

# Deep in the Dumbles

*The hidden dells of Lambley's Dumbles  
make Nottingham seem far away.*

**DISTANCE** 6.25 miles (10.1km) **MINIMUM TIME** 3hrs

**ASCENT/GRADIENT** 508ft (155m) ▲▲▲ **LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY** +++

**PATHS** Undulating paths and green lanes, over 20 stiles

**LANDSCAPE** Rolling farmland, pockets of woodland and villages

**SUGGESTED MAP** OS Explorer 260 Nottingham

**START/FINISH** Grid reference: SK 627452

**DOG FRIENDLINESS** Close supervision around livestock, note stiles

**PARKING** Recreation ground car park behind school (opposite  
The Lambley, on Catfoot Lane)

**PUBLIC TOILETS** Floralands Garden Village, 1 mile (1.6km) up Catfoot Lane

**D**umble is a local term for a small wooded dell through which streams have carved out twisting and steep-sided gullies. The main one is simply called Lambley Dumble, and is visited at the end of this walk. From a distance the snaking line of trees and bushes looks like a narrow copse or old field boundary, but often they disguise deep channels filled with gurgling brooks. Lambley is tucked away at the bottom of a small valley surrounded by a rolling patchwork quilt of fields and clumps of woodland. Lambley derives from 'Lambs' Lea' – an enclosure for the grazing of sheep – although much of the surrounding land is now given over to arable production.

Altogether the rural scene laid out before you is one of such total peace and tranquillity that it might come as a bit of a shock to discover that the bustling city of Nottingham is only 8 miles (12.9km) away.

## Cowslip Sunday

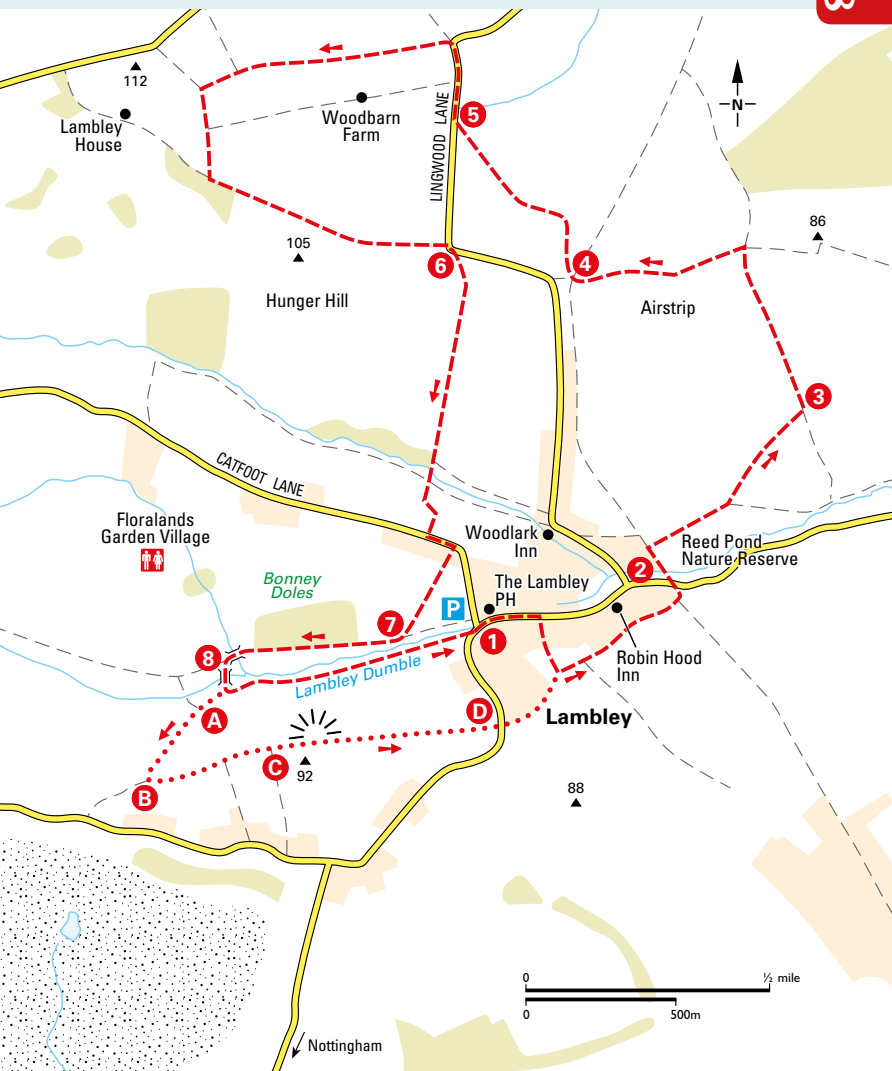
Lambley was once well known in this part of Nottinghamshire because of its wild flowers, and to this day its symbol remains the cowslip. The first Sunday of May was traditionally known as Cowslip Sunday, when crowds would come to the dumbles around Lambley to gather cowslips for wine making. (Incidentally, did you know that many wild and garden flowers – including dandelion, elderflower, marigold, wallflower and rose petals – are still used in country wine making?) Over the years, the Cowslip Sunday gathering grew to become a huge annual event, often attracting thousands of people from the working-class areas of Nottingham. Stalls of food and drink were set up in the main street, and the festivities lasted all day.

Sadly, and rather inevitably, the cowslips themselves didn't last too long, for although the roots may not be disturbed the actual picking of the flowers prevents seeds ripening and scattering, and so the colony does not renew itself. Although they are now protected by law – it is illegal to pick them – the tubular yellow flowers of the cowslip are becoming scarcer still, since the demise of Cowslip Sunday in the mid-1900s was also a result of the increased ploughing of the old pasture where they used to thrive.

## LAMBLEY

## WALK 18

Hope springs eternal, as they say, and to the north of Lambley Dumble, just beyond the playing field, is an example of how the countryside can be changed for the better. With the help of the Woodland Trust, Bonney Doles was planted in a day by local people in December 1998. Apart from the new woods, a large area of traditional meadow has been retained, and it is hoped that, by careful annual mowing, cowslips and other wild flowers will be encouraged to recolonise the area.



### WALK 18 DIRECTIONS

**1** From The Lambley pub, walk down Main Street into the centre of the village. In 220yds (210m) go right for a public footpath between

houses and around the edge of a fenced field. Turn left at the end and go over successive stiles (at the second take the left-hand choice of two) for a path behind houses. Turn left at the end to drop down, cross

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Bonney Doles is one of more than 200 new Community Woods created by the Woodland Trust as part of the Millennium Commission-funded 'Woods on your Doorstep' project. The Woodland Trust is Britain's leading woodland conservation charity, and since 1972 has planted more than five million trees and established nearly 700 new woods.

the road, and enter Reed Pond Nature Reserve.

**2** Veer left to reach the gate in the far left corner. Turn right and out along the bottom of several large fields, cutting across the lower part of the second. Continue around the edge of a copse and when you reach a large sloping field ahead of you, turn left.

**3** Follow the wide track uphill to the left of the hedge. In the far corner of the third field, with a grassy airstrip along its middle, turn left (not the footpath straight on) and walk along the field-edge.

**4** Just before it ends go right and, following the direction of the footpath post (not the bridleway), aim half left across the next field then bear left across pasture. Drop down the hillside, aiming for the stile beyond the wooden enclosure in the far corner by the road.

**5** Turn right and walk along the roadside verge past Woodbarn

## WHILE YOU'RE THERE

A mile (1.6km) up Catfoot Lane is Floralands Garden Village, a vast site that includes specialist camping, aquatic and garden suppliers. There's a well-stocked gift shop at the back of the main garden centre, plus public toilets and the Jasmine Tea Rooms.

Farm to the sharp right-hand bend. Go left across the top of successive fields to reach the wooded track on the far side. Turn left here and stay on this path as it bends left and becomes a wide trail which leads all the way back to the junction with Lingwood Lane.

**6** Turn right, cross a field (aiming half left), then follow the waymarks down through three fields into the woodland at the bottom. Go straight on via a footbridge, left into a field on the far side, then almost immediately right and walk up through a field to the top. Climb the steps and turn left on to the road for 100yds (91m), then go right beside a bungalow to drop down diagonally right across ridged fields to the football pitch.

## WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

There are three pubs in Lambley.

The Woodlark Inn (closed Monday) on Church Street and Robin Hood Inn on Main Street both serve traditional pub food, while The Lambley, at the start of the walk, offers more sophisticated cuisine. There is also the Jasmine Tea Rooms at Floralands Garden Village.

**7** At the far corner continue on a popular (and obvious) path to walk through a newly planted woodland area known as Bonney Doles. Go over a footbridge, turn left, and follow the field-edge to the corner.

**8** Here a short path with a handrail ventures into the bumpy wooded dell for a short way. Ignore this and continue around to cross another footbridge. Turn left and follow the path through the woods, then the field bottom along the south side of Lambley Dumble, eventually turning left on to Spring Lane to return to the car park.

# A Lambley Loop

*Add this extra section for hilltop views back over the Dumbles.*  
See map and information panel for Walk 18

**DISTANCE** 7.75 miles (12.5km) **MINIMUM TIME** 3hrs 30min

**ASCENT/GRADIENT** 623ft (190m) ▲▲▲ **LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY** +++

## WALK 19 DIRECTIONS (Walk 18 option)

Go over the second Lambley Dumble footbridge beyond Point **B**, but instead of turning left for the path back to the village, turn right and follow the path alongside then diagonally left across a rough meadow. Go over a stile (Point **A**) and continue the route uphill through a long, sloping field, aiming just to the left of the brow of the hill ahead.

Cross a second, much shorter field to reach a stile and a pleasant hedged track (Point **B**). Turn left and follow this long and quite narrow thoroughfare for 0.25 mile (400m).

Go across the driveway to a house and continue on the far side, past some more buildings (Point **C**), then go out across the right-hand edge of wide, high fields. There are excellent views down to Lambley Dumble, with its twisting

course along the valley bottom marked by a thin but dense strip of trees. Beyond is the new plantation of Bonney Doles, with the area of shrubs and saplings to the top of the enclosure.

The final field dips down to the road and, as the hedge falls away to the right, walk straight ahead across the middle of the field (aiming for the final house on the road into Lambley). Drop down to the stile that sits in the gap in the hedge at the bottom (Point **D**).

Go across the road for the rough lane opposite, signposted 'public footpath', along the end of a row of back gardens. After 275yds (251m) take the path off to the left, past the fenced field and between houses, that you originally set off from.

Go left on to Main Street to return to the start.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Although the only local industry in Lambley today appears to be agriculture, there was once a flourishing textile business, and many of the former workers' cottages can be seen alongside the brooks and culverts. Records show that although Flemish weavers were present here as far back as the 15th century, it wasn't until the mid-1800s that a boom in framework knitting brought prosperity to Lambley – and at one time there were as many as 381 machines at work in the village. Increasing mechanisation and the rise of the large urban mills and factories eventually sealed the fate of the village businesses.