

THE WALK

This section of the Witton Weavers Way may be a little off putting owing to its proximity to the roaring traffic of the M65 motorway at the start and end of the walk. But this should not be a deterrent. By any measure this is a lovely walk – yea even though it passes in the shadow of Lancashire's waste mountain.

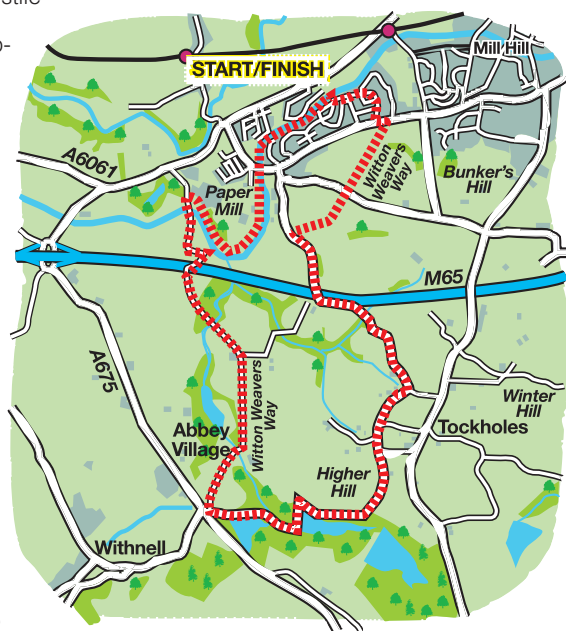
Start: Cherrytree Lane, close to Livesey Library. From Junction 3 of the M65 take the A678 towards Blackburn. After passing below a railway viaduct look for sign on the right pointing to the library.

Directions: Cross the green to join the towpath of the Leeds Liverpool Canal. Turn right and pass under the bridge. There is much to engage interest along this stretch – in particular the waterside properties on the opposite side. Continue along the towpath for 1 mile and then after passing the boundary marker cross a steel bridge. On the far side follow a waymark leading uphill towards the roar of the M65. On reaching a wall turn left and drop past a pylon to a fence on the far side of the field. Here turn right and walk under the motorway. Continue slightly uphill on the edge of a wood cross two fields before turning left into the wood. (To your right looms Lancashire's waste mountain). The path quickly drops down through trees to a footbridge. In the next pasture look for a stile on the skyline above you. Climb the steep embankment in order to cross this. Keep ahead to cross a disused railway by a stone bridge and then turn right for Bradley Farm. Cross its yard and then continue on a farm track that crosses three fields. As you reach the boundary of the third turn right along the hedgerow and then cross a stile on the left. Keep ahead with woodland on your right dropping to a stream. Cross the footbridge and on joining the track on the far side turn right. Follow the track as it leads you into Abbey Village.

As you approach the village turn left onto a service road that leads you besides a reservoir. Just before a house turn left onto a footpath and then cross or ford the stream. Bear right onto a broad track. This leads down to the end of a second reservoir. Turn left and cross the dam end. Still on the track follow it into woodland. After 600m look for a waymark post on the left. Follow it left to the edge of the woods. After a kissing gate begin to climb the pasture to reach a field wall corner. Cross a paddock onto a lane. Turn right and at the junction left. Now in Tockholes bear left at the next junction and then left at the end of a terrace onto a track leading downhill. This passes the ancient pinfold on your right to reach Chapels Lane. Follow this as it passes two chapels to the edge of a housing estate. Here take a footpath on the right. At the next stile turn left cross



Reelers on their trail



it and drop gently down hill. Bear right following the field boundary and then cross a stile and turn left. Now in a large field continue with a hedge on your left. After a stile enter woodland and follow the path to a wooden bridge. Cross it and then the stile after. By now it will be apparent you are very close to the M65. Walk towards it and then as you reach its retaining fence turn left over a ladder

FACTFILE

Distance: 12k 7 ½ miles

Time: 3 – 4 hours

Summary: Easy, with a couple of short sharp ascents

Map: OS Explorer: west Pennine Moors

stile. Walk downhill and when you reach the lane at the end turn right beneath the motorway. Continue for 400m and turn right into the drive of farm. As you approach the building bear left onto a track. Where this bends to the right turn left and cross the meadow. Locate a stile to the right of the farm, cross it and after edging around the property follow a drive to the road. Cross this to another footpath. This takes you past a farm on your left. Beyond it take a track to the right of a hedge that leads down to Livesey Branch Road. Turn left and then right into Pinewood. Now in a residential area keep on Pinewood until after Burford Close then turn right onto a footpath that will take you across the canal to the library.

Walk devised by John Griffiths and Bob Clare. Hit www.lancashirewalks.com for more walks exploring the diversity of the Lancashire countryside.



NATUREWATCH

with Liam Creedon

Hollywood stars Matt Damon and Scarlett Johansson do it. Pint-sized funny man Ronnie Corbett certainly does it. MP Vince Cable has launched campaigns about doing it. Even mop-haired frontman Liam Gallagher is rumoured to be thinking about doing it.

This bunch share the honour of indulging in apiary, or beekeeping as it is more commonly known, a tradition dating back 5,000 years. The humble honey bee is dying out in increasingly alarming numbers, however, despite doom-laden prophecies, help may be at hand from an unlikely source, for British beekeeping is undergoing a renaissance. Formerly a pastime reserved for slightly eccentric, sandal-wearing gentlemen of advancing years, the hobby is unexpectedly catching on with a younger audience.

The British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) has reported a membership surge of 40 per cent over the past two years, reversing a historic decline since the Second World War. At first glance it seems an extremely odd way to pass the day. Bees, by their nature, sting. Beekeepers get stung – a lot. As pets go, the honey bee can be seen as rather limited. You can't take them for a walk or stroke them and they don't, as a rule, respond well to a game of catch in the park! But Christine Gray from the BBKA explains that beekeeping is the ultimate stress buster. She says: "So many people have become aware of the plight of the honey bee and how dependent we all are on it. One in three mouthfuls of what we eat is dependent on pollination and the countryside would look very bleak without bees to pollinate the hedgerow flowers which in turn produce the berries the birds eat. People see beekeeping as a hobby that brings them closer to nature. It lets them switch off completely. When you're handling a hive of 50,000 bees, you have to be gentle, concentrate and have your mobile switched off!"