This brochure hopes to encourage you to get out and about in West Lancashire and discover the area’s wonderful public rights of way and cycle routes.

The public regularly use all the footpaths in this leaflet without let or hindrance as public rights of way; however, please respect the privacy of landowners, tenants and farmers and the possession of this leaflet is NOT to be taken as a guarantee of any particular right of access.

WHAT TO WEAR AND BRING WITH YOU

- Cycle hire is available in West Lancashire and locations can be found on the website.
- When walking any distance, good quality walking shoes or lightweight waterproof boots are advisable, as is a daypack to carry your maps, food and drink and extra warm clothing or waterproofs. In winter be aware of the wind chill effect in exposed areas and in winter some sections can become muddy and suitable footwear should be worn.
- In summer it would also be sensible to pack a hat, sunscreen and plenty of water.
- Why not take a camera to record your walk, we would be happy to share your experiences and receive your feedback on the route. For information on other walks in the area visit the website.

www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk

@VisitSefWLancs

Visit Sefton and West Lancs
This guide has been compiled to encourage you to get out and about in West Lancashire and discover its beauty and fascinating history. The maps are not intended for detailed route planning, however, more detailed maps of each individual route are available on the website. Alternatively, the Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No. 285, Southport & Chorley is available online or at good book shops. Some of the trails that feature on such maps are public rights of way. A public right of way is a path that anyone has a legal right to use on foot and sometimes using other modes of transport, e.g. horses on a bridleway.

Please be aware of the Countryside Code and leave nothing behind … except your footprints or cycle tracks.

The new Countryside Code

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Walking and cycling fun, free and gets you fit

Cycling Routes
- Pier to Pier Route
- Churches & Monuments Route
- Lapwing Route
- Moorhen Route

Walking Routes
- Wetlands & Waterways Route
- Yellow Hammer Route
- War Horse Route
- Parbold Hill Circular
In 1914 it was agreed that Canada Dock at the port of Liverpool would be used to import horses to the North of England. Horses were needed as part of the war effort. There was no site available near the City so Lord Lathom offered Lathom Park to be used as a Remount Depot free of charge.

The horses were initially brought by rail from Liverpool to Ormskirk and then on to Lathom Park by road. Of the 215,000 horses and mules brought to the Park more than 210,000 went into military service. Of the remainder 4,000 were not suitable for military service and would have ended up working in local farms or with local hauliers.

As well as being a base for horses, the Park became a large employer as all the horses needed to be supported by men with suitable equine skills such as blacksmiths, farriers, grooms and riders. The Park even had its own veterinary centre based at Scarisbrick Hall. At the start of the war armies still used cavalry. As the war went on it became more mechanised, meaning the era of war horses was coming to an end.

The Remount Depot closed in 1919.

Further details on the history of the war horses of Lathom Park can be found at www.lbmhs.co.uk/remount-history. This information may enhance your enjoyment of the walk.
These routes are a bit more challenging than some of our other walks. The total distance is about 14.5 miles, however, the flyer gives options for shortening it into easier routes that can be completed separately.

Starting at Burscough Bridge railway station the route takes you around some of the flattest land in West Lancashire. Or start at Rufford railway station to complete the Rufford Loop. Pretty cottages, nature reserves and quaint waterside pubs are just some of the things you can see along the way. The route uses field paths, tracks and canal towpaths, many of which are well signposted.
This route is a very good reason to get out and about in the Ormskirk area and discover its wonderful public rights of way network.

Ormskirk is an historic market town in the heart of West Lancashire. The trail starts and finishes at Ormskirk railway station or bus station taking you through the historic town centre and out to the rolling countryside beyond, boasting stunning views of Lancashire and Merseyside.

The fields surrounding Ormskirk are mostly arable so whether it's cereal crops blowing in the breeze or the harvesting of root crops, the views along this route change from season to season. This walk is fairly level with some gentle gradients. Follow the map in conjunction with the public footpath signs on the ground.

There are also many cafes and places to eat in Ormskirk town centre on your way out or on your return and along the way there are benches where you may enjoy a picnic.
Sefton and West Lancashire have some wonderful churches. They are often the oldest buildings in the area. For instance, people have been meeting at the site of St. Michael's Church, in Aughton since 850 AD.

Some are simply the loveliest, and the best looked after by their local community. All have interesting histories; where available, full details can be accessed via their websites.

This tour is a sampler of the delights these churches, their history and grounds. This ride is approximately 35 miles long and allows riders to join the route at various access points including, Ormskirk, Aughton Park, Town Green and Burscough Bridge railway stations.
One of our longer routes, the Pier to Pier starts at either Southport or Wigan passing through Burscough which is about midway. Southport Pier is a recognisable landmark and is a Grade II listed Pier, the oldest iron pier and at 1,216 yards (1112m) the second longest in the country. The original pier was officially opened up to the public in 1860 and was an instant success. Wigan Pier is not the sort of pier associated with those of a seaside resort. It’s actually inland by the Leeds to Liverpool Canal and was typical of the type of “pier” built alongside rivers and canals in the 18th and 19th centuries. The original ‘pier’ at Wigan was a coal loading staithes, where wagons from a nearby colliery would unload into the barges. Today the name Wigan Pier refers to The area around the canal at the bottom of the Wigan flight of locks on the canal. The Pier to Pier route forms part of the National Cycle Network (NCN) and has been given the route number NCN562 by Sustrans.
Lapwing Route

- Moderate: Mostly on quiet roads
- Distance: 9.5 miles
- Time: 75-95 mins

Key:
- Lapwing Route
- Railway Station
- Cycle Hire Venue

- Leeks & Corn-Marigolds besides Mere Lane
- Sandy Way Bridge
- Tarlscough Moss
- Curlew Lane
- Burscough Wharf
- Lapwing at WWT Martin Mere

Windmill Animal Farm
WWT Martin Mere
Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve
Easy/Moderate
Mostly Road
Distance 5 miles
Time 40-50 mins

Moorhen Route

KEY
- Moorhen Route
- Railway Station
- Cycle Hire Venue

Ainscough Mill
Runnel Brow
Top Locks

Hoscar Moss

The Ship at Lathom

Glovers Bridge

Moorhen along canal

Burscough Junction

River Tawd

Eller Brook

Warper's Moss

Hoscar Moss

Hoscar

To Southport
To Manchester
To Liverpool
To Preston

Lathom

The Ship at Lathom

Easy/Moderate
Mostly Road
Distance 5 miles
Time 40-50 mins
This is the winning route from our Best Walks Competition 2014. It has a bit of everything; lovely walking, opportunities for refreshments, history and fantastic views. The Parbold Bottle is a monument to The 1832 Reform Act and from it magnificent views extend to Ashurst Beacon, Liverpool, the Welsh hills, the whole of Sefton and West Lancashire and round to Blackpool.

1. Starting from Parbold Station head south on Mill Lane and after crossing the canal turn left onto the towpath heading east.
2. At the third bridge go left over the canal and follow the footpath up the side of Parbold Hill crossing the railway line on a bridge. At the track go straight ahead and cross the stile. Keep on the path with the former quarry on your left.
3. On reaching the road on the top of Parbold Hill (A5209) turn left on the pavement and after a couple of hundred yards you reach a short path (The Millenium Path) on the left leading to The Parbold Bottle.
4. Retrace your steps back to the top of the hill. Cross over by the restaurant and follow the road to the end of the car park. Just past the car park on the left cross the stile and take the path across fields towards High Moor. After 150 yards take the stile on your left and follow the path to the right. Go forward and take two more stiles. Keep the trees on your right and there is a further stile with a pond on your right. Follow the path and after 100 yards it curves left as though towards the cream coloured house.
5. On reaching the tarmac lane turn left and follow the track down the hill passing through two gates. At the bottom go ahead to the trees. Just before the trees turn left on the footpath keeping the ditch on your right.
6. Follow this footpath to the corner of the field and cross the stile. Cross the stream and the path emerges onto Parbold Hill (A5209), turn right through the bollards and then immediately right again on a path that leads to Miry Lane.
7. Follow this to the bottom, turn right onto Lancaster Lane and then first left into Tan House Lane. At the end turn left onto The Common which takes you back to Parbold Station.

There’s plenty to do in West Lancashire
Did you know that West Lancashire’s Ranger Service host lots of free walks throughout the year. Visit the West Lancashire website at www.westlancs.gov.uk/events for information on their upcoming events.

If you enjoy these walks you may also enjoy the routes in the Sefton Walking and Cycling Guide. Not too far away these routes explore the Sefton coast and its countryside giving ideas for some wonderful days out.

And then let’s not forget the Visit website, www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk packed with the routes in these guides, plus lots more information on other routes and days out, you will never be short of something to do.
Other walks...

Mere Sands Wood

There are many places in West Lancashire where you can hire a bike (see the Visit Sefton and West Lancashire website) and ride out to this hidden treasure. The site is accessible by foot at all times. No permit is required for access to the nature reserve, but a donation of £2.00 per adult is recommended. There are a number of surfaced trails through the woods between 400m & 4k in length.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS – there are 3 circular trails, leading from the car park through the main areas of the reserve, which are accessible to most wheelchair users. The white trail (1.5km) is suitable for most motorised wheelchairs. Two motorised buggies are available for loan from the Visitor Centre.

See their website at http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/reserves/mere-sands-wood-local-nature-reserve for a site map and further information.

Beacon Country Park

Open all year round this park has three hundred acres of open countryside, an 18-hole golf course (with golf and leisure shop), countryside displays and exhibitions, guided walks, craft fairs … there’s something for just about everyone at Beacon Country Park.

There is space to walk, run, ride horses or bicycles, fly kites, or just get away from it all and relax at Beacon Country Park – a combination of flowing meadows and woodlands, commanding majestic views across the Lancashire Plain to the west and the Pennine Hills to the east.

Picnic areas, an orienteering course, nature trail, and bridle path are open for everyone to enjoy. Close by is the Beacon Park Golf Course, driving range, and visitor centre with refreshments and bar.

Beacon Country Park is the base for the borough’s Park Ranger Service. The Ranger Service often run events and activities to enhance your visit, and can provide added information from their visitor services cabin alongside the visitor centre.

Beacon Country Park is West Lancashire Borough Council’s main countryside site, consisting of over 300 acres of rolling countryside on the slopes of Ashurst Beacon above Skelmersdale.

WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre

Martin Mere is within walking distance of Burscough Bridge railway station using the paths from the east bound platform. Alternatively, you can hire a bike and take a ride there, see www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk for locations of cycle hire.

Once at the centre there are numerous walks and you can see a map of their site at www.wwt.org.uk/wetland-centres/martin-mere/plan-your-visit/martin-mere-map/