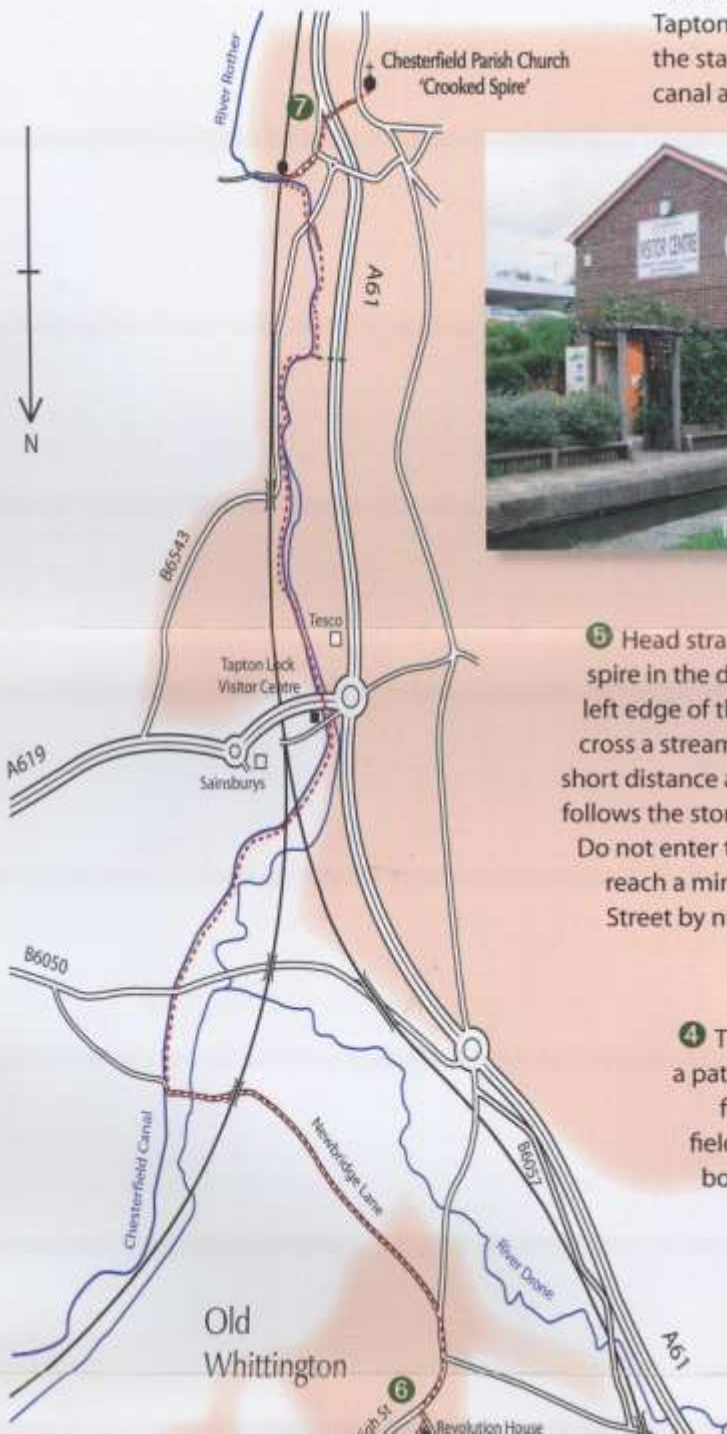


Chesterfield Crooked Spire

**7** Cross over the main road with care and continue uphill to pass the "Chesterfield Hotel". Take the footbridge just beyond the entrance to cross over the by-pass and into Corporation Street. Keep to the right hand road and walk uphill passing the Pomegranate Theatre and the Chesterfield Museum. Cross the main road by the zebra crossing and enter Churchyard where the walk finishes. The Tourist Information Centre is to be found in the square beyond the church.

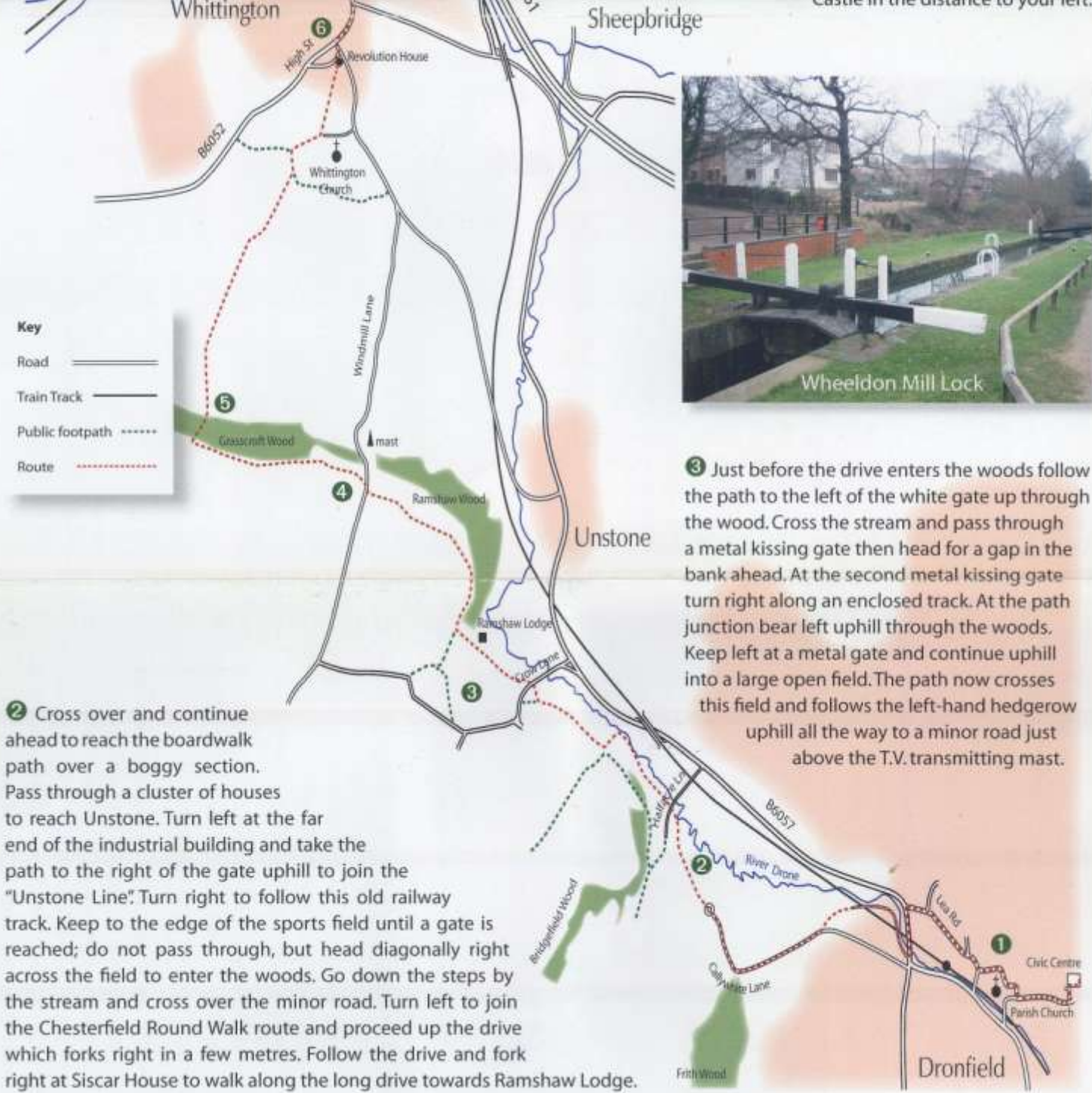
**6** Cross Church Street North and continue along the main road. Just beyond Howard Drive cross over the busy main road with care at the pelican crossing. Continue past the "Bulls Head" down Whittington Hill and then left along Newbridge Lane. Keep straight ahead along this road for  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile as it changes from a residential street into a quiet country lane. Pass under a rail bridge and over the river bridge to eventually reach Chesterfield Canal at Wheeldon Mill Lock. Turn right and follow the canal towpath for  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to reach Tapton Lock visitor centre. Continue along the towpath under the main road tunnel. At Tapton Mill Bridge cross to the other side of the canal. Ignore signs to the station and keep by the waterside as you pass the junction of the canal and the River Rother. Follow the river upstream. After passing under two bridges re-cross the river, turn immediately left alongside the right-hand bank to reach a minor road in a short distance. Continue along this road to reach a main road. Turn left to cross the river, cross the road and take the service road behind houses to reach a bridge to once again re-cross the river. Turn right leaving the waterside and go up the road to pass the station entrance.



Tapton Lock Visitor Centre

**5** Head straight across the large field aiming just to the left of the crooked spire in the distance. Cross the stile with 3 stone steps and then keep to the left edge of the next three fields. By a high wooden fence continue down to cross a stream over a stone footbridge. Go up hill on the left-hand path for a short distance and then climb the 14 steps up to the graveyard. The path now follows the stone wall between the graveyards and alongside the churchyard. Do not enter the church at the gate, but turn left along a narrow footpath to reach a minor road. Cross over and continue down path to reach the High Street by number 77. Turn right along this road passing by the Revolution House and the "Cock and Magpie."

**4** Turn right along Windmill Lane and after 50m turn left to follow a path through the right hand field entrance. Keep to the left of this field, ignoring minor paths to the right. At the top corner of this field take the path through bushes to walk along Grasscroft Wood boundary. In 200m emerge into open fields and keep along track close to the woods. In the second field turn right at a crossing of paths to go straight through the wood. In a short distance emerge from the woods by a seat where you can admire the view of Chesterfield and on a good day can see Bolsover Castle in the distance to your left.

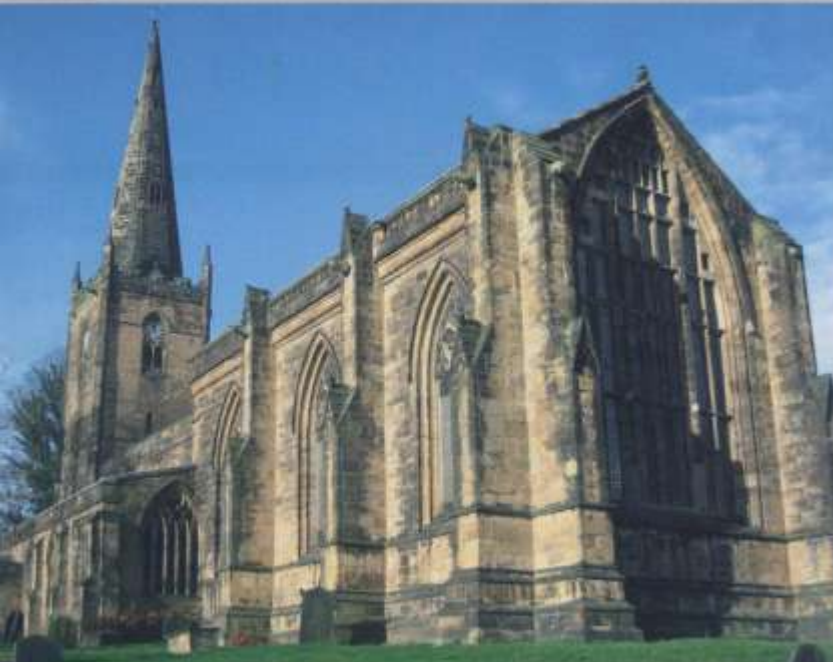


Wheeldon Mill Lock

**2** Cross over and continue ahead to reach the boardwalk path over a boggy section. Pass through a cluster of houses to reach Unstone. Turn left at the far end of the industrial building and take the path to the right of the gate uphill to join the "Unstone Line". Turn right to follow this old railway track. Keep to the edge of the sports field until a gate is reached; do not pass through, but head diagonally right across the field to enter the woods. Go down the steps by the stream and cross over the minor road. Turn left to join the Chesterfield Round Walk route and proceed up the drive which forks right in a few metres. Follow the drive and fork right at Siscar House to walk along the long drive towards Ramshaw Lodge.

**3** Just before the drive enters the woods follow the path to the left of the white gate up through the wood. Cross the stream and pass through a metal kissing gate then head for a gap in the bank ahead. At the second metal kissing gate turn right along an enclosed track. At the path junction bear left uphill through the woods. Keep left at a metal gate and continue uphill into a large open field. The path now crosses this field and follows the left-hand hedgerow uphill all the way to a minor road just above the T.V. transmitting mast.

**1** Begin by the Sports Centre bus stop in Dronfield Civic Centre. Take the only traffic access road out of the centre. Turn right at the Peel Monument and go down to Dronfield Parish Church (open most days). Then walk down Church Street to the T-junction with Lea Road. Turn right and follow Lea Road until you reach the back of the White Swan public house where you turn left along a narrow roadway to join the main road through the town centre. Pass under the railway bridge and cross the road at the zebra crossing. Continue for a short distance and then take the next right to walk along Mill Lane. Follow Mill Lane as far as the signed way to the left along a fenced path through the industrial estate. Turn right along Callywhite Lane and follow to a roundabout at the far end. Follow the signed public footpath (access path to Dronfield 2000 Rotary Walk - also a route signed as Frith Wood, Summerly & Unstone Walk). Pass through the woods downhill to the River Drone to reach Halfacre Lane.



Dronfield Parish Church

## Drone Valley Way

This seven and a half mile route links Dronfield and Chesterfield parish churches. It follows the River Drone valley and then climbs over the hills to join the Chesterfield Canal along the Rother valley and leads into the town centre. From the high point of the walk above Old Whittington views of the Crooked Spire and Bolsover Castle can be enjoyed on a clear day. The distinctive blue way markers will guide you along the field paths, lanes, towpaths and roads that comprise this varied walk.

Regular bus services link Chesterfield and Dronfield and the route crosses bus routes at Unstone and Old Whittington giving the option of returning to the start point after completing a shortened section of the walk. For information on timetables and routes call the County Council's **Traveline** on **0870 608 2 608**. Car parking is available below the Dronfield Sports Centre, where there is a café and toilets.

The information in this leaflet is subject to change and the authors can accept no responsibility for such. You are advised to refer to the **Ordnance Survey Explorer map 269 Chesterfield and Alfreton**, for detailed **1:25,000** mapping showing public rights of way along the route.

Dronfield Footpaths and Bridleways Society have produced this leaflet with support from the Derbyshire Community Foundation, Dronfield Town Council and Derbyshire County Council, Three Valleys Project. The society does not accept any liability as to the safety or the suitability of the walk. Individuals should take whatever action is necessary to ensure their own safety.

**Website:** [www.dronfieldfootpaths.org.uk](http://www.dronfieldfootpaths.org.uk)

### Places of interest:

The walk begins by the 14<sup>th</sup> Century parish church of St John, in **Dronfield**, a market town with an interesting mix of old and modern buildings within a town centre Conservation Area. Nearby is the Forge Shopping Complex, a modern retail development on the site of an old foundry. Along Mill Lane we pass the remains of Dronfield's industrial past before walking through the modern business developments lining Callywhite Lane.



Mill Lane, Dronfield

**Unstone** is a village with a mix of attractive historic buildings interspersed with modern homes. Our walk takes us along the Unstone Line, a former railway branch line, now reclaimed by nature. We pass the hidden site of a colliery where coal would have been loaded onto the trucks to be hauled by the locomotives to a variety of destinations.

On the hill above the village we pass close to the Unstone TV mast erected to serve the local area. Recently a mobile phone mast has been erected alongside it.

In Old Whittington we can visit the historic **Revolution House**, formerly the "Cock and Pynot" alehouse. Here a group of noblemen, including the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Devonshire, met to plan their part in the Revolution of 1688. This revolution deposed James II and brought his daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange to the throne.

**Chesterfield Canal**, opened in 1777, was one of the earliest to be completed in Britain - at the start of the Industrial Revolution. It was built to give land locked Chesterfield an outlet to the River Trent, then a great national highway for both inland boats and coastal craft from the North Sea. With the coming of the railways in the the 19<sup>th</sup> Century traffic declined and then in 1907 the Norwood tunnel collapsed and cut off the town. Restoration work on the canal, started in the 1990's has as its eventual aim reopening of the whole length of the Chesterfield Canal, including the creation of a new section in the area where the tunnel collapsed.

Our walk follows the towpath for around 2 miles taking us into the heart of Chesterfield. Along the canal a former lock cottage, **Tapton Lock Visitor Centre** is a drop-in point for information on local attractions - it has a small display area, toilets and a gift shop. (Open daily in Summer and at weekends in Winter.)



Revolution House

The **Parish Church of St. Mary and All Saints**, Chesterfield, is the largest church in Derbyshire and, according to local tradition, the building was dedicated in 1234. It is famous for its "Crooked Spire" which soars 228 feet (70m) above the town. Visitors can climb the tower to see the timber structure supporting the spire as well as enjoying the spectacular view.

## Natural History Notes

Early in the year look out for signs of spring with the bright yellow Coltsfoot and Gorse flowers and the pollen covered Hazel catkins brightening the countryside. The field off Windmill Lane, opposite the T.V. mast, shows signs of being an ancient meadow with its numerous varieties of wild flowers, including Yellow Rattle. Later in spring the woods are colourful with Bluebells in bloom along with the red and white of the Campion and Greater Stitchwort.



River Drone

The canal side has a late summer burst of colour when the tall Himalayan Balsam produces its pretty pink flowers. It may look beautiful but it is very invasive and is becoming a problem alongside many waterways. In some parts attempts to eradicate this plant are being made. As the walk winds through woodland and across farmland there is a wide variety of birdlife. By the canal you may see several species of waterfowl and occasionally a kingfisher can be glimpsed. Water voles also inhabit the canal banks.



River Rother and the start of Chesterfield Canal

## Links with other way marked walks:

- ◆ **Frith Wood, Summerley and Unstone Walk** follows the same route as the Drone Valley Way from Callywhite Lane to Halfacre Lane. This is a 4 mile circular walk published by Derbyshire County Council.
- ◆ We cross the **Dronfield 2000 Rotary Walk** when crossing Halfacre Lane. This is a circular walk of 14 miles around the town of Dronfield.
- ◆ **Round Chesterfield Walk** joins our route as we leave Unstone and go uphill towards the TV mast. This is a circular walk of 34 miles around Chesterfield.
- ◆ **Whittington and the Handleys Walk** uses the same paths from Grasscroft Wood down to Revolution House. This is an 8 mile walk also published by DCC.
- ◆ **The Cuckoo Way** follows the canal towpath for 46 miles to the River Trent.
- ◆ **North Chesterfield Way** links Chesterfield Town Hall and Dronfield Civic Centre by a nine mile route through the villages of Cutthorpe and Barlow to the west of the Drone Valley - making it possible for the enthusiast to do a circular route of about 17 miles by combining this walk with it.
- ◆ **South Chesterfield Way**, currently under refurbishment, runs from the end of your walk to Clay Cross, a further 6 or 7 miles.

**Leaflets**, some with a charge, referred to above are available at the Tpton Lock Visitor Centre, Chesterfield Tourist Information Centre or Dronfield library.

### Short Cuts:

Long-term plans for a new path along the riverside at the end of Mill Lane, Dronfield would enable the industrial estate to be avoided. This would take a direct route along the valley bottom to link with Halfacre Lane. It is possible to leave the walk at a number of points, such as Unstone or Old Whittington, to reach bus stops for Chesterfield.

# Drone Valley Way



A walk from Dronfield to the famous Crooked Spire of Chesterfield



a seven and a half mile linear walk linking Dronfield with Chesterfield