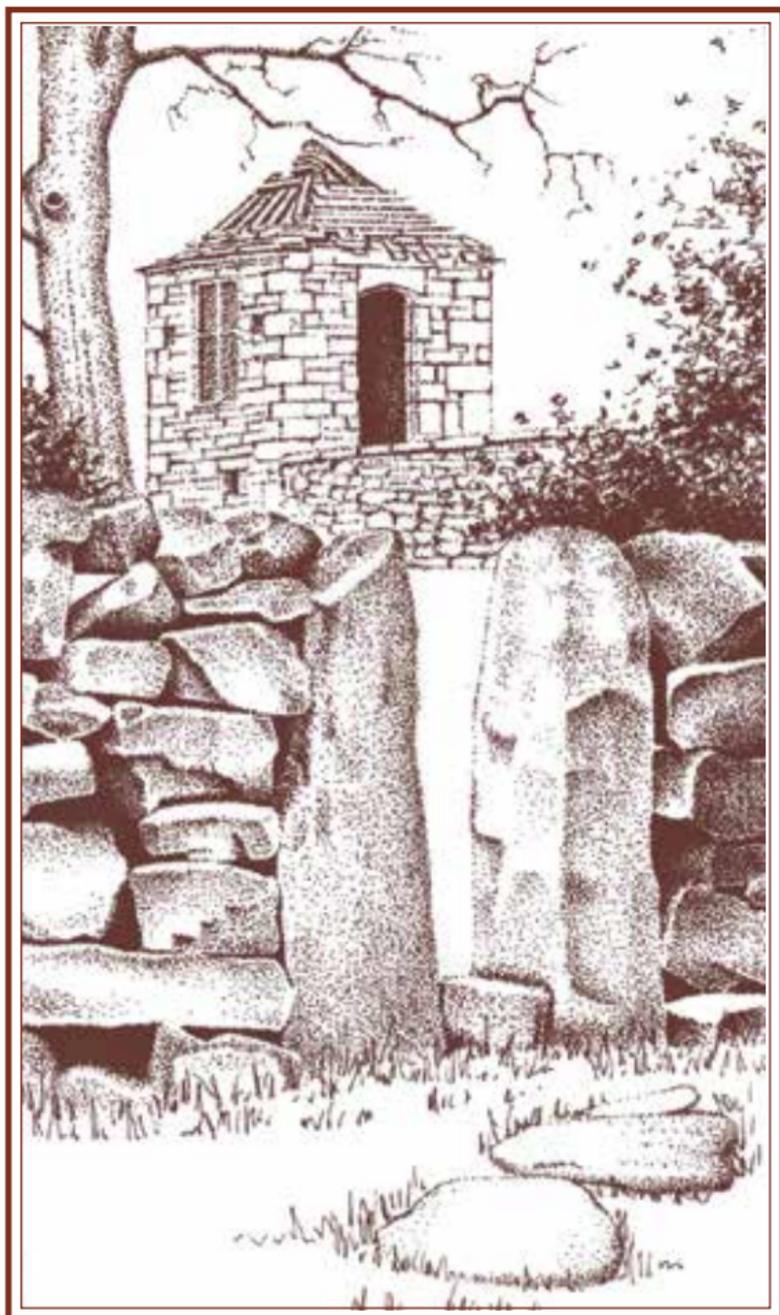


STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS

WALKS

# Styles in Stone

A WALK EAST FROM CHEDDLETON



STAFFORDSHIRE  
*moorlands*  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

ACHIEVING • EXCELLENCE

## **How to get there**

Cheddleton is on the A520, 3 miles south of Leek. Turn into Station Road in Cheddleton and continue for a mile to the old station where some roadside parking is available.

Buses run regularly Leek - Cheddleton - Hanley. For bus information telephone 0871 200 22 33.

## **Local Architecture**

From the village of Cheddleton, deep into the heart of the Staffordshire Moorlands countryside, this walk reveals not only interesting landscape and wildlife, but some real architectural gems

The "Jacobean" style station of 1849 is one of several built along the Churnet Valley line in the mid nineteenth century. It now houses the North Staffordshire Railway Museum having been saved from demolition in 1974.

Beyond the Coombes Valley, there are the spectacular seventeenth century halls of Sharpcliffe and Whitehough. Both were built by the affluent Whitehall (originally Whitehalgh) family of Ipstones and are classed as Grade II\* listed buildings to protect their architectural excellence. There are many examples of these grand old houses in the area that resulted from the new wealth generated by agricultural enclosure and by the exploitation of local mineral reserves for industry.

In the fields around there is a complex network of footpaths with delightful stone stiles, built when the fields were enclosed. The paths were important routes for work, markets and social visits. Today they are most frequently walked for leisure.

## **Enjoy the Walk**

The walk takes you east of Cheddleton through the beautiful Coombes Valley Nature Reserve to the outskirts of Ipstones. It is approximately 6 miles and you should allow 3-4 hours to enjoy the scenery. Good stout footwear is recommended, as the ground is steep in places.

**1.** Opposite Basford Bridge Lane is a track and footpath to Fernyhill. Follow the path along the field boundaries, crossing a lane and climbing to Lowerhouse Farm. You will pass the restored 'Challinor' buttercross, one of many in the Moorlands which mark crossroads, boundaries or religious places and were used as meeting points for the exchange of produce.

**2.** Turn left at the road after 300m look for a stile to the right. Continue through several fields along a well-built gritstone wall, then bear right across the fields as you descend from the hilltop. Continue to the road and turn right.

**3.** A stile ahead takes you into the Coombes Valley Reserve. Bear right between the footpath through the valley. The secluded woodland yields many old folks tales related to the 'ghostly' Spiritholes Wood and 'Horsby's' stone where a local man is said to have killed his brother in a love dispute.

**4.** At the top of the incline, cross the wall and head over the field to a gate at the back of Sharpcliffe Hall. Join the lane and keep left to the tree-lined driveway. The magnificent Sharpcliffe features stone mullioned windows and grand chimney stacks built to exhibit the wealth of the landowner of the day.

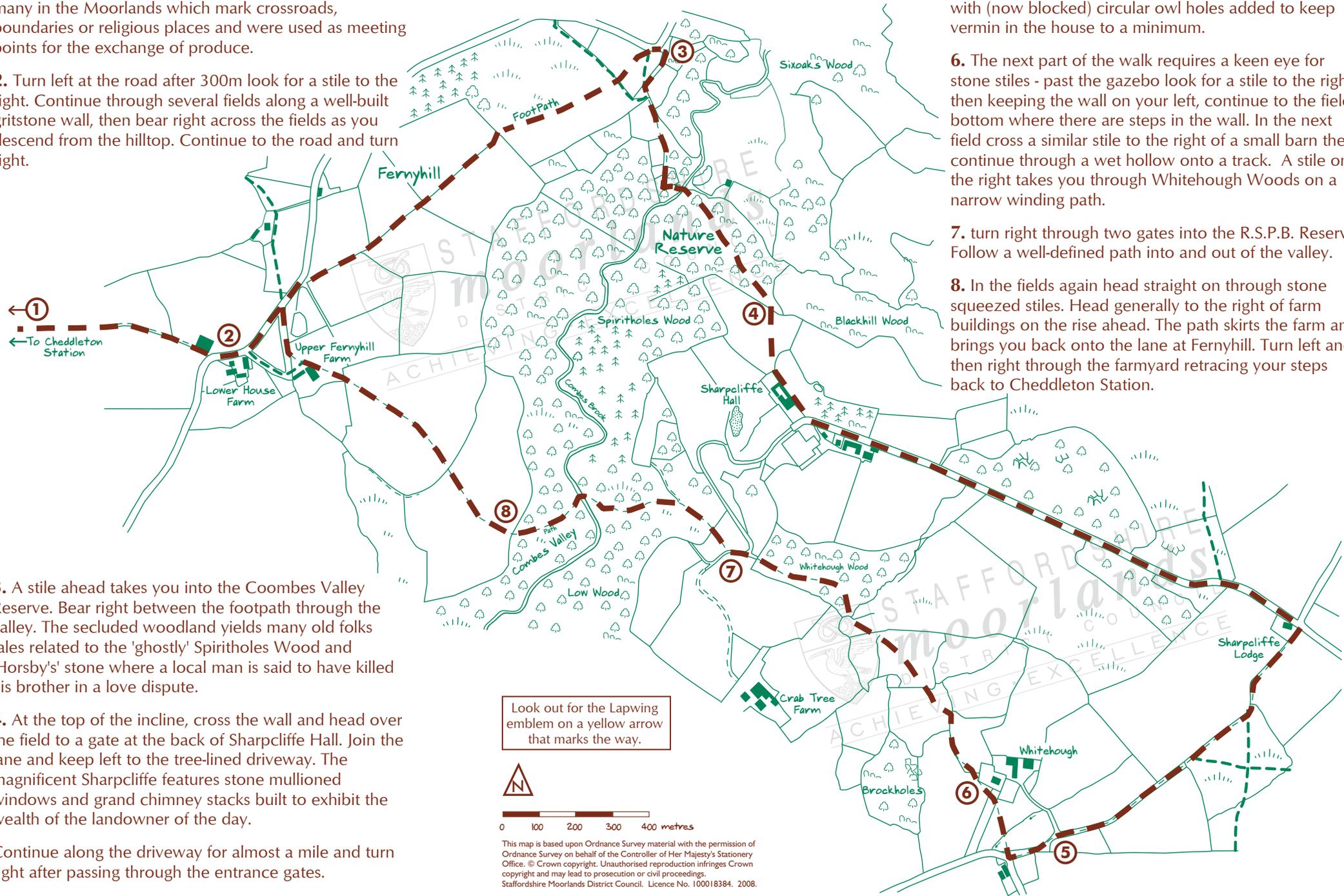
Continue along the driveway for almost a mile and turn right after passing through the entrance gates.

**5.** Where the tracks diverge bear left and after approximately 100m look for a squeeze stile in the wall on the right. Passing Whitehough note the massive almost turret-like chimney stacks and the large gables with (now blocked) circular owl holes added to keep vermin in the house to a minimum.

**6.** The next part of the walk requires a keen eye for stone stiles - past the gazebo look for a stile to the right, then keeping the wall on your left, continue to the field bottom where there are steps in the wall. In the next field cross a similar stile to the right of a small barn then continue through a wet hollow onto a track. A stile on the right takes you through Whitehough Woods on a narrow winding path.

**7.** turn right through two gates into the R.S.P.B. Reserve. Follow a well-defined path into and out of the valley.

**8.** In the fields again head straight on through stone squeezed stiles. Head generally to the right of farm buildings on the rise ahead. The path skirts the farm and brings you back onto the lane at Fernyhill. Turn left and then right through the farmyard retracing your steps back to Cheddleton Station.



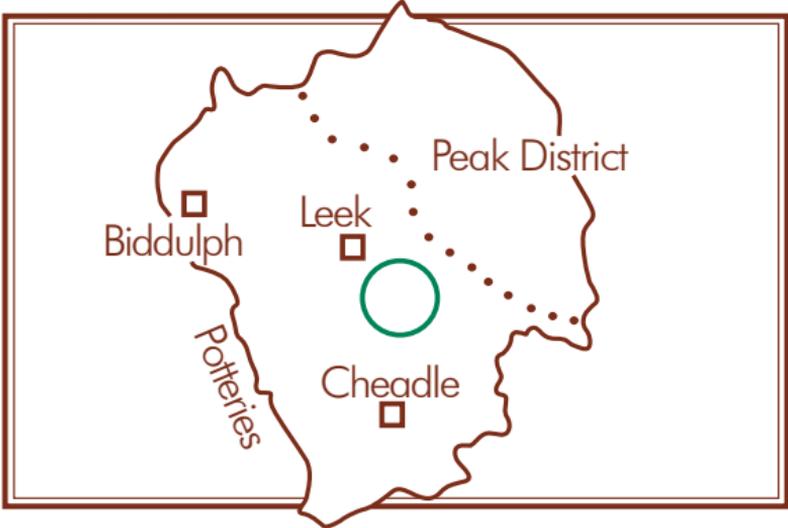
Look out for the Lapwing emblem on a yellow arrow that marks the way.



0 100 200 300 400 metres

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# LOCATION OF WALK



Remember these paths cross private land.  
Please:

- Keep your dog under control
- Fasten all gates behind you
- Take all your litter home
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees
- Follow the country code

For comments or more information please contact:

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Leek, Staffs. ST13 6HQ.

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E-mail: [countryside@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk](mailto:countryside@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk)

Web: [www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk](http://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk)

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website for diversions and updates.