

Mo Cuishle

- Family owned for three generations
- Spectacularly scenic setting
- Working farms all around
- Carefully managed wildlife haven

The family at this smashing set site a few miles from Chatsworth House in Derbyshire is rather fond of its part of the world: the site name translates from Irish Gaelic as 'my pulse' or 'my love', which is just how they feel about this little piece of land on the edge of the Peak District. (Want to know how to say it? It's muh-khwish-la, so do practise before you get there...)

The land has been in the owners' family for nearly three generations and you'll see why they've stayed once you arrive: the views are spectacular with working farms on all sides, the vibe is hushful with very little traffic noise, and it's all within easy walking/cycling distance of local pubs and easily accessible from main roads. Several footpaths for local walks lead directly from the site.

The site is a wildlife haven, where the habitat is carefully managed by the owners who take a lot of time to keep it as a safe environment where local critters can flourish. You'll likely spot rabbits, bats, brown owls, buzzards, hawks and foxes, and for the fortunate, resident hares and badgers. Native and visiting birds will be fluttering about overhead for most of the day too.

The site is set in 12 acres of pasture, so has plenty of room for kids to run about and for camps to be set up with a bit of privacy. It runs on an off-grid policy to have as little environmental impact as possible.

The friendly local village of Barlow is a mile away and has a farm shop and three pubs serving food; for very rich pickings, the Chatsworth Estate Farm Shop is about eight miles from base.

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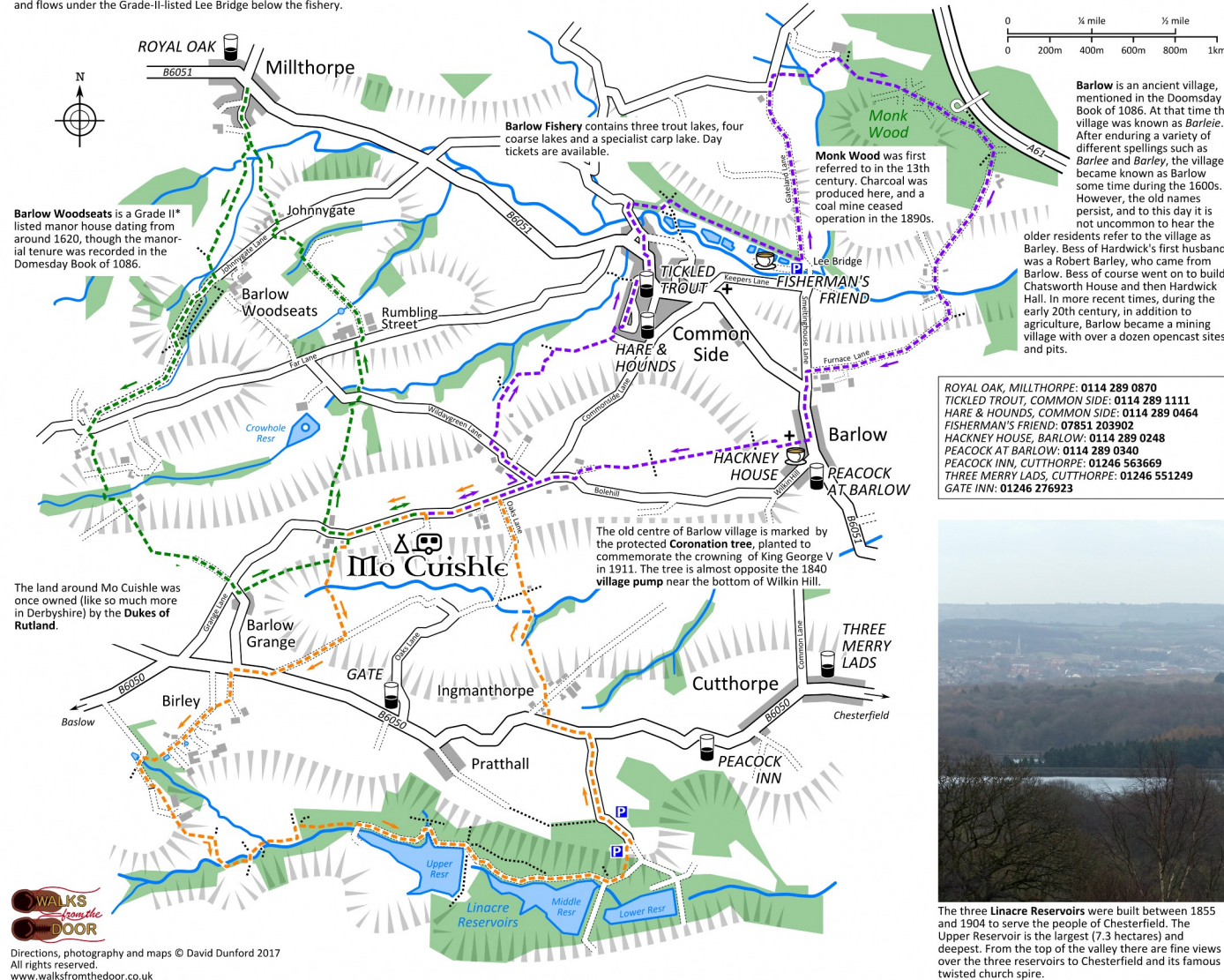
One of the two fords at **Millthorpe** is overlooked by pretty cottages (and avoidable using the footbridge from which this photograph was taken!). Further downstream, the Barlow Brook feeds a series of fishing ponds and flows under the Grade-II-listed Lee Bridge below the fishery.



The body of **St Lawrence's Church, Barlow**, is 12th-century Norman, with Victorian additions in the same style. A sundial in the churchyard displays the site's latitude and longitude.



Bole Hill House is a former schoolhouse dated 1677, with a 19th-century extension to the right. It has Gothick windows throughout.



Three Country Walks from Mo Cuishle

Campsite nr Dronfield, Derbyshire

Millthorpe and Barlow Woodseats

4½ miles: Moderate

A hilly walk to a pretty village and historic private house, with two picturesque fords to add interest.

Linacre Reservoirs

4½ miles: Moderate

A lake- and streamside stroll in a wooded valley with distant views of Chesterfield's twisted spire.

Monk Wood and Barlow

5½ miles: Moderate

Hills, woods, streams and villages: a varied hike around the Barlow valley.

Millthorpe and Barlow Woodseats

4½ miles: Moderate

Allow 2–3 hours. A couple of moderate climbs. Muddy after rain; the first ford at Millthorpe is quite deep at times, but can be bypassed by a footbridge. The Royal Oak at Millthorpe has limited opening hours.

1 Turn left up Grange Lane to High Ashes Farm. **2** Take a footpath on the right just beyond Figg Barn. Join a descending path with paddocks to the left. **3** In the next field, continue downhill to a central tree, cross a gravel path through a laurel hedge and aim for the bottom right-hand corner of the next field. **4** Drop into woodland and bear right to the road. **5** Turn right then immediately left over a stile to a footbridge. **6** Climb the slope beyond, following the right-hand edge of two fields, to reach Far Lane. **7** Take a few steps to the right, then turn left along a farm track between the farmhouse and modern barns. Follow the track downhill past a pond to a wood. **8** When the track bends sharp right, head straight on into the wood, then bear right and left. **9** Beyond the wood, follow the field edge towards the stone buildings of Johnnygate. After the first gate, head left of the nearest building to a gate into the road. **10** Turn right past the farm-yard buildings, then turn left before the farmhouse into a track. In dry weather, keep along the track, which develops into an attractive hollow way down to a ford. *In wet weather, this path may be very wet and the ford slightly awkward; in such conditions, a gate on the right just beyond the buildings at Johnnygate gives access to an unsignposted alternative path that closely parallels the track and avoids the ford.* **11** Negotiate the ford. **12** Beyond the footbridge, either continue along the field edge or rejoin the hollow way; either brings you to the end of a lane. **13** Follow the lane to a second ford (footbridge to right) and continue to the centre of the village; the Royal Oak is to your left. **14** Retrace your steps over the first ford to the end of the lane; when a driveway bends right, take the stile ahead of you, to the right of the track you followed before. **15** Walk down the left-hand edge of the field to a stile, then bear half-right to a footbridge. **16** Climb a rail stile beyond the bridge then bear right to another beside a holly tree. **17** Follow the hedge up the left-hand edge of the next field to a gateway in the corner, then follow the right-hand edge of the next field. **18** When a footpath joins from the right, bear half-left across the the corner of the field to a footbridge and climb the steps beyond to the lane at Barlow Woodseats (divert left to view the historic house). **19** Otherwise, turn right up the track, ignoring the footpath opposite the steps. Cross a stream and follow the track as it climbs through woodland between tumbledown walls. **20** Bear left along the track, with open fields to your right, and ignore side paths to the right and left. Further up, the track is joined by a stream on the left and eventually reaches a road. **21** Cross into the entrance to Bank Farm then turn immediately left onto a path that skirts to the left of the buildings. **22** Bear half-right to the corner of the field and follow a fenced path between paddocks above Grange Wood Farm, crossing a track partway along. **23** Drop down stone steps to a footbridge in a

steep wooded valley, then bear left up the opposite bank. Pass to the right of Grange Lumb Farm, crossing two fields, the first containing a farm track. **24** Go through a gap in a line of holly trees and bear half-right (uphill) to a stile opposite. **25** Follow the bottom of the next field to the lower (left-hand) of two gates. Follow the track beyond out to Grange Lane. **26** Cross into the road opposite. **27** Just before the first building, turn left over a wall stile. **28** Walk down the right-hand side of the first couple of fields, then down the middle of the next before dropping to a stile in the far left-hand corner. **29** Turn left up the bridleway to High Ashes Farm. **30** Turn right round the garden to Grange Lane. **31** Turn right back to the campsite.

Linacre Reservoirs

4½ miles: Moderate

Allow 2–3 hours. Several moderate climbs. May be muddy after rain.

1 Turn left up Grange Lane. **2** Just before High Ashes Farm, turn left onto a bridleway that skirts the garden. **3** By the farmhouse, turn left, through a gate and downhill. **4** Keep straight on over a crossing path, up a slight rise and descend to a small stream. **5** Climb the other side to a farm track; turn right and follow it to the B6050. **6** Turn right for 200 yards to a junction, and take the driveway on the left with a sign for Bluster Castle. **7** When the drive bends left, follow a signposted footpath on the right. **8** Beyond a wall stile, keep straight ahead to another track. **9** When the track swings left by the entrance to Birley Grange Cottage Farm (identified by a plaque on a millstone), go straight ahead, past a small pond on the left. **10** At a metalled driveway, turn left below a pond and follow the drive to the left (ignoring a footpath ahead). **11** At a pair of automatic gates, turn left onto a bridleway which bears right to Birley Farm with views down the Linacre valley to Chesterfield. **12** Beyond a hand gate, walk past the farm entrance and descend between narrowing walls to another gate. **13** Bear left and follow the main path downhill; when an obscure path joins from the left, bear right. **14** Near the bottom, turn left through gateposts and cross the stream, following it downstream on your left. **15** Beyond a second pair of gateposts, turn left over a footbridge, and then turn right along the stream. **16** Ignore a second footbridge and continue to concrete stepping stones over a side-stream. **17** Continue along the valley bottom, then briefly head left (uphill) alongside a wall to a hand-gate on your right. Turn right into the woodland. **18** Take the lower (right-hand) path ahead of you through the wood, parallel with the stream to your right. **19** On reaching a broad track by a boardwalk, keep straight on, left of the Upper Reservoir. **20** Skirt an inlet and cross a stream, continuing along the track nearest to the reservoir. **21** Beyond the dam, bear left, above the Middle Reservoir. **22** At the second dam, turn left, away from the reservoirs. **23** By a dog waste bin, turn left up some shallow steps to the car park. **24** Follow the entrance track out to the B6050. **25** Turn left for 200 yards then, immediately before the first house, cross the road and go over a stile. Walk alongside the boundary of the

property and between chicken coops to a track. **26** Turn right briefly then leave the track over a stile on the left. Cut the corner to near the left-hand farmhouse to another stile. **27** Turn left and descend along the right-hand side of a narrow field. **28** At the bottom, a track bends left to a gateway; the path continues steeply to an awkward crossing over a small stream, best bypassed by following the track. **29** Turn right along the woodland edge to a footbridge. **30** Climb the steps to a stile, and cross to a stone barn. **31** Pass to the left of the barn and climb the field beyond. **32** When you meet Oaks Lane, keep straight ahead to Grange Lane. **33** Turn left for 300 yards back to the campsite.

Monk Wood and Barlow

5½ miles: Moderate

Allow 3 hours. Several moderate climbs; parts may be muddy after rain. Refreshments are available at the Tickled Trout or Hare and Hounds in Commonsides, the Fisherman’s Friend café at Barlow Fishery, or at the Hackney House café or Peacock Inn in Barlow.

1 Turn right down Grange Lane. **2** At the first road junction, with a postbox in the middle of the road, turn left, signposted Wilday Green. **3** Pass Wilday House on your left and 100 yards after Vine Cottage (just before Wilday Meadow) turn right onto a footpath. **4** Follow the right-hand side of the first field. **5** In the next field, with a tile-roofed stone barn to your right, bear slightly left to the top of a narrow wood. **6** Don’t cross the stream, but turn right along the woodland edge, with wood and stream on your left. **7** By a stile and gate, cross a small side-stream, then turn right, along a hedgerow and away from the wood. **8** Walk along the bottom of two fields, then bear left, now with the hedge on your right, to meet a path coming up from the stream and wood on your left. **9** Turn right here, across the middle of a field. **10** After a gate by a holly tree, bear left along the bottom of the next couple of fields, towards the houses of Common Side. **11** When you reach the bottom of Mods Lane, bear left along a short path around and through gardens to emerge by a loop of road at the end of a housing estate. **12** Walk down the road (Springfield Road) to the junction with Valley Road, the B6051 (the Tickled Trout is within sight to your right). **13** Turn left, then right at a junction by a yew tree (“Unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles”). **14** Beyond the fishery entrance keep right, to cross the Barlow Brook. **15** Just beyond a bench on the left, take a footpath into the trees on the right. **16** Follow this path parallel to the brook until it emerges above the fishing lakes. **17** Here turn *left* (away from the lakes) and climb the end of the field into woodland again. **18** At a crossroads of paths, with steps in front of you, turn right along a narrow path. **19** Follow the path along the bottom of the wood, overlooking the fishing lakes, for half a mile, ignoring various opportunities to drop down onto the lakeside track to your right. **20** At Lee Bridge, at the end of the fishing lakes, turn right and right again through the fishery car park if visiting the Fisherman’s Friend café, otherwise turn sharp left up a slightly rocky bridleway through the trees which leads through a gateway into a brief

hollow way before emerging into open fields. **21** Follow the fieldside track to a gate, beyond which it narrows between hedges before meeting a road. **22** Walk straight on down the road for fifty yards, then take a footpath on the right (Dronfield 2000 Rotary Walk point K). **23** Head down the field to a stile into woodland, and descend steps to a footbridge. **24** Climb the grassy bank opposite, curving slightly to the right below a house. **25** A gap in the fence gives access to a fenced footpath, where you turn right through a tall kissing gate. **26** Follow the path along the woodland edge to a pair of gates, then continue ahead with woodland now on all sides. **27** Join a track at a junction and continue straight ahead, ignoring private tracks to left and right. **28** After passing another private track leading off to the right, you pass close to a bridge over the A61 trunk road, a bridleway joining from the left. **29** Continue along the main track, ignoring a footpath on the right. **30** Leave the woodland at Monkwood Farm and follow the farm drive across a field to cross the Barlow Brook among a cluster of houses at Furnace Farm. **31** Follow the metalled Furnace Lane as it ascends from the brook and bears right (ignore a footpath off to the left at the bend). **32** Eventually you pass Elm Tree Farm and emerge on Smeltinghouse Lane. **33** Turn left to reach the B6051 in Barlow. **34** Turn left again, into the village. **35** Just after the lych gate and before the Hackney House café and Peacock Inn, turn right onto a footpath alongside the church. **36** Beyond the churchyard gate and a stone stile the path curves right and left past farm buildings and follows a wall (first on your right and then your left) uphill. **37** Beyond a crossing path the way ahead leads across the middle of a series of fields to a second crossing path. **38** Cross another field to a stile then meet the hedge on the left-hand side of the next field, which leads to a gate into the grounds of Bole Hill House. **39** Exit via the drive to the road, where you turn right and walk downhill to the junction with the postbox you met earlier. **40** Take the road straight ahead (signposted Baslow) and walk back up Grange Lane to the campsite.

Gateland Lane, near Lee Bridge

