

*A pleasant circular walk from Matlock Bath to the historic areas of Bonsall and Cromford*

There are a couple of fairly strenuous uphill sections.

*Duration: about 3 hours.*

*Distance: 3.7 miles / 6 km.*

You start this walk from outside the Peak District Mining Museum at Matlock Bath. Cross the main road (A6) at the crossing and turn right along South Parade. Take the first left (Waterloo Road) just after Hodgkinsons Hotel. Climb Waterloo Road until you reach a cobbled footpath on your left. Take this path and at the top, climb the steps leading to the road. Cross the road and continue up the footpath (West Bank) opposite, eventually emerging by an entrance to the 'Heights of Abraham'. Turn left along Upperwood Road. Opposite the end of a house called 'The Pines', look for a footpath on the right hand side of the road. Climb the steep stepped path. When the steps peter out, continue to follow the path through the wood. At a junction with another footpath, turn left. Keep the edge of the woods to your left and continue uphill. Eventually when you reach the edge of the woods you'll see a fingerpost and a stone squeeze stile. Go through the stile continuing straight ahead towards a farm gate. This is by Ember Farm. You need to go straight ahead onto Ember Lane.

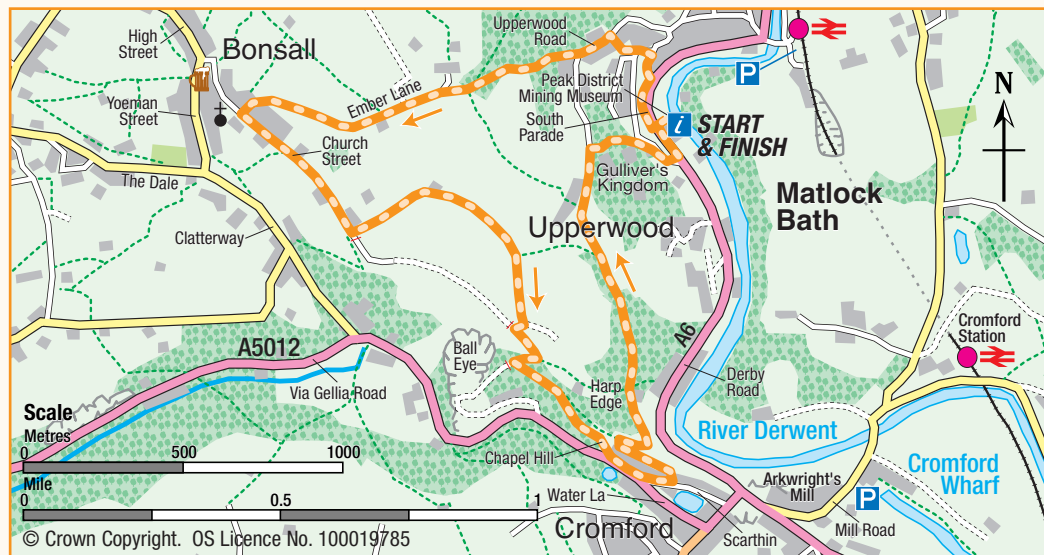
Follow the lane down hill until you reach a junction and Bonsall Church. You may wish to take some time to

have a look round the village and its picturesque 13th century church (St James) which has a tower surrounded by crowns and gargoyles. Mentioned in the Domesday Book, Bonsall is an ancient settlement. While it has a long history of lead mining, other industries have included stockings and the manufacture of tortoiseshell. Most of the old lead mines in the area are capped for safety, but small hillocks of grass covered spoil can be seen dotted over the fields and moor. An interesting map of the village is available for purchase in local pubs and at Scarthin Books in Cromford.

To continue, turn left into Church Street. This road eventually runs out and becomes a farm track. When you reach a gate and squeeze stile go through and continue straight ahead. When a metal gate and wire fencing ahead bars the route (there's a large rock here too) you should bear left. Follow the farm track, keeping the wire fencing to your right. Go through a squeeze stile by another gate and continue. You will pass an old ruin and the path bears slightly to the right and runs gently downhill.

As you enter a wooded area you will see a junction with another path from your left (there's a stone gap stile here). Go straight ahead through a gap stile by a gate following the path downhill. Keep the wire fencing to your right and the open fields (through the trees) to you left. The area to the right is fenced off for safety reasons; there are quarry workings and old mine shafts in the vicinity. You will pass some metal gates on your right and the path continues downhill. You will then reach a clearing and find some more metal gates on your right. You can see the quarry through here, this is Ball Eye Quarry. Continue ahead and downhill until the clearing runs out and follow the path round to the right into the woods. Follow the main path as it does a zigzag downhill, ignoring any other paths. Bear left to follow the path that has broken iron rail fencing on the right side. The path emerges at the top of a road called Chapel Hill. Walk down here to the main road. Continue along the main road, taking the next left (just past the Cromford Garage). This road is called Scarthin. Take the cobbled footpath on your left just opposite 'The Old Chapel'.

You may also like to take some time to explore Cromford before continuing your walk, if so continue walking along Scarthin until you reach the Market



Mill Pond at Cromford

Square. The village is part of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site where Richard Arkwright set up his cotton-spinning mills powered by the River Derwent.

If you wish you can return back to Matlock Bath by bus. Services leave Cromford at frequent intervals. Telephone Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 for information.

The path runs up behind some houses. You'll pass a fingerpost pointing the way ahead (to Bonsall and Matlock Bath) continue uphill. After another few hundred yards you'll reach a junction with a waymark post pointing sharp right (at an angle of about 45 degrees backwards). Turn right here and continue over 'Harp Edge'.

By the large house take the branch of the path which goes to the left, slightly uphill and behind a netball pitch. (Ignore the path going off to the right, past the house.) Follow the path, bear left at the waymark post.

At the next waymark post, a few yards further on (by a cave entrance just to your left) you need to go straight-ahead. Continue to walk gently uphill through the woods, the path gradually levels out. At the edge of the wood you'll also reach a junction and see some houses in front of you. Follow the path straight ahead (just to the left of the houses).

This path soon becomes a tarmac road as you pass through the tiny hamlet of Upperwood. As you continue you may notice how the tranquillity is broken by the squeals of kids enjoying the various rides at 'Gulliver's Kingdom' theme park just up ahead of you. After going past a sign saying 'Road Liable to Subsidence' you should see a stepped footpath going down hill to your right. This is near to the 'Heights of Jacob'. Take this path that runs, in a series of zigzags, back down into Matlock Bath. You emerge just by the entrance to the 'Gulliver's Kingdom'. Walk round in front of the theme park and follow the road downhill. You'll notice a metal fingerpost sign on your left indicating the route to take (left) back to the Peak District Mining Museum.



The village cross at Bonsall