

Lancashire Walks



Foulridge Tunnel

It is difficult to believe when walking besides the placid waters of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, that it once was one of main arteries of industrial Britain. At 127 miles long, the canal is the longest single canal in Britain, and believe it or not the greater part of it is in ...Lancashire. This walk examines two of its most impressive features. The flight of locks at Barrowford and the 1640 yard tunnel at Foulridge.

Start: Car park Foulridge Wharf. From M65 at Colne, follow directions for A56 Barnoldswick and Skipton. On reaching Foulridge turn left on B6251 following signs for canal wharf. Foulridge Wharf is at the end of Warehouse Lane. The car park is a little way beyond it.

Distance: 11 Km or 7 miles

Time: 2½ - 3 hours

Terrain: After a slight ascent over the course of the tunnel, the walk becomes easier still along the towpath. The return leg crosses fields after a gradual ascent from Barrowford.

1. Foulridge to Barrowford (5 Km or 3 miles: 1 ½ hours)

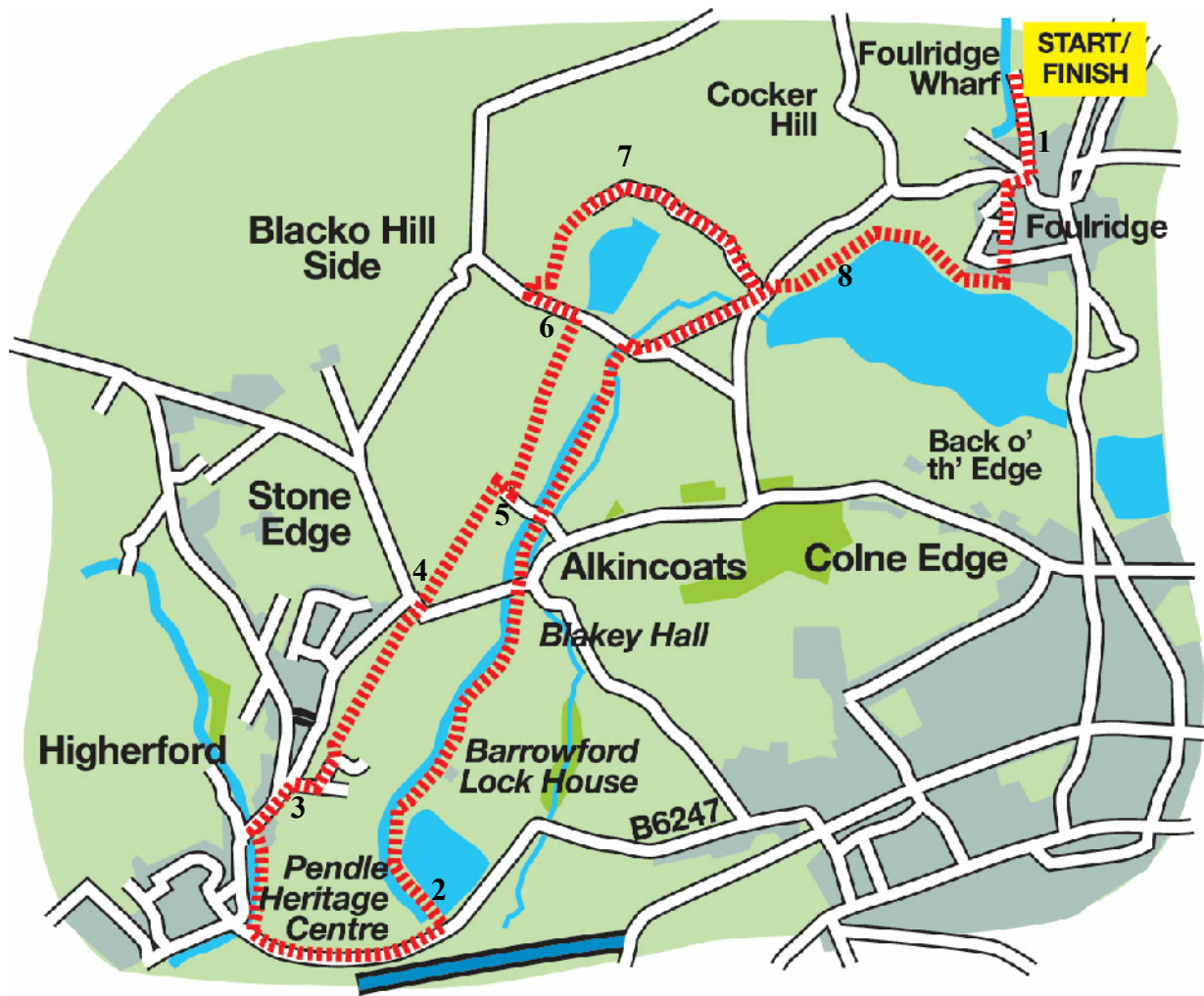
To begin with you'll want to inspect the east end of the tunnel. Walk back along the tow path, past the canal side buildings and it will come into view. **(Pic 1)**

To reach the west end of the tunnel a little more time and effort is required. Make your way into Warehouse Lane and then turn right onto Whitemore Road (B6251). On the opposite side a directional sign will confirm you are on route. Follow it through a modern housing estate on lanes called Waller Hill and Sycamore Rise. A footpath will bring you down by Foulridge Lower Reservoir. Turn right onto a narrow footpath that skirts the shoreline. Follow the footpath to a boathouse, behind which the path drops to a lane. Opposite follow the cycle track towards Burnley. Here you are walking just to the left of the tunnel as an airshaft will soon confirm. Turn right onto the lane at the end and then left. A short way beyond this gate you will arrive at the west entrance. On reaching the tow path follow it down through Barrowford Locks to Colne Road. **(Pic 2)** Here what may impress you most, will be the roar of the motorway. Turn right onto Colne Road and walk down into Barrowford.

2. Barrowford to Foulridge (6 Km or 3¾ miles)

The return route takes a parallel course to the canal and at some points comes quite close to it. It also has a great number of stiles.

From Colne Road turn into the Heritage Centre car park. Here for a short stretch follow the Pendle Way picked up at rear left of the car park. On reaching Gisburn Road turn right. At the next junction fork right towards Barnoldswick and immediately turn right into Francis Avenue. Next turn left into Grange Avenue. At the end of Grange Avenue **(Pic 3)** look for the footpath to the left. Keep on this path as it takes you past a farm on your left, to bring you to a gate leading onto a lane. Cross the lane onto a footpath opposite **(Pic 4)** and then, after crossing another stile continue with a wall on your left to cross a wall and then drop to a stile in a mature hedgerow. You will find yourself on an ancient sunken lane. Turn right towards a farm. Look for a gap opposite a breeze-brick building. **(Pic 5)** Turn left through the gap, and bear right towards a farm yard. Just before reaching it turn left on a narrow path to the right of a barn. Here you will find yourself close to the canal – on your right. Follow the path alongside the wall, past a wooden gate to reach a stone stile in the corner of the field. Beyond this turn left through a gap and continue with the hedge on your right. This will bring you to the rear of some attractive property, the garden of which provides the right of way to bring you to a lane, opposite Slipper Hill Reservoir. Once on the lane, turn left up the hill. **(Pic 6)** Past a tennis court on the right, look for a footpath sign. The route now passes around the tennis court and its adjoining property to continue on a contour above the reservoir. After passing Greenshaw on the left, another sunken lane is reached to bring you to Holly Bush Farm. **(Pic 7)** Follow the farm lane bearing right after the house and descend towards Foulridge Lower Reservoir. **(Pic 8)** Here you will rejoin the outward route. Turn left for Foulridge and the car park.



Map by Chris Wyatt
at The Blackpool Gazette

Pic 1



Pic 2



Pic 3



Pic 4



Pic 5



Pic 6



Pic 7



Pic 8

