



THE LIVING BARN

by Annie Wallace, age 8,
Manifold CE Academy, Warslow

In the heart of the wild sat a barn,

Watching, waiting.

Once occupied by cows, now home to an owl,

Creaking, whispering.

Miserably looking on

Or is it?

Enjoying the winds company,

Passionately, mouldy.

Hidden in the shadows,

Decrepit but watchful.

Life in the shadows.

Find out more, including poetry and pictures
by Manifold CE Academy schoolchildren at
www.southwestpeak.co.uk

All photos © SWPLP

Walk details:

The purple route walk, taking in B1 to B15 is 7km (4.3 miles). Alternatively, you can make your walk shorter – 6km (3.75 miles) – by following B1 to B8, B16 to B19, then B12 to B15 (which misses out B9 to B11 and the walk up to the trig point). Allow 3 to 4 hours.

Starting point:

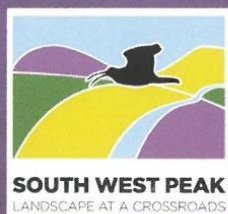
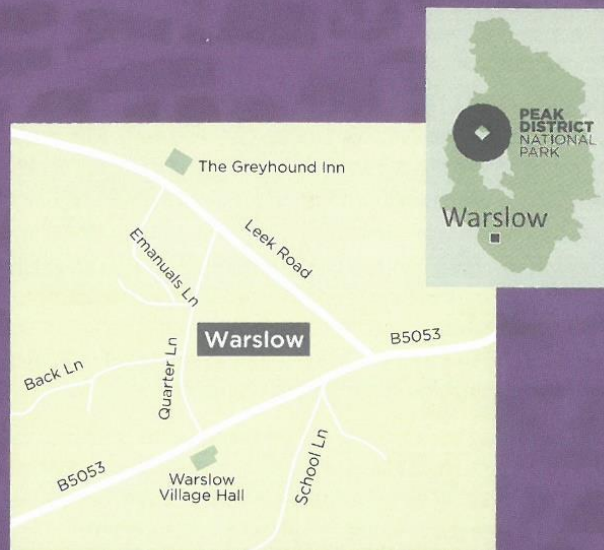
Warslow village hall, Leek Road (this is the B5053), Warslow, Buxton SK17 0JL. OS Grid reference: SK 085 585

Getting there:

The 442 bus service between Ashbourne and Buxton serves Warslow.

Parking and toilets:

Park at the village hall, donations are welcome in the honesty box. Public toilets are accessed via a ramp on the right side of the village hall.



Made possible with

Heritage
Fund

Information for this leaflet was compiled by
South West Peak Landscape Partnership volunteers.

WARSLOW'S FIELD BARN & FORGOTTEN FARMSTEADS

A self-guided trail exploring the
history of farming in the South West Peak



www.southwestpeak.co.uk

Welcome to Warslow

Follow the route, over the page, to step back in time and discover how people used to live and work in the area.

Forgotten Farmsteads

Dispersed settlements and isolated farmsteads are a feature of the South West Peak. Farms and fields developed along with piecemeal enclosure as well as land enclosed through parliamentary acts from the late 17th to 19th centuries. As you follow the walk, you will see how the 'forgotten' farmsteads lie along the original turnpike road, which followed an even older route across the moorland.



Field Barns

Stone built barns in the fields were essential for over 100 years. Most here were built in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Fields at a distance from the farmhouse, and harsh winters, meant that barns were important for milking in, for animals to shelter, and for storing equipment and feed. In the 1950s, with less cheap labour and increased mechanisation, farm buildings became bigger and were centralised on the farm. Many field barns were unused and no longer repaired, yet they remain part of the character of the landscape.

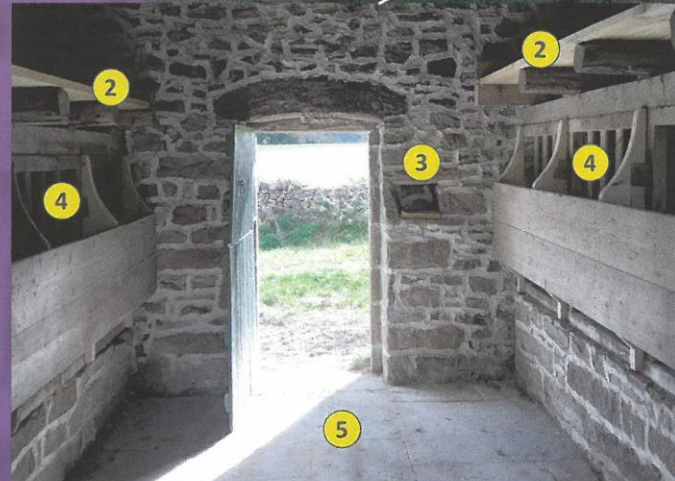


Wildlife

Disused field barns and other buildings have become part of the ecosystem and are now home to a variety of wildlife. Bats, barn owls, tawny owls, little owls, kestrels and swallows use field barns to nest or roost. Holes in walls provide homes or hideaways for small mammals such as voles, mice, stoats and weasels, as well as insects, such as bees. Wildflowers, ferns, mosses and lichens grow on the old walls and provide food for invertebrates, which in turn are food for birds. In spring and summer, you will see wildflower meadows. Much work is done to preserve and restore these. Look for orchids, yellow rattle, knapweed, scabious, eyebright, selfheal, cuckooflower, and oxeye daisies. In autumn, look out for often brightly coloured grassland fungi, some of these fields are nationally important.



THE ANATOMY OF A FIELD BARN



- 1 Pitching hole
- 2 Hayloft
- 3 Niche
- 4 Hay cratches
- 5 Fodderbing (central passage)

- 6 Ratch-stake (wooden post)
- 7 Boskin (stall)
- 8 Standing - raised area for boskins that cattle would stand on
- 9 Groop - lower area behind cows where muck would collect and be taken out the end door

WARSLOW'S FIELD BARNs & FORGOTTEN FARMSTEADS

Advice for walkers:

- The route is muddy all year, varying from wet to very muddy, and it is uneven in places.
- The buildings are private property, and many are in a poor state of repair. For your own safety KEEP OUT! Do not disturb wildlife or livestock.
- The walk is through working farmland. Please respect the Countryside Code: leave no litter, keep dogs on a lead, and if you open a gate, close it after you.

1 Leaving the village hall car park, turn right along the main road. St Lawrence's Church is across the road to your left. Further on, to your right, you will see the 19th century stocks. Carry on and in the field on your right is B1.

B1 Field Barn - This is a small traditional field barn belonging to Pump Farm.

2 Walk along the road until you reach a footpath turning right into a field. Follow the footpath then divert to go straight through the gate in front of you to enter the field with B2 in. Make your way into the yard using the stile, or walk around to enter through the yard gate. You may enter this barn.

B2 Littler's Barn - This is also known as Hobcroft Barn and was repaired by the South West Peak Landscape Partnership in 2021. It is safe to look inside. See the diagram over the page. It has many original features: boskins for cattle, a fodderbing with hay cratches, and even an old horse drawn sledge. Please close the barn doors and yard gate as you leave.

V1 Dale Mine - Across the valley to the southeast are the remains of Dale Mine, an 18th and 19th century lead and zinc mine. In 2019, the South West Peak Landscape Partnership excavated and consolidated the remains of 'ore bins'.

3 Make your way back to the footpath and walk back to the main road. Turn left, cross over the road and take the first right. Walk up the road to the Greyhound Inn. Pass the pub and turn right into Stacey Close. Follow the footpath sign through the gate and bear left. Ahead is B3.

B3 Cattle Market Building - This has existed since 1879. It was part of the Warslow Cattle Market. The livestock sale was on the third Friday of the month, until the 1950s. Farmers walked their cattle from Sheen, Longnor, Onecote and Bottomhouses, and buyers came from further away.

4 Follow the footpath around to the right of B3 and go through a squeeze stile in the middle of the wall on your left. Walk straight across to the squeeze stile opposite and continue along the top edge of the field until you reach the next stile. Go over this stile to a small footbridge and through a squeeze stile to the next field. Keep to the top of field, with hedgerow on your left and stop at the end.

V2 Hills - Behind you is Ecton Hill, the site of old copper mines. To the left are Narrowdale Hill, Gratton Hill and Wolfscote Hill. These hills have Bronze Age barrows on or near their summits.

5 Continue on the footpath with a hedge on your right. Head for a small gate, pass through and follow the footpath sign. Walk down into a small dip and up the other side. Take a small detour to the right and on the brow of the hill look towards Upper Brownhills Farm. Stop when you see B4 in the distance. The field you are standing in is a species-rich hay meadow and supports rare grassland fungi in autumn.

B4 Bank Barn - This is called a bank barn as it is built on slopes and hillsides to provide easy access to the hayloft. Water was supplied for cattle on the ground floor, in this case, from the stream next to it. This barn is still used to store hay.

6 Return to the footpath and continue through a squeeze stile by a metal farm gate. Walk straight ahead to B5.

B5 Ruined Barn - Like many, this has fallen into disrepair due to changes in farming methods and the cost of upkeep. A farmhouse once stood here also, the stones on the ground indicate it existed. Notice the remains of a squeeze stile and drystone wall. Although the building no longer has a practical use for farmers, it is a haven for nature - spot the different lichen growing on the stonework.

7 Keeping the barn to your left, go down the mud track. Pass over the stream and up the slope through a squeeze stile and gate, with the fence now on your right. Continue along the footpath, which leaves the fence, and head diagonally towards a squeeze stile and gate at the far side of the field. Go through the gate and immediately through another, keeping the wall to your right. A little ahead on your right is a private farmhouse and B6.



B6 Yard Barn - This building has been renovated. Barns close to a farmhouse are often more useful today than traditional field barns. You can see the original pitching holes through which the farmer once pitched hay into the loft. A number of doors have been part blocked to make windows.

8 Carry on the footpath and down into a dip. Cross the footbridge and go up the steps on the other side. In the field, head for a squeeze stile and small gate beside the next farmhouse. Go through this and another gate. Immediately after, go through the squeeze stile to the left of the farm gate. Ignore the Hayeshead/Reapmoor sign and continue straight ahead on the footpath to B7.

B7 Hayes Barn - This has been renovated but you can detect its history. A half-blocked doorway is now a window, and another window looks like it was a later insertion. On the opposite side, a door has been fully blocked and the doorjamb on the right removed.

9 With the barn on your right, wall on your left, follow the footpath, then pass through the gate and turn left between parallel walls signposted to Hayeshead. Where the walls end, is B8. Do not enter.

B8 Hayeshead, Linear Farmstead - This is a ruined farmstead. There are unusual limestone door lintels containing crinoid fossils.

10 Carry on the footpath, head through the gateway. Ignore the path to Hayes and continue uphill to the next footpath sign. (At this point, you can shorten the walk by turning left and taking the blue route). Follow the sign to Reapmoor, keeping an old holloway to your left. Follow the holloway/stream channel as it bends and, as you reach the wall, follow the footpath sign and turn right keeping the wall to your left. Pass through a wicket gate by a metal gate and continue until the path intersects a gravel track. Follow the footpath sign to Reapmoor/Revidge. To the right of the track, the remains of B9 are in the field.

B9 Daniel's Field - This is a ruined farmstead, visible in the distance. The family who lived here in the 19th and early 20th centuries supplemented their farming income by making and mending shoes as the local cobblers. We know this from census returns and living memory.

V3 Landscape Differences - From here, looking ahead (north) and to your right (east) you can see the limestone plateau. The irregular shaped fields are earlier than the larger rectangular enclosures. In the distance is Longnor and its fossilised medieval strip fields. Look to your left (west) to see the Revidge ridge where heathland and woodland provide habitat for ground-nesting birds.

11 Continue along the track. At the end, before the gate and cattle grid, turn sharp left, onto a grassy track. Just before the brow of the hill, turn right up some stone steps (which includes an old cheese press base) and meander along the path to the trig point.

V4 South West Peak - The view from the trig point can be panoramic on a good day, with views of Longnor and Chrome Hill to the north, and the Manifold Valley to the south-east.

12 Leaving the trig point behind, go down the slope to re-join the track further on. At the track, turn right and continue through a gate, keeping the wall on your right. Soon you will see B10 and B11 in a field on the right.

B10 and B11 Forkhill ruins - These were once part of an isolated farmstead. B10 was part of the farmhouse. B11 was a small field barn.

V5 Turnpike - The track you are walking on is part of the old turnpike road, dating back to 1770-75. It went from Brierlow Bar, south of Buxton through Butterton Moor End, near Onecote, and onwards.

13 Continue straight on, through a squeeze stile and keep going. In a short distance, just ahead, you will see the remains of B12.

B12 Remains of a small building - Look carefully and you can see the cornerstones. There is no record of it on historic maps.

14 Continue down the footpath to the road. Cross over the road and turn left, then take the footpath to the right through a squeeze stile. As you go down the hill, you will see B13 in the field on the left.

B13 Field Barn - This has had some restoration in the past. You can see where repairs were done to the gable end.

15 Continue down the field, noticing remnant field boundaries and recumbent stone gateposts, until you see a gate in the wall to your left. Go through the gate and across the field, crossing a remnant hawthorn hedge field boundary. Go through a gate on the right leading onto a track. Turn left. Continue past Water Gap Farm and take the concessionary track, on your right, before you reach the road. Walk to the end of the track, you will see B14 on your left. B15 is on the right on the other side of the gate. Stay on the track.

B14 Oils Heath Barn - This is a large field barn with some old farm machinery outside it. Notice the elevator, which lifted bales of hay up to the hayloft.

B15 Oils Heath Outfarm - This has three buildings that have seen many alterations. An outfarm is one or more barns with a yard.

16 Retrace your steps back up the track and turn right at the top towards the road. Stop where the track meets the road.

V6 Manifold Valley - To your right (south-east), are excellent views of the Manifold Valley. You may be able to spot Thor's Cave on the hillside.

17 Continue down the road past the old spring and troughs, on your right, and the old milk churn stand or mounting block, on your left. Pass The Greyhound Inn. Continue then turn right at the Old Post Office onto Quarter Lane. Notice the original sign above the door. Continue on Quarter Lane past more troughs. At the end of the lane is a War Memorial commemorating those fallen in World War I and World War II. Opposite is the village hall where you started.

Blue route: Head along the footpath signposted to Warslow. In front of you are the remains of B16.

B16 Ruined Field Barn - This has large flat stones on top of the long wall. These are the wall plate, which once supported the roof.

18 Continue on the path, through a squeeze stile across a field and through a wicket gate to the left. Go through a second wicket gate and walk along the top edge of the field. B17 is to the left.

B17 Top Barn - Inside, on one side was the shippon where four heifers were tied in winter. Hay was stacked on the floor opposite.

19 Pass through the stile to B18.

B18 Field Barn - This field barn is still in use. Notice the old stone gateposts in their original positions.

20 Continue along the path. At the farmhouse, turn left into the yard. Follow the path around to the right, up the track to Clough Head Cottage. Turn right following the signpost to Revidge. Go through the gate, keeping the wall to your left, until you arrive at B19.

B19 Field Barn - The barn, at Clough Head, once had traditional wooden features. These were removed and replaced with concrete stalls and water troughs in the mid-20th century.

21 Continue past the barn and follow the wall on your right until you reach a wicket gate and squeeze stile. Go through this and the next wicket gate. Continue until you reach a squeeze stile on your left. Here you meet the purple route. Facing the squeeze stile, follow directions from 13).

