

**i** Marsden Library and Information Centre  
 Marsden Mechanics Hall  
 Peel Street  
 Marsden  
 HD7 6BW



Email- [marsden.walkersarewelcome@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:marsden.walkersarewelcome@yahoo.co.uk)  
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**All walks start and finish at:**  
 Platform 3  
 Marsden Railway Station  
 Station Road  
 Marsden  
 HD7 6AX



The weather in Marsden can be cold and unpredictable on high ground even in summer.

Always wear suitable clothing, footwear and take **OL1 and OL21 OS maps**.

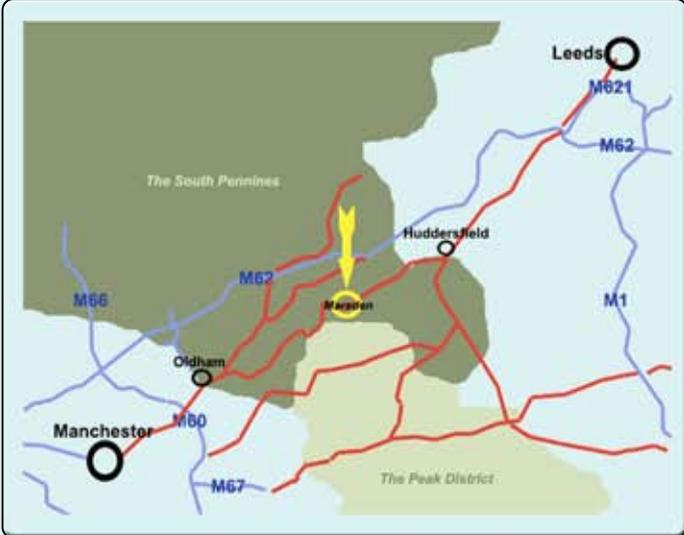
The route is along public rights of way. Report problems to- [highways.ross@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:highways.ross@kirklees.gov.uk)

This leaflet has been produced with the help of the Marsden History Group.  
 Visit- [www.marsdenhistory.co.uk](http://www.marsdenhistory.co.uk)

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 38/40a Peel Street  
 Marsden  
 HD7 6BW

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**Full historical notes available from our website.**



# Marsden Walkers Are Welcome



## Swellands

This 6.5 mile/ 10.5 Km walk will take you from the Marsden centre into the scenic Wessenden Valley, containing ancient woodlands and deep upland reservoirs, then onto sections of the Pennine Way and Standedge Trail close to the watershed and above Swellands Reservoir. This walk contains some sustained ascents, descents and rough terrain.

### Important information for visitors

#### Country Code Note

- Take your litter home.
- Close gates behind you.
- Keep dogs under close control at ALL times.

Marsden Walkers Are Welcome ©2012

## Swellands Route Description and Historical Notes

6.5 miles/ 10.5 Km (Page 2)



**WARNING** Part of this walk is on open moorland paths and there are some steep rugged sections.



From the **Railway Station**, go down Station Road towards the village centre. At the junction take the right fork and cross the bridge over the river onto Church Lane with the church on your right. Leave the road as it bends up to the right and bear left along the road between the houses opposite. Pass the Old Cobblers on your left, cross the river and continue under the road bridge to your right. Join Fall Lane and continue away from Marsden to the roundabout.

*On your left is the ground of Marsden Football Club (the cricket field until 1921 when Marsden Cricket Club moved up to Hemplow). On your right is the site of Fall Lane Mills, which burned down in 1984. A woollen mill, with millpond, was in existence since at least 1801, called, in 1852, Kiln Croft mill. Just before the roundabout you can see its millpond over the wall.*

*The roundabout was previously the turning circle for trolley buses from Huddersfield to Marsden. As you reach it, note the route of the "Second" Wakefield to Austerlands Turnpike road, which ran along Carrs Road on your left to Mount Road on your right, thus bypassing the centre of Marsden. 50 metres along the Marsden side of Carrs Road stands the former Old New Inn, which closed as a pub in 2010: originally the New Inn, it became the "Old New Inn" when another New Inn was built on the "Third" Turnpike, the A62. Opposite it, formerly, stood the large iron foundry and boiler works built by the Taylor family. Enoch Taylor and his brother James were originally blacksmiths who manufactured the shearing frames hated by the Luddites. The foundry later became a rag mill operated by Crowther and Sons, and was demolished to make way for modern housing.*

### **A Take the road across the roundabout; Binn Road.**

*At the bottom of Binn Road, notice the entrance to Bank Bottom Mills on your right. Near the roundabout stood the former Ottiwells Mill, run from 1805 or earlier by William Horsfall. He installed shearing frames to finish woollen cloth; the Yorkshire Luddites in 1812 were bent on destroying these frames, which were putting hand-croppers out of work. William Horsfall fortified his mill, which was also defended by the militia, and proclaimed that he "would ride up to his saddle girth in Luddites blood". On 28th April, he was shot dead in an ambush at Crossland Moor as he rode from Huddersfield to Marsden; three Luddites were hanged for the murder after the trial at York in January 1813 which marked the end of the uprising. Ottiwells Mill passed into the hands of William Kinder, and was eventually demolished, although the associated Ottiwells House was still there in 1894.*

*A little further up you will see on your right the former Equitable Co-operative Society building, which was used as a Youth Hostel from 1974-1983. To its right is a cobbled lane, providing a short diversion for a closer view of Bank Bottom Mills, which were established in 1867 by John Crowther and Sons. In 1936 the mill covered 14 acres, used 680 looms and 43 carding machines, and employed 1900 people. There was a big fire in 1909; but Bank Bottom continued in business until it closed in 2003.*

*As you continue, note the streets of good stone terraced housing, built circa 1901-1911 by the Crowther firm to house mill workers.*

### **Continue to climb up Binn Road. 180m after the last housing on your right you pass many steps leading down the damside back to Marsden.**

*From here you can see the former sites of two early woollen mills. Upper Bank Bottom Mill ("Th'Top Bonk") was in existence by 1801; it was demolished in 1891 during construction of Butterley Reservoir, and its site lies under the far end of the embankment. Lower Bank Bottom Mill ("Bottom Bonk") lay just beyond the bottom of the steps; it was built in 1801 by Messrs Whitehead of Well Lane, worked for nearly a century as a woollen mill, used as a store-house during reservoir construction and finally demolished in 1913. Both mills took waterpower from the Wessenden Brook and had milldams. If you divert a little way down the steps, you will find a stone tenter post on the bank to your right; tenter posts were used for stretching and drying milled cloth.*

### **B Take the wide track ahead on the right, and continue along it beside Butterley Reservoir passing the spectacular listed spillway, comparable with the Chatsworth House Cascade.**

*The construction of reservoirs at the beginning of the 20th century changed the entire landscape of the Wessenden valley. Look at Butterley Reservoir and imagine beneath it the Wessenden valley, its pastures and farms – several of which (Booth, Row and Hole Top) were demolished to make way for the reservoir. Completed in 1906, the reservoir took 15 years to build because of geological problems. It holds 403 million gallons.*

*Pause a little way along to look across at Butterley Clough which feeds the reservoir. Long before the reservoir was built, there was a disaster when, early in the morning of 29th November 1810, Black Moss Reservoir high on the moor above burst its banks. The "Black Flood" rushed down Butterley Clough, inundated the house of the miller at Bank Bottom, and swept his wife out of the window to her death. The wife and four children of James Schofield also died when their cottage was flooded. You will pass you will pass the reservoir later on the walk.*

## Swellands Route Description and Historical Notes

### 6.5 miles/ 10.5 Km (Page 3)

*Along the track, you pass the "Still Life" sculpture by Joss Smith on the left. A Kirklees Way waymark, it brings together the themes of stone, water and cloth which define the history of this area.*

**C Continue to Blakeley Reservoir. 50m past the embankment pass through a gate to your right and down a track beside the reservoir.**

*Blakeley Reservoir, like the other reservoirs in the Wessenden Valley, was constructed to supply water to Huddersfield; completed in 1903-4, it holds 80 million gallons.*

**D Continue on the path until it turns to the right and crosses a bridge. Climb a very steep rugged path, and on reaching the stone structure at the top, turn right past the Marsden Moor Heritage Trail marker, and follow the path as it passes above a deep valley to your right.**

*Pause by the stone structure. You can see Wessenden Lodge, built around 1891 as a shooting lodge. In the first half of the twentieth century teas were served here, and it was a popular destination for walking parties, who would sometimes continue up the track to the Isle of Skye Inn (now demolished) on the Holmfirth to Saddleworth road. To the left of the lodge are the ruins of a farm, originally called "Hay Green."*

*In 1881 there was a navvies' camp at Wessenden, complete with a police officer to keep order. The navvies were working on Wessenden Head Reservoir, out of sight at the top of the valley and completed later that year. You can see Wessenden Reservoir. The original reservoir, in existence by 1801, was built by mill-owners to feed the mills at Bank Bottom. By the Wessenden Act of 1836, the Wessenden Commissioners were constituted and empowered to make and maintain a much larger reservoir with a capacity of 107 million gallons. It was purchased by Huddersfield Corporation in 1890.*

**E The path crosses a stream, and climbs a steep stepped slope. Continue on this mainly flagged moorland path upward for about 1.2Km with the stream on your left. Arrive at the Black Moss and Swellands Reservoirs.**

*The moors here were traditionally used for sheep grazing; they were too far from Marsden to be convenient for pasturing cows, which needed milking during their summer grazing on the moors. From the latter half of the 19th century they were also let for shooting grouse.*

*To your left is Black Moss Reservoir, constructed in 1806 to feed the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. On your right is Swellands Reservoir; it was first proposed by Telford in 1807, when the existing reservoirs feeding the canal were found to be inadequate, but was not started until 1820. Research based on original sources shows that it was almost certainly the bursting of Black Moss reservoir (then called Diggle Moss reservoir) which in 1810 caused the "Black Flood."*

**F Cross the small bridge and the embankment. Turn left and soon pass through a large wooden gate. After 50m turn right up a flagged path to a kissing-gate. Continue, pass through another kissing-gate; as you descend you reach a standing stone and signpost.**

*Pause here to inspect the view. To the north lies Redbrook Reservoir, built to feed the Huddersfield Narrow Canal via Red Brook and Tunnel End Reservoir. It was also used to operate a water-balance engine, to bring up spoil during construction of the canal and railway tunnels which lie deep beneath you, on their route from Marsden to Diggle.*

*Across the reservoir, you can see The Great Western pub on the A62: it may have been named after the Great Western ship, built by Isembard Kingdom Brunel in 1838. Censuses show that there was an inn at Redbrook from 1841 or earlier; however, the name Great Western does not appear until 1861. Alternatively the name may derive from the Great Western railway; navvies from the Great Western may have subsequently worked on the Standedge railway tunnel, completed in 1849.*

**G Do not continue on the path to your left, but go down and climb across the stream. Your route lies along the raised causeway to your right. signed to Marsden. Pass a pond on your right, then through a cutting, and over a conduit which goes under the path.**

## Swellands Route Description and Historical Notes 6.5miles/ 10.5 Km (Page 4)

*The well-constructed causeway you are on was part of the “Second” Wakefield to Austerlands Turnpike road. The evidence is scanty, but this section may possibly have been completed around 1815. It was used until the “Third” Turnpike (A62) was completed in 1839.*

*To your north lies Pule Hill, where Bronze Age burial urns were found in 1895 – they can be seen in the Tolson Museum in Huddersfield. The Chester to York Roman road passed across the lower stretches of the hillside you can see, towards a signal station on Worlow (the rise on the right above a quarry), where a turf rampart, Roman pottery, beads, nails etc have been excavated.*

**H 1Km after the signpost turn left on a broad path and drop down to ford a stream. Turn right, cross a bridge over another stream, and climb up a broad path to the road.**

*As you cross the second stream examine the structure of the old stone bridge. In 1852 a house called “Old Bridge House” stood here.*

**Turn right along the road for 140m to reach a junction with a road on your left.**

*The road you are on follows approximately the route of the “First” Turnpike, constructed by John Metcalfe around 1759, although exact dating is difficult. A little before the road junction, by the Heritage Trail board, the “Second” Turnpike formerly crossed the stream, but is now broken by the stream and clough.*

*At the junction, the route of the “Second” Turnpike follows the main road, Mount Road, down to Marsden; this section, which descends to bridge Wessenden Brook just before Fall Lane roundabout, was designed to provide a gentler gradient on the climb up from Marsden. The junction is called Mount Bar, and in the past there will have been a bar across the road for collecting tolls from passing traffic. A short way down Mount Road, on the left, stood a pub, “The Old Moorcock”, now demolished.*

**I Take the road to the left (Old Mount Road) After 50m take the broad track which leads off to the left towards Hades Farm. Continue along the track for about 750m.**

*Old Mount Road follows the route of the “First” Turnpike. As you pass along the track, take in the fine views of Butterley Reservoir and, behind it, the old hillside settlement of Binn, against the backdrop of Deer Hill and West Nab. Immediately below you lies the golf course and sports complex at Hemplow, donated to Marsden in 1921 by mill owner John Edward Crowther.*

**J Reach a stone barn on your right, take the path on your right leading downhill. When you come to a wall corner 50m after the barn, take the right fork, and descend to pass a house (Green Top with date 1671) on the left, and join Old Mount Road.**

*Green Top was the home of Mary Firth, who died in 1784 aged 111. She is said to have subsisted for the last ten years of her life on alms begged from coach passengers while the coach horses rested after the steep climb up from Marsden. Note the moulded footstones on the gable, and the ground-floor double-chamfered mullioned windows, with continuous drip moulding above and the motifs IMM at one end and 1671 at the other.*

## Swellands Route Description and Historical Notes

### 6.5 miles/ 10.5 Km (Page 5)

**K Turn left down Old Mount Road. Continue down the road for 900m to the A62 Manchester Road.**

*As you drop down this last section, you will appreciate why it was deemed necessary to provide a less steep alternative to the “First” Turnpike! To help horses grip the road it was previously paved with stone setts. On your right, notice Wood Top, a fine long terrace of workers’ cottages. It is nicknamed “Titanic Row” as it was built in 1911, the year the Titanic was launched.*

*Just a little above Wood Top, the Reservoir Railway crossed the road, on its way around the shoulder of Pule Hill, taking clay from railway sidings at Tunnel End to Butterley and Blakeley reservoirs. The clay, which was imported from Micklethwaite in Saddleworth, was needed to seal the reservoir dams. The railway is shown on the 1904 O.S. Map, but there are now few traces of it left.*

*As you reach the A62, notice the old houses at Throstle Nest on your left. The “foundlers”, London workhouse children brought to Marsden to work in the cotton mills at the beginning of the 19th century, lived at Throstle Nest, either in this building or in one nearby. Behind it stood the former National School (1856-1960).*

*This walk has given you the opportunity to understand some of the ways in which road transport has crossed the Pennines between Yorkshire and Lancashire. The A62 is the “Third” Wakefield to Austerlands Turnpike road; this well-engineered section, which takes a different route around Pule Hill to its predecessors, was completed in 1839.*

**L Cross the road, go downhill and past the church on the left.**

*Look to your right as the road curves round to the left, to appreciate the old houses on Town Gate, formerly Marsden’s main street which once contained a number of shops and inns. You may want to divert down Town Gate to look at the old stocks, and at the family tomb of Enoch Taylor, iron-founder of Marsden (mentioned earlier).*

*Continue down Church Lane; once very narrow, it was widened in 1927-8. This entailed the demolition of the former Old Ram Inn, and of “Marsden Hall”, a fine old house. On your right on the raised ground is the site, marked out with stones, of the former church, built in 1758 to replace an earlier chapel, and demolished in the 1890s. Some of the old gravestones are preserved there. Further down on the right is the site of Planks (or “Plonks”), an area of narrow lanes and old houses demolished between 1935 and 1939. On your left is St. Bartholomew’s Church, “the Cathedral of the Colne Valley”, consecrated in 1899, and well worth a visit. The lych-gate stands on the site of the former Church School (1829-1910).*

**At the junction, turn left onto Station Road and follow it up to the railway station.**

*Station Road was formerly called Pinfold Lane. At the bottom of the road stood, formerly, the old pinfold – this was used to pen animals which strayed onto the moorlands without their owners having grazing rights, and the “pindar”, an official appointed by Marsden Manor Court, took charge of them.*