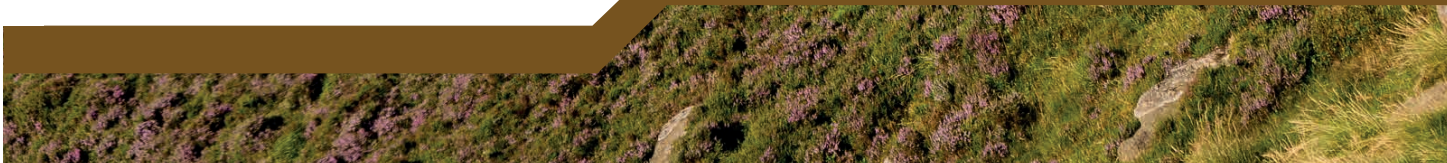




Day Walks in the PeakDistrict

20 new circular routes

The following route is featured in
Day Walks in the Peak District
by Norman Taylor & Barry Pope.
To buy a copy of the book visit
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vp inspiring adventure



TOP OF DOCTOR'S GATE PHOTO: JON BARTON

02 Bleaklow Head

20.6km/12.8miles

A demanding 'mountain' walk to a remote summit using the Pennine Way in ascent and a Roman road in descent.

Old Glossop » Padfield » Torside Reservoir » Bleaklow Head » Doctor's Gate » Old Glossop

Start

Turn off the A57 to Old Glossop along Manor Park Road, then bear right up Shepley Street to park alongside the factory. GR: SK 043947.

After nearly five kilometres of climbing, the summit cairn at Bleaklow Head reveals itself. 'Bleak' is an apt description of this barren, eroded summit mound. In bad weather one can quickly become disoriented here and, even in clear conditions, when there are distant views of the Pennines to the north and the Lancashire and Cheshire plains to the west, the routes off the summit are not clearly defined, and a compass becomes an essential navigational aid.

The Walk

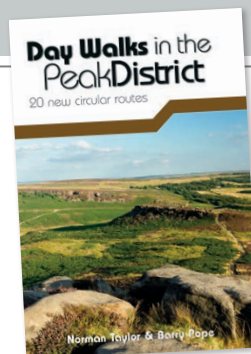
This route climbs out of Old Glossop by a combination of track and footpath. To avoid walking along tarmac, it wends a way across fields, through a cemetery, and past cottages, eventually descending to the Trans Pennine Trail. The walking here is easy but would become monotonous if it were not for the changing views of the reservoirs and the steep flanking moors.

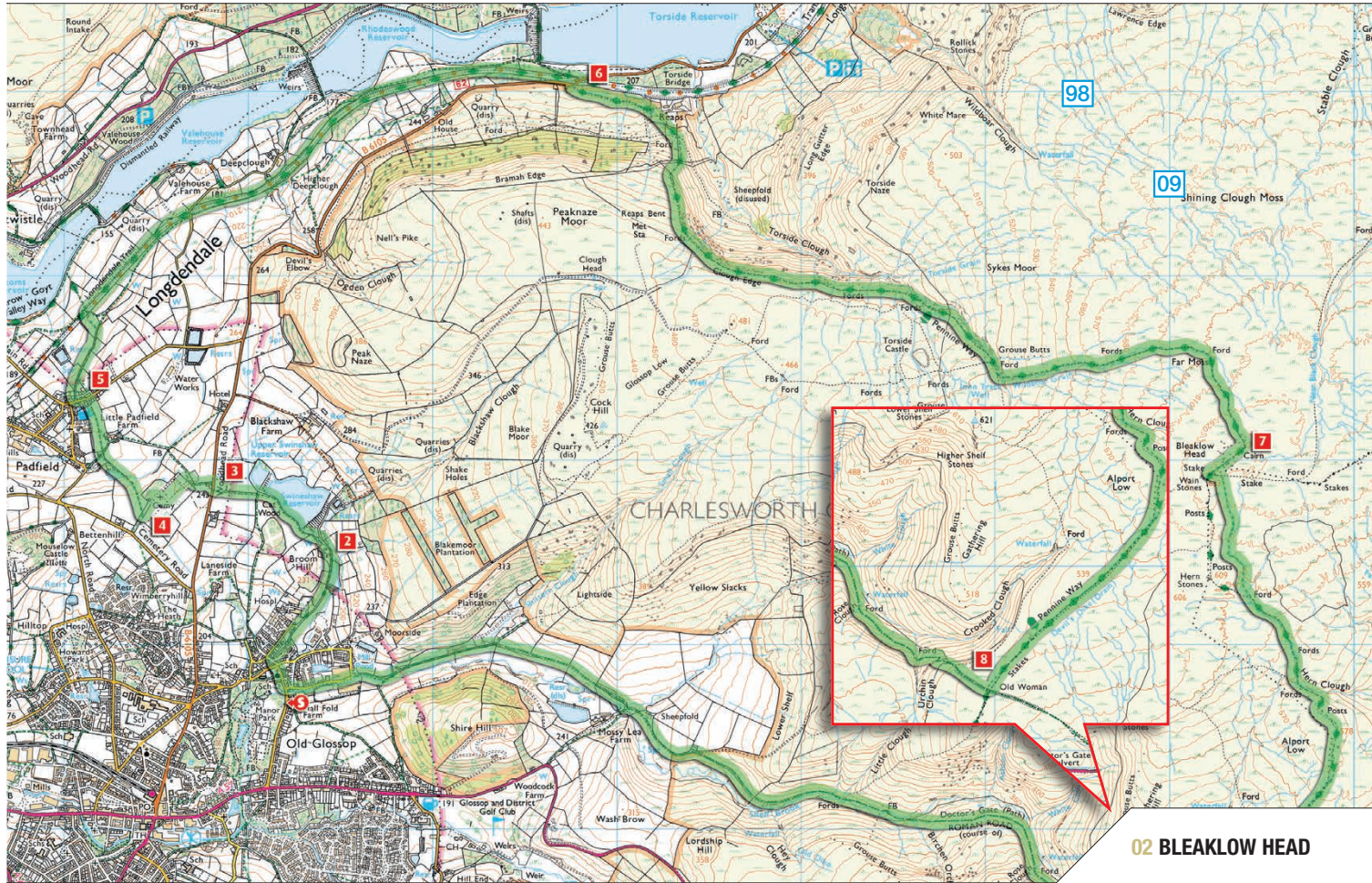
Once located, the Pennine Way footpath becomes a well-blazened trail that is followed towards the summit of the A57 Snake Pass. Before reaching the pass, however, the Pennine Way crosses a much older pathway known as Doctor's Gate; an old Roman road. This is our means of descent, a mountain path that is anything but a 'road' as it descends an impressive valley back to Old Glossop.

On leaving the Trail, the climb along the Pennine Way up Bleaklow begins in earnest, the first half kilometre being steep, although not difficult underfoot. It gradually eases off and takes on the character of a mountain path, enhanced by its course along the rim of the steep-sided and craggy Torside Clough.

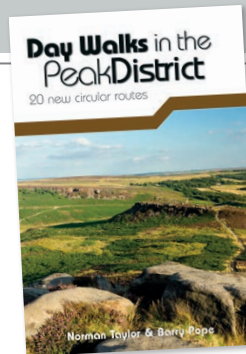
BLEAKLOW HEAD

DISTANCE: 20.6KM/12.8MILES » TOTAL ASCENT: 651M/2,135FT » START GR: SK 043947 » TIME: ALLOW 6 HOURS
 SATNAV: SK13 95A » MAP: OS EXPLORER OL1, PEAK DISTRICT: DARK PEAK AREA, 1:25,000 » REFRESHMENTS: NONE ON ROUTE
 NAVIGATION: COMPETENCE IN THE USE OF MAP AND COMPASS IS STRONGLY ADVISED.





02 BLEAKLOW HEAD



Directions – Bleaklow Head

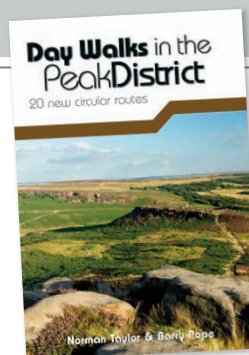


- From Shepley Street **turn right** along Church Street South and pass immediately right of the Bulls Head Public House. **Turn right** on Bute Street and continue to the entrance of what was Shire Hill Hospital (now closed). **Turn right** to follow the tarmac lane around the right-hand perimeter of the old hospital buildings.
- 2 100m after passing a pond, and opposite farm buildings, **turn left to cross a footbridge** and follow a path up the side of an embankment. Continue with the reservoir wall on your right. Keep **straight ahead** across two stiles and continue uphill to a road.
- 3 **Turn right** along the road; shortly afterwards **turn left** on a path beside a cottage. This leads to a stile straight ahead, not easily seen. **Continue straight ahead, then bear half right** to a stile in the cemetery wall. Cross this, **bear right to the chapel**, and continue along a drive alongside the right-hand boundary wall. Your objective is a stile in this wall between rhododendrons about 100m before the drive joins the road ahead.
- 4 **Cross the stile and bear half right** towards a wall corner. **Descend to the left** to join an old track running alongside a pond. Leave the track to keep straight on along a footpath that meets the road in the village of Padfield.
- 5 **Turn left** and after 100m **turn right** between cottages (at a fingerpost). Continue down the track. **Cross the first stile on the left** and descend to the Trans Pennine Trail. **Turn right** along this and follow it for 3km, at which point it crosses a road.
- 6 **Turn right**, cross the road and **turn left** up a track to join the Pennine Way. This soon leaves the track and ascends steeply for about 800m before becoming more gradual. **Fork left** down to the stream to cross Torside Clough at a ford. (Another path keeps straight on but becomes indistinct as it approaches the summit.) Continue along the Pennine Way to the cairn at Bleaklow Head (633m).
- 7 **Care is needed on leaving the summit.** By walking south-west from the cairn you will pick up the Pennine Way. This becomes an obvious and waymarked route using stream channels, and short sections are paved. The path crosses two fords and after 3km a crossroads of paths is reached with a post identifying the spot. The path cutting across the Pennine Way is Doctor's Gate.

- 8 **Turn right** to follow Doctor's Gate down the valley. This crosses a boggy area and a footbridge en route. After 3km it joins a former quarry track. Follow this downhill to Old Glossop. **Keep straight ahead** alongside the factory to return to the start.



FOOTBRIDGE ACROSS SHELF BROOK, DOCTOR'S GATE PHOTO: NORMAN TAYLOR



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Back cover: Win Hill summit and Ladybower Reservoir (route 10). © John Coe field.
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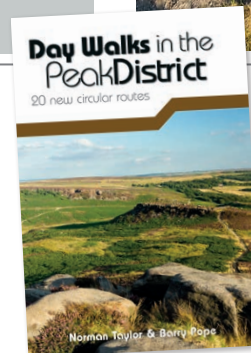
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