

The Monsal Trail uses part of the former Midland Railway Line through the Peak District National Park. It runs for eight and a half miles between Blackwell Mill Junction at Wyedale, three miles east of Buxton, and Coombs Viaduct, one mile south-east of Bakewell.

Four tunnels have been closed for safety reasons along the trail, but alternative paths are available, however these footpaths are only suitable for walkers. The footpath links between sections of the trail at Water-Cum-Jolly (between Cressbrook Mill and Litton Mill) and in Chee Dale are liable to flooding in wet weather so please take this in to consideration when planning your walk.

For cyclists, horseriders, the disabled, mobility and pushchair users there are firm, level surfaces that stretch from the car park at Bakewell Station south to Coombs Road viaduct and north to the closed Headstone tunnel, near Great Longstone (approx 4 miles). Please note that there is no suitable access for cyclists and disabled users to leave the trail beyond the bridge crossing the road to Great Longstone near its junction with the A6020.

Disabled access is also available on to the viaduct west of Millers Dale Station and east as far as the closed tunnel near Litton Mill however you will need to retrace the same route back along the trail to the station.

There are car parks at the former stations at Bakewell, Hassop and Millers Dale. Additional parking is available at the northern end of the trail near Topley Pike and at Monsal Head. The car parks at White Lodge and Tideswell Dale are situated on routes and footpaths that link to the Monsal Trail. Coaches can be parked at Monsal Head and in Bakewell town centre at the Agricultural Centre.

Public Transport. Bus services operate on the A6 from Nottingham, Derby and Manchester; stopping at Bakewell town centre, Ashford in the Water, White Lodge, Taddington, Blackwell Turn and Wye Dale (this stop has a limited service). Other routes include the services operating from Chesterfield and Sheffield to Bakewell and also to Buxton via Tideswell and Millers Dale. A limited service also operates to Monsal Head. Before setting out on your walk please contact the Traveline Public Transport information line on 0871 200 22 33 or Website: www.derbybus.info for details of the latest timetables and services available.

For further information about the trail and public transport details please visit or contact the Bakewell Visitor Centre, The Old Market Hall, Bridge Street, Bakewell, DE45 1DS. Tel: 01629 813227.

Email: bakewell@peakdistrict.gov.uk.

Web: www.peakdistrict.gov.uk

Midland Railway In 1863, the railway link from Rowsley, just north of Matlock, to Manchester was completed, and the Midland Railway achieved its ambition of having its own London-Manchester main line route. A branch line at Millers Dale connected Buxton with the main line.

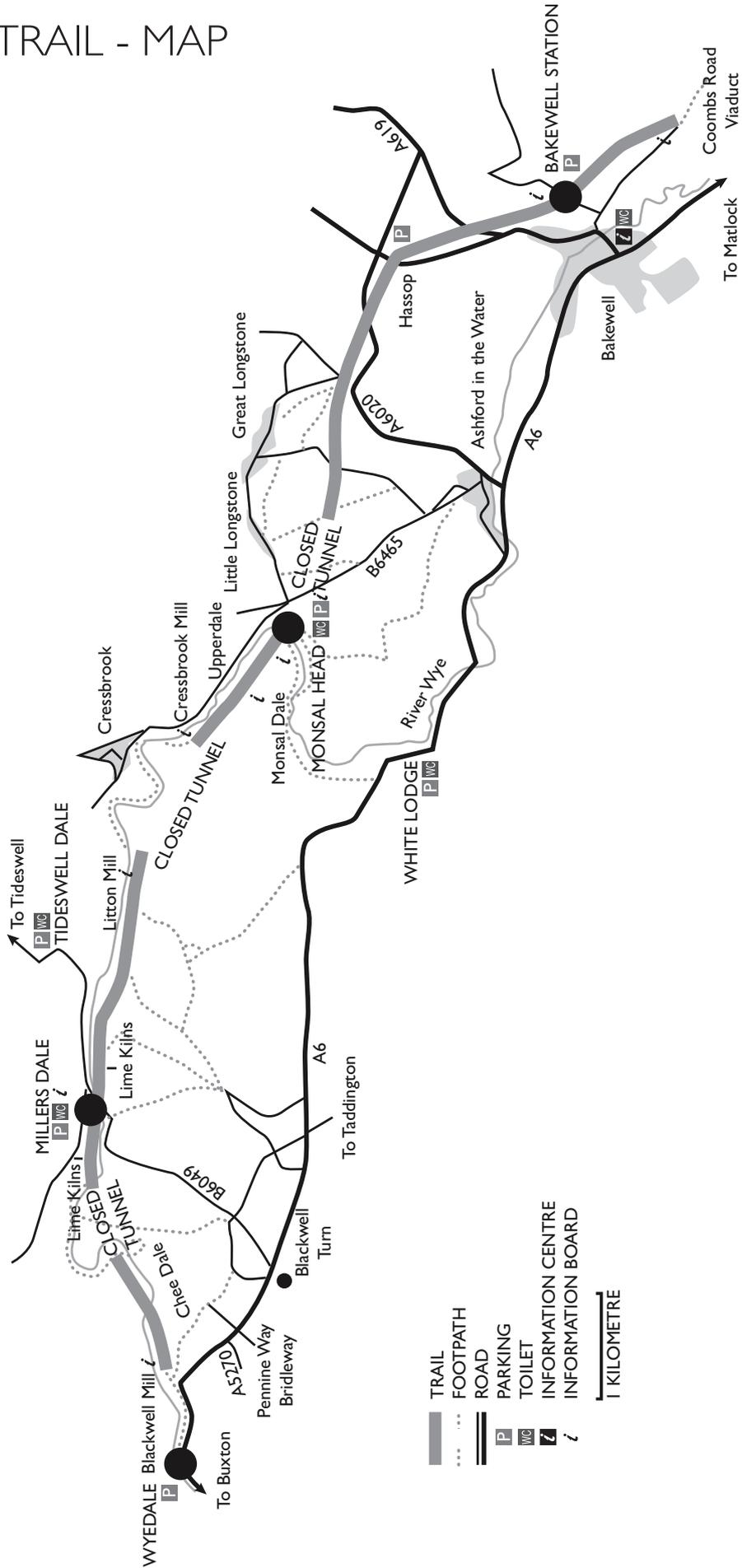
The line carried both freight and passenger traffic. Coal was unloaded at Bakewell Station and delivered to remote areas, while milk churns from surrounding farms were sent south to London as was lime from Millers Dale. Express passenger services between London and Manchester, and London and Buxton, were established as the railway company sought to upgrade the service. The enlarged station at Millers Dale was needed as the main line did not reach Buxton and shuttle services were provided to the fashionable spa town. After the second world war the Midland Line was unable to recapture its former pre-eminence, and rationalisation of the railway network in 1962 sounded the death knell. Closure of the Peak section of the line finally occurred in 1968, despite local pressure to keep it open.

Subsequently the Peak District National Park Authority negotiated for 12 years with British Rail to purchase the line to prevent dereliction and to put the track to a new use. Eventually, British Rail agreed to hand over the land together with £154,000 towards repairing the structures involved. Once work on the structures was complete, the Monsal Trail was born.

Geology The trail between Blackwell and Monsal Head cuts through the central limestone plateau of the Peak District, as it follows the deep valley of the River Wye. The limestone was formed about 300 million years ago in the Carboniferous period, from the remains of marine creatures which inhabited the warm shallow sea which then covered this area.

South of Monsal Head, the limestone dips beneath overlying shales. These were formed from fine compacted muds and sands deposited on top of the

MONSAL TRAIL - MAP



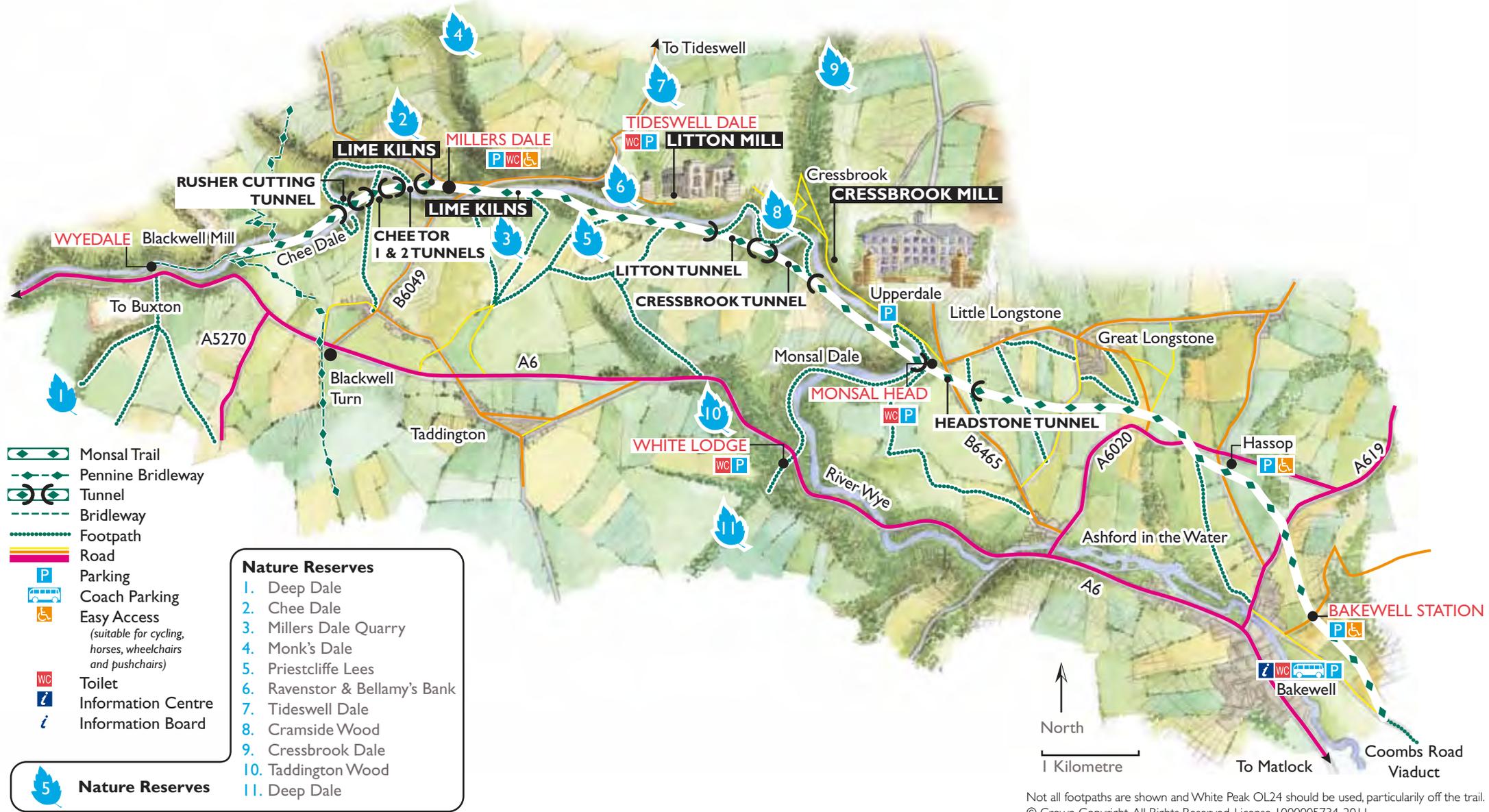
limestone by rivers flowing into that early sea. The cap of shale, which once covered the whole of the limestone dome, now forms the basis of the gentler, more rounded landscape of the southerly portion of the trail.

Monsal Viaduct, now one of the most famous features of the trail and listed as being one of historic and architectural interest, was once the subject of much controversy. Its construction and the invasion of the Upper Wye Valley by the railway aroused strong opposition. Today, however, the embankments are covered in vegetation and the rawness of the cuttings has mellowed to merge into the landscape.

Cressbrook Mill was first opened as a cotton mill in 1783, powered by water from Cressbrook stream. It was built on the site of a small herb distillery by William Newton of Abney for Sir Richard Arkwright. The original building was destroyed by fire but a replacement was soon opened. This became known as "Old Mill". In 1812, construction work started on the large Georgian building that can be seen today "Big Mill", as it was known, at first used water from the River Wye to power its two large water wheels before steam turbines were introduced in 1890. Manufacturing ceased here in 1965.

Litton Mill was a large cotton spinning mill that first opened in 1782. It became notorious for the harsh treatment of child labourers by the owner, Ellis Needham. Many of the children, brought from London and other large cities, died young from the cruel treatment and were buried in the churchyards at Tideswell and Taddington.

The Limekilns to the east and west of Millers Dale Station are examples of commercial kilns built in the 19th and 20th centuries. Quicklime had long been produced in small kilns, mainly for agricultural use, but with the expansion of industry, especially the chemical industry, demand increased. Limestone from the quarries that opened adjacent to the railway and coal brought in by train were burnt to produce the quicklime. This in turn was taken out on the railway. The last kiln closed down in 1944.



- Monsal Trail
- Pennine Bridleway
- Tunnel
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Road
- Parking
- Coach Parking
- Easy Access
(suitable for cycling, horses, wheelchairs and pushchairs)
- Toilet
- Information Centre
- Information Board

- Nature Reserves**
1. Deep Dale
 2. Chee Dale
 3. Millers Dale Quarry
 4. Monk's Dale
 5. Priestcliffe Lees
 6. Ravenstor & Bellamy's Bank
 7. Tideswell Dale
 8. Cramside Wood
 9. Cressbrook Dale
 10. Taddington Wood
 11. Deep Dale

North
 1 Kilometre
 To Matlock
 Coombs Road Viaduct

Not all footpaths are shown and White Peak OL24 should be used, particularly off the trail.
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