



## Stage 7 - CONSETT to HEXHAM ABBEY

**Distance** - 26.6km / 16.5 miles

**Explorer maps** - Consett & Derwent Reservoir 307, Hadrian's Wall OL43

**Time** - 7.5 - 8 hours average time based on Naismith's rule

**Total ascent** - 434m

**Total descent** - 569m

**Description** - This is an undulating stage with a mixture of fields and roads to walk on. The route passes through the grounds of the Edwardian house, Slaley Hall and past Shield Hall the former home of Capability Brown the famous landscape artist. Then after a brief section by the Devils Water travel through the village of Ordley which in 1663 was described as "a large towne' of 400 people", on the old pack horse route from Allendale to Hexham. Now just a few houses remain. Just before descending into Hexham pass Queens Letch, thought to be where Queen Margaret was found by the robbers.

1 - From the A691 in Blackhills at the junction of the Cycle 14 / Derwent Walk, turn left down the hill. Just before reaching the Shotley Bridge sign and opposite house No 8 turn left to reach the road. Turn left then right across the river Derwent and then left along the river bank.

2 - After passing a footbridge on the left, turn right before the house passing a wooden fence on the left. In the wood keep left and ignore any paths left or right to reach a field. Turn left and ignore the path over the stream but continue ahead.

3 - Turn left between the two fields and the right with the wood on the left hand side. The path goes through the middle of the field, this is an easier route. Follow the field boundary to the right and bear left towards a derelict building and past a stone gate post on the right.

4 - Bear right to the next field boundary and continue ahead to a footpath junction. Turn left to reach a road then turn right. Take the next footpath left, direction Black Hedley. At the top right hand corner of the field bear right through the metal gate, through the wood and into the next field. In the right corner turn right through the wooden gates and follow the path to the road with Black Hedley on the right.

5 - Turn left and after passing Greenhead Cottage turn right, cross the road and continue ahead and past the farm to reach the A68. Turn right and then left and keep left on the Byway to the road. Turn left and after passing West Minsteracres farm on the right and then keep left where the road bends right. Turn right on Coal Road, marked unsuitable for motor vehicles.



6 - At the end of Coal road where the road forks keep left past West Cornfield Cottage on the right to reach a road. Turn left and after passing Sandy Braes house turn right, direction Slaley 1 mile.

7 - At the road turn left through Slaley to the T-junction. Turn right, direction Hexham 5 miles. Pass the Travellers Rest and where the road bends right keep ahead, direction Shield Hall. Keep right and continue ahead to cross over the river.

8 - Turn right and in Nunsbrough Wood keep left up to the track. Turn left and pass through the group of houses to the road. Turn right and where the road bends right turn left New Biggen Hill, opposite The Mill Barn.

9 - At the end of the wood on the left, turn right signed Hexham and Dipton Mill. Descend the hill to the stream and bear left to keep it on the right. Cross over and pass Dipton Mill on the left. Continue ahead through the wood and across fields and a road to reach the outskirts of Hexham. Turn right down the hill and keep left at the junction to the T-junction in Hexham. Cross straight over and continue ahead, Fore Street to the end. Turn left to reach Hexha Abbey ahead and the end of the stage.

