

Family day out from Parsley Hay

Let's Go Peak District



Route Summary



This 13 mile route is relatively flat and uses mostly even terrain. The vast majority of the route is on either the Tissington Trail or the High Peak Trail, both former railway lines that have been converted to well-made cinder walking/cycling/riding trails.

Route Overview



Category: Mountain Biking
Rating: Unrated
Surface: Moderate
Date Published: 7th May 2019
Difficulty: Easy
Length: 20.850 km / 13.03 mi
Last Modified: 7th May 2019

Description



Details

Distance: 13 miles (21 kilometres)

Time: Allow 3-4 hours

Terrain: Cycle trails, a short section of road, some gates to open

Start and end grid reference: SK 14602

Downloads:

Nearby Accommodation

If you are looking for accommodation in this part of the Peak District, Croft Farm Holiday Cottages are located right on this route, only a few metres off the High Peak Trail. You will see the entrance to their accommodation from the High Peak Trail between points 11 and 12 of the route.

Introduction

This 13 mile route is relatively flat and uses mostly even terrain. The vast majority of the route is on either the Tissington Trail or the High Peak Trail, both former railway lines that have been converted to well-made cinder walking/cycling/riding trails. There is a very short section on road, and about 2 miles of the route is uneven and rocky, best suited to all-terrain or mountain bikes. Note that the same route is used for the High Peak Trail, the Pennine Bridleway and the Midshires Way, so don't be concerned if you see signs for any of these names!

The route takes in the most perfect views across the White Peak, and a short detour (on foot) allows you to explore the mysterious ancient site of Minninglow Hill. Although it is quite a distance, this is the perfect route for a family day out – take it easy with rest stops to enjoy the views and take along a picnic!

The route starts from the Peak District National Park Visitor Information Centre at Parsley Hay. There is car parking available here (fees apply) and a bike hire centre, as well as public toilets, a café and small gift shop.

The route

1. From the Parsley Hay Visitor Information Centre (SK14602, SK17 0DG) head west on the Pennine Bridleway signed to Middleton Top and Hartington Station. When you reach the fork in the path, take the right hand track, on the Tissington Trail, with a high-sided cutting visible ahead of you.



2. The Tissington Trail is part of the former London & North Western Railway line, opened between Buxton and Ashbourne in 1899. The line closed in the 1960s and this beautiful traffic-free trail now runs for 13 miles from Parsley Hay in the north to Ashbourne in the south.

3. Follow the Tissington Trail for approximately 3 miles, enjoying the beautiful scenery of the White Peak off to both sides. There are plenty of benches along this section on which to pause and enjoy the view, and a lovely picnic site – Ruby Wood – for those who have worked up an early appetite.



4. After approximately 3 miles look out for a fork in the Trail with a path off to the left, signed only Route 548 on the National Cycle Network. This path takes you down to a quiet country road, at which you should turn left, heading away from the village of Biggin.

5. Follow this road for a short distance – there is a footpath to the side of the road for nervous or young cyclists, but please beware of pedestrians. The road soon meets the busy A515 Buxton to Ashbourne road, which you should cross with great care. Turn right and almost immediately take a further cycle trail off to your left, signposted to Minninglow, again on Route 548 of the

National Cycle Network.



6. You are now on Cardlemere Lane, a quiet lane running to Minninglow Hill. There are a few gates to open on the way and be aware that the terrain is more uneven than on the Tissington Trail. The wide open views are very impressive. At a crossroads of paths with a Green Lane, go straight on through a gate following Route 548 to Minninglow.

7. At a junction with a quiet lane, go straight on again, signed towards the High Peak Trail, still following Route 548. This lane gives wonderful views of Minninglow Hill ahead of you, topped with its distinctive double ring of trees.



8. After a short rise, you will reach another gate and a junction. Turn left on the route signed Pennine Bridleway to Parsley Hay. This takes you on to the High Peak Trail, another former railway line that runs for 17 miles from Dowlow near Buxton to High Peak Junction near Cromford. The old High Peak Railway Line was opened in 1831 to carry minerals between the Cromford Canal and the Peak Forest Canal. It closed in 1967.

9. After a short distance, just before you reach a disused quarry, look out for a concessionary footpath up to Minninglow Hill on the right. This is well worth a short detour if you feel able to leave your bikes safely at the bottom and walk up. Minninglow Hill is the site of a collection of Neolithic tombs, dating from around 3000BC. The tombs are still very evident, scattered around a later circular mound constructed in the Bronze Age. The whole site is crowned by a group of tall beech trees, encircled by a further outer ring of beech trees, creating a distinctive shape that is visible for many miles around.



10. Continuing on the High Peak Trail, soon after the turning for the footpath to Minninglow Hill look out for an old crane on the right hand side. This is a relic from the disused quarry here, part of the industry of the former railway, and would once have been used to load limestone from the quarry on to the trains.

11. Continue on the High Peak Trail, through a succession of gates and crossing two roads. Watch out for the old brickworks factory, still in operation, on the left hand side, obvious by its tall chimney.



12. At a crossroads with another path go straight on, following the signs for the Pennine Bridleway to Parsley Hay. Look out for more evidence of the old railway line on this section of the route, including railway bridges and old signal posts.



13. The High Peak Trail eventually meets back up with the Tissington Trail on which you started. Where the two paths meet

go straight on, bearing right, and follow the trail back to the Parsley Hay Visitor Information Centre and your start point.



Waypoints

