# **FAQs - Questions and Answers**

**Find answers to the most common questions about the White Peak Loop below!**

**Q: Where can I find a White Peak Loop route map?**

**A:** You can download the GPX file and there’s a link through to a more detailed map here: [The White Peak Loop | Visit Peak District & Derbyshire](https://visitpeakdistrict.com/trails/the-white-peak-loop)

You can also see the outline of the route on the Cycle Derbyshire map: [Cycling - Derbyshire County Council](https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/cycling/cycling.aspx) and it’s on the [Derbyshire Mapping Portal](https://maps.derbyshire.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=Ordnance_Survey_Maps) under the cycle networks tab as *White Peak Loop interim.*

We don’t currently have a standalone printed White Peak Loop map. However you can pick up a copy of the [Cycle Derbyshire Map](https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/cycling/cycling.aspx) from selected businesses and all libraries across Derbyshire. This is a map showing all the trails in Derbyshire. It will help you connect the route from Cromford Mills to Matlock using 1.7miles of the A6, then Rowsley to Bakewell using public rights of way which involves a steep climb. At Topley Pike you can 'hike-a-bike' from the Monsal Trail onto the Pennine Bridleway National Trail and follow quiet lanes to connect with the High Peak Trail.

**Q: Is there a GPX route available to download at all?**

**A:** You can download the GPX route and save it onto a GPS Unit from here [The White Peak Loop | Visit Peak District & Derbyshire](https://visitpeakdistrict.com/trails/the-white-peak-loop)

You can also view the route, plan a journey and download the route directly here [Bike map | Cycle route planner | cycle.travel](https://cycle.travel/map/journey/691009)

**Q: From where do I access the route?**

**A:** There are several car parks along the route which are shown on the [Cycle Derbyshire map](https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/leisure/countryside/access/cycling/cycle-derbyshire-map.pdf). However, why not ditch the car and travel by rail or bus?

**Q: Can I get to the route by public transport?**

**A:** The route is accessible by train from the local rail stations of Cromford, Matlock Bath, Matlock and Buxton. Trains tend to have between two and six dedicated bicycle spaces and booking in advance is the best way to secure a stress-free journey and avoid disappointment.If you are on foot, there are local bus services within easy reach of the route. The [Traveline journey planner](https://www.traveline.info/) will help you find the best routes and connections for your journey by bus and train.

**Q: How long will it take to ride the Loop?**

**A:** That depends on how far you're used to riding in a day – if riding 42 hilly miles off-road in a day is no problem, you could complete the route in a day, but if you'd rather ride around 21 miles a day and have more time to stop off and look at all the interesting things along the way, then you'll want a leisurely two days staying overnight at a range of [cycle-friendly accommodation](https://www.cyclistswelcome.co.uk/featured/peak-district). There are lots of interesting places on route, so to give yourself plenty of time to stop, explore and admire the views. View the White Peak Loop [film](https://youtu.be/QlOzFW7uPKw?si=1OzlJJaU5EKFousS) for inspiration, find out about suggested multi-day itineraries and plan your adventure at [visitpeakdistrict.com](https://visitpeakdistrict.com/trails/the-white-peak-loop)

**Q: Why is it promoted as 2/3-day cycle ride? It’s only 42 miles surely you can do it in a day.**

**A:** With a total of 610 metres, or 2,000ft of ascent, it normally takes 2–3 days to ride but can be done in a day if you are extremely fit and enjoy a challenge. Alternatively, it can be enjoyed as short excursions with the whole family.

A key highlight is the opportunity for trail users to enjoy a slow journey stopping to enjoy Derbyshire’s unique heritage and stunning views on the way. There’s ample accommodation available on route to create a great short break experience.  Incorporating an [overnight](https://visitpeakdistrict.com/itineraries/the-white-peak-loop-2-day-cycle) makes it into an adventure.

**Q: How hard is it?**

**A:** The route is currently 42-miles long with 2,000ft climb: 5 miles on-road, 37 miles off-road (I mile of which is ‘hike-a-bike'). The route follows a variety of surfaces including some sections of public open roads, aggregate tracks, bridleways and traffic-free trails. It’s a predominantly off-road route (88%) that runs through exposed areas of the Peak District National Park, so expect hills and changeable weather!

As the route progresses westwards through the Peak District it becomes more remote, and the settlements are fewer so Trail users should be sure to carry supplies and be prepared for all weather conditions. Ensure your visit is a responsible one by following the Countryside Code and stay #PeakDistrictProud by parking only in designated areas and taking your litter home with you. Always be safe and responsible when out on the trail.

**Q; Is the White Peak Loop signposted?**

**A:** The route is well signposted, follow the White Peak Loop / WPL blue signs. They do sometimes go missing, or can be hard to see, so we recommend taking a map with you or downloading a GPS file if you can. There have been significant recent improvements to the route, including installation of 288 new signs to try and make it as user friendly as possibly.

 **Q:** **When will the White Peak Loop be finished?**

**A:** Work continues to make the trail accessible to more people and to make further local connections for both active travel and leisure. We are committed to improvements to extend and improve the route and its connections. The White Peak Loop today is now 42 miles but in five years’ time, with more effort and investment, it could be twice that, with connections all around the loop to other treks and trails – drawing visitors from across the nation (or even globe) and providing first class recreation on our doorsteps.

 **Q: Are you connecting to Buxton anytime soon?**
**A:** A 42-mile route is currently open which we are hoping to extend to over 50 miles through Buxton. We are currently working with partners on progressing routes into and through Buxton, giving people more choice about how they get to jobs and learning – and for leisure, whilst also reducing the impact of transport emissions on local air quality. In the next two years we hope to have completed some of the missing links through and to Buxton.

 **Q:** **What’s happening with the White Peak Loop?**

**A:** We are working on connecting the link from the western end of the Monsal Trail at Blackwell Mill Cottages into Buxton and through to Harpur Hill. Although there is a recently resurfaced bridleway route from Rowsley to Bakewell, the ultimate link would be through Haddon Estate. This section could entail the building of three bridges and the refurbishment and opening of a 1km long tunnel. Keep up to date with the [latest news](https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/cycling/white-peak-loop/white-peak-loop.aspx).

**Q: Are the plans to reinstate a railway now dropped?**

**A:** Whilstorganisations are campaigning for the reinstatement of an active railway on a section of the WPL known as the Monsal Trail. The current proposal does not pass [key tests](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/learning-about/news/current-news/statement-on-proposals-for-reinstatement-of-an-active-railway-line-on-the-route-of-the-monsal-trail) that need to demonstrate reinstatement of the railway line within the Peak District National Park is a viable option.

**Q: Is it intended as road, gravel or MTB ride? / What type of bike do I need?**

**A:** The route uses traffic-free trails, public rights of way and some sections of public open roads. It is being designed so that it can be ridden on any kind of bike that’s in good mechanical order and the right size for the rider. Low gearing will make climbing the hills much less daunting. Good quality tyres between 28mm and 40mm in width are a sensible all-round choice for a comfortable multi-terrain ride.

**Q: Is the route suitable for walkers?**

**A:** Yes! Many people have walked all or part of the route, although it is not fully waymarked for walkers you can use a GPS or Ordnance Survey map to join up the loop from High Peak Junction (Cromford) to Matlock station and between the end of the Monsal Trail to and through Buxton.

**Q: Where does the walking route go between Bakewell and Cromford?**

**A:** The walking route varies from the cycle route between Cromford and Matlock. Here walkers can pick up a quieter, more scenic route by following the Derwent Valley Heritage Way. A GPX file can be downloaded here and uploaded onto OS Maps app to aid navigation: [Walk The White Peak Loop in 4 days | Visit Peak District & Derbyshire](https://visitpeakdistrict.com/itineraries/walk-the-white-peak-loop-in-4-days)

**Q: Is the route suitable for horse riders?**

**A:** The completed Loop will aim to cater for all – walkers, cyclists, and horse riders where possible.Currently around 31 miles (74%) of the route is open to horse riders. Horse riders are welcome on the High Peak, Tissington and Monsal [shared use trails.](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/places-to-visit/trails)

The [Pennine Bridleway National Trail](https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/pennine-bridleway/) which runs for 205 miles through the dramatic Pennine hills from Derbyshire to Cumbria opens up opportunities for the more adventurous. A start point for this, which is recommended for horse riders is at Hartington Station on the Tissington Trail. A horsebox park with turning area has been provided here, along with tethering and watering facilities.

**Q: Is the route suitable for families?**

**A:** Doing the White Peak Loop with kids is an amazing adventure and experience for the whole family. The Peak District offers so much variety, there is something for everyone. With kids it can take a little longer so it’s best to choose an itinerary that has a few key stops each day with plenty of time for other fun experiences. Look out for the sculpted benches along the Trails and the mural at Friden brickworks. Take an audio tour at High Peak Junction Workshops. Explore the National Stone Centre next to the High Peak Trail at Wirksworth and the nearby Steeple Grange Light Railway. Visit the World Heritage Site including Arkwright’s Mill (the world’s first cotton-spinning mill) near Cromford Wharf. Use the network to visit the historic towns and villages of Ashbourne, Cromford, Hartington, Tissington and Wirksworth

**Q: Is the route suitable for wheelchair users or people with mobility scooters?**

**A:** The Monsal Trail provides a firm, level surface from the car park at Bakewell Station south to Coombs Road viaduct and north to Blackwell Mill near Buxton (approximately 8.5 miles). Also suitable are sections of the High Peak and Tissington Trails. All terrain mobility scooters can be hired from High Peak Junction Visitor Centre, near Cromford, DE4 5AA, tel: 01629 533298 and Middleton Top Visitor Centre, near Wirksworth, DE4 4LS, tel: 01629 533298.

Our [Access for all](https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/access-for-all/access-for-all.aspx) page brings together access information about the Derbyshire countryside, including easy access for all sites and all terrain mobility scooter hire.

**Q: Why don’t you use tarmac instead of a fine gravel surface?**

**A:** There is no one surface that suits all users. Many of our trails are designed to provide a comfortable and pleasant route for walking, wheeling, cycling and horse riding. They provide a safe space for all vulnerable user groups away from busy carriageways.

We have made considerable recent surface improvements to the parts of the route, including between Coombs Road between Rowsley and the Monsal Trail near Bakewell and along Church Walk between Mill Road and the A6 at Cromford. The aim of these latest repairs is to provide a better surface with improved drainage and accessibility, enabling more users to enjoy the route throughout the year.

The surfacing, along with the materials specified for other aspects of the improvement works, were chosen to be in-keeping with the landscape character of the area.

For these latest repairs we used approximately 3” of locally sourced type 1 limestone then topped off with a blinding layer approximately 20mm thick of 6mm to dust limestone, also locally sourced. A key influencing factor for this choice were the site locations within a National Park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site setting.

Tarmac is not in keeping with this and is often found to be too hard for many walkers with hip or knee issues, and it can cause impact concussion or ligament problems in horses.

**Q: It was good to see the new surface on the path between Rowsley Church and Coombs Farm, approaching the Monsal Trail. But the last mile or so of this path has a base layer, but not the top layer, of surface. Why have the contractors left with the path unfinished?**

**A:** the White Peak Loop follows a variety of surfaces including some sections of public open roads, aggregate tracks, bridleways and traffic-free trails.

The original aim of the project for the path between Rowsley Church Lane and Coombs Farm, approaching the Monsal Trail was to improve the surface, drainage and accessibility of the existing public rights of way (sections of bridleway and restricted byway) which were previously poorly drained and badly rutted, so they could be enjoyed by users throughout the year.

It has been undertaken in two phases over a total length of 2.5km, with the first being finished back in 2021. The second phase was completed by our contractors before they left site on 26 March 2025.

As far as Coombs Road itself is concerned, part of the original specification of works was to replace the opening/closing mechanisms of three existing field gates and repair the worst of the potholes on the section between the Monsal Trail ramp and Coombs Farm. The plans for the 760m section to the SE of the farm were to scrape and reprofile the surface, undertake some minor drainage works, treat potholes and fill ‘soft spots’, overlaying the worst sections with a layer of clean stone.

However, due to circumstances beyond our control the start of the work was delayed resulting in it being undertaken at a time of year we originally planned to minimise, if not avoid entirely. Although not part of the original plan, we were also restricted to using Coombs Road from the Bakewell side as the sole means of access to and from the site for construction plant and HGVs delivering materials to the storage area at Coombs Farm. The weather conditions and frequent passage of plant over a period of around 12 weeks along the section of Coombs Road to the SE side of the farm resulted in unavoidable additional potholes and rutting of the surface. This was reviewed once its temporary use by plant was coming to an end, and it was considered necessary to overlay a greater length with a layer of clean stone. However, as this section is used by agricultural vehicles, it was considered inappropriate to blind the surface with a layer of finer stone as has been applied along the 1.02km of improved public rights of way, but this is still a considerable improvement on its previous condition.

**Q: Is there any information that shows camp sites close to the Loop?**

**A:** You can find campsites near the route using this useful app / website cycle.travel: <https://cycle.travel/map/journey/691010>

And check out this Google map which has been created to show campsites suitable for cycle camping at a reasonable price <http://tinyurl.com/CycleCampingUK>

**Q: Would be possible to use the White Loop Peak for a fundraising event?
A:** Sorry, there is not a straightforward answer regarding events on the route as it passes through a lot of different landowners, so in theory you would need permission from each of them to hold an event and to film.

The main landowners along the route are Peak District National Park Authority, Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council and the Arkwright Society who you would need to contact to request permission. There are also numerous smaller landowners though as you would be on public rights of way at that point there should not be any issue with that as long as they are not large-scale events, which could be deemed to be a nuisance.