

Lancashire Walks



Hoghton

It is said that when James 1st (6th of Scotland) feasted at Hoghton Tower during a royal progress he was so pleased with the side of beef he was served that he knighted the remains "Sir Loin". Whether this tale is true or whether it is just an example of a 17th century marketing ploy put about by butchers, the fact remains that the impressively situated Hoghton Tower provides a superb view on this short walk which passes across its drive.

Start: The route describes a walk from the lay by on the A675. From junction 3 of the M65 turn left, first exit towards Riley Green. The lay by is on the left about 100m from the roundabout. This is far from satisfactory but is unambiguously a place where a car can be parked. More appealing will be the upper parking area near the Boatyard Inn, which is on the right 500m further along. This is generally open during busy weekends during the summer. At other times the lower car park is reserved for customers. Readers are advised to seek permission before leaving their car in this area. If you declare an intention to have refreshment in the pub at the end of the walk it will undoubtedly make matters easier.

Distance: 6 Km or 4 miles

Time: 1½ - 2 hours

Terrain: Mainly easy with descent to River Darwen and a corresponding ascent away from it. The riverside can be quite muddy after wet weather.

Walk along the A675 towards Riley Green. Cross the bridge over the Leeds-Liverpool Canal and then turn right onto the tow-path. **(Pic 1)** Within 100m look for a path on the left **(Pic 2)** and take it as it crosses fields to bring you to the busy A6061 (Riley Green Switch Road). **(Pic 3)** Turn left and then right onto a cinder track leading down towards a handsome property. **(Pic 4)** At the point where the track branches towards the property, go forward through a gate **(Pic 5)** to follow it down the escarpment, through a ribbon of woodland to reach the River Darwen. On reaching the riverside turn left. **(Pic 6)** The path soon enters a gorge as the river tumbles over a weir and beneath imposing railway viaduct of the Preston – Blackburn line. **(Pic 7)** For first visitors to the area this scene will come as a surprise. The path takes you beneath the impressive viaduct and quickly reaches the edge of Hoghton Bottoms. **(Pic 8)** On the aptly named Viaduct Road pass a handsome terrace of mill cottages and after a little over 200m turn left over a stile onto a footpath opposite a three-storey farmhouse. **(Pic 9)** After another stile **(Pic 10)** you will notice a brick igloo, which seems to be a well for the farm below. Higher up where the path forks, take the left branch, which will soon bring you to the railway. Trains pass by with a reasonable degree of frequency on this stretch so take great care crossing it. **(Pic 11)** Through woods opposite you will arrive at the stone boundary wall of the Hoghton Tower estate. **(Pic 12)** Turn right and keep on the path with the wall on your left as it crosses fields with an open aspect. Indeed the views here are extensive and on a clear day you will have no difficulty in picking out Preston North End's Deepdale Stadium and other less hallowed landmarks. After 600m you will come to a stile next to a five-barred gate. **(Pic 13)** The lane will take you past some estate cottages and onto the drive of Hoghton Tower itself. This is one of the most magnificent views in the county. The eye is pulled along and up by the avenue to the castellated outline of the tower. **(Pic 14)** Closer inspection is possible on the numerous days when Hoghton Tower is open to the public. Cross the drive and pass through a metal kissing gate **(Pic 15)** and with the fence on your left follow the track as it leads uphill to a patch of woodland. Cross a stile and after another keep in the same direction to traverse a wide field **(Pic 16)** to gently drop to a stile that places you on Green Lane. This quickly brings you to the Royal Oak at Riley Green. Follow the A675 Bolton Road opposite back to the lay by or the Boatyard Inn.



Map by Chris Wyatt
at the
Blackpool Gazette

Pic 1



Pic 2



Pic 3



Pic 4



Pic 5



Pic 6



Pic 7



Pic 8



Pic 9



Pic 10



Pic 11



Pic 12



Pic 13



Pic 14



Pic 15



Pic 16

