

BRIDGEND HERITAGE TRAILS, BOLLINGTON

Circular walks that explore the local countryside and bring Bollington's past to life



TRAIL NO. 4 REVOLVING IN TIME

Compare life and work in the mill and on the farm as you follow the River Dean past remnants of the Industrial Revolution to reach the countryside.

Younger walkers! Follow the trail of sheep and tease some answers in our 'Sheep' quiz!

4.5 miles (with short cut, about 4 miles)

Difficulty: Moderately easy with occasional short ascents

www.bridgendcentre.org.uk



Bridgend Heritage Trails

The Bridgend Centre has created eight circular local walks that explore how industry, transport and farming have shaped the fascinating heritage of Bollington, with local people bringing the trails to life in their own words.

Walking with kids? The trails have special interests for younger walkers with markers to follow and surprises to uncover on the way. **Plus there's a kids' quiz for each trail to add to the fun! Download it yourself or pick one up at the Bridgend Centre...**

All the walks start and end at the Bridgend Centre, 104, Palmerston Street, Bollington, Cheshire SK10 5PW. Open Mon-Fri 10-4.30, Sat 10-1.

Parking: Pool Bank car park on Palmerston Street just along from the Centre.

Toilets are available at the Bridgend Centre.

Recommended map: OS Explorer 268.

Although we aim to be accurate, be aware that things can change, structures become wobbly and surfaces slippery. Make your own judgements, stay safe and be prepared!

The Bridgend Centre

The Bridgend Centre is a local, independent charity, playing an active role at the heart of the Bollington community. We offer many services and activities that help to promote quality of life for everyone.

Our range of walking activities and information provide a great opportunity for people to exercise in the great outdoors, which has been demonstrated to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Find out more at www.bridgendcentre.org.uk

Drop in after your walk for tea and cake, or a browse in our Aladdin's den of a charity shop...

Revolving in time

A 4 mile circular walk following the River Dean to Rainow and returning through farmland, starting and ending at the Bridgend Centre.



Follow the sheep markers.

The fourth of the Bridgend Heritage Trails takes you back to the Industrial Revolution with an insight into the lives of mill workers and farm labourers beyond who helped to create the landscape that surrounds Bollington today. Find out about the people who trod the ancient packhorse trails and stone slab paths which have echoed the ring of hooves and the clatter of clogs over the centuries.

'Some say Rainowlow is the oldest part of Rainow. The walled section of the path would have been a Packhorse Trail for local traffic, linking Rainowlow with Bollington by way of Oakenbank.'

Younger walkers! Follow the trail of sheep, and look out and listen for all sorts of animals along the way. Plus there's a 'Sheep' Quiz to get you thinking as you go ... Download it yourself or pick one up at the Bridgend Centre.



With thanks to The Hobson Trust.

Photographs courtesy of the Bollington Photo Archive



Bridgend Centre to the waterfall

With your back to the Bridgend Centre, turn right along Palmerston Street to a mini-roundabout. Turn right into Church Street and pass St Johns Parish Church. Walk to the bend in the road. (Higher Mill, then later Shrigley Dyers, were both sited where the new houses are now.)

At Lowerhouse Mill, instead of having an Apprentice House, Greg farmed the children out to the workers – “You’ve got a job here, but you’ve got to have one or two children as well!” So they had to adopt them. In a way it was a marvellous idea. Those youngsters were now part of a family for probably the first time ever.’

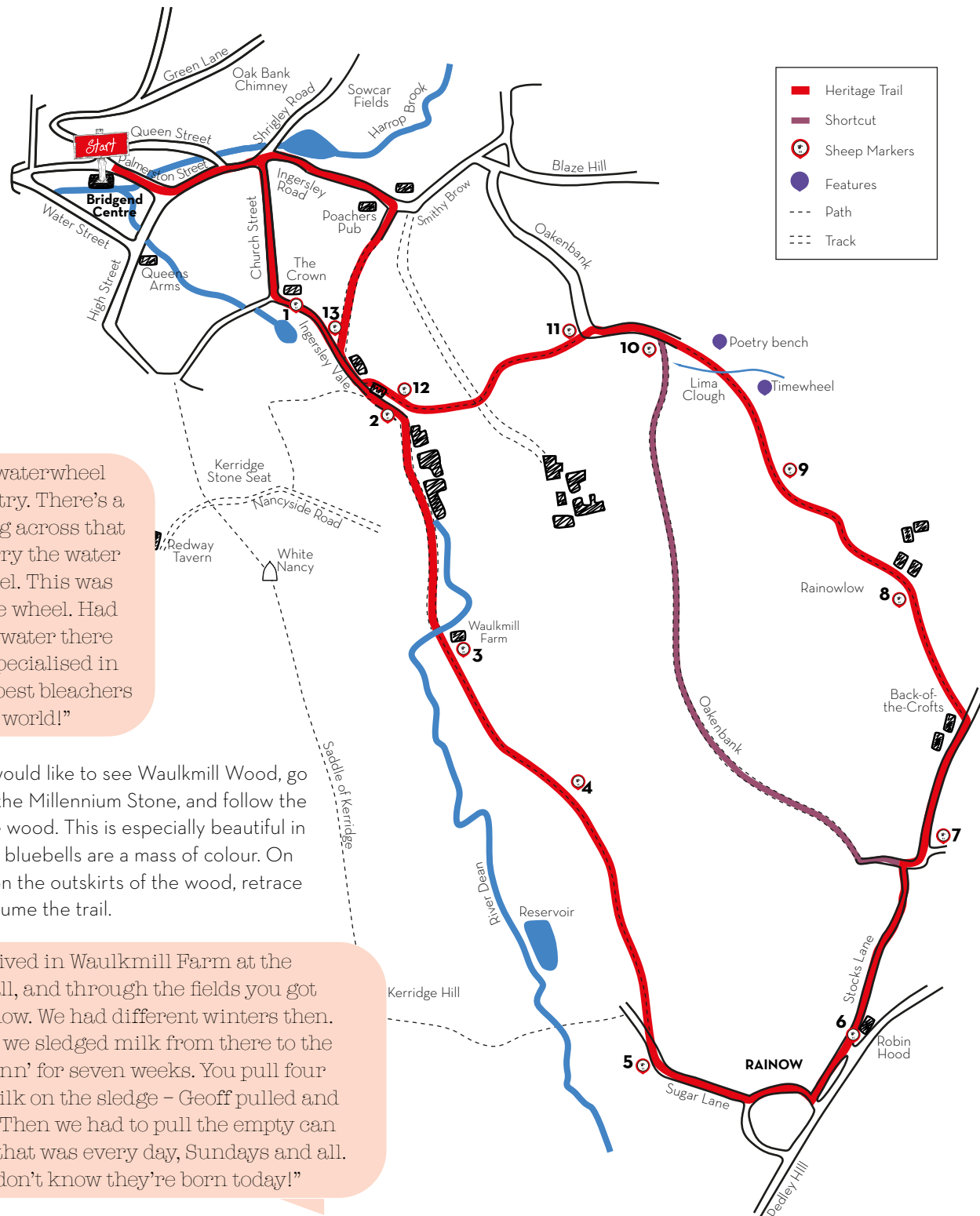


Turn left by the ‘Crown Inn’ ① passing Higher Mill pool and walk along Ingersley Vale. Carry on past Rainow Mill cottages on your left to enter Rainow. Follow the track upwards ②, past the wheelhousing of Ingersley Vale Mill and then curve up to Waulkmill Farm and waterfall.

“Biggest waterwheel in the country. There’s a bridge going across that used to carry the water to the wheel. This was to drive the wheel. Had very good water there and they specialised in calico – the best bleachers in the world!”

Detour – If you would like to see Waulkmill Wood, go up the steps by the Millennium Stone, and follow the path through the wood. This is especially beautiful in spring, when the bluebells are a mass of colour. On reaching a stile on the outskirts of the wood, retrace your steps to resume the trail.

“We lived in Waulkmill Farm at the waterfall, and through the fields you got into Rainow. We had different winters then. One year we sledged milk from there to the ‘Crown inn’ for seven weeks. You pull four cans of milk on the sledge – Geoff pulled and I pushed. Then we had to pull the empty can back, and that was every day, Sundays and all. They don’t know they’re born today!”



Waulkmill Farm to Rainow

At the waterfall, walk through the gap next to a gate and through the gate by a stone wall ③. You will now be crossing several fields on a path of stone flags.

“The flagged path was not called a ‘Bridleway’ but a ‘Bridal Way’! Before the church was built in Bollington the brides had to walk to Rainow Church to get married”

Walking for approximately half a mile parallel to Kerridge Ridge, cross three squeeze stiles ④, with Rainow Church visible in the distance depending on the season, before descending to a kissing gate, which leads on to a track.



‘Rainow Church isn’t due East and West as churches usually are. When you normally look down the nave to an altar, you look East. Graves are also laid out in the same direction, so that on the day of resurrection you face the sun, so it’s very unusual for Rainow Church not to be so aligned.’

The garden on the right is laid out to depict ‘Pilgrims Progress’. Follow the track down, over a stream and up stone steps, through a squeeze stile to a ginnel along the back of several houses and emerge on Sugar Lane ⑤, turn left.

‘Along Sugar Lane to the right and down a track, are the remains of Hough Hole Cotton Mill, or ‘The White Shop’. It was built by James Mellor, farmer and builder, in 1803. Mellor and his four sons were extremely inventive and, in 1868, a three-wheeled steam road engine, made at the works, took fifteen passengers from Rainow, via Winkle to Macclesfield and home, terrifying innocent passers-by in the process!’

Following to a T-junction turn left into Chapel Lane, climb to the top and turn left into Stocks Lane. Directly ahead, ⑥ a well-earned rest can be taken at the ‘Robin Hood’, a hostelry that has quenched the thirst of Rainow inhabitants and travellers since the 18th Century.

Continue forward on Stocks Lane looking left to beautiful views across fields to Kerridge Ridge. At the grass triangle, the ancient track of Oakenbank leads off left, winding over the fields to Bollington. This short cut follows the track and re-joins the main route description at marker 10.

Back-o-th-Crofts to Rainowlow

Take the right fork here into a lane and climb up the hill to reach ‘Back-o-th-Crofts’. Continue past Back-o-th-Crofts Farm entrance, up steps to a gate ⑦ at the back of the barn, and walk diagonally across the field to a kissing gate in the wall. Bearing left, the path curves round the side of Big Low. Bollington can be seen gradually emerging, nestling between White Nancy and Nab Hill.

‘It always makes people laugh because the hill behind Big Low was known as ‘Buggas’ Knob’! ‘Bug’ means ghost in Anglo-Saxon and the reason it was called that is because it is the site of a Bronze Age barrow, and the locals thought it was haunted.’

Looking over the Cheshire Plain on a clear day, Fiddlers Ferry Power Station near Liverpool can be seen, with the Welsh Hills in the distance to the left. Go through a kissing gate and follow the path as it descends towards the tiny hamlet of Rainowlow.




Go through a squeeze stile at the side of a gate, and turn immediately left down steep stone steps ⑧ onto a footpath. Descending, the track is now walled on both sides and passes straight through two wooden gates of a farm enclosure adjacent to the farmyard.


Cross the stone stile at the bottom and continue forward, with a wall then a hedge and then a wall again on your right, following the right-hand path at the marker. Drop down to a stile by two gates ⑨ with a stream on the left. Continue forward and cross a stream coming in from the right. This is a lovely picnic spot.

‘We had to plough land in the war; most of the food came from the farm. I used to make butter – I had a glass churn. I used to skim the cream off the milk for us.’



Immediately bear left, passing a little waterfall, and carry on with the stream on your right. Ford the stream at the massive stone slabs, and walking forward, with the stream on your left, turn left onto a track. Crossing a stile  10 at the left of a gate, bear right onto Oakenbank, the ancient track mentioned previously. The short cut joins from the left at this point.



‘My Auntie was the unofficial midwife of the area, so I was born at my Mother’s sisters. Then we went to Oakenbank, to Father’s parents – 3 years of my life. Water supply for washing etc. was drawn from the stream opposite, but drinking water – you had to walk for it. Pipe coming out of the wall with constant supply of water, so it had not been contaminated by running on the surface.’

Continue along the road until it bears sharply to the right. Ignoring the first stile on the left, go over the stone stile to the right of the gate. You now proceed forward and through a kissing gate  11 to enter the grounds of Savio House, now a Salesian retreat. Originally this was called Ingersley Hall and home to the Gaskell family.

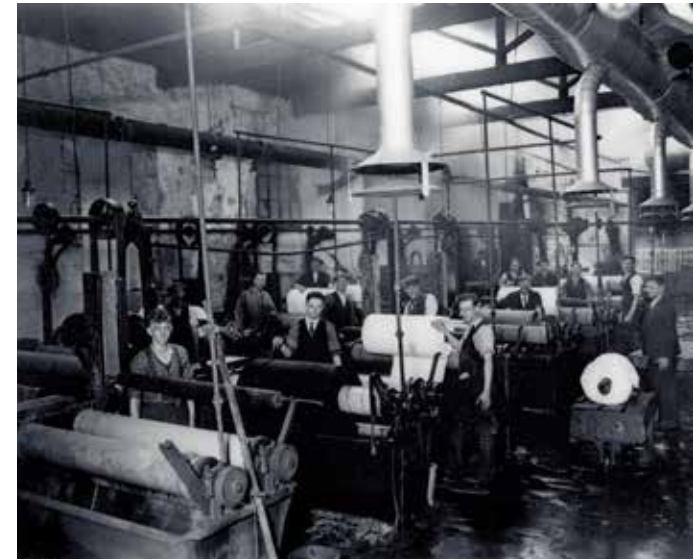
‘In the 1930’s, John Cooper, a farmer of Rainowlow, was seeing to his cattle early one morning, when he spotted a blaze two miles away. He dashed across fields through a rainstorm to raise the alarm, but Ingersley Hall. For generations the home of the Gaskell family, who built ‘White Nancy‘ was gutted by fire anyway!’

The footpath leads across a field, and over the main drive to Savio House via two further gates.

Through Ingersley Vale to Mill Lane

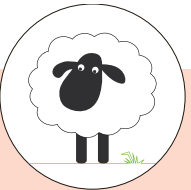
Continue diagonally right over another field, to a finger post under mature trees  12 and down steps leading to a dirt path. Always keeping left eventually more steep steps down bring you to the back of Rainow Mill Cottages. Follow right past the front of the cottages  13 onto the dirt track of Mill Lane to emerge at ‘The Poachers’.

‘Mill Lane was a thoroughfare for the mill workers to and from the mills along Ingersley Vale. It’s probably the site of an ancient Salt Trail.’



Turn left into Ingerlsey Road and upon reaching the mini roundabout retrace your steps along Palmerston Street to the Bridgend Centre. ■

Be aware that the waymarkers placed in the landscape may be subject to unknown forces such as the weather, groundwork and vandals. Treat the map and directions as your primary guide!



And that’s it! We hope you enjoyed your taster of the people and places that have made Bollington what it is today.

Don’t forget to check out our other Bridgend Heritage Trails!

Walking with kids? All the walks have a specially designed kids quiz that you can download yourself or pick up from the Bridgend Centre.