own steam. It also took a large amount of skill from the driver!

3 At the top of the incline go through a gate, and past the old Engine Man's cottage and outbuildings. Shortly afterwards, go through another pair of gates either side of a works access road. Don't go too far beyond the last gate, because you will be leaving the High Peak Trail very soon. A fingerpost on your left, signposted to Carsington, indicates the next stage of your route. With care, climb over the old stone step stiles and cross over the road (look out for fast traffic) and enter the large field opposite. This is Carsington Pasture. Its pitted landscape reveals evidence of historic lead mining activity. To your left, in the adjacent field, are the remains of an old windmill that once worked here. Today you can't fail to notice the Wind Turbines that continue to harness the wind, and are visible from miles around.



From left: Remains of the Hopton Wood boiler, Hopton Tunnel on the High Peak Trail, wind turbines from Hopton Bottom.

4 Keep the stone wall to your left, and walk up the field, watching out for capped mine shafts. At the head of the field, bear left while still keeping the wall close to you. You will soon have your first view of Carsington Water down below on your right. Still keep the wall to your left, walk along the top of the pasture. You will walk past a rock outcrop known as the King's Chair, and soon reach the woodland at the far end.

Please be careful on the next stretch. It is very steep, and can be difficult in wet conditions.

At this point turn right and head down the hillside aiming for the waymarker post. From there follow the well-worn path down the hillside, aiming to the left of the cottage below you at the bottom of the hillside. Pass through the wooden gate at the side of the cottage into what appears to be a private garden, it is a public right of way. Turn left down the steps onto a surfaced drive that brings you into Carsington village.

Carsington to Hopton

5 If you are following the shorter route, turn left onto the main road, and follow it through Carsington and then on to Hopton. Although this road is generally quiet, watch out for passing vehicles. If you are walking during Snowdrop Season, Hopton Hall is well worth a detour as you pass by. Towards the end of Hopton village, look out for the Severn Trent waymarked route on the right, and follow it down to the main road. **Cross with care, it can be busy and fast,** and turn left onto the surfaced track around Carsington Water. Follow this track around the reservoir for about 275 yards, looking out for a finger post on your right, indicating a footpath to your left. **This is POINT A on the map.**

Carsington Village to Carsington Water

To continue around Carsington Water (adding a further challenging 8 miles to your walk) take the right fork on the road behind the Miners Arms public house. The road soon turns sharp right up a slight incline. When it turns right again, follow the track directly ahead of you. This takes you down to the main road. **Cross with care, it can be busy and fast.** This is the circular route around Carsington Water. Turn right, keeping the water to your left, and follow the Severn Trent Water waymarking around the reservoir until you reach **POINT A** on your map. Look for a finger post on your left, indicating a footpath to your right.

POINT A Climb over the stile and follow the footpath across the field. At the field boundary continue to climb ahead to the Holly tree in the corner of the following field. Continue up the next field and at the crest bear left to the far corner of the field where there is a wicket gate onto Stainsbro Lane.

6 Turn left onto the road, and follow it downhill whilst watching out for traffic.

7 After passing Stainsborough Hall on your left, ignore the footpath directly opposite, look for the footpath on your right that goes up a wide track. Follow the track to the right as it gets narrower, ignoring a stile on the left. At the summit turn left over a stile opposite a wooden bench. From here there are superb views of Wirksworth nestling in the valley below. Wirksworth has amenities such as cafés, shops and pubs, should you wish to explore further.

8 The footpath heads downhill, crossing a number of fields. In the bottom field the path passes to the left of a stone barn to a wicket gate that leads onto a road called Yokecliffe Drive. Turn left here and head slightly downhill, ignoring two road junctions to the left. Continue until you are alongside some bungalows. Turn left up a small alleyway between No's 34 and 36, this leads you to a short flight of steps on to an old lane.

Circuit Walks Around Wirksworth

Wirksworth to Middleton Top

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Pictured from left: Carsington Water from Carsington Pasture, view over the rooftops of Wirksworth town, view down Greenhill.

9 Turning right here, follow this track to eventually arrive at a surfaced road. This is West End, Wirksworth. Cross straight over onto Bowling Green Lane, or turn right down the hill to explore the town.

Returning to Middleton Top

If you visited the town, go back up West End until you reach Bowling Green Lane on your right. If you chose not to visit the town, Bowling Green Lane is opposite the track that brought you on to West End. Follow this alleyway ignoring all right turns as far as the next road, The Dale. The property opposite you now, No 31-33, was restored in the early 1980's by the Derbyshire Historic Building Trust as part of a programme with the Civic Trust to save key buildings from dereliction. The path now goes to the left of and behind No 31-33 and rises steeply uphill. Again, ignore any side alleys and follow the main path until it levels off. Stop here to catch your breath and to take in a fine view across the town.

10 The large house below you is Babington House. Built in about 1630 as a private residence it has served as both a Workhouse and a Cottage Hospital. It is a private residence today. The footpath now crosses another steep road, Greenhill, where you'll turn left and then right onto a surfaced path to the left of The Croft.

11 The path here passes an entrance into Stoney Wood, Wirksworth's Community Woodland. It is worth exploring the site with its interesting installations - such as The Star Disc, a large artwork that depicts the night sky, which is located at the very top of the site.

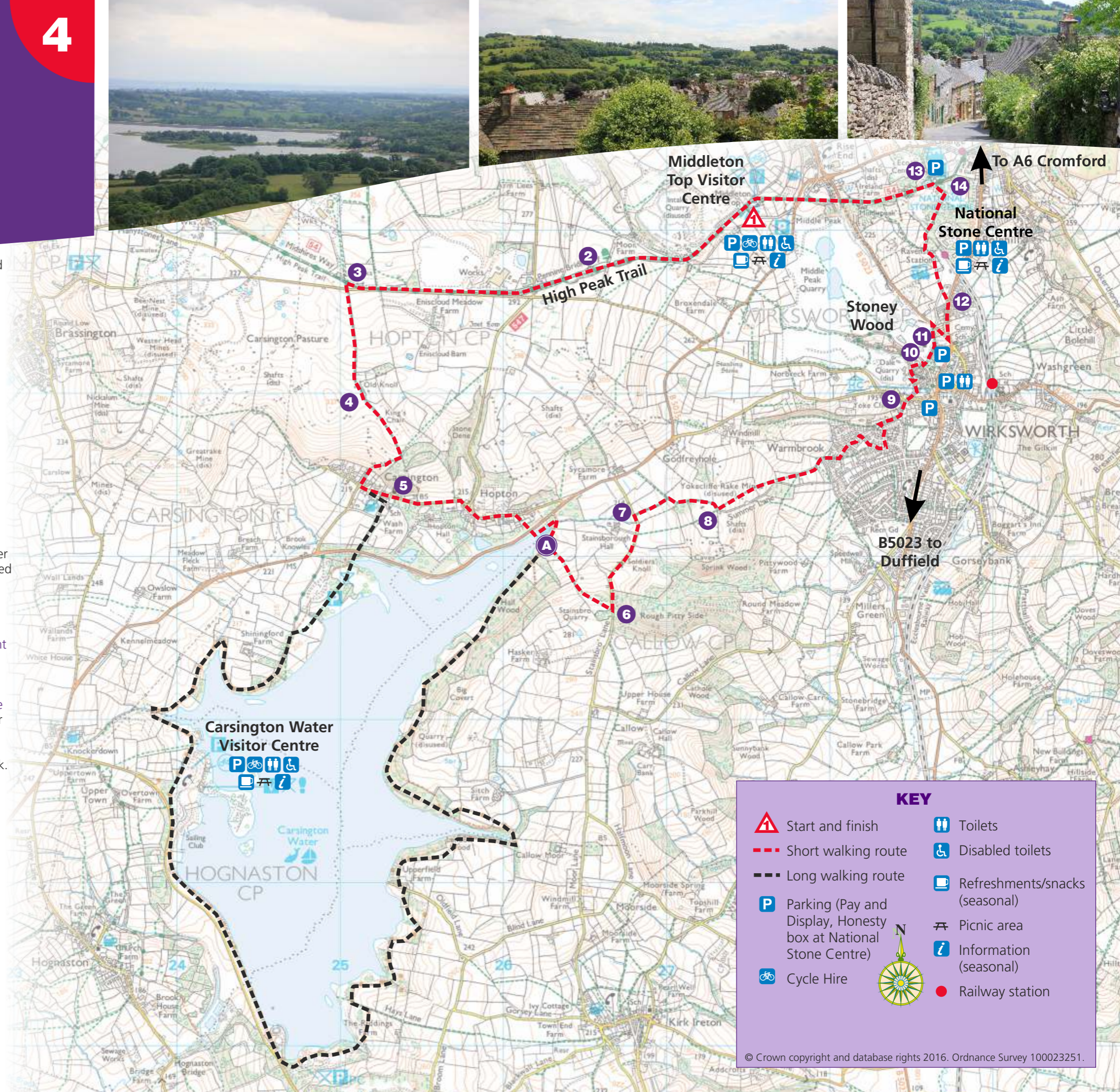
When you are back on the path, follow it as it drops down towards another road. Carefully cross the road to the pavement on the other side and turn right downhill. At the junction with the main road, turn to your left, and follow the pavement to reach Old Lane.

12 Turn left up Old Lane, which soon becomes a wide, unsurfaced track. Follow the main track, ignoring others that branch off, under a disused railway bridge and uphill into the site of the National Stone Centre. This is a fascinating place to explore.

13 Although not on the walk route, a few hundred metres uphill from the National Stone Centre, you will find the Derbyshire Eco Centre. This is the county hub for courses and activities focussing on education for sustainable development. It supports Derbyshire County Council's work to address climate change issues. It promotes creativity through the arts, and teaches skills to help conserve the natural world and to live healthy lifestyles.

14 Leaving the National Stone Centre, go uphill and follow the path just to the right of the arch of another railway bridge. This leads directly to the High Peak Trail. From here, turn left and return to Middleton Top via the steep incline that soon looms into view.

Now you have explored this route try one of the others available from our Visitor Centres. There are 4 'Circuit Walks around Wirksworth' leaflets in total.



KEY

	Start and finish		Toilets
	Short walking route		Disabled toilets
	Long walking route		Refreshments/snacks (seasonal)
	Parking (Pay and Display, Honesty box at National Stone Centre)		Picnic area
	Cycle Hire		Information (seasonal)
			Railway station

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