

Trail Guide:



A pleasant tour south on quiet country roads to see some pretty Derbyshire villages.

The 'Fancy That' Factor

See where the Roundheads and Royalists had a punch up!

Imagine long lost soldiers returning from Agincourt

See where Florence Nightingale's family members are buried

See where George Stephenson developed even more railways

From **Chesterfield** and its distinctive landmark, the Crooked Spire on the hill, take the **A619** west and join the **A632**. You will pass the B5057 to Darley Dale, continue for approximately 1 mile and then turn **left** into **Birkin Lane**.

Take the first **right** turn called **Long Lane**, then at the crossroads go **right** signposted to Ashover. At the next small crossroads **go straight across and right** into **Hillside**. Then take next **left** turn to **Ashover**.

Ashover predates the Normans but in Domesday its total taxable value was £4! The church was rebuilt in the 1350s and after the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, returning soldiers commemorated their victory in the name of the Crispin Inn. Members of Florence

Nightingale's family, who lived nearby at Dethick, are buried here. Many 17th century buildings survive including Pear Tree Farm, the Old Rectory and other cottages near the church and along Butts Road. The Civil War saw the Crispin Inn landlord refuse to serve the unruly Royalists! And the Roundheads destroyed Eastwood Hall to stop the Royalists taking it. The village was a lead mining centre where cottage industries such as weaving, threadmaking and basket making flourished. There is a story about a female lead miner who always used to say "May the Earth open and swallow me up" if ever accused of stealing (as she often was). John Bunyan reported that in 1660 it actually did!

Trail Key:



Walking



Car



Bus



Cycling



Scenic



Historic



Time



Distance

This trail is one of 44 exciting trails to explore in the Peak District & Derbyshire.

Ashover also had 2 hydros in the 19th and early 20th centuries, but never grew to rival Matlock!

In 1925 Ashover's own light railway, one of the last narrow gauge of any length in the country, served day trippers from Clay Cross. Today it remains a pretty village with a conservation area at its heart.

Go past the Crispin Inn and church on the right hand side. At the T-junction turn **left (B6036)** signposted Stretton.

Take the next right hand turn into **Fallgate Road**, signposted Milltown, follow the road passing the Miners Arms Inn (real ale pub) which will be on your right.

At the next T-junction turn **left** onto the **B6014** towards Tibshelf/Clay Cross, **then immediately right** towards **Brackenfield**. You can see the reservoir on the left hand side in the distance.

Brackenfield centres on the village green and has a number of fine 17th century houses. Trinity Chapel was built in 1500 but now sadly lies in ruins although an annual pilgrimage is made there on Trinity Sunday. The current church of 1857 contains its ancient screen. Ogston Hall has a long history, first mentioned in the Domesday Book and added to over the centuries. The 200 acre **Ogston Reservoir**, which you will see soon, was made in 1957 by damming the River Amber at the south end of the valley, adjacent to the Hall.

After passing through Brackenfield you will come to a sharp left hand bend, go round the bend towards **Woolley Moor**. On the bend is a church and you will then come to **Ogston Reservoir** on the right hand side which has parking, picnic areas, toilets and bird hides. There is a heronry here too, but the road is closed to it during the earlier part of the year.

At the next T-junction turn **right** onto the **B6014** towards Clay Cross, then take the **second left** and at the crossroads go straight over through **Handley** towards Clay Cross and Stretton.

You will then come into **Clay Cross**, an industrial town occupying a commanding position on a high ridge between the valleys of the rivers Amber and Rother.

At the beginning of the 19th century Clay Cross was mainly a rural area, but George Stephenson, the railway pioneer changed that.

Whilst driving a tunnel under Clay Cross hill for his main line from Derby to Leeds, he discovered a rich seam of coal and iron deposits and formed the Clay Cross Company in 1837. George Stephenson and Company built houses for the tunnel navvies and later, as they sank colliery workings, for the miners and their families. Some 400 houses were built, and by 1846 the population of the area had reached 1,478; an ironworks with steam engines for blowing, pumping and hauling kept some 600 men employed.

As the Company prospered so did the town grow, listing by 1857 some 2,278 inhabitants. Schools were provided by the Company, also shops, chapels, a church and a Mechanics Institute. George Stephenson died at Tapton House Chesterfield in 1848 and is buried inside Holy Trinity Church in the town centre. Clay Cross is today also remembered for its part in the decline of the mining industry in the 20th century.

At the traffic lights, turn **left** onto the **A61** and follow this road back into **Chesterfield**.

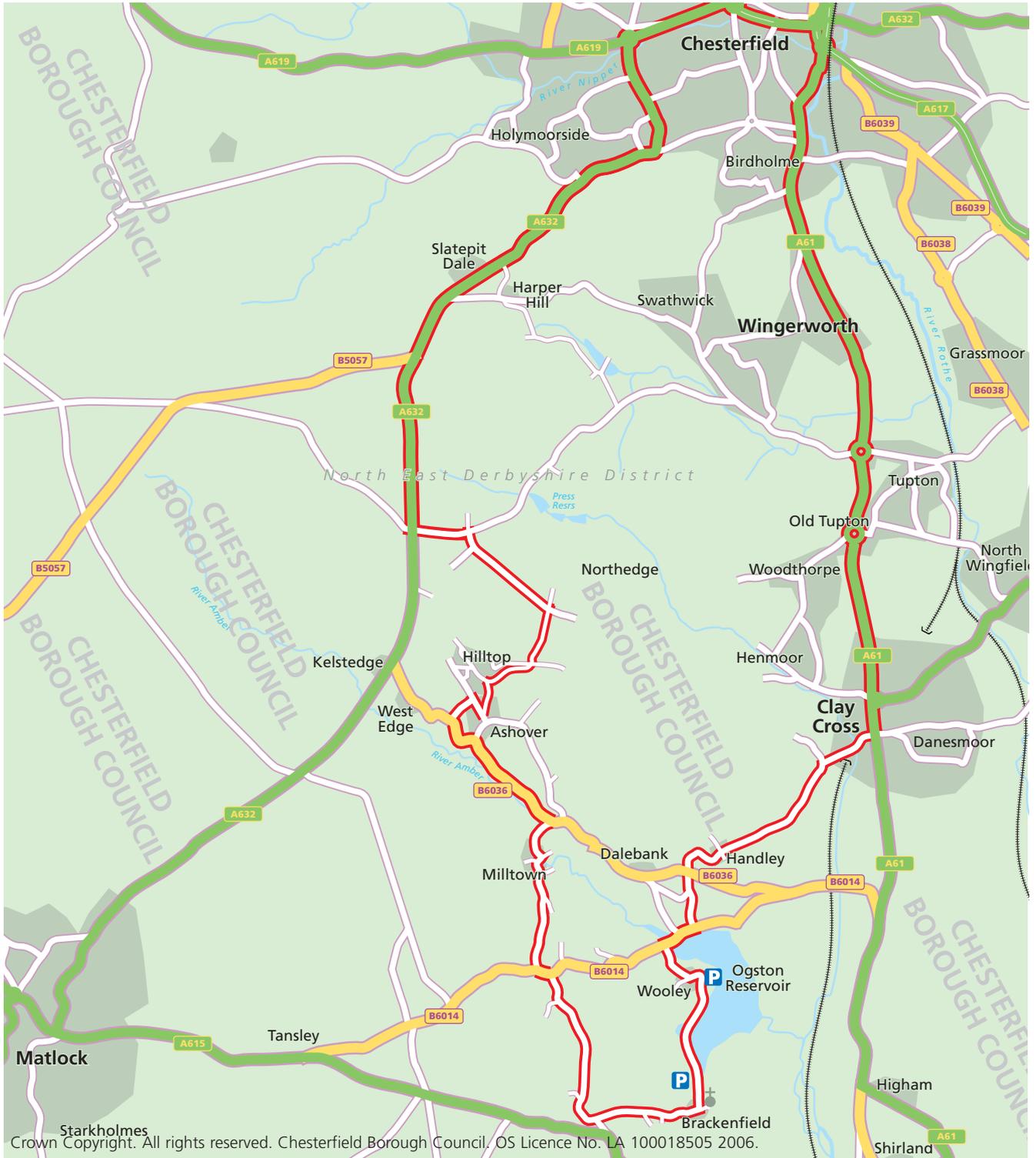
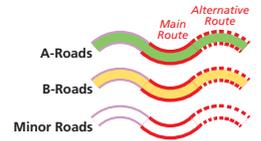
Chesterfield Trail No. 14

Hidden Villages



24 km
15 miles

Key



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