

Ashbourne, Thorp & Mapleton

Walk Information

Walk Area:	Ashbourne	OS Map:	Explorer OL24
Distance:	5.5 Miles		White Peak Area
Start Point:	Mapleton Lane Cycle Hire		1:25000
Map Ref:	SK 175 469		

General Information

Parking:	Pay and Display
Tea Shops:	One
Duration:	2 Hours 45 Minutes

Altitude Data

Start:	423 ft (129m)
Minimum	383 ft (117m)
Maximum	672 ft (205m)

Altitude Profile



A five and a half mile Derbyshire walk starting and finishing on the northern outskirts of Ashbourne "Gateway to Dovedale". The walk starts from the Mapleton Road car park near the southern end of the Tissington Trail. The route heads north along the Tissington Trail to Thorp, from there the walk goes west the River Dove and follows the county boundary for a river side stroll down to Mapleton. The route then off with with a walk across fields and back to the start point at Mapleton Lane. One thing to watch for is the hill as you leave Mapleton in the latter part of the walk, it is a bit of a sting in the tail as it is fairly steep both going up and coming down.



Mapleton Lane Cycle Hire Centre

Getting There:

Ashbourne lies at the intersection of the A52 from the East or West, and the A515 from the North or South. To get to Mapleton Road from the centre of Ashbourne take the A515 north towards Buxton, take the first left immediately after passing the market place, then follow the signs for Tissington Trail and Cycle Hire. From the north turn right off the A515 at the crossroads near the top of the hill as you enter Ashbourne, then take the first left onto Mapleton Road and follow the Tissington Trail and Cycle Hire signs.

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Ashbourne is well served by public transport with bus services from most local towns such as Belper (service 113), Buxton (service 442), Derby (service 109), Matlock (service 411), and Uttoxeter (service 409). Full timetables for all of these services are available from the Derby Bus Info web site. Bus service 442 stops at the start point for this walk, but the service is very limited on Sundays and Bank Holidays, a current time table is available from Derby Bus Info. Although I have marked this room as having no tearooms, refreshments are available from the cycle hire centre on the Tissington trail, the downside is that whenever I have been there it always has a rather long queue!

The Walk:

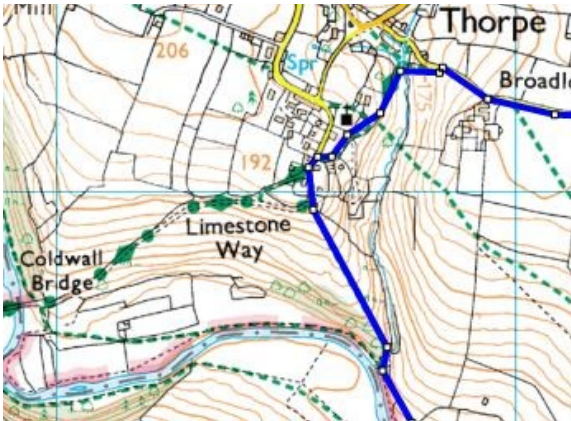
This walk has two possible variants, the documented walk of 5.5 miles and an extended 6.25 mile walk taking in the old Cheadle to Ashbourne coaching road from Thorp to Coldwall Bridge. This write up is for the shorter route. From the Car Park walk north along the Tissington Trail past the toilet block and cycle hire centre. Almost immediately the trail dips sharply then climbs back to the original height, from this point on the walk rises gently all the way to Thorp. After around two miles or so the trail enters a cutting and passes under a bridge, as the trail exits the cutting Thorp Station comes into view a little further up the trail. The footpath path for this walk is on the left signed with a wooden footpath marker with the text "Public Footpath To Thorp". Having found the footpath pass through the wooden kissing gate into the field, walk straight ahead across the field to a stock gate with a yellow way marker plaque in the hedge on the far side. The slabs of stone on the far side of this gate could be slippery when wet so please take care, once into the paddock look for a second stock gate on the other side that leads out onto Spend Lane. Directly across the road to the exit from the paddock is a driveway marked "The Firs". Cross the road and walk down this drive until it reaches some farm buildings, at this point the path splits. Take the fork to the right and continue down the hill until you reach an area of houses. As you enter the area of housing look for a footpath marker on the left beside a stream, this marker post also has a "Royal Shrovetide Football Challenge Walks" marker. Take the grassy path indicated by the marker post, cross two wooden footbridges and pass into a wooded area.



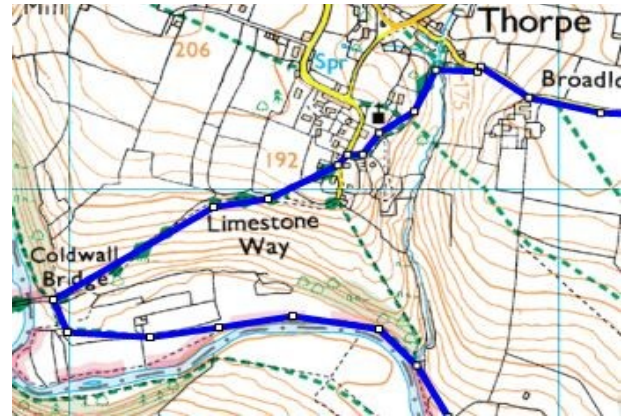
Shrove Challenge Walk Marker.

Walk through the wooded area until more hedges are reached and the path turns into a vehicle track, continue up the track to the road at the top of the slope. Turn left and walk to the end of the road and a farm gate, go through the gate to a foot path marker in the hedge on the left visible from the gate. This is the point where the route splits, if you follow the track down to Coldwall Bridge, then turn left to follow the River Dove the walk extends to over six miles. Take the path indicated by this sign post and the walk is five and a half miles. For this walk we are going to take the sign posted route of five and a half miles. The two alternate routes are mapped out in the images at the head of the next page.

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5.5 Mile Walk



6.25 Mile Walk

Having chosen the shorter route pass through the stock gate and cross the field to a second gate besides a disused telegraph pole in the hedge on the other side. The second field is split diagonally by a steep bank, keeping to the top of this bank walk to the far corner in which is a third stock gate. This field exit is hidden by the slope of the field becoming visible only in the last few yards/meters. On the far side of the gate the path becomes less well defined, and less well trodden and rather muddy. During the short descent through the scrub to the river the path becomes a little overgrown with a couple of fallen and low hanging trees to navigate, but all in all it's not too bad. When the path reaches the River Dove the alternate route from Coldwall Bridge rejoins the walk from the right. Turn left and go through a wooden kissing gate into a field.



The River Dove Delow Coldwall Bridge

The walk now tracks along side the River Dove for a little over a mile until it reaches Okeover Bridge. Along the way all that could be heard was bird song and the sounds of the river. If I had a picnic with me I would have stopped for a while to enjoy the tranquillity. Only one along the way to Okeover Bridge does the route stray more than a few meters from the river, and that is only for the width of a single field. On this stretch board walks have been provided over muddy areas, all the gates are easily passed and well marked, it is a real pleasure to walk. At the bridge cross the road into another

another field at this point the river is easily accessible to the right with a good view of the bridge. There is a New Years Day tradition of people jumping from the bridge into the river then running across this field to the pub. I have no idea why!

Resisting any urge to jump from the bridge and run to the pub, continue to follow the river bank to the far side of the field. On entering the next field the path leaves the river bank to join the road at the opposite corner of the field next to a white house. Turn left and walk along the road past the football field to the outskirts of Mapleton. (The road signs around this area seem to have two spellings for this village; Mapleton and Mappleton, I have gone with what is on the OS map.) As you leave Mapleton look for a footpath marker post on the left near the entrance driveway to

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View Over Mapleton

Callowend Farm. Do not go up the drive just follow the indicated path into a field. This is the hardest part of the walk the hill in front of you! Walk up the hill, I aimed for the gap in the hedge on the skyline a little to the right. Should you choose to turn around on reaching the hedge line near the top of the hill both Thorp Cloud and Bunster Hill (between them lies Dovedale) are clearly visible in the distance. Continue up the slope to the far right corner of the field where there is a step stile near a collection of farm gates. The path is now a well work track in the grass ahead and slightly left, follow this track to the brow of the hill. From here the spire of St Oswalds comes into view below along with a hedge. The stile we need is roughly in the middle of this hedge line, but there is also a farm gate to the left of the hedge. In all honesty the gate may provide a better route down the slope beyond the hedge, but as indicated by the map I took the stile.

On the far side of the hedge the hill falls away quite steeply, make your way down the slope as safely as you can to a stock gate in the bottom right corner of the field.

This exit is not clearly visible due to the slope and a fallen tree, but is near to a small brick building. Go through the gate then ahead along the fence line to the drive way to Callow hall Hotel. Walk down the drive, or follow the hedge line down the field (I couldn't work out exactly which side of the hedge the footpath is on) down to Mapleton Lane. At the road turn left and follow the road to the bridge over Bently Brook, from here the entrance to the car park and the end of the walk are clearly visible on the left.

Map of walk with route overlay on following page.

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