



Trespass Trail

Celebrating the 75th anniversary of the 1932
Mass Trespass on Kinder Scout



by Martin Doughty and Roly Smith

£1.00

In the footsteps of the trespassers

The 1932 Mass Trespass on Kinder Scout has been described as the most significant event in the century-old battle for the Right to Roam on Britain's mountains and moorlands, now enshrined in law under the 2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act.

Although the event was originally opposed by the official ramblers' federations, the vicious sentences which were handed down on five of the young trespassers actually served to unite the ramblers' cause. It is now recognised as a

major catalyst not only for the Right to Roam, but the creation of our National Parks, of which the Peak District was the first in 1951.

Now you can follow in the footsteps of the trespassers by walking the Trespass Trail, a 14-mile walk starting and finishing at New Mills, where there are rail connections from Manchester and Sheffield. The Trail takes in most of the important locations which featured in the build up to, and events of, the 1932 Mass Trespass.

The walk

(Numbers refer to points on the map)

From the New Mills Heritage and Information Centre (SK 000854) off Rock Mill Lane (behind the bus station), descend into the Torrs Gorge and turn right.

1. *Cross the Millennium Walkway (SJ 999854), an awe-inspiring and award-winning, 160-metre long, icon to access. This £525,000 walkway, an aerial path partly attached to a huge Victorian railway retaining wall and partly supported on giant pillars rising from the river bed, was opened in 2000 by Derbyshire County Council to fill the missing link in the valley footpath network. A plaque at the entrance commemorates Stan Brewster, the County Engineer who supervised its construction and who was tragically killed in the London bombings of July, 2005.*

Continue walking by the River Goyt along a wide path until it reaches a tarmac track in an area called Mousley Bottom. Cross the track into part of the Torrs Riverside Park which was reclaimed from the former town gas works. The path takes you to the left of a circular pit which formerly housed a gasholder. Keep right leaving the former gasworks and pass a renovated cruck barn on your left, then take the woodland path left behind the high stone wall to the rear of the barn. This area is a former landfill site now managed as woodland by Derbyshire County Council, and now a local nature reserve.

The path joins a track coming in from the left just before a gate and small brick building. Climb the stone stile and follow the path along the river bank. This area is a reclaimed former sewage works and

the path is part of the Midshires (Goyt) Way. There is mature woodland across the river.

2. *As the path emerges to a more grassy area, you will see a cast iron milestone (SJ991852) commemorating the opening of the 225-mile Midshires Way, which links the Trans-Pennine Trail at Stockport with the Ridgeway in Buckinghamshire. The milestone was unveiled by Benny Rothman (1911-2002), leader of the 1932 Mass Trespass, in 1994.*

Continue walking by the river, which is now the county and regional boundary with Cheshire and the North West on the opposite bank. After passing between the river and a small pond, you leave the grassed flood plain through a kissing gate and, shortly afterwards, take the steps to your right, climbing through a small wooded area to the car park and picnic/play area at Hague Bar.

Cross the car park, walk up Waterside Road and, after crossing the B6101 Hague Bar Road, climb the steep tarmac track heading north towards Brookbottom. When the track meets Brookbottom Road, divert left for the delightfully-unspoilt Fox Inn, otherwise cross onto the stone track which rises up to Shaw Marsh with New Mills Golf Course to your right.

At the clubhouse (SJ 994865), turn left on to Castle Edge Road, again heading to the north. At a three-way junction where the tarmac runs out, take the stone track to the right which descends to Mellor Road, with the oak and birch woodland of Broadhurst Edge Nature Reserve, managed by the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, to your left.



Millennium Walkway, New Mills

Turn right into Mellor Road, taking care on this fast stretch of highway and, after 50 yards or so, take the track which goes off sharply to the left running level in a northerly direction. The views of the valley open up with the heights of Lantern Pike and Kinder Scout to the east. When the track reaches Briargrove Road, walk a few yards up the road to the left then take the lower of the two footpaths going off to the right, just to the west of Briargrove Farm.

The path continues heading generally north over ground which can be quite marshy in places. In spring and summer, this area attracts ground-nesting birds, and you have a good chance of seeing lapwing, snipe and curlew as well as the occasional short-eared owl. The path bends east of north as it approaches the Children's Inn at Rowarth (SK 005893).

3. *It was near here in 1932 that the Lancashire branch of the British Workers' Sports Federation entertained their colleagues from the London branch at an Easter camp. On a planned ramble to Bleaklow, they were turned back at Yellowslacks by gamekeepers. Frustrated and humiliated, the Manchester ramblers resolved to organize a well-publicised Mass Trespass onto Kinder Scout on Sunday, April 24, 1932. Kinder, the highest point in the Peak District at 2,088ft/636m, was owned by the Duke of Devonshire and walkers were forbidden.*

Turn right and walk down Hollinsmoor Road. The road passes the Little Mill Inn before starting to climb towards Lantern Pike. The tarmac runs out near Laneside Farm but the route continues as a stone track. As it turns south and starts to level out, take the path which turns sharply to the left

heading north eastwards to a six-path junction near Blackshaw Farm (SK 025889).

From here, it is a short if steep diversion to reach the summit of Lantern Pike (1,224ft/373m), which has been in the hands of the National Trust since 1948. The topograph on the summit commemorates the pioneering Manchester-based access campaigner, Edwin Royce (1880-1946).

Back at the path junction near Blackshaw Farm, take the second right path, with impressive views across to the moorlands around Kinder, and descend to Clough Mill and Little Hayfield.

4. *Little Hayfield was another favourite Easter or Whitweek camp in the early 1930s for the British Workers' Sports Federation, which was responsible for introducing many young urban people to the pleasures of the Peak District countryside.*

Cross the A624 Glossop Road. The Lantern Pike pub is a welcome diversion to the left, but the Trail crosses this busy road into the National Trust woodland of the Park Hall estate. Double-decker buses used to come loaded with passengers from Manchester to the now closed and abandoned outdoor swimming pool here. About 400 yards after leaving the main road, take the path climbing in an easterly direction on to Middle Moor. The Snake Path joins the track as it starts to level out (SK 046881). As Kinder Reservoir comes into view with the shooting cabin on your left, stay on the higher path running level above the reservoir.

5. *You are now on White Brow following the route the 1932 trespassers took after rallying at Bowden Bridge Quarry (see 7). From Kinder Road, they scrambled up the steep bank to White Brow then followed the Snake Path to Nab Brow and into William Clough.*

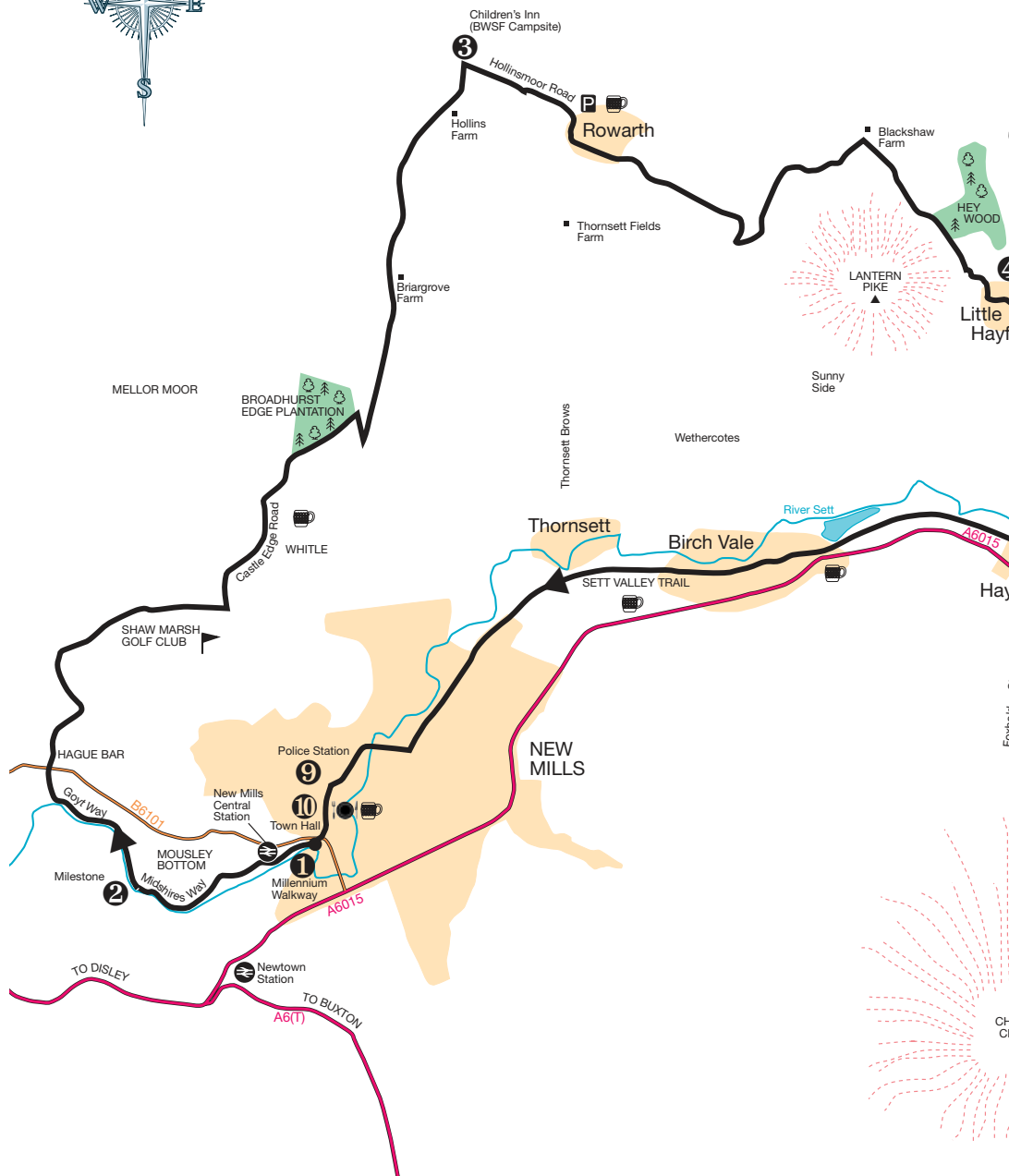


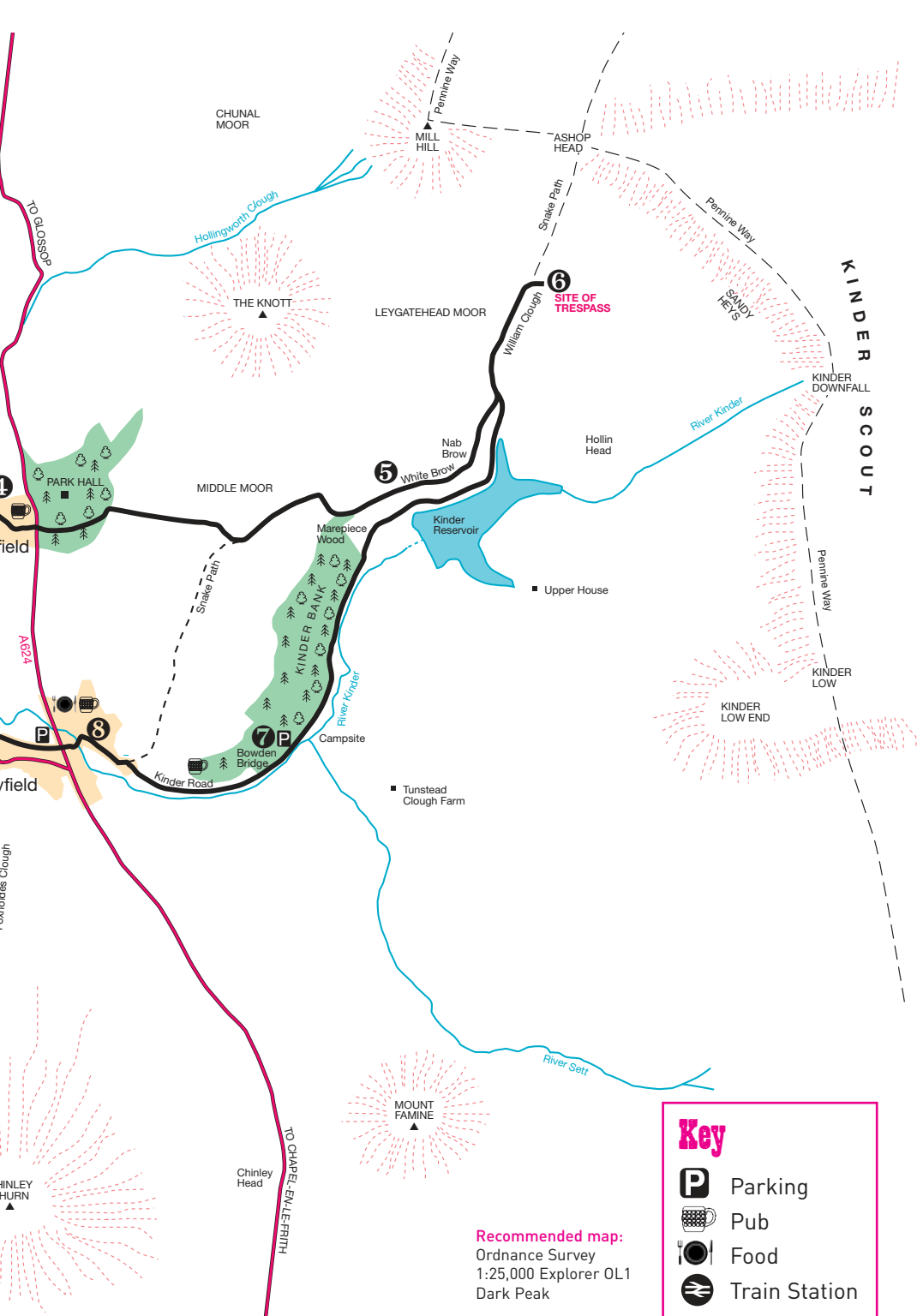
Children's Inn, Rowarth

Trespass Trail



Start and Finish Point
New Mills Heritage Centre
(SK 000854)





Key



Parking



Pub



Food



Train Station

Recommended map:
Ordnance Survey
1:25,000 Explorer OL1
Dark Peak



New Mills Town Hall

Leaving the reservoir behind, head up the William Clough path. About a third to halfway up the slope, turn to climb towards the plateau to the right in a roughly easterly direction and stop at about the 450 metre contour (SK 064895).

6. *It was around here where the trespassers came face-to-face with the Duke of Devonshire's gamekeepers. A whistle had signalled for them to leave the track and head up towards the forbidden plateau. In the ensuing scuffle, one keeper was slightly hurt, but there was little confrontation and the ramblers were able to press on to the plateau where they were greeted by a group of Sheffield-based trespassers who had set off that morning from Edale. After exchanging congratulations, the two groups retraced their steps, the Sheffield trespassers to Edale and the Manchester contingent back to Hayfield.*

Return to the William Clough path and descend to the reservoir to take the reconstructed low-level path round the north west edge of the water to Kinder Road. Walk down the road to Bowden Bridge Car Park (SK 048869), where a plaque erected in 1982 commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Kinder Trespass.

7. *The disused quarry at Bowden Bridge was chosen by the trespass leaders on the day in 1932 to rally the ramblers before setting off for Kinder Scout. The police had been trying to serve an injunction on Benny Rothman all the previous week, but they had not managed to locate him. On the day of the trespass, every railway station en route from Manchester and Sheffield was teeming with police, but Benny and his friends avoided them by cycling to*

Hayfield. Benny rallied the hundreds of ramblers with an impassioned speech at the quarry, calling for the mass trespass to be the start of a campaign to finally win the right of access to mountains. After Benny had scrambled off his impromptu pulpit, the whistle blew and the trespassers moved off towards Kinder, cheerfully singing ramblers' songs.

From the quarry, continue down Kinder Road for about a mile down into Hayfield.

8. *One third of the Derbyshire Constabulary, under the personal command of the Deputy Chief Constable, was reputedly in and around Hayfield on the day of the trespass. As the trespassers returned to the village, they were faced by massed ranks of police stretched across Kinder Road. Five ramblers, including Benny Rothman, were arrested by policemen accompanied by keepers on Kinder Road and taken to the Hayfield Lock-up. There they discovered a further Rambler, John Anderson, who actually opposed the mass trespass but had been held at the scene of the scuffle, where he claimed to have gone to the aid of the injured keeper.*

Then as now, Hayfield has a good choice of pubs, cafes and restaurants.

The Trespass Trail now heads back towards New Mills. Cross the river bridge in the centre of the village and walk down the track to the left of the church. Carefully cross the A624 at the pedestrian crossing and head to the left of the ranger station to the Sett Valley Trail, a bridleway to New Mills which follows the route of the former railway branch line which closed in 1970.

The Trail takes you through Birch Vale, which had the only station on the line between New Mills and the terminus at Hayfield. Most of the bridges on the former railway line were removed when the Trail was constructed but one, over Watford Bridge Road, New Mills, remains.

About 500 yards after crossing the bridge, a tarmac path with street lights crosses the trail with a walled cemetery to the right (SK 004858). Take this path to the right – the cemetery is now on your left – cross the river bridge and take the left fork by the Pineapple Inn to climb up High Street. After passing the Mason's Arms, fork to the right up the steep short Cross Street.

The imposing Victorian splendour of New Mills Town Hall is facing you. Cross the road and walk a short distance up Hall Street, to the left of the Town Hall, to the former police station on the left, opposite the town hall/library complex (SK 000857).

9. The six arrested ramblers were held overnight in New Mills Police Station. A large group of ramblers had waited outside the Hayfield lock-up to press for the release of their arrested colleagues. The police then smuggled the six out through a rear door and brought them to New Mills.

The plaque on the former police station was unveiled in 1994 when Benny Rothman, then 82, returned to New Mills. As he started to speak, a fellow octogenarian began heckling him. It was John Anderson, who had made the long journey from his home on the Lancashire coast to protest his innocence, and it was the first time the two had met since their imprisonment in Leicester jail 62 years earlier. Anderson only calmed down when Derbyshire's then Chief Constable, John Newing, stepped forward and told him he believed he was innocent. At the age of 83, John Anderson returned to Lancashire absolved.

Cross Hall Street and walk to the front of the Town Hall. Take a look at the carving over the right hand door to the building, indicating that it was formerly used as a court.

10. On April 25, 1932 – the day after the mass trespass – Benny Rothman and four other ramblers were charged at New Mills Police Court with unlawful assembly and breach of the peace. John Anderson was charged with causing grievous bodily harm to a keeper. All six were remanded on bail to appear later at New Mills Court. All subsequently pleaded not guilty and were remanded to be tried at Derby Assizes, 60 miles from the ramblers' homes, in July, 1932.

Five of the six were found guilty and were jailed for between two and six months. The condemning jury consisted of two brigadier generals, three colonels, two majors, three captains, two aldermen and 11 country gentlemen.

Walk down the Town Hall drive and turn right down Market Street. The bus station is in front of you at the mini-roundabout junction with the Heritage and Information Centre behind. New Mills Central rail station is to the right.

The arrests and subsequent imprisonment unleashed a huge wave of sympathy for the trespassers and their cause. Later in 1932, 10,000 ramblers – the largest number in history – assembled for an access rally in the Winnats Pass, near Castleton, and the pressure for greater access continued to grow.



Martin Doughty (left) and Benny Rothman (right) at the 1994 unveiling of the plaque. Extreme right is John Anderson, and between Martin and Benny in the hat, is Jimmy Jones, another trespasser.

Something to CROW about...

It was to be another 17 years before the passage of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act by the post-war Labour Government in 1949. This legislation set up the mechanism for the creation of National Parks, and the process for the negotiation of access agreements to open country. The Peak District was the first to be designated, and almost immediately negotiated access agreements with landowners for the former 'battlefields' of the 1930s; Kinder Scout and Bleaklow.

Even so, huge tracts of moorland remained inaccessible to the public for another 50 years until the passing of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act in 2000, and its final implementation in 2005.

In 2002, Andrew, the 11th Duke of Devonshire, publicly apologized at the 70th anniversary celebration event of the Kinder Trespas at Bowden Bridge for his grandfather's 'great wrong' in 1932.

Justice was finally seen to be done.



Reward poster for trespassers

Walkers enter William Clough during the 70th celebrations
(Ray Manley, Peak District National Park)



*Cover picture: Kinder Scout from Kinder Reservoir (Martin Doughty)
Produced for the 75th Anniversary of the Kinder Trespass, April 2007*

*New Mills has two rail stations, Central and Newtown.
Train services provided by Northern Rail (www.northernrail.org).*

For more information, visit the website: www.kindertrespass.com

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