

including woodlands, wetlands and meadows. We also provide advice on sources of grant aid, work to help create the National Forest and work to improve public access to the countryside.

We are responsible for looking after hundreds of areas of open space in East Staffordshire, from town parks, playing fields and play areas to locally important wildlife havens

THE PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE

- Please keep to the paths on farmland
- Keep dogs on a lead at all times and always clean up after your dog
- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
- Take your litter home with you
- Take special care on country roads
- Guard against all risk of fire

WHEN WALKING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The Parks and Countryside Service would like to thank all landowners and farmers on the route and acknowledge the help of Ellastone and Wootton Parish Councils

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As with any form of exercise, it is important to build up gradually. Start off with the short route if you are not used to walking the longer distances. If you haven't exercised for some time and/or you have a health condition that might be aggravated by exercise, then check with your G.P. before continuing with these walk routes.

Regular slow, long distance exercise is the best for weight control. Ideally you should be aiming to walk at a brisk pace for 20 – 30 minutes without becoming breathless.

Walking is ideal for the build up of stamina. By maintaining a steady, rhythmic pace, you will be exercising the heart and lungs, and improving your aerobic fitness. Through aerobic type exercise, like walking, the body releases chemicals that can help you to feel good and relieve the symptoms of stress.

HEALTH AND FITNESS FOCUS



Views across Ellastone

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

Care has been taken to try and make the routes enjoyable, free from obstruction and easy to follow. Path conditions vary with the season and it is recommended that strong waterproof footwear is worn and that waterproof clothing is available should the weather try to catch you out.

WAYMARKING

Each route has been waymarked with a distinctive disc, at any point where the direction of the path may be confusing. Look out for any accompanying signs as you follow the routes.

REFRESHMENTS

Refreshments are only available from 'The Duncombe Arms' public house and the post office stores in Ellastone (varied opening times). Otherwise it is recommended that some refreshments and drinks are taken, particularly on the longer routes.

EASY WALKS IN EAST STAFFORDSHIRE

This is one of a series of leaflets outlining easy walks for you to try in East Staffordshire. If you are not confident about walking in the countryside and using public footpaths, why not try these walks out as an introduction. The paths have been clearly marked with distinctive arrows and a selection of routes provided allowing you a choice of distances to walk.

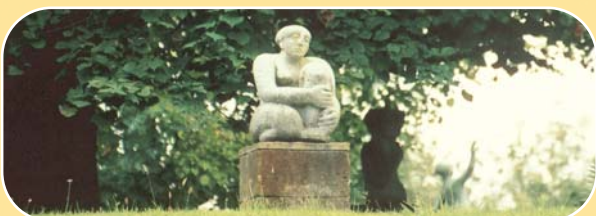
Lychgate
Ellastone Church



Duncombe Arms



Sculptures - Forge Farm Studio



ELLASTONE AND THE WEAVERS

STARTING POINT

Ellastone is on the B5032 seven miles north of Uttoxeter. A bus service between Uttoxeter and Ashbourne is operated by Arriva, Tel: 0870 6082608 or www.arriva.co.uk.

There are two car parks available within the village, either at the village hall or the Duncombe Arms (see map) and during opening, the pub offers the only toilet facilities in Ellastone, or anywhere else in the area of these walks.

You may wish to start the walks, particularly a shortened Weaver Hills loop, from Wootton. A small public car park provided by Wootton Parish Council can be found on the Leek road 150 yards west of the village centre. You will need to walk downhill to the village centre to pick up the routes at point 14.

FURTHER INFORMATION / FEEDBACK

If you have encountered problems on this route, or would like information on other walking opportunities, please write to the address shown at the bottom of the page. Please also let us know if you enjoy your walk as this helps us to provide similar walks in the future.



Please Contact us at:

Parks and Countryside Service

East Staffordshire Borough Council
Health & Environment Services, Midland Grain Warehouse,
Derby Street, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire, DE14 2JJ
or telephone 01283 508730
email: parks.countryside@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk

Derby and Burton upon Trent
Sheet 128 or Buxton etc
Sheet 119
Explorer Series

USEFUL MAPS

All routes in this leaflet cross farmland, and in all cases stiles will need to be negotiated, although these have been improved to a two step stile where necessary or replaced where possible with gates and kissing gates. On the longer routes in the leaflet some steep climbs will be necessary at certain sections and conditions underfoot can be wet and muddy in certain areas.

EASE OF USE

7.5 miles (12km) 4 hours – a longer and hillier route for the reasonably fit. The upper section of this route ascends into genuine 'hill country'. Weather conditions are liable to sudden change and you may be exposed to strong winds or rain and appropriate waterproofs and walking boots are essential. Additionally, this route crosses rocky ground and includes a very steep descent from the summit of the Weavers.

WEAVER HILLS ROUTE

3.7 miles (6km) 2.5 hours – an interesting addition to the Calwich Abbey circuit, incorporating a few gentle climbs and descents. Walk along a 'green road', learn of the vanished Wootton Hall and enjoy the peace and quiet of this agricultural landscape.

MICHAEL'S LANE ROUTE

2.5 miles (4km) 1.5 hours – a gentle stroll with few gradients, the ideal introduction to the landscape surrounding Ellastone. Features charming countryside, some interesting flora and fauna. Ellastone's historic church and the ruins of Calwich Hall.

CALWICH ABBEY ROUTE

The Routes

Easy Walks in East Staffordshire

Ellastone and the Weavers



Easy Walks in East Staffordshire

Ellastone and the Weavers

Calwich Abbey Route

Starting at the Village Hall

Turn right out of the hall's car park **1a** into Church Lane; pass the church turn left and then right to arrive at the Duncombe Arms **1**.

Starting at the Duncombe Arms

Turn left out of the car park **1** and follow the road for about a quarter of a mile before turning left **2** into Dove Street. Pass the post office and turn left by the old lodge house **3** and follow a lane into Calwich Park. Remain on the main track and pass through a series of gates.

Your route from Ellastone to Calwich crosses a brook and the adjoining land hosts some interesting bogland flora and fauna. Gracious parkland follows in the old estate of Calwich Abbey, an Augustinian establishment dating from the twelfth century. Not surprisingly little evidence of the Abbey remains, and not much either, of Calwich Hall built in its place, apart from a handsome, though sadly disused, stable block and hidden from view, a curious fishing temple by the lake.

As you go through the final gate before the ruins of Calwich Hall and Abbey, continue on the track with the small woodland on your left.

Opposite the ruins, a gate **4** on your left heads you almost back on yourself into the area of woodland you have just passed. Proceed parallel to the lane you have already walked until you reach a kissing gate giving entry into a field. Bear half right, passing just below an island of trees in the middle of the field and aiming just right of a belt of woodland on the far side of the field **5**. Cross a stile alongside a five bar gate and go half right across another field, crossing a stile before road is reached. Cross road (taking care with traffic) and after climbing the stile cross the field half right downhill (in the direction of farm buildings) to a stile **6** by a gate in a stone wall. Drop down the rutted track to reach footbridge over stream just past ford. Climb up field crossing the stile on the driveway, to pass just right of farm buildings through stone stile **7** to reach road.

Those on Michael's Lane and Weaver Hills routes should now follow directions for Michael's Lane route.

Turn left onto road past Northwood farm. Climbing from road, cross a stile after Northwood Cottages into a field on right **8**. Head for Ellastone church tower, crossing a number of waymarked stiles as you go. Continue through a kissing gate **9** into the churchyard. Turn left through the churchyard and lychgate, cross the road and turn right to return to the village hall car park or, turn left onto Church Lane. Then turn left and then right to return to the 'Duncombe Arms'.

Ellastone's greatest claim to fame is, ironically, fictitious. George Eliot had an uncle in the village, and used it, under the pseudonym of 'Hayslope' as a setting in her novel Adam Bede. Just after the Second World War, Ellastone was used in the filming of a period melodrama called Blanche Fury starring Stewart Granger and Valerie Hobson. The parish church of St. Peter dates from the 16th century and features monuments to the local Fleetwood, Granville and Davenport families.

Michael's Lane Route

First follow points **1-7** on the Calwich Abbey Route which will take you to the road next to Northwood Farm. At the road bear left and almost immediately right past Rose Cottage before proceeding up Michael's Lane.

Michaels Lane is a typical 'Green' road which in earlier times would have been considered an important thoroughfare. It would probably have retained this significance up until the development of motor traffic. Now only the occasional tractor disturbs the peace. As it begins to climb out of the valley the views open up ahead towards the eastern flank of the Weavers.

At the junction to the Cottage, continue straight ahead through a field and gate to rejoin the more defined route of Michael's lane. Rejoin the tarmac road at the house known as Distant Point **10**.

Those on Weaver Hills route should now follow directions under that heading.



As road bears right, turn left down a drive past Home Farm towards Wootton Hall Farm.

Wootton Hall was demolished long ago but in 1766 it provided refuge to the French philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau. Escaping from a France apparently outraged by his progressive views, he spent a year in the neighbourhood and was to be seen 'haunting' the local roads, a wild figure in a flowing black gown.

Now cross the stile in the hedge to the left **11**, bear right and proceed down the field with farm to your right. The path leads parallel to a drystone wall, soon reaching a gate and a stile. Continue down a field and go through a kissing gate and cross a small brook. Bear right uphill, and then continue

downhill over some temporary stiles to reach a stile across a farm track. Bear half left across a field to reach a small bridge **12** over a brook. Cross this bridge and proceed upfield to temporary stile in fence, then pass to right of stone house. Keeping this attractive house to your left, join a track which takes you back to Church Lane **13**. Turn left down Church Lane past the old school to return to the village hall car park, or continue down Church Lane then turn left and then right to return to the 'Duncombe Arms'

Weaver Hills Route

Please see **TYPE OF ROUTE** overleaf before attempting this route. First follow points **1-10** which will take you to Distant Point. Follow road bearing right to Wootton **14**. Not being a through road it is lightly used but do keep an ear open for approaching traffic. As you enter Wootton, turn first right down Back Lane and after a hundred yards cross the stile on your left by a wooden seat and small pond **15** into the adjoining field. Bear right to next stile **16** and pass between dutch barn and stone outbuilding. Go through small belt of trees into field. Continue uphill through fields passing several waymarked stone stiles and climbing gradually towards the Weaver Hills.

The fields bear evidence of former 'ridge and furrow' farming patterns. Nowadays though, the landscape, apart from the odd field of crops, is largely given over to pasture. Locals used to call the hills ahead of you 'The Wevvers'.

Keeping to left of limestone outcrop **17** and passing between clumps of hawthorn, you will come to the stile in the top left hand corner of a dry stone wall. Proceed in the same direction across a stile (on your left), a gate and a further stile **18** to reach the road. Turn left and stay parallel to the fence as the road veers right. Keep in the same general direction across fields and stiles.

You are close on 1200 feet above sea level now and there are good views northwards toward the Manifold Valley. Close by, on your left, a solitary tree marks a tumulus, the burial site of an iron age warrior.

Presently you will come to a field gate with a stile directly alongside it to the right. Cross the stile and continue in the same direction for about 50 metres. At point **19** almost double back to your left, cross a stile in a stone wall. Stay on the higher ground and bear half right uphill to a stile **20**.

Bearing half left, and taking great care, descend flank of hill to stile **21** by a gate in a stone wall.

Continue to the left through the gap in the wall, across the field and over another stile and then half right until a rutted track **22** is reached. This is not strictly a right of way, and you should keep to the right of it until reaching a stile **23** in the hedge to the right hand corner of the field by the cricket ground. Join Gidacre Lane and return to Wootton, taking special care on the short section of road which leads left to the village. As the main road turns right, continue straight ahead into the village **24**.

Wootton is a pretty village with a number of attractive stone houses and farms. A brook runs alongside the main street. The garden of Forge Farm Studio is peppered with stone statues and if open, the Studio is well worth a visit.

Return along Hall lane to home Farm and the stile **11**. Points **11-13** described in Michael's lane text will return you to Ellastone.