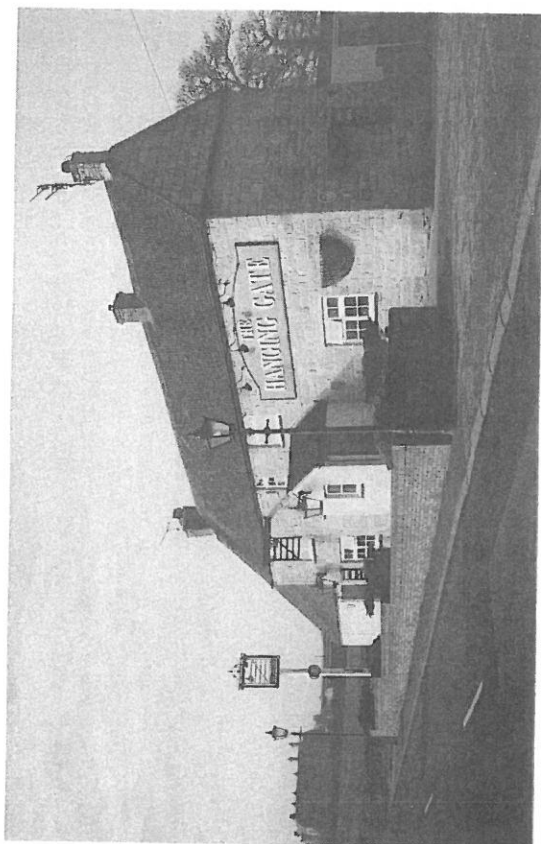


## [11] Shottlegate The Hanging Gate



Shottlegate is a tiny crossroads hamlet situated at the intersection of the Belper to Ashbourne road with the winding minor road between Duffield and Wirksworth Moor. The Hanging Gate stands apart from the village, on the Belper side; a traditional country inn, parts of which are understood to date back to the early 16th century. There are time-honoured beams and flagged floors, and open coal fires in the winter. This is a Bass house, where the ales include Highgate and guest beers, as well as Carling and Tennent's lagers and Dry Blackthorn cider. An extensive choice of wines includes bottles from France, Australia, New Zealand and the USA.

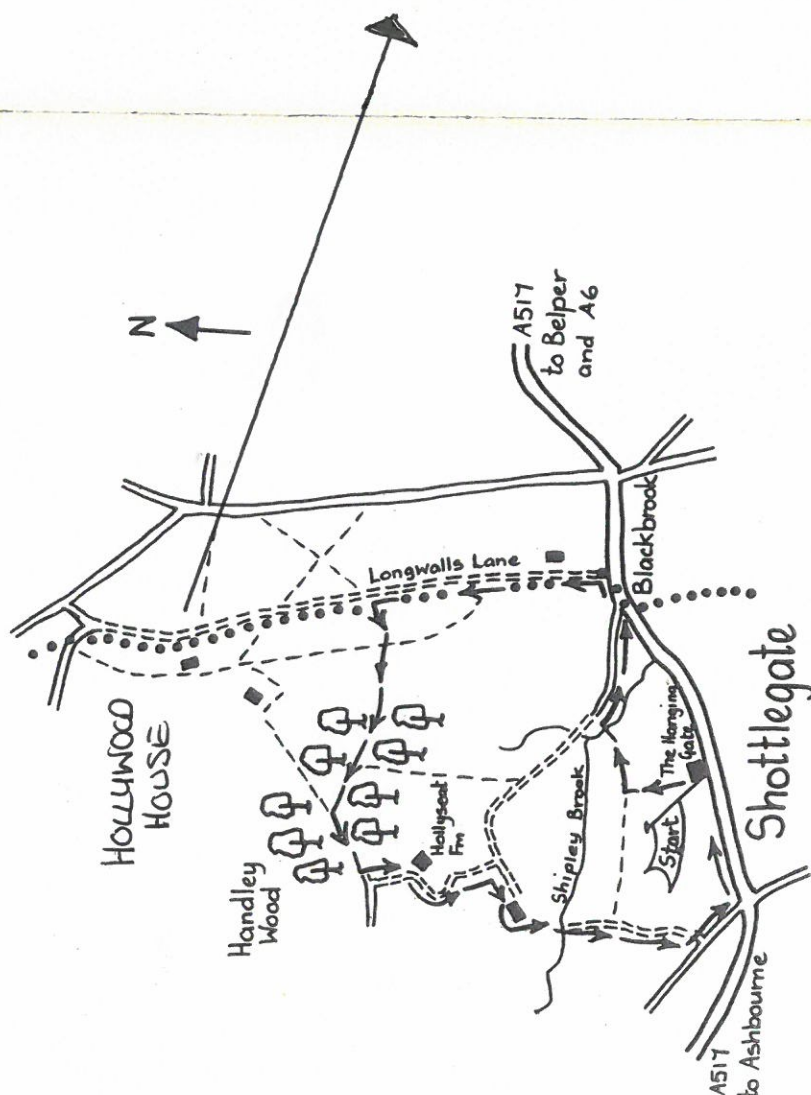
The service is warm and friendly, and food is available throughout opening hours, with a wide selection of starters and main courses – fish, chicken and red meat dishes, pies, grills and salads. There is a tempting range of delicious sweets, and snacks include cheese and pickle ploughman's, pork pie ploughman's and massive sandwiches. Vegetarians are catered for too, and many of the dishes can be obtained in smaller portions, at reduced cost, for the kiddies. Families are welcome and will find a family room and a children's play area, as well as a beer garden and a non-smoking zone. Dogs are also welcome, but in the outside areas only.

The pub is open all day and every day in the summer from 11 am to 11 pm. The winter Monday to Wednesday hours are 12 noon to 3 pm and 5.30 pm to 11 pm and on Thursday to Sunday from 12 noon to 10.30 pm.

Telephone: 01773 550363.

*How to get there:* The pub is situated on the A517 road between Belper and Ashbourne. The road climbs steeply out of Belper until it reaches Blackbrook, where it levels out. The Hanging Gate is about 1/2 mile further, on the north side of the road.

Shottlegate can be reached by buses from Ashbourne and Belper (Stevensons) as well as from Derby and Matlock (Trent).



*Parking:* The pub has its own spacious car park, which you are welcome to use while walking.

*Length of the walk:* 4 miles. Maps: OS Landranger 119 Buxton and Matlock, and Pathfinder 811 Belper (inn GR 324474).

*Between Duffield and Belper Lane End, the Midshires Way follows the route of the Old Portway, almost certainly the oldest road in Derbyshire. Here, to the west of the busy town of Belper, we get our first taste of the rolling hills and dry-stone walls of the Peak District. We follow the Portway along ancient Longwalls Lane, returning to base by way of quiet lanes, woods and field paths.*

### The Walk

Cross a stile in the far corner of the pub car park (beside the children's play area) and cross the ensuing field to reach a concealed stile and footbridge in the extreme left-hand corner. The bridge is a somewhat Heath-Robinson affair, crossing a ditch, so take care. Bear right a little in the next field to arrive at a squeeze beside a metal field gate.

Cross the next field, passing to the right of a row of trees, turning right by a free-standing pair of stone uprights, and cross a stile/squeezer into the next field. Continue straight down the field, passing to the right of a tree and bearing right to cross a footbridge over a stream, and on to join a lane.

Turn right and follow Plains Lane past Chapel House Farm, and the sad remains of the old chapel – now serving as a barn – continuing past a row of modern residences to rejoin the Belper to Ashbourne road. Turn left here, then left again on reaching the hamlet of Blackbrook and Longwalls Lane.



At Longwalls Lane we join the Midshires Way, which here follows the course of the Old Portway, one of the oldest roads in Derbyshire. It remains an unmetalled, wild country way, better adapted to walkers and horse-riders than to the motorised fraternity. The way climbs steeply, initially metalled and built up, but after passing the last of the houses it reverts to a pleasant tree-lined bridleway.

After a steep ascent in a hollow way the path levels out a little. Where a footpath crosses left to right, take the left turn through a squeezer, leaving the Midshires Way.

Follow the right of the wall over two fields. Pass to the left of a pond and turn right to reach a squeezer on your left.

Through the squeezer, continue straight down the middle of the field, and at the end of a second field cross a difficult stile to enter Handley Wood. There is an adjacent handgate, but this appears to be permanently padlocked. Descend through the wood, crossing a culverted stream at



the bottom and re-ascending. Turn left with the track at the top of the rise and continue to the end of the woods. Follow the track round to the right, past a small former quarry, and arrive at a farm road.

Turn left and follow the lane past Hollyseat Farm, keeping to the right as you pass the farm buildings. Continue round a double bend and turn right at a T-junction.

Short of Hollyhouse Cottage, turn right over a stile (it may be overgrown, hidden and in poor repair), opposite a farm gate. Turn left in the field and follow the hedge past the buildings, turning left again through a farm gate. Cross the next field direct to a gate and an enclosed green lane (Shipley Lane). Follow the lane through to the road, turning left here for Shottlegate, then left again, back to the Hanging Gate.

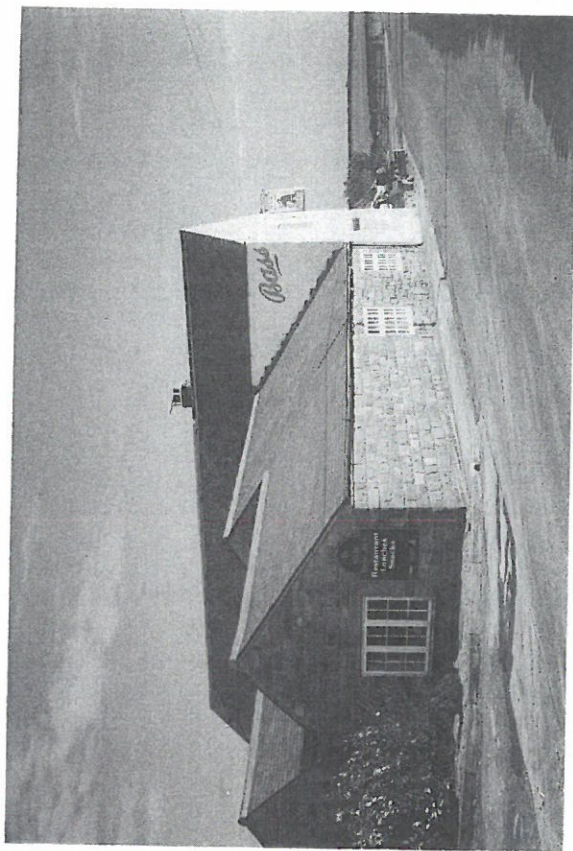


### Midshires Way – Blackbrook to Alderwasley (5 miles)

The Way follows the pub walk route along Longwalls Lane, then continues on the old road to its junction with Wilderbrook Lane. Here it turns briefly left, and then right again, forsaking the road in favour of a waymarked field path. After crossing one field, the route ascends a low ridge on a north-westerly line, still following the believed Old Portway route. As the gradient eases, Alport Hill comes into view ahead with its crown of radio aerials. The field pattern is rather confusing here, and some of the field boundaries marked on the Outdoor Leisure map are no longer in existence. So careful navigation is required, as the path swings round to north-east. The Midshires Way signs are many and frequent, but not always obvious. A new and useful waymark makes its appearance here, in the shape of the Sherwood Foresters' war memorial tower, in line ahead on Crich Cliff. The path crosses a footbridge and arrives at a road – Palerow Lane – where it turns right.

The Way continues to the end of Palerow Lane, turning right here at the T-junction to follow Belper Road for a short distance only. A footpath is then taken, via a narrow squeezer on the left (there is an interesting old milestone on the opposite verge), and follows the wall, initially in a sunken way. It then descends over the fields to Netherpark Farm, where it crosses the lane to enter Shining Cliff Woods (where there is a Youth Hostel) and join the route of Pub Walk 12, to Alderwasley Hall School.

## [12] Alderwasley Ye Olde Bear



Like the Hanging Gate, this too is an 'out of town' pub. A fine old 16th-century coaching inn, it occupies a hilltop site with splendid wide views over the Derwent valley. Alderwasley is a scattered parish, and although Ye Olde Bear is some way from the village itself, it is very much a part of the community. There are oak beams, and some bare stone walls in the several interconnecting small rooms, which include a separate, smart dining room.

This is a freehouse, offering Bass ales, Dry Blackthorn cider and lagers by Carling (Black Label) and Tennent's (Extra and Pilsner). Food is available every lunchtime, as well as on Monday to Saturday evenings, and on Sunday evenings from Easter to September. Specialities on offer include lasagne verdi, chicken curry, calamares salad, smoked salmon and king prawn provençal. There is a tempting selection of various grills, salads and snacks, as well as a range of vegetarian dishes. Families are welcome and will find a children's play area and a beer garden. Well-behaved dogs are also welcome. If you are looking for a bed, the Bear has nine en-suite rooms (including a bridal suite!). Caravan parking is also available with shower and toilet facilities.

The pub is open from 12 noon to 3 pm and 7 pm to 10.30 pm on



Sunday, 11 am to 3 pm and 6 pm to 11 pm on Monday to Friday, and all day (11 am to 11 pm) on Saturday.  
Telephone: 01629 822585.

*How to get there:* Leave the A6 trunk road at Ambergate by Holly Lane (just south of the Hurt Arms Hotel), crossing the river Derwent and climbing steeply. Follow this road for about 2 miles to reach a crossroads. Turn right onto the Wirksworth road and continue for about 1/2 mile. Ye Olde Bear will be seen on your right.

*Parking:* There is a spacious car park for customers.

*Length of the walk:* 4 miles. Maps: OS Landranger 119 Buxton and Matlock, and Outdoor Leisure 24 White Peak (inn GR 314527).

*This walk takes us first through pleasant woodland and over Alderwasley Park to the village itself, passing close by the Hall and church. The round is completed by a circuitous route along field paths and lanes to the Olde Bear. A welcome, if rare, discovery is that all the roads around Alderwasley appear to be prominently identified by name. A great help in describing the route!*

## The Walk

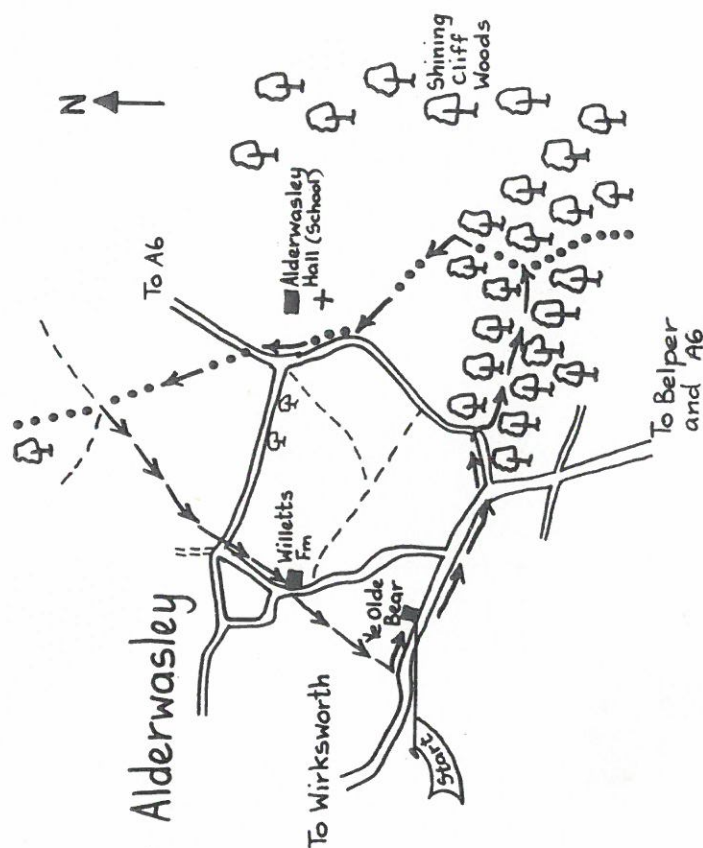
Leaving the pub, turn left and follow Wirksworth Road past Windmill Lane, turning left again on reaching Higg Lane. At Peat Pits (Forest Enterprise woodland), turn right, following the waymarked footpath. This is a delightful woodland walk, although possibly very wet in the lower reaches in the rainy season. There is an alternative, initially gravelled, path along the top end of the woods if the waymarked path is deemed impassable.

On meeting a broader track (T-junction) turn left, joining the Midshires Way.

Keep ahead on this new track through a field gate and continue, with the field wall and the woods on your right.

Passing through a further gate, you emerge into the spacious parkland of Alderwasley Hall, passing initially over open woodland, with birches and bracken – and excellent views ahead over the Derwent valley. A prominent feature across the valley is the long, limestone Crich Cliff, with its war memorial lighthouse.

Bear left with the track and follow it through to the road, close to Alderwasley Hall – nowadays used as a school. Bear right with the road, past the entrance to the Hall and church, continuing up the hill. Pass the end of Chapel Hill and keep on along New Road. Descend the hill (again with Crich Stand prominent a little to your right) and turn left onto the



waymarked footpath. At the end of a length of green track, turn right across the end of the field, pass through a squeezer and continue left, up the field, with the hedge on your left. Continue up a second field, now on the left of the hedge. Go through another squeezer and turn left, leaving the Midshires Way.

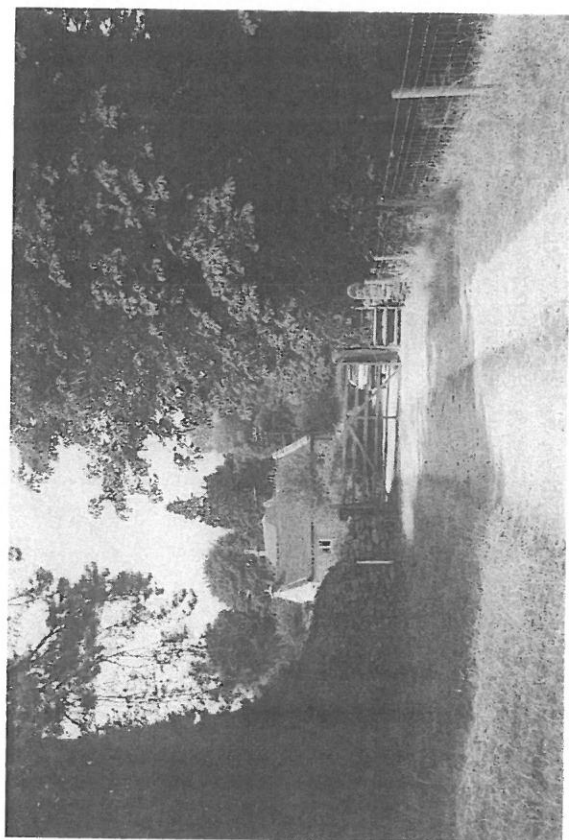
Follow the wall to a stile and cross over, following the wall in the same direction. Bear leftward from the wall in the succeeding fields, heading for a group of farm buildings. Pass to the right of a large barn and reach the road at Bury Hill. Cross over and follow Pendleton Lane to Willetts Farm, continuing ahead up the hill, by field paths, to Wirksworth Road. Turn left, back to base.



## Midshires Way – Alderwasley to Black Rocks (3 1/2 miles)

The pub walk route is followed initially from Alderwasley Hall. Where the Midshires Way and the circular walk part company, the Way turns right instead of left, through a very tight squeezer, then left again, down the field. It bears right down the next field, and left again at the bottom, to reach Watergate Farm. Over the lane by the farm entrance, the Way climbs steeply uphill by field path to Bunting

Wood. After following a track, still uphill, the route branches right along a footpath, passing to the right of Watfield Farm. Then on through woods, descending to cross one small field and reach the Whatstandwell to Wirksworth road. The route continues along the track opposite – Intake Lane. From here to Black Rocks the route corresponds to that of Pub Walk 13 – along Intake Lane to join the High Peak Trail, ascending the steep Sheep Pasture Incline.



*Alderswasley.*