

# Manifold Valley



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# Villages of the Manifold



## Alstonefield

Pretty little village lying between the Dove and Manifold Valleys, a good place to start a walk.

The traditional village green is the heart of the village, surrounded by beautiful old stone houses and cottages.

Visit the ancient church, parts of which date back to Norman times.

## Butterton

Picturesque village situated high above the Hoo Brook. Views of the village are dominated by St Bartholomew's, the local church, which lies within an almost circular churchyard.

## Grindon

Beautiful village situated above the junction of the Manifold and Hamps rivers.

Home to All Saints Church also known as 'The Cathedral of the Moorlands.'

## Hulme End

Picturesque village situated at the northerly starting point of the Manifold Track.

The restored station building, the terminus of the Leek and Manifold Light Railway until its closure in 1934, is now the Manifold Valley Information Point.

## Ilam

Charming village with 'Swiss chalet' style houses.

Ilam Country Park, owned by the National Trust, extends for 84 acres along the banks of the River Manifold. Within the park, Ilam Hall is used as a Youth Hostel, information centre, tearoom and shop.

The Manifold Show, a traditional country show, is held annually, on the second Saturday of August, in the open fields, just North of Ilam.

## Warslow

Delightful, small estate village, remodelled and rebuilt in Georgian times by the Harpur Crewe family, best known for their home at Calke Abbey.

Ideal starting point for walks to the moors of Revidge and Swallow Moss or into the Manifold Valley.

## Waterhouses

Busy village at the southern end of the Hamps Valley. There is a cycle hire centre with access to The Manifold Track.

The former Brown End Quarry is now a Geological Nature Reserve providing a fascinating glimpse into the complex geology and fossils of this part of the Peak District.

## Wetton

Lovely little village above the Manifold Valley, an ideal base for the short walk to legendary Thor's Cave.

Several longer walks lead to the fascinating mining remains at Bincliff and to Beeston Tor.

In the other direction, walk down to the Manifold Track by way of Wetton Mill Tearoom.



# Manifold Track



The Manifold Track, a favourite for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, follows the old route of the disused Leek and Manifold Light Railway, through the Manifold and Hamps Valleys, from Waterhouses to Hulme End.

**TOTAL DISTANCE 8½ MILES**

For all but 2 miles, the track is car-free and shared by walkers, cyclists and pony trekkers.

The track is surfaced and fairly level throughout its length, making it ideal for wheelchair users, those with buggies or prams and people with limited mobility.

Car parking areas are at both ends of the track and at intermediate locations (see map).

Take care in Swainsley tunnel (shared with cars) and at the main road crossings at Waterhouses and Hulme End.

# Walking



Paths and bridleways link the Manifold Track to the surrounding limestone plateau. From here, you can explore the rugged landscape and the picturesque villages with their ancient churches and welcoming old inns.

Other paths climb through the woods to the hills which tower high above the gorges and past the fascinating mining remains at Bincliff and Ecton.

Full information on these and several other walks can be obtained from Leek Tourist Information Centre.



# Cycling & Horse Riding



The byways, old railway tracks and quiet lanes make the Manifold Valley ideal for safe cycling.

Routes vary from the easy, level ride along the Manifold Track to more challenging routes around the valleys, moors and villages.



Cycles can be hired from Hulme End Information Point.

Telephone: 01 298 687399

Email: [manifold.cyclehire@peakdistrict.gov.uk](mailto:manifold.cyclehire@peakdistrict.gov.uk)

[www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/)

Twitter: @peakcyclehire

FB: /peakdistrictnationalpark

Open from Easter to end of October half term, weekends, Bank holidays and school holidays ONLY.



# Myths & Legends

Look out for the phantom white horse which gallops along the Manifold Valley bearing a headless rider on moonlit nights – described by one local in the 1930s as ‘a man on a horse without a yedon, an awful gory sight!’

Fiddling Hob Hurst is supposed to have lived at Thor’s Cave, above the River Dove in the Manifold Valley and is a common folklore character likened to a wood fairy or elf. When annoyed, Hob would turn milk sour, smash crockery and generally upset the harmony between humans and nature. To keep Hob in good spirits, people would leave a bowl of milk for him on the hearth or leave offerings in sacred places at key dates in the farming calendar, to the pagan god of the fields and fertility.

Thor’s cave is thought to have been named after the Viking God of Thunder, possibly because of the noises made by strong winds reverberating through the mouth of the cave and smaller fissures formed in the rock.

# Caves & Rivers



Ilam Church

Watch out for the rivers of the Manifold and the Hamps as they disappear beneath the porous limestone of the Manifold Valley only to reappear again in Ilam Country Park.

Several caves can be found in the Manifold Valley. Best known is Thor's Cave which is approximately 76 metres (250 feet) up from the cycle/walking track. A steep walk but the magnificent view makes it worth while.

The imposing Thor's Cave is a former home to both stone age dwellers and wild animals and dates back for at least 50,000 years.

The bones of mammoths and giant bears have been discovered amongst the other caves within the valley.

On the high ground are the burial and other religious sites of prehistoric peoples.

From more recent times, you can see the remains of lead mines which are located south of Wetton, around Bincliff, whilst Ecton was the site of the world's richest copper mines dating back over 300 years.

# Leek & Manifold Light Railway



1904-1934

This narrow gauge railway followed the river gorges for nearly 9 miles between Hulme End and Waterhouses.

Opened in 1904, it served the tiny farming communities, brought in tourists and carried milk and cheese from the isolated dairy at Ecton.

Famously known as 'A line starting nowhere and ending up at the same place', the railway finally ran out of steam and closed in 1934.

The old railway track was lifted and the route surfaced and turned into the Manifold Track making it ideal for the walkers and cyclists of today.

# Manifold Valley Information Point



Information on the Manifold Valley and surrounding Staffordshire Peak District is available in the Manifold Valley Information Point, housed in the former ticket office at Hulme End (SK17 0EX).

Opening times: from Easter to September - 10am to 5pm

In February & March and October & November we are open 10am to 4pm on weekends and open during all school holidays.

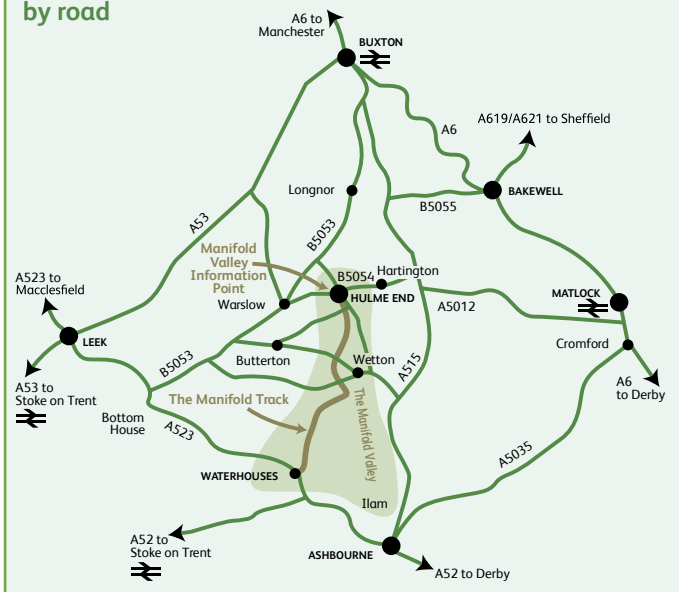
December & January the Information Point is closed.

The Information Point is closed on Mondays unless a Bank Holiday.

For further information please use the free phone in the Information Point to speak directly to Leek Tourist Information during their opening times.

## How to get to the Manifold Valley

### by road



email: [tourism.services@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk](mailto:tourism.services@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk)

Tel: 01538 395530

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

Tourist Information Centre, Nicholson Institute, Stockwell St, Leek, ST13 6DW

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# Explore the Manifold Valley



<b>Key</b>	Cafe	Car park	Cycle hire	National Trust	Public house	Toilets	River
	Camp site	Caravan site	Youth hostel	Nature reserve	Shop	Manifold Track	Dry river bed (seasonal)
	Camping barn	Church	Information	Picnic area	Telephone	Footpath (approx. route only)	Woodland

Approximate scale  
 1 mile  
 1 kilometre

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