

Edges and Ales

LINACRE AND BRAMPTON

An easy 5-mile circular route from peaceful Linacre Reservoir following paths and lanes through woodland and farmland.

Parking

Linacre Reservoir

Real ale pubs en route

- Pubmaster's **Royal Oak Inn** at Riddings
- **George and Dragon** at Old Brampton

Route

A From the bottom of the lowest car park go down the steps into the woods. After about 100yds (91m) turn right along the waymarked bridleway heading westwards, high above the lower reservoir. Ignore the path going off to the left, which goes to the dam of the middle reservoir, but continue on the wide bridleway along the north shore of the middle reservoir.

Although many conifers have been planted here for the protection of the reservoirs, about two thirds of the trees are broad-leaved, mainly sycamore, beech, oak and ash. The remaining third are larch, pine and spruce. Hidden in the woods you may discover the remains of some old Q-holes. These were crudely dug pits of about 5ft (1.5m) diameter where timber was once burnt for use in the smelting of lead ore. This was a widespread practice in the 17th century.



Linacre Reservoir

Take the right fork on a footpath raking up to the top end of the woods, high above the upper reservoir's dam. The path continues westwards, dipping to one of the reservoir's inlets. Cross the bridge and follow a well-defined concessionary footpath along the shoreline.

The word Linacre literally means 'arable land where flax is grown', and there are records from the 13c that linen was made in the valley bottom, where the damp conditions would have been ideal for growing the crop. The middle car park at Linacre covers the site of a medieval hall.

The lower reservoir was the first to be built, in 1855, to respond to the need for clean water in the growing town of Chesterfield. The other two reservoirs, built later, brought the total capacity of the three reservoirs to over 140 million gallons.

On reaching the end of the reservoir ignore the left turn over the Birley Brook footbridge, but head west on the waymarked footpath. This soon leaves the woods via a ladder stile to enter, first scrub woodland, then fields with woods to the left of a wall and gorse bushes to the right.

Cross the stone slab across the brook, then the stile beyond it. A muddy path now climbs through more woods before emerging in fields north of Wigley Hall Farm. It passes to the right of the farm (which dates from the 17c and is Grade II listed) to a tarmac lane in the small hamlet of Wigley. Follow the lane to crossroads. Turn left towards Old Brampton.

B Just beyond the **Royal Oak** pub turn right down a tarmac bridleway, an ancient track called Bagthorpe Lane, following it past Bagthorpe Farm. The lane, now unsurfaced, descends into the valley of the River Hipper, passing through the farmyard of Frith Hall (which has a large medieval cruck barn), down to the river bridge. A winding surfaced track climbs to Westwick Lane, where you should turn left.

Just before Broomhall Farm, descend left on another track down to the river, then up the other side of the valley into Old Brampton.

The straggling village of Old Brampton is dominated by the 'broach' spire of the 14th-century parish Church of St Peter and St Paul. The oak doors came from the chapel of Derwent Hall before it was submerged beneath Ladybower Reservoir. Take a look at the clock - it has 63 minutes painted on its face!

C Turn left along the lane, passing the **George and Dragon** pub and the church, before turning right by the telephone kiosk. The cart track descends to the top edge of Linacre Wood, and then swings to the right.

At a junction of paths turn left through the gate before descending to the dam. At the far side of the dam turn left on the metalled lane, passing the public conveniences and ranger's office and climb back to the car park.

continued overleaf...

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George and Dragon Old Brampton

Award-winning CAMRA pub with four regular beers: Tetley's; Black Sheep Bitter; Caledonian Deuchars IPA and Adnam's Broadside together with a regular guest ale.

Royal Oak Riddings

Food served every day (exc Sun evening and all day Mon), 12.00 noon - 13.30p.m. and 7.00p.m. - 8.30p.m.

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Route 3

PEAK DISTRICT
AND DERBYSHIRE