

# THE WHITE TO DARK WAY: DAY 1 BAKEWELL TO LITTON

► Distance: **11.2km/7 miles** ► Time: **4 hours** ► Grade: **Moderate**



**S**o here we go: Day 1 of a fabulous three-day celebration of the greatest landscapes in the Peak District, marking the 25th anniversary of *Country Walking* magazine. We start at Bakewell in the heart of the White Peak, and this first stage heads out across upland fields to join the famous trackbed of the Monsal Trail, passing through the newly reopened Headstone Tunnel. Monsal Head, the River Wye and the dramatic limestone outcrops of Cressbrook Dale follow, before a final gentle climb to the little hamlet of Litton. For an extra mile (repeated next day) you can continue from Litton to the larger town of Tideswell.

## 1 START

Emerging from car park, cross main road and go through gate in wall, signed for 'Scot's Garden'. Follow path through meadow with River Wye L. Go through two gates where river runs close to road. Follow path veering L heading for far corner of meadow. At end, cross wall using stone step. Turn L, following road. After a few metres, turn R onto lane heading uphill. Where lane branches into three, take middle track heading uphill through trees. Climb to gate, pass through and continue uphill, ignoring all branching paths to reach another gate. Path soon becomes enclosed by stone walls. Continue for 1.3km, tending downhill and passing through four gates, to reach junction with Monsal Trail.

## 2 2.5km/1½ miles

Turn L and follow Monsal Trail for 4km, passing abandoned Thornbridge Station before reaching Headstone Tunnel. Pass through tunnel to reach Monsal Viaduct (optional short, steep climb R to Monsal Head pub).

## 3 5.7km/3½ miles

Cross viaduct and continue on Trail, with view of Cressbrook Mill ahead on R. At entrance to Cressbrook Tunnel, turn R onto permissive path, passing through gate and following path downhill towards mill. At bottom, turn sharp R to cross bridge over weir. Do not cross second bridge but turn R to go through gate into mill complex. Follow permissive path with wall L and railings



Map: Steven Hall

R, to reach road. Turn L and follow lower of two roads uphill, signed for 'Litton'. Ignore R turning for Ravensdale, to reach sharp L bend in road.

## 4 8.5km/5¼ miles

Leave road and take path going straight ahead on track through trees. After 180m ignore path climbing L and continue ahead through gate. Veer R

away from wall to descend steep bank. At bottom turn L to enter Cressbrook Dale. Cross small footbridge and follow path up dale, staying close to riverbed, L. After half-a-mile, reach distinctive 'stepping stones' and turn L through gate in wall.

## 5 10.2km/6¼ miles

Follow path heading directly west up Tansley

Dale. Climb steadily through dale then across an open field. Cross stile over wall into enclosed track. Turn L, then quickly R over wall-stile to cross a field on diagonal path. Emerge on road via stone stile and turn L into Litton village.

**Extension to Tideswell:** continue past Red Lion pub, R, and follow Church Lane for 1.3km to reach Tideswell. Retrace next day.



The first stretch of the White to Dark, just outside Bakewell.

Photo: Tom Bailey

## PLAN YOUR WALK

### Route

**Start/parking** Bakewell Bridge car park, grid ref SK220686

**Is it for me?** Well-marked tracks and footpaths, Monsal Trail trackbed, limestone valley. One steep ascent on quiet lane  
**Stiles** 3

### Planning

**Nearest town** Bakewell  
**Refreshments** Pubs and cafés in Bakewell,

Monsal Head and Litton – and in Tideswell, a short distance off route  
**Public toilets** Bakewell  
**Public transport** Regular buses to Bakewell from Sheffield and Hathersage. Hulleys Bus 173 connects Bakewell with Litton and

Tideswell if returning to start point  
**Maps** Ordnance Survey Explorer OL24





# THE WHITE TO DARK WAY: DAY 2

## LITTON TO HATHERSAGE

► Distance: **15km/9½ miles** ► Time: **5 hours** ► Grade: **Moderate**

**D**ay 2 continues through the top end of Cressbrook Dale then heads through meadows to the villages of Foolow and Eyam, the latter famed for the tragic arrival of the plague in 1665. Find out more with a visit to Eyam Museum (see page 36). Then you move into the fringes of the Dark Peak by crossing Sir William Hill into the secluded gorge of Bretton Clough, before reaching the Hope Valley, where White and Dark truly meet.

### 1 START

Follow main road heading east out of Litton, signed for 'Wardlow'. Continue over brow of hill, passing side-road, R, leading to Beacon House B&B. After 450m, turn R over wall via stile to enter Cressbrook Dale National Nature Reserve. Follow path along north end of dale, with wall L. Pass through tumbledown wall and continue downhill to reach head of dale. Go through squeeze-stile to emerge by road. Turn R to enter hamlet of Wardlow Mires.

### 2 1.8km/1¼ miles

Carefully cross road to Three Stags' Heads pub. Passing pub, turn L into Somerset House Farm. Entering compound, turn L and pass between barns. Take footpath passing L of building (through small gate) and enter field beyond. Go uphill through

field with wall L. Cross stone stile and continue uphill, crossing two further stiles, to reach Stanley House Farm.

### 3 2.4km/1½ miles

Turn R onto farm track, passing farm R. Where bridleway veers L, turn R into enclosed track running downhill to south of Silly Dale. After 45m, turn L over stile then R to follow path uphill. Go through gate, then cross two fields. Cross an enclosed track via two squeeze-stiles and continue across fields, crossing a sequence of four stiles on path to Foolow. Nearing village, cross field, pass through kissing-gate and turn R to cross a final field before turning L through a gate. Follow path through cottages and a narrow passage to emerge at Foolow village pond, with Bull's Head Inn beyond.



Looking out over Bretton Clough, between points 7 and 8.

Photo: Nick Hallisey

### 4 3.8km/2¼ miles

Passing pub, turn R onto side-road. After 450m, turn L and cross stile into residential drive, crossing a further stone stile at bottom of drive. Path now proceeds to Eyam across a series of fields divided by a total of eight easy stiles and 12 small gates. On edge of Eyam, cross a lane, a small field, another lane, then follow enclosed footpaths into residential street. Continue downhill on footpath through houses, reaching main road at bottom with Eyam Hall and Craft Centre opposite.

### 5 6.4km/4 miles

Turn L along road, which soon bends L. Take first R

up Hawk Hill Road; Eyam Museum is 180m up on L and well worth a visit. Afterwards, carry on uphill on road. Where road bends sharp R, turn L onto small lane, The Nook. Climb steeply through woodland; road zig-zags then straightens as it reaches a junction at summit.

### 6 7.3km/4½ miles

Emerge on road and turn R. After 320m, turn L to cross stone stile and follow footpath heading uphill with wall R. Follow grassy path over brow of hill. At end, cross stone stile and cross Roman road. Cross another stile onto open moorland signed for 'Stoke Ford'.

### 7 8.2km/5¼ miles

Follow moorland path descending over Sir William Hill. After almost 1.5km, cross stile and continue on grassy track with Bretton Clough valley L. Track veers R and descends into gorge. At bottom, do not cross bridge at Stoke Ford but turn sharp R on path signed for 'Hazelford' and climb slightly to follow path heading east above Highlow Brook. Ignore paths R and descend to brook.

### 8 11.3km/7 miles

Cross bridge, turn L and cross a second bridge. Turn R through gate and head uphill through woods. Climb through meadow and go through gate to join road next to Highlow Hall. Turn R, then immediate L across

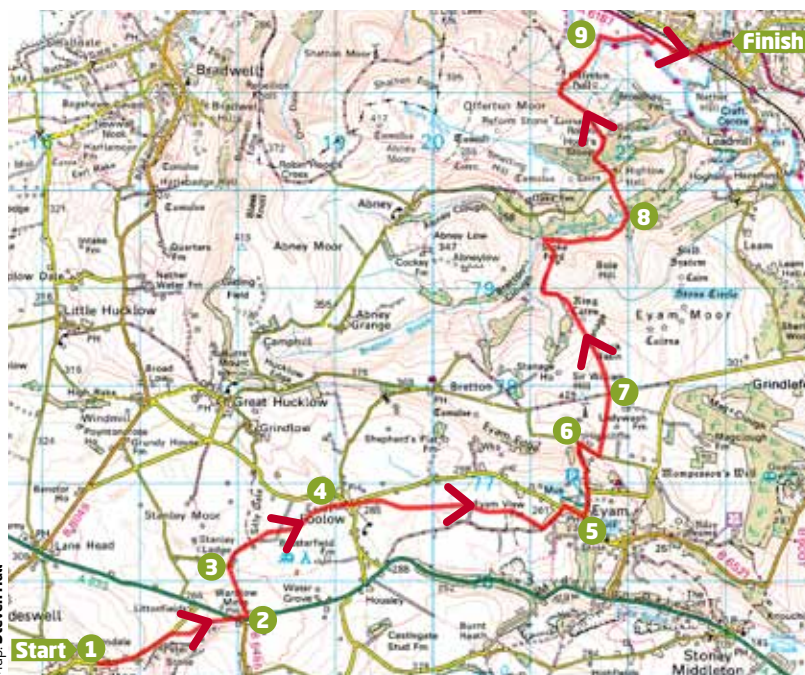
### PLAN YOUR WALK

#### Route

**Start/parking** Red Lion pub, Litton, grid ref SK163751  
**Is it for me?** Limestone dale, field footpaths, open moorland and woodland tracks. Two steep ascents/descents  
**Stiles** 12

#### Planning

**Nearest towns** Tideswell and Hathersage  
**Refreshments** Pubs in Litton, Foolow, Eyam and Hathersage. Cafés in Eyam and Hathersage  
**Public toilets** Hathersage  
**Public transport** Few bus links between Litton and Hathersage; multi-car or taxi options preferable  
**Maps** Ordnance Survey Explorer OL24 & OL1



Map: Steven Hall

road onto lane leading away from hall. Follow track round side of hill, passing Callow Farm and continuing to Offerton Hall and Offerton House. Just after the latter, leave lane through gate, R, and descend through three gates to reach Derwent.

### 9 13.8km/8½ miles

Cross stepping stones over river (if impassable, turn R and follow riverbank to road, then turn L for Hathersage). After stepping stones, climb far bank, turn R and follow riverbank. Path soon tends L away from river and climbs to reach main Castleton-Hathersage road. Turn R and follow road into Hathersage.

# THE WHITE TO DARK WAY: DAY 3

## HATHERSAGE TO HOPE

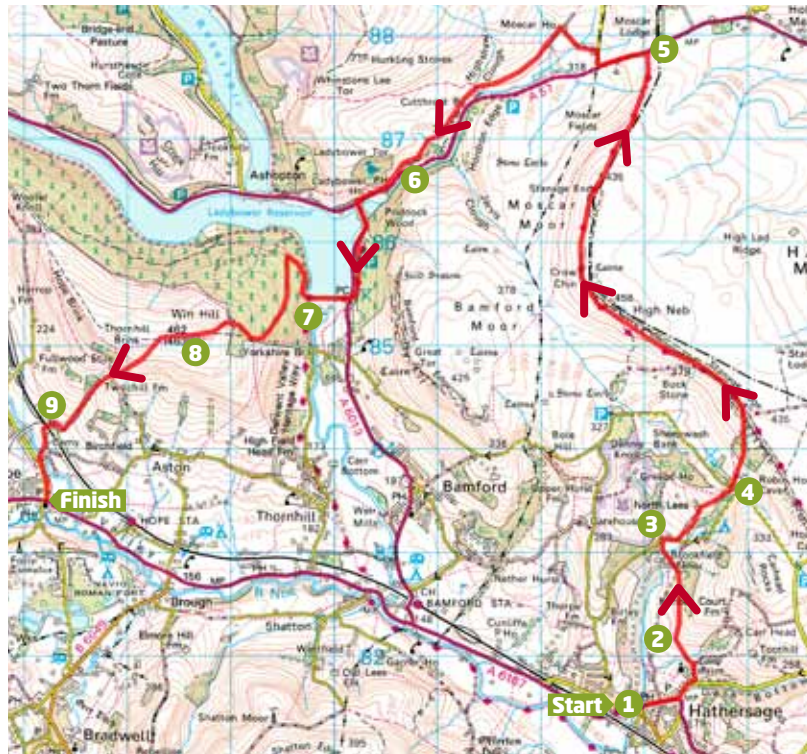
► Distance: **17.7km/11 miles** ► Time: **5.5 hours** ► Grade: **Challenging**



**T**he final day of the White to Dark heads high up into the Dark Peak, crossing Stange Edge then descending to Ladybower Reservoir. A final climb over shapely Win Hill provides a challenging but hugely rewarding end to an unforgettable trail.

**1 Start**  
At top of high street, where road bends R for Sheffield, turn L onto School Lane heading downhill (signed for 'Little John's Grave'). Pass Scotsman's Pack pub, R, turn L up Church Bank. At top, turn sharp L up cobbled track to churchyard. Little John's grave is on L, marked by a yew tree. Leave churchyard by eastern end through lychgate. Turn L on lane, then after a short distance go through gate in fence by footpath sign. Path veers R. Where path splits around tree, take L path heading down steps to river.

**2 0.6km/¼ mile**  
Go through gate, cross small bridge and continue uphill with hedge L. Cross stile and continue across next field with fence R. On meeting another track, turn R through gate and continue uphill. Where path splits, take lower path, L, following footpath sign. Go through gate into enclosed path and continue through farm compound. Go through gate and emerge on road.



**3 1.8km/1 mile**  
Turn R, passing Bronte Cottage, L. After 180m, turn sharp L up through a gate and follow drive uphill to pass North Lees Hall, L. Go through gate onto enclosed track veering L. After 45m turn sharp R up track and continue up over next field. Go through a gate and continue on enclosed track through wood. After 230m turn L to ascend stepped path and emerge onto road.

**4 2.8km/1¾ miles**  
Cross road and continue uphill on grassy path towards Stange Edge. After small copse, path

becomes stepped to climb to crest. Turn L and follow edge. After 180m, branch R on smaller path which keeps to crest (permissive path – if closed, use right-of-way on path running below crest). Cross stile and continue along scarp, passing High Neb. Continue along edge, veering R after Crow Chin. Descend to main road.

**5 8km/5 miles**  
At road, cross stile, turn L and follow road downhill. After 300m turn R on side-road signed for 'Strines Moor'. After 137m, turn L on track, passing Moscar Farm. Where track bears L, turn L

onto path, which drops into marshy area then climbs slightly to wall. Turn L, with wall on R. At next wall, turn L and again keep this wall R. Follow clear path downhill, crossing ladder-stile beside old milestone. Cross beck at Highshaw Clough, climb bank and continue ahead (do not descend to Cutthroat Bridge or turn R uphill). Follow path down through two gates marking out a nature reserve and emerge on road by Ladybower Inn.

**6 11.4km/7 miles**  
Cross road and follow it downhill to junction beside bridge. Turn L to cross bridge, keeping to R-hand pavement. Follow road with reservoir R, passing large 'plughole' and reaching dam wall. Turn R and cross dam wall to far end.

**7 13km/8 miles**  
Go through gate and turn R. Just after bend, take path uphill, L, signed for 'New Barn'. At brow, go through gate, turn L and follow path. At junction of paths, turn R steeply uphill through plantation. Go through gate

### PLAN YOUR WALK

#### Route

**Start/parking** Top of Hathersage high street, grid ref SK232815  
**Is it for me?** Gritstone edges, forest tracks, farmland. A long day in the High Peak with some steep ascents and descents, but all paths are easy to follow  
**Stiles** 8

#### Planning

**Nearest town** Hathersage  
**Refreshments** Pubs and cafés in Hathersage and Hope; pub at Ladybower  
**Public toilets** Hathersage  
**Public transport** Buses and trains link Hathersage with Sheffield and Manchester. Return to Hathersage from Hope via bus 272 or train. Alternatively bus 173 connects Hope with Bakewell (timetable at [hulleys-of-baslow.co.uk](http://hulleys-of-baslow.co.uk))  
**Maps** Ordnance Survey Explorer OL1

Map: Steven Hall

and continue uphill to crossroads of paths. Continue uphill (signs for 'Win Hill') to summit.

**8 15km/9¼ miles**  
Cross summit and descend far side. Take first path leading L off ridge path, passing through kissing-gate and descending sharply, soon passing a lone hawthorn tree. Cross stile, then cross field to far R corner. Descend through gate to Twitchill Farm then follow access road downhill to meet road.

**9 17km/10½ miles**  
Turn L, under rail bridge. Cross bridge over river then turn R and pass through two squeeze-stiles onto Edale Road. Turn R for Cheshire Cheese pub, then retrace steps and continue down Edale Road into Hope, where pubs, cafés and buses back to Hathersage can be found. Well done, White-to-Darker!

**NOW TURN TO P36**  
for your full guide to lodgings, food and transport on the trail.

Massive views from the summit of Win Hill.



Photo: Tom Bailey