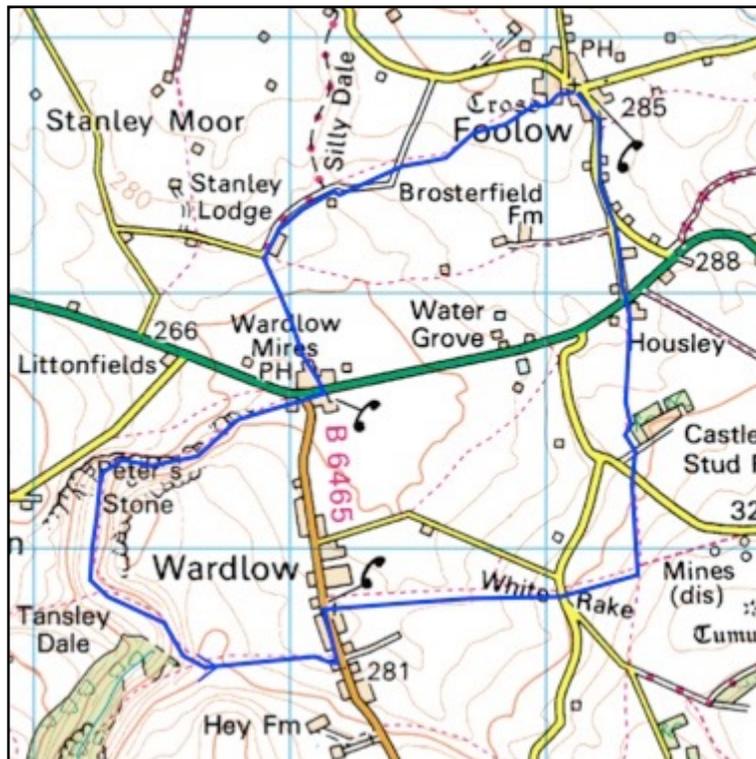


4. Foolow - Cressbrook Dale - Wardlow - Foolow  
Orchids in May! 5 miles



From the door of the Bulls Head turn right and cross onto the green. Walking towards the duck pond a foot path is seen next to the entrance to The Manor House with a signpost "Silly Dale." Follow path through a narrow alley to a gateway leading into the fields.

At the gate the path turns right and walks diagonally left across the field to a "kissing gate." From here the path is obvious crossing 7 further fields to a junction with a green lane. Cross straight over the lane and follow the path through 3 further fields until the lane is joined again. This is the bottom of Silly Dale. Turn right following the lane for 50m where there is a junction with another green lane. Turn left towards the buildings of Stanley House Farm.

At Stanley House, the track bears right. Ignore this and cross the stile on the left. Turn right and follow the path diagonally left downhill to a gateway into the next field. Walk alongside the stone wall on the right through a further 2 fields and down the right of the agricultural building into the farmyard. Go through the gate, left through the farmyard and out to the main road on the right. This is Wardlow Mires.

**Wardlow Mires**, although now only a hamlet, has an interesting history. Black Harry was a notorious early 18th century highwayman. He robbed the pack-mule trains between Tideswell and Bakewell. He was eventually arrested by the Castleton Bow Street Runners, and was hung, drawn and quartered on the Gallows Tree at Wardlow Mires.

Turn right passing the Three Stags Heads (a pub serving good ale, food and welcoming to dogs). Cross the main road immediately after the Turning on the left (for Wardlow) bear right in front of the house, to the gate into Cressbrook Dale. Follow the path keeping to the lower part of the Dale, past St Peter's Stone to reach some "stepping stones" used by a path that crosses the Dale. (If you do this walk in summer or a dry winter you'll wonder why they are here!) The Dale on the right is Tansley dale and leads up to Litton.

**Cressbrook Dale** is a natural nature reserve and a stunning example of a limestone dale, pretty all year round, but particularly so in the spring when the banks are covered in flowers including cowslips and early purple orchids. Those who are more adventurous can climb to the summit of St Peter's stone; an obvious limestone outcrop towards the dale's the northern end.

There are signs of mining at various points through the length of the dale. Ravensdale cottages at it's southern end were built as part of the development of Cressbrook Mill which has recently been renovated and turned into apartments, but retains some of it's former character.

Ignore the stepping sones, and instead take the path that climbs diagonally up left out of Cressbrook dale. At the top of the path there is a stile beside an English Nature "interpretation board." From the stile follow the walled in track through another stile to the road at Wardlow.

Turn left along the road passing the Bulls Head until a footpath on the right is reached just beyond the church. The path leads across a rough field slightly leftwards towards the wooden pylon and to a stile. Follow the path along the wall to a gap; go through this and continue along the wall on the left. A small field is crossed and a large field full of old mine workings is entered. Here the path is not well defined but head for the

stile out of it is in the top left hand corner beside the gate. This brings you to a road.

**Mineworkings.** Minerals have been mined in the Peak District since pre-history and some evidence of this has been found deep in the soils of Kinder Scout, suggesting there was mining during the bronze age. The height of the mining era was during the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century when the Peak became a major supplier of lead, smelt on high points around the area, usually on a small scale. The legacy of the mining industry can be seen around Foolow and the surrounding areas. There are old shafts, buildings and spoil heaps. More recently fluorspar has been discovered in the spoil heaps and these are still being dug up, and the lead workings being reclaimed eg. Mildam mine at Hucklow.

Cross the road to a stile into the field and walk diagonally left to another stile. In the next field walk diagonally right, the stile onwards is about 25yds right of the large tree. Cross the stile and walk diagonally left through 2 fields to another road.

The stile opposite leads into a small field, which is crossed diagonally left to the farm track. Cross the track into the field, which is followed, rightwards to the end of the walled plantation. Take the stile between the 2 gates and cross the field slightly rightwards to another stile. Diagonally right now through the field to a stile beside the gate. 2 further fields lead to the main road where the road from Foolow joins. Straight across the main road, it is now 10 minutes walk back to Foolow.