

3.8 miles (6.1 km)

trentbarton Sixes Bus Route
Rowsley Circular Walk

Starting and ending at the trentbarton Sixes bus stop in the village of Rowsley, this is a beautiful walk that takes in some of the best countryside walking and far-reaching views in the area, all in less than 4 miles. You'll leave Rowsley on a well-made track to reach the little hamlet of Stanton Woodhouse, before walking on field paths offering wonderful views towards Matlock. You'll return on quiet country lanes through the hamlets of Pilhough and Congreave, with views of Haddon Hall, before dropping down on field paths back into Rowsley, past the mysterious tree-topped hill of Peak Tor.



Start/Finish Point

The trentbarton Sixes bus stop opposite the Peacock Hotel in Rowsley (DE4 2EB; ///diamond.deliver.overhead)

A The walk starts on School Lane, directly opposite the bus stop outside the Peacock Hotel. Walk along School Lane, passing the primary school on your left.

Where the lane bears right immediately after crossing the bridge over the River Wye, continue straight on along the private road lined with high hedges. Follow this private road for approx 1.25 km, ignoring all tracks and paths off. Look out for views over to Darley Dale and Matlock on your left; on clear days you may be able to see Riber Castle on the distant hillside.

After approx 1.25 km look out for a footpath sign on the right and follow the field path that leads through a metal kissing gate. Head straight on uphill walking alongside the hedge until you reach a wide wooden gate on your left after approx 25-30 metres. Go through the gate and carry straight on to rejoin the private road that you were walking on before.

Continue straight on to reach the little hamlet of Stanton Woodhouse. These pretty buildings belong to a 16th Century country estate, once part of the Stanton Estate but passed to the Duke of Rutland and the Haddon Estate in the early 1800s.

As the road curves to the right just beyond the buildings, continue straight on across the grass. Go through a wide metal gate and take the field path that is obvious straight ahead of you between the trees.

B Follow this curving field path as it leads gently uphill and bears right. Look out for wonderful views of Matlock from the top of the hill. Continue following the clear path through a pair of stone gate posts and a small metal hand gate.

At an obvious fork in the path you can go either left or right, although the path on the right is usually clearer and easier to negotiate. Either way brings you out onto the same quiet country lane. Turn right on the lane.

C Continue on this quiet, pretty country lane for approx 1.5 km. At a junction of lanes stay straight on and follow the signs to Pilhough and Congreave, ignoring the road on the left signposted to Stanton in Peak. The views to the right are wonderful, across open countryside to Darley Dale.

Pilhough is a small collection of farms and cottages clustered around a crossroads. Go straight on when you reach the crossroads, taking the very narrow lane signposted to Congreave. The lane twists down for a further 750 metres to the little hamlet. Again, the views to your right are wonderful, and keen-eyed spotters may be able to spot Haddon Hall in the trees ahead.

When you reach Congreave, look out for a footpath on your right, directly opposite a house called Dovehouse Farm and just before Congreave Farm. Leave the lane and turn right to follow the path as it passes to the side of barns and through a wide wooden gate with a stone squeeze stile beside.

D Walk straight on through the gate and stay to the top of the field, picking up a clear path that bears right and leads downhill towards a small wood. Go through two small wooden hand gates with a stream between, and then follow the curving path for approx 10-15 metres through trees to a third small wooden gate in a stone wall.

Go through the gate to emerge into a wide field. Head slightly diagonally right and follow the clear path ahead, with Rowsley village visible ahead of you beyond the river. The distinctive hill topped with a group of trees on your right is Peak Tor. Despite its prominence in the landscape and the clear earthwork bank and ditch that surrounds it, its history remains unclear.

The path bears right between trees and heads gently downhill to reach a wide metal gate with a small wooden hand gate beside. Go through the gate and turn left on the lane. Follow this quiet lane for approx 500 metres back into Rowsley village and your start point on School Lane.

VISIT PEAK DISTRICT & DERBYSHIRE

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