

Walk 9: Cuckoostone Dale/Matlock Moors – Directions



Start Point: On-street parking, Upper Lumsdale, Matlock. Map Reference SK311612.

Maps: 1:25000 Explorer Sheet OL24, Peak District, White Peak Area or 1:50000 Landranger Sheet 119, Buxton, Matlock & Dovedale.

Public Transport: Buses from Matlock to Chesterfield.

Public Toilets: Matlock town centre.

Distance: 5½ miles.

Time needed: 3 – 4 hours.

Description: A generally easy walk with some climbing, along field footpaths, forest tracks and green lanes. There are views of 5/6 disused quarries and some industrial archaeology.

Route Directions:

(1) Walk up Upper Lumsdale to its junction with Chesterfield Road, turn left and cross the main road. Turn right into Sandy Lane, the second street. Walk up the street to the left hand corner and then take the track straight ahead, following the direction indicated by the public footpath sign. The track soon bends sharp right and then passes some farm buildings on the left.

Walk uphill to the summit of the track and then slightly down hill for about 100 metres to reach two stone gateposts on either side. Ten metres beyond these is a way marked post with a yellow arrow. Leave the lane here, bearing down to the right, along a footpath, to arrive at a T-junction of paths. **(A detour down the path on the right will give you a view of the Cuckoostone itself (2). To view the stone climb the stile onto a fairway of the golf club and look to your right. The stone is at the side of a small tree in the centre of the fairway. The footpath crosses the fairway; therefore the stone is on private land. Be aware of golfers).** From the T-junction head towards a wooden barn (either straight ahead if you did not take the detour or by turning right when returning from it).

At the corner of the barn, turn half right and walk diagonally down the field to a squeeze stile in a wall. *There is a view of the Cuckoostone from the centre of this field.* Continue in the same direction, down into Cuckoostone Dale and a clapper bridge over Bentley Brook. A short scramble over the rocks upstream will give views of a small disused quarry (3).

Cross the bridge and climb up the steep path, going through a squeeze stile half way up, to a wooden stile, where you should turn a quarter right and walk up the field to another stile. Once over the stile you will see the ruins of several farm buildings (4). Turn right to follow the path through some trees. The path soon turns left, through the remains of an old garden and a gateway. Turn right here, walk alongside the wall for a short distance and then left, uphill. Notice the tops of several underground water tanks. (5) *There are some deep recesses in the walls where skeps (straw bee hives) were kept for protection.* A few metres beyond these the path joins a wide track.

Turn left onto this track. There are large piles of spoil from Cuckoostone Quarry on your right (6). Very soon you will see two stone gateposts, each side of the track. Thirty metres beyond these, turn right into a large clearing. Follow the path round to

the right into the grounds of a large ruined building (7). You will also see the remains of several other buildings. Follow the line of the house wall, going between it and the other ruins, to a small walled bank directly in front of you. Climb the bank to gain access to the top of the quarry face (8), a few metres further on. The quarry is extremely overgrown, but views of the faces are possible. Caution is required, because of the terrain.

Retrace your steps to the clearing and the main track. Turn right and go to the opposite side of the clearing, heading towards a field gate/stile at the corner of the large wood. Just before you reach the gate turn right onto a path, which soon curves left to enter the wood, via a broken down wall. Once in the wood follow the left path, keeping close to the boundary with a field. After about 100 metres, the path broadens into a wider, grassy track with a T-junction. Turn right here, to go deeper into the wood, along a grass path. Two hundred metres along the path is another T-junction. Turn right, keeping a stone wall on your right. After 200 metres the path bends sharp left, heading up hill (there is the corner of a stone wall at your right front). The path soon joins a wide limestone track at a bend. Continue along this track, heading uphill to arrive at a wooden barrier and a public road. (You should see a Forestry Commission signboard for Bottom Moor)

Cross the road into the clearing on the opposite side. Turn a quarter left to cross the clearing and enter the wood at the side of a leaning tree. Twenty metres into the trees will bring you the top of the face of Wirestone Quarry (9). Follow the face to the left for a few metres to arrive at a Trig. Point and a huge rock with a crane post set into the top of it.

Once you have seen all you need, return to the road and the track in Bottom Moor. Walk back down the track for about ten metres, where you should turn left, to walk along a wide firebreak in the trees (this break runs parallel to the public road). Turn left at the end of the firebreak, towards the road and a public footpath sign at a stile. Just before you reach the sign, turn right, to follow a second, angled firebreak, in the direction indicated by the signpost.

Continue along the firebreak, generally downhill, crossing another firebreak at right angles. After a further 300 metres you will reach a point where five firebreaks meet. Cross the break you meet at right angles, continue downhill for five metres, then branch left down another firebreak to reach a wall at the edge of the wood. Walk downhill alongside the wall to a public footpath sign at the edge of a lane. Turn left along the lane to a main road (The A632 Matlock to Chesterfield road).

Turn left along the A632, walking about 100 metres to the entrance drive of Wayside Farm. Cross the road and go down the drive (there is a public footpath signpost for Tansley and Ashover at the start of the drive). Walk through the farmyard, through a metal gate with two wheels set into it, pass some dog kennels and bear left into a field. Keep the wall on your left and walk to the gate/stile leading into the next field. Continue ahead, aiming to the right of 2 wooden gates and a bungalow on the far side of the field. Cross the stile at the right-hand corner of the field. The path crosses two more fields and then kinks right and left to follow a boundary wall on its right. Cross another stile, to walk alongside a caravan park to a further stile leading onto a lane.

Turn left along the lane to the crossroads 200 metres from the stile. Turn right along the wider lane. Walk down hill and then uphill to the sharp left hand bend. Go over the stile at the side of the field gate and large tree on the right, just beyond the bend. Once in the field, head diagonally right to the top corner, going under some power

lines to a stile. The fence to the right of the stile forms the boundary to Lumshill Quarry (10) and there a good views over it into the site.

Cross the stile to follow the quarry boundary fence for a short distance, through some heather to a T-junction with another path. Turn right along this path to see further views into the quarry. At the metal gate notice the huge gritstone rock opposite (11). A sign on the gate states that the quarry is private with no public right of way. From here you should retrace your steps to the path junction. Continue straight ahead at the junction, not left onto the original path from the field stile. A few metres further on you will see the corner of a wire and post fence. Fork left here, to pass close to some power lines and a support post on your left. The path soon reaches another T-junction, where you should turn right, towards a stone wall.

Follow the wall to the end, turn left and then immediately half right into the top of Bentleybrook Quarries (12). This is an extensive site. Continue ahead, down several banks, keeping close to the large square grit stone outcrop on your left, to join the old quarry road in a cutting. On reaching the old road you should turn left, to explore the extensive faces.

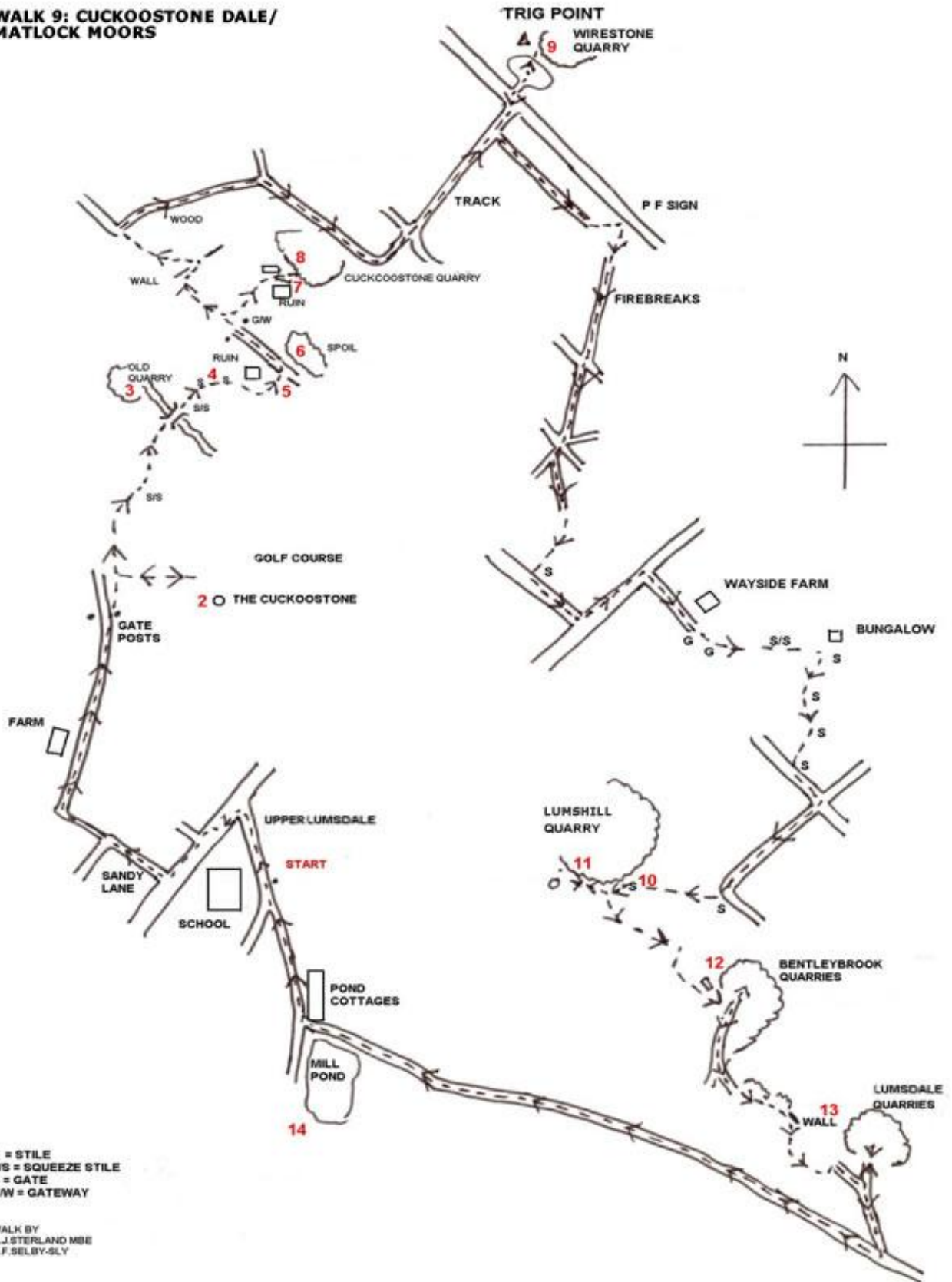
Retrace your steps on the old road, continuing along it past where you originally joined it. You should soon reach an obvious fork in the road. The right fork bends sharply downhill, with the left fork maintaining the level. Take the left fork and you will soon see more quarry faces on the left. The path meanders along, between the faces and the top of a large embankment on the right to reach a high stone retaining wall on the left, with a steep track curving up to it from your right. Cross the track, keeping close to the bottom of the wall, and go up the bank on the opposite side. Walk alongside the wall, for about 10 metres through a gap in it, and then downhill, this time keeping the wall on your right.

The path soon bends left, to run level across the hillside. This seems to be an old Clatterway. You will soon reach another wider road – the old access to Lumsdale Quarry (13). Go down onto this road, turning right along it for a few metres. The road bends left into the quarry, from where the faces are visible and accessible.

Walk out of the quarry onto the road, turning left to go downhill. The old road joins a green lane which runs between Tansley and Lumsdale. Turn right along the green lane which descends and then levels. Once in Lumsdale (14) notice the feeder dam for the old mills on your left. The old mills in the Dale are well worth seeing if you have time.

The green lane forms a T-junction at the dam, with Pond Cottages on the right. Walk along the lane, passing the cottages on your right, to reach your start point.

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MATLOCK MOORS**



Walk 9: Cuckoostone Dale/Matlock Moor - Points of Interest

Cuckoostone Dale and Lumsdale are in the Namurian gritstone series. The base of the dale, around the Bentley Brook is in the Chatsworth Grit and higher up the valley in the Ashover Grit.

- 1 Start, Street parking Upper Lumsdale.
- 2 The Cuckoostone itself,
 - Thought to have been used for worship in Pagan Times. The stone is at the side of a small tree in the centre of the fairway.
- 3 A short scramble over the rocks upstream will give views of a small, disused quarry, possibly 'Old quarry'
- 4 Ruins of Palethorpe Farm - several farm buildings and the remains of an old garden and a gateway.
- 5 Notice the tops of several underground water tanks.
 - There are some deep recesses in the walls where skeps (straw bee hives) were kept for protections.
- 6 There are large piles of spoil from Cuckoostone Quarry on your right.
 - In 1903 was reported as being a Major Quarry
 - Producing Mill Stones and building stone from the Chatsworth Grits
- 7 The grounds of a large ruined building (possibly the quarry managers house). You will also see the remains of several other buildings.
- 8 Climb the bank to gain access to the top of the quarry face, a few metres further on. The quarry is extremely overgrown, but views of the faces are possible. Caution is required, because of the terrain.
- 9 Wirestone Quarry.
 - Follow the face to the left for a few metres to arrive at a Trig. Point
 - A huge rock with a crane post set into the top of it.
 - This area is used by paint ball enthusiasts so take care when there is a meeting on.
 - The whole of the Forestry Commission land in this area is open access land.
- 10 Good views over Lumshill Quarry.
 - In 1903 was reported as being a Major Quarry
 - Producing Mill Stones and building stone from the Chatsworth Grit.
- 11 At the metal gate notice the huge gritstone rock opposite
- 12 Top of Bentleybrook Quarries. This is an extensive site.
 - Produced Millstones and building stones
- 13 Keeping close to the large square gritstone outcrop on your left, to join the old quarry road in a cutting. On reaching the old road turn left if you wish to explore the extensive faces.
- 14 Once in Lumsdale notice the feeder dam for the old mills on your left. The old mills in the Dale are well worth seeing if you have time.
 - SSSI for semi-natural broadleaf woods