



**Six Dales Walk - Including Dovedale**

**A strenuous walk through six of Derbyshire’s glorious dales,  
including some ridge walking with fabulous views**

<b>Essential Facts</b>	
▪ Route distance:	17.0 km (10.5 miles)
▪ Approximate time:	5 hours
▪ Optional extension:	4.0 km (2.5 miles)
▪ Approx. total ascent:	328 metres
▪ Start point Grid Ref:	SK 130 556
▪ GPS Ref:	SK 13034 55624
▪ Recommended O.S. Map:	Explorer OL24
▪ Toughness Rating	Peaks 4

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

**Up For A  
CHALLENGE ?**

**Take a Great Walk and HELP  
your favourite charity with**

**A Donation  
An Individual Walk  
A Team Effort**

**Full Info from the Great Walks web site**

## THE ROUTE

Today's walk starts from the car park and public conveniences in the centre of Alstonefield, **S**. (There are several car parks in Alstonfield, so find the one with toilets !). On leaving the car park turn left and cross the road and almost immediately take the footpath sign over a stile into the field. There are 4 stone stiles diagonally to the left. The path then goes straight ahead through several gates keeping parallel to the road. On reaching a stone stile go left by the wall to the road and then back diagonally over two fields to a brideway at **A**. Cross over this and follow the path through three stone squeezers.

This path contours round the side of Narrowdale Hill with views into Narrow Dale and the lower brideway on your right. As you round the hill take the stile on your right leading down to the lower path at the end of Narrow Dale, **B**. Continue forward on the brideway ignoring the farm lane off to the left. On reaching a gate, take the path to the right signposted Hartington. The gate indicates this is part of Sabrina Way a long distance footpath.

On crossing Frank-i-th-Rocks Bridge, turn right and continue down Wolfscote Dale. Notice the caves up to the left, many of which you will pass on this walk. You will reach the path joining from the left signposted Biggin Dale and this is the start of Dovedale. Pass Gipsy Bank Bridge, **C**, which goes back to Alstonefield. Continue past Coldeaton Bridge and to the road bridge just before Milldale at **D**. Here cross the bridge and follow the road into Milldale. If lucky the shop will be open selling drinks and food.

Cross the bridge over the river and instead of continuing along the river valley take the path going straight up the hillside. This will make a change from the valley walk and give some great views of the area. Keep the wall on your right and follow the footpath signs up to the top of the moor until you reach a four way signpost at **E**. Turn right here towards Nabs Dale. The path goes to the left of the farm buildings, then drops steeply down secluded Nabs Dale and back to the River Derwent, **F**.

Turn left here and continue to follow the river. On reaching a bridge under Ilam Rock you now have an option before crossing it at **G**. From here you could continue along the river to the famous Dovedale stepping stones, **H**, and return the same way to the bridge. This is 2 km each way but passes some spectacular caves, a natural arch and 'Lovers Leap'.

After crossing the bridge, **G**, and turning right, follow the marked signs to Stanhope. The path shortly turns away from the river into Hall Dale. Follow the yellow markers all the way up the dale until you reach a lane. Turn left here and at the T junction, **J**, you will see Stanhope Hall on your right. Take the road to the right of the Hall which becomes a brideway. Along it you can see Alstonefield church ahead. On reaching a lane, cross straight over and pick up the path on the other side. It heads up the hill and into Harry's Bank. Then markers go diagonally across a field and left through gates. It brings you out opposite The George in Alstonfield. Pass The George and turn left, back to the car park, **S**.



Caves



Stepping Stones



Hall Dale

## Refreshment

The George Inn  
Public House  
Alstonefield  
Tel: 01335 310205  
A lovely country pub with  
bar and Food

Beresford Tea Rooms  
Cafe

Hartington  
Tel: 01298 84418  
This busy little café provides  
a good selection of light  
meals and teas.

The Royal Oak  
Public House  
Whetton, Staffordshire  
Tel: 01335 310287  
This 400 year old pub  
has two cosy bars and  
beams on the ceiling.  
Food is served.

The Old Coach House  
Licensed Tea Rooms  
Tissington  
Tel: 01335 350501  
Morning coffee, lunch  
and afternoon teas



The George Inn

## LOCAL INFO

Over the millenia **Dove Dale** was formed as the River Dove carved its way through this massive limestone plateau to create a deep and spectacular gorge. It is famous for its rock pinnacle spires, natural arches and caves.

There is evidence that the gorge was inhabited from early prehistoric times. Surviving from later periods are some Bronze Age barrows, old limekilns and post-medieval farm buildings. The names of the crags, such as Jacob's Ladder and Reynard's Cave, Lion Head Rock and Tissington Spires, originated with Victorian tourists, as did the famous 'Stepping Stones'.

Not far from the stepping stones a flight of steps carry you up to a promontory known as **Lover's Leap**. The first steps were built after the Second World War using the labour of Italian prisoners of war. Over the years both the National Trust and National Park have contributed to maintaining and improving these steps.

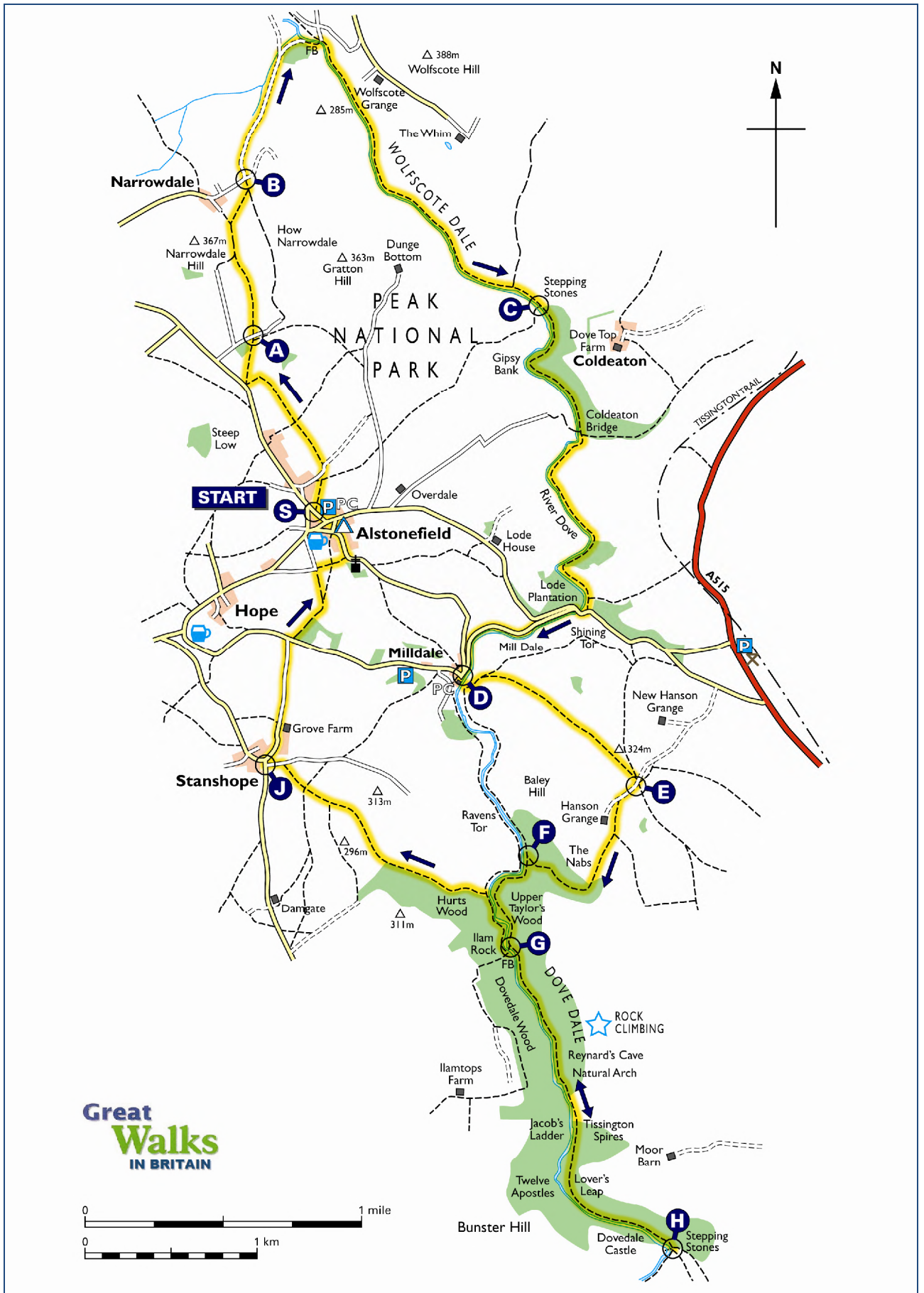
The name Lover's Leap came about following the story of a young woman, who on hearing that her young man had been killed in the Napoleonic wars, climbed to the top of Lover's Leap and threw herself off. Her billowing skirt caught in branches on her way down, and she was able to scramble to safety. On returning home, she received the news that her boy friend, was not dead but had recently arrived back in England.

On the other side of the valley from Lover's Leap stand a large group of limestone towers and crags known as the **Twelve Apostles**, which being formed from harder rock, have been left sticking up from the side of the valley as the river eroded down.

The hamlet of **Stanshope** is little more than a cluster of farms dominated by Stanshope Hall. The Hall dates back to the 1500s and today is a bed and breakfast establishment. A previous owner William Manley a money lender, with two mistresses who lived nearby, went bankrupt in 1799. Over the next 50 years, the house fell into disrepair before being rescued from dereliction in the 1850s.

**SIX DALES WALK  
G.P.S. WAYPOINTS**

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF		CO-ORDINATES		ELEVATION: Metres
DOV S	S	SK	13034	55624	276
DOV A	A	SK	12682	56694	310
DOV B	B	SK	12631	57607	236
DOV C	C	SK	14342	56897	178
DOV D	D	SK	13923	54718	183
DOV E	E	SK	14930	54091	320
DOV F	F	SK	14295	53598	173
DOV G	G	SK	14205	53136	172
DOV H	H	SK	15162	51457	146
DOV J	J	SK	12756	54218	264



MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	M6 Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	A23 Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	B2116 Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

## Safety First

**Safety should always** be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

**Lead a group** of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

**Weigh up the capabilities** of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

**Ensure** all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

**Emergencies** are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

**Refreshment**, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

**On tougher walks** it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

**All our walks use legitimate routes:** Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

**Road** walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

**Occasionally** you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

**It is courteous** to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

**Mutual respect** for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

**Dogs** should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

## Walking Our Routes

**Our walks** are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

**On mountain, moorland and open heathland** walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

**Take care** to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

**Consider conditions before setting off.** Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

**When navigating the route** look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

**All our routes are carefully checked** before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

**The approximate time** given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

**Total ascent** is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

**GPS users** can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

**Remember that GPS** is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

### TOUGHNESS RATINGS

Most of our **Peak District** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise the map segments and our recommended Ordnance Survey maps, together with the route guidance notes.

The toughest walks should be undertaken or led only by experienced mountain walkers with navigational expertise. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks. There may be prolonged steep ascents, and perhaps several ascents over the whole walk. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.
4. The toughest walks, requiring considerable fitness and navigational experience. There may be prolonged steep ascents. The ability to navigate by compass may be essential.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Cambridgeshire may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route in the Peak District.