

# Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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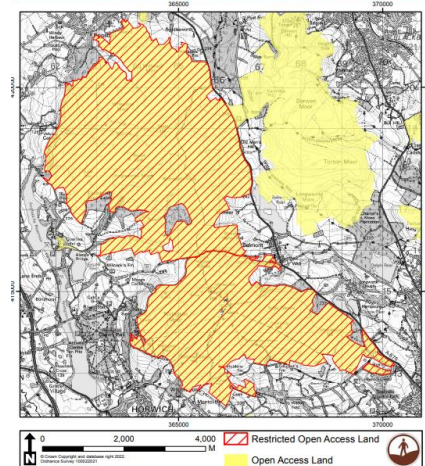
## Access Land Closed

With the recent high temperatures over the last few days, there are now some restrictions in place to areas of open access land across England and Wales as the fire severity index has reached 'exceptional'.

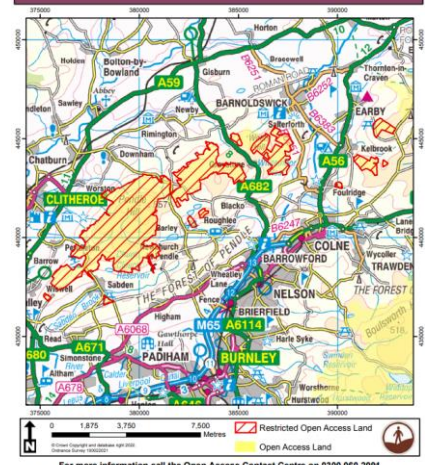
The Access authorities have now a number of Directions in place to legally facilitate the closure of CROW access land and which were automatically activated when the Fire Severity Index (FSI) records 'exceptional' conditions. Please note that these closures do not apply to public rights of way, only Access Land which is shown on OS 1:25,000 Explorer maps in a yellow wash or in a light green wash on woodlands. Details of all the restrictions are shown on Natural England's [open access portal](#).

Closures in our immediate area include the Forest of Bowland, also Pendle Hill and Rimington Moors and the areas known as Wheelton and Anglezark Moor around Great Hill as shown on the maps. Darwen Moors are currently open but take care!

Wheelton  
and  
Anglezarke  
Moors  
Great Hill  
**Fire  
Restrictions**



Pendle Hill  
Rimington  
Moors  
**Fire  
Restrictions**



Michael C

## Heritage and History Afloat

The 127-mile Leeds-Liverpool Canal was built to move coal and limestone and also to link the merchants of west Yorkshire to international markets via the port of Liverpool. The canal was designed for broad boats of 62 feet (19 m) length. A commencement ceremony was held at Halsall, north of Liverpool on 5 November 1770, but only two canal sections were constructed west and east - Liverpool to Wigan completed by 1781 and Skipton to Leeds by 1777 when the canal joined the Aire and Calder Navigation in Leeds.

In 1789 proposals were developed to vary the line of the remaining part of the canal, including a tunnel at Foulridge. In 1791, construction of the canal commenced south-westward heading towards Barrowford. Construction did not reach East Lancashire until 1807. A specification for four culverts was drawn up and this part of the canal was completed in 1810. It is one of these culverts that caused the breach in Rishton in October 2021. The remains of a bridge were discovered at the site of the breach. The bridge was known as Gallows Bridge and was an up-and-over pedestrian bridge with steps at each side that resembled the steps up to the hangman's gallows. The bridge had disappeared by the 1940s.

The canal took almost 50 years to complete as the main line of the canal was not completed until 1816. The heavy industry along its route, together with the decision to build the canal with broad locks, ensured that (unlike the other two trans-Pennine canals) the Leeds and Liverpool competed successfully with the railways throughout the 19th century and remained open through the 20th century.



Johnsons Hillock near the old Botany Bay Mill

The Leeds & Liverpool Canal is the longest canal in Britain built as a single waterway and has 91 locks. It is second only to the Grand Union Canal which is made up of merged canals. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal has several small branches, Leaving Liverpool, the canal passes through East Lancashire and then crosses Pennine countryside and picturesque villages on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales before reaching Leeds. The limiting height for boats is Foulridge Tunnel.

Walkers love the canal, and thousands of visitors marvel at the impressive Bingley Five Rise Locks and the historic salt town and World Heritage Site of Saltaire. Other popular destinations are Leeds City Centre waterfront, Liverpool's Royal Albert Docks, the pretty canal side town of Skipton, the famous 'pier' at Wigan and the Rufford Junction at Burscough.

For walkers there are lots of guides including Stanley Lock Flight wellbeing walk; Burnley Trail - a three mile walk taking in lots of historical sites from Gannow Tunnel to Bank Hall Colliery; Gargrave to Skipton - a five-mile walk following the lock-free summit of the canal, with Gargrave's lock 31 the last lock for 17 miles; Bingley to Saltaire - a three-mile walk from Bingley Five Rise Locks to the Victorian village of Saltaire; Leeds canal walk - a 4km wellbeing walk from Leeds Dock to Thwaite Watermill. Many of you will have walked sections of the Leeds Liverpool canal with Spring Vale Rambling Class or NE Lancs Area Coach Rambles. Feniscowles or the Barnoldswick to Adlington are probably the sections we all know best.

In August 2010, a 60-mile stretch of the canal was closed due to the low reservoirs, following the driest start to the year since records began. It was reopened the following month, although some restrictions remained. *On 18th July 2022 it looks like history is repeating itself as some restrictions are already in place!*



Volunteers cleaning the sculpture at the halfway point Church Kirk

**Barbara**

## Forgotten Strongholds

We have all heard of Clitheroe and Skipton Castles and no doubt visited these ancient monuments many a time over the years. There are a couple of lesser-known fortified structures that once provided protection to the peoples living in the Ribble Valley, giving shelter from Scottish marauders who would plunder deep into northern England during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Situated south of the village of Hellifield, famed for its railway junction and now as a water filling station for the many steam engines that pass through, is Hellifield Peel. Hellifield Peel was originally a mid-12th century fortified manorial complex, with a stone and timber-framed aisled hall. In the mid-13th century, Elias de Knoll attached a two storey, stone solar tower to the hall and the steep roof line on the east wall of the tower identifies the hall's location. In 1440, Laurence Hammerton founded the stone three storey tower house, when he was granted a license to crenellate his manor.

In the 17th and late 18th century, the tower was extended with major alterations, which included mullions, then Georgian windows and the battlemented parapet. Sadly, when being restored from a ruin into a dwelling house in 2005, an internal wall which was part of the original tower collapsed. The property is privately owned and managed as a country castle hotel with access restricted only to guests. The peel is visible from a public footpath, which passes its late 18th century Ha Ha from The Green in Hellifield.



Hellifield Peel

The next little known ancient property situated 5 miles south-west of Hellifield near to the village of Paythorn is Castle Haugh.

Castle Haugh is an 11th century earthwork motte, founded by William de Percy. The truncated motte is now a large tree covered mound with a deep ditch running part-way around it, supporting a strong D-shaped rampart. Both the Ribble Way and the Pennine Bridleway pass very close to the spot, from which access is possible to explore the site.

Standing on high ground, against the steep slope formed by the valley of the River Ribble, Castle Haugh commands an extensive view to the north-east and south-east. It was quite obviously a hastily constructed fortification built by Norman barons. There might even have been a wooden structure on top of the mound in the early years, but this was soon destroyed by Scottish raiders.



The ditch at Castle Haugh

The bailey, if it ever existed, has long since disappeared and part of the motte has collapsed down the scarp at the bend in the River Ribble,



The collapsed side of the motte at Castle Haugh  
Eleanor

## Ode to Great Harwood

by Dave Forshaw

Oh, take me back to yon sweet vale – to the place that I love so  
To that little town Great Harwood, not so far from the Calder's flow  
Let me see again the town clock, in the centre of the square  
And venture in the Wellington, with all my comrades there.

Oh, to walk again up 'Clinkham', or to pause in the woods of Dean  
Or to wander by the Lidgett, where the waving grass is green.  
There's a little place called 'Star Delph', where nature's running wild  
A place that meant so much to me when I was but a child  
It was much like a fairy dell, in which a child could dream  
Of climbing up the waterfall that fed a secret stream.

Take me back to Good 'Owd Snuffy' where the folk are 'gradely fine'  
Let me see again the terraced streets, with houses line by line  
Let me see again The Parish Church, or St. Hubert's pointed spire  
That glowed in the evening's sunset light,  
like a pointed spear of fire.



St Hubert's R C Church Gt Harwood

Is the path still there that wound its way down to the waterside?

Where the trees leant o'er the Calder, in all their summer pride

Oh, take me back to you sweet vale, to the place that I love so –

To that place called 'Snuffy Arrodd', not so far from 't Calder's flow.



Dean Clough Reservoir Gt Harwood

Let me see again the faces and the places I knew so well  
With their honesty and friendliness and gradely tales to tell  
Take me back to old Great Harwood, by the river Calder's flow  
For its beauty and its homeliness, there's no better place I know.

*Continuing our theme of poets from East Lancashire this is one from Great Harwood - David Forshaw. David served as Labour councillor in Great Harwood's Overton ward from 1995 to 1999 and was a member of more than a dozen committees and panel groups. He had very strong views on politics. He worked as a mental health care worker at Calderstones Hospital, Whalley. In his early years David worked as a gravedigger, a HGV driver and an upholsterer and in his 20s won awards for his poetry. He died in April 2015 aged 75.*

**Contributor Pesto Cenorr**

## Stories from the Forest

When you look at the images of very old forests where the trees support each other as if they were one huge mass, where roots are so densely growing together you can't place your feet on them to walk or run as you try to escape whatever beasts your imagination has conjured up, where moss hangs down from branches like the forest is dripping around your face it's hard to be sensible about the environment around you. This is like the setting for a true Tolkien mystical saga.

These places need lots of rain to provide the perfect conditions for these rainforests to grow but we all know that England has Borrowdale in the Lake District, Wales has Snowdonia and Scotland has lots of areas that provide such a climate. Our westerly areas get 4,000mm of rain a year. The official definition for a temperate rainforest is set at 1,400mm!!

With such settings it's easy to see how stories start to unfold specially in winter when there is very little natural light getting through the spaces even when there may not be many leaves left on the trees. Movements from a natural animal like a deer can seem unreal and magical. When you add that to local myths that you were once told regarding anything from Viking raiders attacking villages coming out of the woods and then disappearing back into them with their hostages or a wolf dressed in clothes and coming with a basket of food to eat you or your grandma (Little Red Riding Hood) it's no wonder we started to feel scared!



Most people may not be aware of the fact that oral stories came long before written down stories. Tales were told or enacted and were passed down from generation to generation. Evidence of Roman folk stories go back to 100-200 AD or from India in the 3rd century BC.



All contain magical beasts, vampires and dragons, heroes and princesses. These fairy tales didn't have just one fixed form but were quite often manipulated to suit the tellers own purpose. The Brothers Grimm stories used a spirit of romantic nationalism to weave together their stories. Russian, Norwegian, Romanian, English, Irish, African, to name but a few all used multi cultural threads to weave through their stories. Quite often two story lines were similar like Beauty and the Beast and Rumpelstiltskin, or Little Red Riding Hood and The Wolf and The Seven Kids.

Modern films and books were set in dark forests to give a feeling of impending doom and gnomes, goblins, dwarfs, giants, and elves all featured in Fangorn Forest in Lord of the Rings. Aragog in Harry Potter was the giant spider that dwelled deep within the forbidden forest, a friend to Hagrid

So, the next time that you are walking through or just sitting in a forest, let your mind wander and start to be creative by using all of your senses to breathe in the smells, to listen to the sounds or just the silence all around you. The forest will set the scene and you can create your own tale.

The only thing to "cage" you is the extent of your imagination and just how wild and free you will allow yourself to be. You can then slowly return home, perhaps tell your family immediately about your newly found skill of storytelling or a better way may be to keep it as a secret until a young child says those famous words "will you tell me a story???"

**Glenda B**