

En-route

Astwith is a village in Derbyshire, England. Astwith is in the parish of Ault Hucknall. For many decades it was a part of the manor of Stainsby, which was known as Steinesbei in the Domesday survey (1087). Apparently there is no mention of Astwith, otherwise spelt Estewayt, Est(th)wayt, Estweit and Eswheytt, by name until the 13th century.

The Savage family are believed to have held Astwith among other local lands until 1593, when Bess of Hardwick purchased them from the Lord Chancellor and Auditor for the sum of £9,500. The village remained in the ownership of the Dukes of Devonshire until 1959, when it was passed the National Trust as part of the death duty settlement of the 10th Duke. Most properties are now privately owned.

Hardwick Hall. It was the formidable 'Bess of Hardwick' who first built the house and developed the surrounding estate in the late 1500s. Her descendants, the Dukes of Devonshire, treasured Hardwick, while lavishing much of their attention and money on nearby Chatsworth. Their success – intimately associated with empire over 400 years and across the globe – preserved Hardwick, and their interests elsewhere saved it from significant alternation.

Hardwick is also home to one of the finest collections of Elizabethan tapestries and embroideries in Europe including the Gideon tapestries and Noble Women embroidered wall hangings. Almost every room in the Hall proudly displays tapestry and embroidery work on the walls.

Visit - hardwickhall@nationaltrust.org.uk – for further information.

Route Description

1. From the Checkpoint **retrace your steps back to the lane then follow the road which bends to the right**. You are walking along the main road through the village. Heath is a particularly beautiful little village above the motorway, decidedly peaceful despite the fact that two main roads run very close to the village. There are a number of different types of properties in this village; including one pair of cottages with the steepest roofs we have ever seen anywhere! See if you can spot the Punch and Judy connection opposite Wayside Cottage! Where the road takes a sharp right turn, **you continue straight ahead** along the little lane, heading for a public footpath fingerpost ahead of you in front of a stone cottage. **Continue straight ahead as if you are walking down the driveway of the cottage**, heading for the gate at the end. Go past the gate down the concrete path leading to the road.
2. At the road, **cross straight over** to the footpath sign opposite and then **continue straight ahead down the embankment** leading to a stile in the hedgerow. Cross over the stile and **continue straight ahead** heading for the lane to the left of the farm buildings. The lane you are walking down is a typical country tractor lane, bordered to the left by a wire fence and to the right by a hedgerow. After about ¼ mile the fence on the left comes to an end at a point where you will see a metal gate on your right. **Continue straight ahead along the farm track**. You now have open field to your left. At a point where the track appears to come to an end and there is a metal gate, **continue straight ahead as if still on the track**, keeping the hedgerow to your immediate right, walking along the edge of the field.

3. After approximately 75m you will see a wooden post on your right with yellow arrow marker on it, here **turn 45° left to walk across the field**. Once across the field you will meet a ditch populated by trees and you will meet a wooden bridge crossing this ditch. **Cross the bridge and take the little path up to meet the fingerpost** at the beginning of the next field. At the fingerpost **take a 45° turn to the right** to cross the corner of the field. Once across the field, about halfway up the field you will see on your right a wooden stile with a yellow arrow on a green background on it. **Cross the stile and then turn left** as indicated by the arrow. As you emerge from the trees you start to cross a field **heading slightly right and gently uphill** to meet a hedge at a point where several paths meet. You are at the “end point” of the hedge. **Continue straight ahead** with the hedgerow on your left. As you go the path begins to “stray” from the hedge slightly directing you to a stile in the hedgerow in front of you. Cross this stile and **continue ahead bearing slightly right** heading for a stile in the middle section of hedgerow ahead of you. In this hedgerow there is a gate with a yellow arrow on it directing you across the next field, **follow this** again bearing slightly right and now directed to the right of a very large tree. Once across this field you will meet a stile to the side of the tree with a yellow and black arrow on it. **Cross the stile to drop down to the metallised lane. Cross straight over to the stile opposite and continue straight ahead** across the field as indicated by the yellow arrow and the metal public footpath fingerpost. As you cross this field you can see, ahead of you, the small hamlet of Astwith which you are heading for. Once across the field you will meet a stile in the corner. There are the yellow and black arrows guiding you **straight on**. You now start walking downhill, hedgerow on your right, and open field on your left. As you reach the bottom of the hill at the bottom of the field, you bend round to your left for approximately 10m to meet a gate. As indicated by the yellow arrow, **pass through this gate, crossing over the stream and then continue onwards up the field** immediately in front of you. I would advise hugging to the right hand side of the field, using the hedgerow as your guide. You are going to walk the whole length of this field uphill to the top right hand corner. **Cross over the stile in the corner and continue straight ahead** as indicated by the faded yellow arrow. Cross the middle of the field which will probably be bordered by electric fencing keeping the horses away from the path. Once across the field you will see a wooden stile just to the right of the large tree. **Cross over the stile and continue straight on** until you meet a wire fence by a lane. Here **turn 90° left to meet the stile. Cross over the stile to meet the lane and continue straight ahead** as indicated by the yellow and black arrows. The lane is bordered either side by hedgerow.
4. We are now entering the hamlet of Astwith – The lane starts to go downhill as you pass Manor Farm on your left and then you meet a metallised road. **Continue straight ahead**. Where the road bends round to the right immediately before a dilapidated farm building, **turn 90° left** as indicated by the wooden fingerpost to pass down to a gate. **Pass through the gate and continue down to the gate to the left of the farm buildings. Pass through the second gate and continue straight ahead**, heading downhill to meet a wooden gate. **Pass through the wooden gate** (please make sure you close the gates in this area) and **continue straight heading downhill** towards what appear to be a gap in the hedgerow. This “gap” in the hedgerow is, in fact, a small bridge over a stream. **Cross over this bridge and turn left** to walk up the trackway. You have hedgerow on you left and open fields “rising” on your right. After 100m you will see a fingerpost sporting a yellow arrow directing you to go **45° right** following the contours of the hill and leading you to a metal gate in the fence to the left of which is a wooden gate. The actual path goes straight ahead across the field as directed by the arrow heading to the right of a tree and heading to the top right hand corner of the field where you meet a small copse. I would advise however, that from the gate **turn right** to walk up the edge of the field heading uphill for a gap in a hedge. At this gap you will see steps leading you through this gap. **IGNORE THIS AND TURN 90° LEFT TO WALK ACCROSS THE TOP OF THE FIELD, HEDGEROW ON YOUR RIGHT OPEN FIELDS LEFT, TO MEET THE COPSE MENTIONED EARLIER**. At the copse you will see a wide gap leading into another field. **Turn right, passing through the gap, to walk down the field**, copse on your left, open fields to you right. Ahead you have a splendid view of Hardwick Hall. After 200m the copse on you left comes to an end. **Continue walking straight downhill** to the bottom left hand corner of the field. On meeting the stile, on board which is a yellow arrow, **cross over and continue ahead** slightly left heading steeply downhill through bushes to meet a road.

5. **Cross over the road and turn right.** Soon the road passes under the M1 motorway via a tunnel. Just beyond this you will see the entrance to Hardwick Park. **Turn left to enter the park.** You are now entering the car park of this facility. When you reach the first parking meter on your right, **turn 45° right** to follow the path leading to the lake. Please note the sign saying “Sculpture Walk”.

There are some toilets nearby. Ignore the right turn above and walk into main car park and you will see a “Visitor Centre building where there are some toilets.

Remember to return to the route as described above to continue on the walk by taking this right turn! ####

The path crosses with the lake on your right and just beyond the sluice gate you will meet a junction of paths. **Take the path to the right leading to a gate. Pass through and continue straight ahead.** Please note you are currently on “the Sculpture/Millers walk”. At the path junction **take the left fork still following the “Sculpture/Millers walk”.** On reaching the pond **bear right** keeping the “main pond” on your left. These are called the 5 row ponds.

6. On reaching the kissing gate immediately after the pond **turn 90° left to walk with the pond on your left,** wooden fence on your right. After 50 metres to reach a “second” of the ponds. **Keep this on your left continuing with fence on your right.** 80 metres further on “pond 2” ends and just before the start of “pond 3” (Alan Blacks Corner) **turn right to walk through the kissing gate then at the path junction take the left hand fork and walk up the “obvious” path.** You are NO LONGER on the Sculpture/Millers walk. FYI – Look left and you can see the entrance to the “Ice House”. After 70 metres you pass a standing stone and the path starts to rise. After 250 metres you meet a “crossroad” of paths. **Continue straight on and upwards** (a little more steeper than before). Almost at the top of the climb you pass a bench and a few metres on you reach the top of the hill by the side of an information board. **Here, turn LEFT to pass through the gate and follow the path uphill** with the buttresses on your right. At the top of this short hill you meet open ground, **turn right here** (the magnificent Hardwick Hall “smacks you in the face”) **and walk towards the Hall** and on reaching the road **turn right to walk along the road.** You walk “between the Hall (National Trust) and the “OLD HALL” (English Heritage – and where Elizabeth 1 once stayed) continuing along the road. **##BEWARE – THIS IS THE ROAD USED FOR VISITORS TO EXIT THE HALL.##** Soon the road bears slightly right then left and starts to descend. **Cross over the cattle grid. Continue down past the “Stone Centre”** and, where the road swings sharply right, **come off the road walking straight ahead to meet a gate on your left. Turn 90° left to pass through this gate** (you are now joining “The Oak Walk”) and **follow the well walked path across the field.** Once across the field you meet a gate. **Pass through and bear right to walk up the path** which has a “wired” fence to the right. The very end of this path swing left and climbs to meet the main path from the Hall gardens (Note the HH car Park opposite. **Here, turn right onto the main path.**
7. You are walking through Lady Spencer Wood and are still on The Oak Walk. After 525 metres you meet some steps. **Go down these** and halfway down The Oak Walk turns Left. You leave this and **continue straight on** at this point descending more steps to cross a wooden bridge over a stream after which you start to climb up again via some more steps. After 100 metres you reach the top and a few metres more you reach a wooden gate. **Pass through and turn LEFT.**

8. You are now on a lane which widens soon after. **Continue along this lane** and after 330 metres you reach the start of the Hamlet of Norwood. **Walk through this to the far end** where you come across what appears to be some “50s Suburbia semis”, one being called “Stanton House”, **turn right to pass through the metal kissing gate onto the public footpath** crossing the open field. Once across you meet the hedgerow, **turn left** to walk with this on your right, open field to your left. After 130 metres and just after the hedgerow starts on the left **turn 90° left to walk down a bridle path** which starts off narrow and widens and twist slightly further on. After 350 metres you pass a farm on your left followed by 4 “contemporary” properties then a metal storage building. At this point the track widens to become a rough road. 160 metres beyond the storage building the track swings left and rises to cross over the Teversal trail (former rail line). 20 metres on you see a metal fingerpost on your right. **Turn right here through the wooden posts and follow the path downhill** “back on yourself!” until you reach the bridge. Here **swing round almost 180° left to join the trail heading south!**
9. 380 metres on you reach a metal bridge over a road. **Continue straight on** for a further 230 metres until you reach a “major trail junction”. Here **turn left following sign for Teversal Visitor centre**, and, after a further 20 metres **turn right to cross the small bridge and follow path beyond** which leads into the visitor centre car park.

THIS IS CHECKPOINT 2