

Lathkill Dale Walk

“A Cloudy day walking in the peaks is better than a sunny day in the office”

Start/Parking: I started at Over Haddon car park which is very easy to find OS grid reference SK204664. Or if you're using a Sat Nav (post code DE45 1JE)

The parking charges (April 2013)

1 hour - £1.20

2 hours - £1.90

3 hours - £3.00

4 hours - £4.00

Over 4 hours - £5.00

Coach per 2 hours £5.30

10pm – 8am 40p



For disabled parking there is a small area to park down the hill past St Anne's Church (On the last bend just before Lathkill lodge. There wasn't a machine there so I presume it is free parking.

Walk Summary: I started the walk, with my wife, at 10.30am and we arrived back at the car park at 2.30pm. So we took 4 hours but weren't in a rush. This Lathkill dale walk is an excellent way to explore pre-historic fossils, caves, mandale mine and Bateman's House.

The walk is relatively flat except the slight climb near Monyash. You could walk to Monyash and retrace your steps but I prefer circular walks rather than looking at the same scenery.

Guided walks: We have guides available to escort you on your walk. Our guides are very friendly, experienced hill walkers. They are also highly qualified first aiders. Obviously there is a charge for their time; the more there are of you the cheaper it will be. Call 07710 403928 to arrange your guide.

The start of the Lathkill dale walk

Leave the car park on the path to the right of the car park pay machine and turn right down the road. It is signposted Lathkill Dale (No surprise there then). If you look closely at the wall on the right you will start to see some fossils. You'll pass St Anne's church on the left.



Follow the road all the way down to Lathkill lodge. Walk to the left past the lodge and you'll see the medieval bridge crossing the river Lathkill. You'll see evidence of many feet having passed over the bridge which has smoothed the rock down. You'll also see evidence of Health and Safety gone barmy with the attached handrail!! Maybe the council should employ a lifeguard just in case.

Anyway, don't go over the bridge, turn back and take the path on the left into Lathkill dale. You'll see some small holes in the limestone on the right. These are "Adits" which are holes where miners looked for Lead Ore veins.



You'll come to 2 large gate posts either side of the path and just beyond on the left is a drainage tunnel (or Sough). The drainage tunnel is part of the Mandale Mine Engine House. You'll find the engine house on the right of the main path. Take the well-trodden path through the trees. You'll find the ruined building and an excellent explanation post just behind it. There are some rough steps leading up to the mine entrance. Above the entrance

you'll see a vein of Lead ore. I found some rocks scattered on the floor full of the ore. The rocks felt unnaturally heavy. Just before you return the main path again, walk to the right of the ruins to the small exposed rock face. You'll see lots of fossil brachiopods piled on top of each other.

Continue along the main path past the aqueduct remains. The aqueduct carried water from the river to drive the water wheel at Mandale mine, which pumped water from the mine.

You'll soon pass the ruins of the Bateman's House. This unusual building was originally built in 1830 by the Lathkill Dale Mining Company to cover a 12m deep shaft housing a novel design of a water-powered pump to drain their lead mines. It later became the family home for the company's agent James Bateman. You can visit the shaft underneath so take your torch as the lights aren't working anymore.

Back on the main path. You'll eventually come to a gate which takes you into the Lathkill Dale meadows. On the left are 2 Mill stones and a large deep pool (on the right) which is evidence of an old corn mill. The pool was built to power the mill.

Continue along the path. You'll pass the Lathkill Head Cave, which is the source of the River Lathkill, and then through the disused quarries.

You'll know when you are near Monyash because you pass the final gate and the path opens up into a wide green area. On the right you'll find a path going uphill. Take the path to the top where you'll find a round water hole (for sheep possibly). Follow the path next to the wall

on the left. At the bottom we are turning left. (If you did turn right the path will take you to Ricklow quarry).



Anyway turn left through Ricklow Dale. You'll come to a sign indicating a path which crosses the field going upwards on the right – follow this path. You continue along this path all the way to the camping field at Haddon Grove farm. Go through the camping field to the left and exit the farm buildings. You'll come to the corner of the lane, turn right and follow the road all the way to Over Haddon. As you reach Over

Haddon you'll see "Main Street" The car park is just down this road.

Now I don't know about you but we fancy a beer after a walk like this. The only place in Over Haddon is the Lathkil Hotel. We did pay it a visit and had a pint. It was a little expensive and the "Take your boots off before entering sign" was a bit of a turn off.

I hope you have enjoyed this lathkill dale walk please let us know what you thought and post some of your photos for other visitors to our web site to see.