

U WALK NO 2 – DOVE VALLEY



7 km, 4.5 m, 69m, 226 ft climb, 2.5 hrs walk time. Start point Brookside Road.

One of a series of local walks to enjoy our wonderful Uttoxeter countryside.

Field paths can be a bit muddy and there are stiles. Keep your dog on a lead and take dog-poo bags and litter with you to the nearest bin or home.

Walk to the end of the road where there is room to park a couple of cars. Go through the black gate and the footpath finger post. You are on the Staffordshire Way here. Follow the wide path past the back of the racecourse and as it turns to the left drop down to the field to the right alongside the brook.

This is an easy route to follow keeping the railway in view to your right and using the yellow direction arrows.

Cross the first stile and head across the field with the next stile in view. Cross the stile and look for the 2 metal bridges that cross the meander of the brook. After the second bridge the path crosses the field diagonally moving away from the railway. Head for the metal gate with a difficult stile at the side. Along this next stretch as you cross a stile look forward to spot the next one. The fields are flat but do have ancient shallow ditches. You will soon be heading back towards the railway and another metal gate and bridge. The Dove makes an appearance in a long meander. It is so quiet here that you will be able to hear the current. Continue on alongside the railway through more pastures often containing sheep but sometimes cattle. After another river meander keep an eye open for a wartime pill box on your left. At this point turn right up a slight slope to cross the railway. **Stop Look and Listen.** Trains always whistle on approaching the crossing. You are leaving the tranquillity of the Dove Valley.

Go down into Woodford Hall Farm farmyard and turn to the left. Mr Langridge has signposted a passage away from the cattle sheds and excitable cattle. Go up the farm track for 10 metres and turn right through a metal gateway. Go straight ahead keeping the barns to the right. Cross the stile and keeping to the right of the field go up the hill. Go through a metal gate and continue up and as the path turns gently to the left look out for a stile in the hedge on the right. Cross the stile and turn left, going uphill again aiming for the left of the house in sight. At the top remember to look back at the fabulous view.

Turn right onto the tarmac road surface of Moisty Lane and head gently upwards. Ignore the footpath to the left and continue until you get to a double stile on the right. Cross over and go down to cross a bridge then up the slope to a finger post in view. The arrow on the post is slightly misleading but have no fear as your next stile is in view cutting the corner of the field. Cross the stile to turn left and keep your eyes peeled for the next stile to the right. Walk slowly here as the views are magnificent!

Go through a kissing gate and drop down to two stiles as you enter the golf course. **Flying golf balls can hurt so always look both ways and follow the very large yellow signs to safely reach the other side.** Leave the golf course and drop down on to the tarmac road of Wood Lane. Follow this narrow road keeping to the right to face the traffic all the way to the roundabout. Cross to take the footpath over the railway bridge back to Brookside Road and your starting point.

'Look out for wildlife as you walk - please report sightings on the iRecord App on your phone, or by email to records@staffs-ecology.org.uk '

If you want to walk further and would like more information on joining Uttoxeter Walking Club, please see the following link <https://www.uttoxeterwalkingclub.co.uk>

