



Ordnance Survey

12.7km/7.9 miles/3-4 hours

Ascent 715m/2350ft

8

# Chrome Hill and Parkhouse Hill Peak District ENGLAND



## Dan Hobson tries to conquer dragons in the Peak District

THE DRAGON'S BACK, as it is known locally, is one of the most distinctive hill ranges in the Peak District. Standing in stark contrast to the soft pastures of the upper Dove Valley, the rugged ridges of Parkhouse Hill and Chrome Hill burst from the landscape like a beast awakening from its slumber.

Formed some 340 million years ago, the limestone reef knolls were once coral reefs covered by a tropical sea. Now, standing proud where the Dark Peak and White Peak meet, the ridges are a fascinating geological quirk that dominate the landscape for miles around.

After limbering up along the Dove Valley to

**1 Start/Finish**  
Longnor High Street/  
Market Place (free parking)  
GR: SK089649  
Follow High Street E for 230m.

**2** Go L along Dove Ridge.  
Continue for 140m, through  
the gate and down the track.  
Keep L at the barn and take the  
immediate R through the gate.

**3** Head straight across the  
field for 580m, cross the  
River Dove on Beggar's Bridge  
and continue for another 270m.

**4** When you reach the lane, stop  
sharp L and follow lane for  
1.4km, through Underhill  
Farmyard, to the B5053 at  
Glutton Bridge.

**5** Go R along the B5053  
for 250m then take the  
footpath L towards Parkhouse  
Hill. Climb steeply up Parkhouse  
and continue along the ridge for  
400m, before a precarious  
descent to the lane.

**6** Go R on the lane for 100m,  
over the cattle grid, then  
take the footpath immediately to  
the L and climb steeply up Chrome  
Hill. Follow ridge along Chrome for  
about 450m. Keep R towards the  
end of the ridge and follow the  
steep path L down to the gate.

**7** Go through the gate and  
follow the path for 200m.  
Go sharp right after the next gate  
and continue up the path for 150m.  
Follow path behind Stoop Farm for  
about 1km to reach a lane.

**8** Go L along the lane then take  
footpath L after 25m. Follow  
track for 1.4km then go sharp R  
down to River Dove after the stile.  
Cross the bridge and bear L up the  
bank until you reach the road.

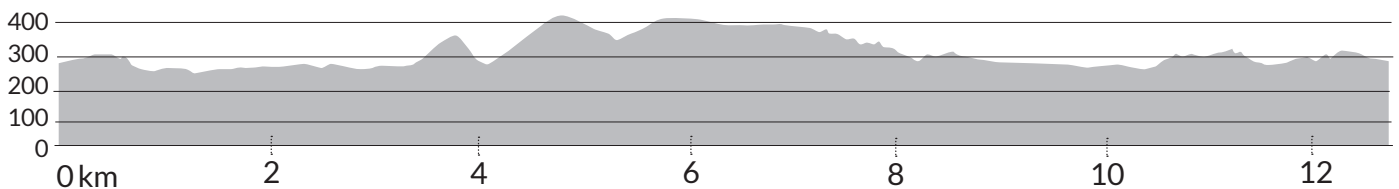
**9** Head L into Hollinsclough  
and go L at the triangle.  
Follow the lane for 350m until you  
see a byway on L.

**10** Follow byway for 1.7km  
until you reach a lane. Take  
footpath immediately to the R  
through a gate and follow for  
800m to reach the B5053.

**11** Go R along B5053 for  
240m to footpath on L.  
Follow footpath down past  
Yewtree Grange before climbing  
towards Longnor.

**12** Go L along Lane Head for  
100m, then L onto Buxton  
Road briefly before taking  
another L onto High Street  
to finish.

### Gradient profile Metres above sea level





[Captions clockwise from top]  
View across the Dove Valley;  
The steep, rocky descent  
from Parkhouse Hill, past  
the fascinating 'Limestone  
Pyramid'; The River Dove with  
Parkhouse in the background;  
Limestone formation on descent  
from Chrome Hill

Glutton Bridge, the first dragon to conquer is Parkhouse Hill. At 360 metres, Parkhouse is 65 metres lower than Chrome. What it lacks in height, though, it certainly makes up for in character. After a very steep ascent, you are rewarded with panoramic views of rolling hills, hay meadows, sleepy farms and the winding river; all the while teetering on the edge with a wild wind whipping.

The exhilarating descent to the lane is not for the faint-hearted. On the approach to the Limestone Pyramid, the path gets very steep with big drops either side. The polished, slippery limestone and loose


gravel path make it an exciting journey, if a little hairy. About 20 metres from the bottom, I confess I slipped and completed the descent on my derrière. One-nil to the dragon.


The ascent of Chrome certainly gets you puffing. Once there, though, the view of Parkhouse is absolutely magnificent and it is easy to understand why the area is so loved by photographers. For me, the beauty was compounded by a deep sense of nostalgia as I looked the other way, towards Stoop Farm, which was once owned by my grandparents. As I walked behind the farm, memories


of being a young lad – tending to the sheep and sitting on the petrol tank of an old motorcycle as my grandfather drove – came flooding back.

On crossing the infant River Dove through the sleepy village of Hollinsclough and along the byway, I found myself at the bottom of Parkhouse Hill again. After this dragon defeated me last time by way of a tumble, there was only one thing for it: another race to the summit. The exertion was certainly worth it; what a feeling it was to be sat atop an ancient coral reef watching the sun set over the Peak District. Shall we call it a draw, dragons? 🐉

### Further information

 **Maps:** OS 1:25,000 Explorer sheet OL24 (The White Peak)

 **Transport:** Buses from Buxton, Ashbourne (both service 442) and Leek (458) to Longnor. [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport)

 **Information:** Buxton TIC, 01298 25106