



Sefton & West Lancashire  
**VISIT**  
 With  
 Cycle  
 Park

- Distance 35 miles
- and variety of routes
- Villages, canal towpaths
- Moderate/Difficult

**Churches & Monuments**  
 Route  
 Themed  
 Cycle  
 Route  
 Ormskirk • Lydiate  
 Halsall • Burscough



Ormskirk Parish Church      St Michaels      St Catherine's Chapel      St Cuthberts

Sefton and West Lancashire have some wonderful churches and monuments which are often the oldest buildings in the area. Steeped in history, the sites on this tour offer lots of interesting facts to discover with the oldest, St Michael's Church in Aughton dating back to around 850 AD. Many of the churches on this route are looked after by their local communities and more details can be found on their websites where available. This Churches and Monuments cycle route is approximately 35 miles long and offers an insight into these wonderful churches, their grounds and their history. Riders can join the route at various access points including Ormskirk, Aughton Park, Town Green and Burscough Bridge Railway Stations.

Contact us via the website: [www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk](http://www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk)  
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**FRIENDS' BURIAL GROUND**  
 Grave Yard Lane, Bickerstaffe L39 9EG

At Grave Yard Lane is a Friends' Burial Ground. The Society of Friends were also called Quakers. It is thought that the founder George Fox (1624-1691) started the Society of Friends in this parish when he visited the area. There is not much to see as the site is overgrown, but cut back occasionally, and the gates are padlocked. It contains the graves of 250 Friends including Edward Lyon who was recorded as living until he was 109 years old and others including Mary Mollineaux, who spent time imprisoned in Lancaster Castle for their beliefs. The site was purchased by the Society for approximately 50 shillings in 1665 and a Meeting House and the Graveyard was established, however the house has been demolished. The graveyard has a stone at the entrance which reads, 'Friends' Burial Ground 1663'. There are no gravestones to see, perhaps because in their earliest days in the 17th century the Quakers did not mark their graves in any way. The location of each grave was marked on a carefully measured-up plan of the site and that was all. Later Friends allowed the use of gravestones laid flat over the grave. The boundary wall was built in 1880.

**KING GEORGE V AND QUEEN MARY CORONATION MONUMENT**  
 Junction of Church Lane and Bold Lane, Aughton

George and Mary's coronation took place at Westminster Abbey on 22 June 1911, and was celebrated by the Festival of Empire at the Crystal Palace in London. The coronation took place over a year after he came to the throne. George Frederick Ernest Albert of the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha was crowned King George V. Crowned by his side was his wife, who chose "Mary" for her name as queen even though her actual first name was Victoria. The memorial was constructed to mark the occasion and was built on the pedestal of one of seven ancient crosses in Aughton. Opposite the site is the former St Michael's School, now a rest home.

**ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, AUGHTON**  
 Church Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk L39 6SB  
[www.aughtonstmichael.org.uk](http://www.aughtonstmichael.org.uk)

A beautiful setting for this church, it is Grade 1 listed. Evidence suggests that the first church on the site was probably built of reed, wood and mud at sometime around 850 AD. During excavations in the early 20th century, part of a Saxon stone cross was found, dated to the latter half of the 9th century (around the time of Alfred the Great), and is an indication that Christians have gathered and worshipped here for well over a thousand years. Outside there is a sundial which dates from 1736 and still has its original plate with a Latin inscription which translates as "I only count the sunny hours". It is said the parish clerk used to read out notices from the sundial. In 1739 a charnel house was erected on the north side of the church in the recess between the north aisle and tower. The churchyard was much smaller then, and the graveyard had become so overcrowded that the medieval practice was adopted of disinterring bones and placing them in a charnel house, so that ground could be used for more burials. In the 17th century three cottages were built at the north-eastern corner of the churchyard, and a school at the south-western corner. The school later (1836) moved to the other end of Church Lane. One cottage became the "Ring O' Bells" inn, and this was where the post coach from Liverpool to Preston stopped to deliver and collect mailbags. These buildings were demolished in 1877 when the churchyard was enlarged. The open ground nearby is said to have been used as a training ground for the forces assembled in anticipation of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

**ST ANNE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
 23 Prescott Rd, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 4TG  
[www.st-annes-ormskirk.org.uk](http://www.st-annes-ormskirk.org.uk)

The Parish of St Anne's was founded in 1732 and has always been served by Benedictine monks. At that time the mass centre was a house in Aughton, until during the Jacobite rising of 1745 when the chapel and the mission house were attacked and partially burnt down by the mob. For safety the congregation moved further out of town and a chapel was built in 1747 on part of the site of the Social Centre. That was replaced in 1795 by one dedicated to St Oswald, which served until the present church was opened in 1850. Much of the stone for the building is said to have come from quarries at Parbold. Over the years many small additions and alterations have been made to the church. Statues, stained glass windows, Stations of the Cross and memorials have been added at various times, mostly donated by individual families or societies. There are graves from World War One and Two. In addition, during World War 2 Ormskirk was used for burials from Polish Military Hospital No. 4, then stationed at the now Edge Hill University site in Ormskirk and as a result the churchyard contains the graves of 26 Polish servicemen which are together in a group. A large War Memorial is situated close to the entrance.

**CHRIST CHURCH**  
 Long Lane, Ormskirk L39 5AS  
[www.christchurchaughton.org](http://www.christchurchaughton.org)

Christ Church was founded in 1867. It is situated on Holborn Hill and is one of the highest points in the area. It occasionally opens its Tower to the public and wonderful views can be gained from the top. Cafe Vista is situated in the adjacent church centre and this offers a wonderful view over the West Lancashire plain and beyond. It is open for everyone, not just church members; Tuesday to Friday - 10.30 am to 3.30 pm.

**ORMSKIRK PARISH CHURCH (St Peter and St Paul)**  
 Park Road, Ormskirk L39 3AJ  
[www.ormskirkparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.ormskirkparishchurch.org.uk)

The Church of St Peter and St Paul is one of only three churches in England to have both a western tower and a central spire, and the only one to have both at the same end. As Spike Milligan said:  
**'A Lady in Lancs said a spire  
 Is what every good church should desire  
 But her sis with a glower  
 Said a church needs a tower  
 So they built one with both, and it's dire!**  
 The church dates from no later than the 12th century and the north wall of the chancel dates from c. 1170. A chapel was added to the south c. 1280. The steeple was added in the late 14th century and the large west tower was built c. 1540-50 to house the bells from Burscough Priory, which had been suppressed as part of Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. It also houses a bell cast in 1576 by Henry Oldfield of Nottingham, but this is no longer in use. There are lots of interesting grave stones, some of which have been incorporated into the footpaths and steps around the Church. Some of the grave stones mark the death of people in the local poor house. These are marked as "The Poor of Bootle," and "The Poor of Knowsley" and more besides. The churchyard contains the war graves of 16 Commonwealth service personnel of World War I, and 11 of World War II. William Heaton V.C who has been born in Bickerstaffe is buried here. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his brave actions in 1900 during the Second Boer War at Geluk, South Africa when he was 25 years old and a private in the 1st Battalion, The King's (Liverpool) Regiment.

**ST ANDREW'S MISSION**  
 New Lane, Burscough L40 8JA  
[www.stjohns-burscough.org](http://www.stjohns-burscough.org)

St. Andrew's Mission is known as the Boatman's Mission as it is where local boat people working on barges came to worship. The Mission was first established around 1860 or 1870 and held in a room over the stables alongside The Slipway in Crabtree Lane. It was also used for dances at weekends and moved to its present site in 1905. The corrugated iron building is the last Boatmen's Mission in Britain still to be used as a place of worship. It is made from prefabricated material, corrugated iron, a popular method in the 19th century because of its cheapness. Churches made in this way were nicknamed "Tin Tabernacles." Burscough and Lathom have always been important for canal boatmen and their families. After the introduction of steam boats in the 1870s, their families increasingly lived around Burscough, with many houses built for them between 1880 and 1920. The houses always had a stable for the boat horse built behind or near them. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the Leeds to Liverpool Canal to Burscough at that time. Much of its employment was dependent on the canal and the industries along its bank. Religion, dialect, customs and much more, were influenced by the boat people who made up so much of the local population.

**"THE HALSALL NAVVY" - THE CANAL WORKERS' MEMORIAL**  
 Summerwood Lane, Halsall, L39 8RJ

Halsall is where the first sod was ceremonially dug (5 November 1770), by the Hon Charles Mordaunt of Halsall Hall) for the start of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The sculpture, Halsall Navy by Thompson Dagnall, just across the bridge from the Saracen's Head commemorates this. The canal linked the textile towns of Blackburn, Burnley and Bradford and the coalfields of Wigan, Blackburn and Burnley to Liverpool docks. Raw materials including cotton and wool were imported and transported along the canal and finished goods were exported to the whole of the British Empire via Liverpool Docks. Coal was the important cargo. The first public meeting to promote the building of the canal was held in Bradford in 1766. It took almost 46 years to complete its 127 miles. The local stretch opened in 1777. The original route was meant to go from Preston to Bradford but this was changed to go from Liverpool through Wigan because of its coal fields. Regular work stopped in 1972 when the movement of coal to Wigan Power Station ceased. Colonel Mordaunt was a real character. He was a former Guards officer who served in India and was rebuked for wild ways because 'he enlivened Ormskirk with public sword practice.' On one occasion he smoked his brother the rector and congregation out of the church. He built a water-powered spinning/cotton mill in Halsall and by 1782 was employing 160 women and children. As he needed copper coins to pay his workers and there were not enough in circulation - he had his own made, these "Halsall pennies" are still around today. This was the man chosen to turn the first sod.

**ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH**  
 New Street, Halsall, L39 8RG  
[www.lan-opc.org.uk/Halsall](http://www.lan-opc.org.uk/Halsall)

A Grade 1 listed Church. Reported to be the oldest parish church in England. The oldest parts date from the 14th century but the records of Rectors of the parish state there was some form of religious centre here from 1190 onwards. The Sefton coast line was a lot closer hundreds of years ago. The tradition was that a lighted lamp was placed in the spire to guide seafarers. This might explain the two statues of men in boats high on the outside walls. The site was more than a church. Edward Halsall built a Grammar School in the church in 1593 with a two story building and its own entrance. The lower part was for the boys to use as a classroom and the upper floor as living accommodation for the master. In the churchyard, there are grave slabs from the Middle Ages that were originally inside the church. There is a sandstone sundial in the churchyard, dating from 1725 and an octagonal sandstone baptismal font in the churchyard from the 19th century. Both of these have been given a Grade II designation by English Heritage. In addition the churchyard contains the war graves of four soldiers of World War I, and two of World War II. Beyond the graveyard there is a lovely short walk through the trees on a well-maintained path. A very pretty spot at which to sit, contemplate and take a break. Inside the church has beautiful stained glass windows including one which features a tractor and other farm vehicles.

**HALSALL WAR MEMORIAL**  
 Halsall Road, Halsall.

Just outside the Church is a magnificent War Memorial built in approximately 1920 but incorporating the base of an ancient cross from the 15th century. It is inscribed with, "This cross has been set up on the ancient base by the Halsall parishioners in memory of their kinsmen who fell for King and Country 1914-1919." The cross itself contains a crucifixion scene. A beauty spot, "The Bishop's Walk" is back across Summerwood Lane.

**CHURCH OF OUR LADY, LYDIATE**  
 Southport Road, Lydiate, L31 4HD  
[www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk)

Following the destruction of St. Katherine's Abbey the Jesuit Order served the Catholic population from Lydiate Hall and its chapel until 1850 when the current church of Our Lady's was built and opened in 1854. The cost of the building was the princely sum of £3,100 with greater part born by Thomas Weld Blundell, Lord of the Manor. The hard stone was purchased from Upholland, the softer stone for the window mullions etc was bought from Aughton Moss Quarry. Above the porch entrance is a canopied figure of Our Blessed Lady and Child carved in stone. The two heads which form the corbels of the north door are representations of Thomas Weld Blundell and his wife. One frequent visitor to the church was the Jesuit priest, and one of the finest of English poets, Gerard Manley Hopkins who was known to stay on Rose Hill in nearby Pygones Hill Lane. One of his poems written while in Lydiate was 'Spring and Fall'. The church has stained glass windows which show the struggle to keep the Catholic faith alive in Lydiate during penal times. One window is dedicated to Margaret Rimmer who in 1680 refused to swear allegiance to the Church of England and is a reminder of less tolerant times. The church has changed little over the past 150 years but the steeple above the tower was dismantled as it was found to be unsafe in the 1950s. In the grounds of the church there is a magnificent War Memorial Crucifix. It was erected in 1920 with parishioners' subscriptions at the cost of £250 10s 10d. It commemorates the nine men from Our Lady's parish who gave their lives in the First and Second World Wars. Their names are inscribed on a plaque beneath the cross. Also in the grounds is a rare Tudor Mile Cross which was unearthed in a field half way between Lydiate and Downholland by a labourer engaged in levelling a cop. Crosses such as these were placed along a route leading to the nearest church. It is of solid stone and octagonal in shape. It must have lain in its position buried under the hedge since the period when such objects of veneration were destroyed. The space immediately around this cross is devoted to the burial of priests.

**ST CATHERINE'S CHAPEL**  
 Southport Road, Lydiate, L31 4HD

Only ruins of the Chapel remain. But it is a lovely, peaceful setting. Occasional theatre shows are held in the grounds. The Chapel was built for the private worship of the Ireland family, who held the Lydiate lordship from 1410-1673. Its use as a private chapel probably ceased around 1550, following Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. However a small cemetery on the same grounds was still in use until the latter 19th century. It is next to Scotch Piper Inn, the oldest pub of the historic county of Lancashire. The pub dates from 1320 and is a Grade II listed building. It was previously called 'The Royal Oak' until as legends are told; an injured highland piper from the rebellion in 1745 took refuge at the inn. He went on to marry the innkeeper's daughter hence the change of name to The Scotch Piper ([www.scotchpiper.co.uk](http://www.scotchpiper.co.uk))

There are many more lovely walks and rides within the area covered by VISIT, please visit our website at [www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk](http://www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk) for more leaflets and ideas for walks, cycle rides and days out.

VISIT - Visitors in Sustainable Integrated Transport  
 Funded by the Department for Transport through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund

# Churches and Monuments Route

Start/Finish **Town Green Railway Station, Aughton**  
 Distance **35 miles** (Route can be split into stages)  
 Terrain **Variety of Road, Cycle Path and Towpath**



- 1 Starting from Town Green Station, **turn left out of the train station**, continuing forward reaching a T junction, **turn right**.
- 2 Continue forward along **Town Green Lane**, on reaching the T junction **turn left**.
- 3 Take the first right turn into **Parr's Lane**.
- 4 At the cross roads, turn right into **Long Lane**.
- 5 Continue forward; take the first right turn into **Graveyard Lane**.
- 6 Continue along Graveyard Lane until you reach a small wooded area fenced by a stone wall with iron gates. **This is the site of the Friends Burial Ground dating from 1665.**
- 7 Continue forward, reaching the T junction. Turn right onto **Liverpool Road**, before turning right into **Bowker's Green Lane**.
- 8 On reaching the cross roads, **cross straight over** into **Mickering Lane**.
- 9 Continue to meander along the lane, until you reach the next junction; **turn left** here and continue forward until you reach the Coronation Monument in Aughton village, **take the right turn**, keeping the monument to your left. **Merge right** into **Church Lane**.
- 10 Continue forward reaching **St Michael's Church** to your left.
- 11 Follow the road around to the right, continuing up the hill until you reach the junction with Northway. At this point join the **cycle path on your right** & continue forward reaching the roundabout.
- 12 Turn right here into **Winifred Lane**. Continue forward before turning left into **Granville Park**.
- 13 At the junction with Moss Delph Lane, continue straight across the junction entering **Swanpool Lane**.
- 14 At the next T junction, **turn left into Long Lane** and proceed forward until you reach **Christ Church** to your right.

- 15 The route is then **retraced back down Long Lane**, continuing forward reaching the traffic lights at the cross roads with Prescott Road. Turn **left into Prescott Road**.
- 16 Continue along Prescott Road, reaching the **Saint Anne's Church on your right**.
- 17 Continue your journey forward, reaching a mini roundabout, **cross the roundabout with caution**, taking your **2nd exit** into **Aughton Street**, signposted **Ormskirk**.
- 18 When approaching the upcoming junction **keep to the left lane**, **turn left at the traffic lights**. Keep to the left lane, passing through two further sets of traffic lights, the entrance to Coronation Park, before climbing the hill to **Ormskirk Parish Church** to your left.
- 19 At the crest of the hill and as you pass the church on your left; **take the fork in the road to your right**, signposted **St. Helens, Wigan and Manchester**. Then **keep in the left lane**.
- 20 At the first set of **traffic lights turn left** into Burscough Street. Just prior to the mini roundabout, **turn left into Yew Tree Lane**, continue forward, **taking care crossing County road**.
- 21 At the junction, **turn right into Grimshaw Lane**. As the residential area ends, **turn right into Blackacre Lane**. At the end of the road, **turn right into Pippin Street**. On reaching the round about, take your first **exit into Tollgate Road**, entering **Burscough Industrial Estate**.
- 22 Follow the road around merging into Ringtail Road before **turning right into Langley Road**.
- 23 **At the end of the road, turn right**, exiting Burscough Industrial Estate.

- 24 **Turn left at the cross roads into New Lane**, as you follow the road around to your right **St. Andrew's Mission** can be seen to your right.
- 25 Upon reaching the canal, cross the bridge and join the towpath through the gated access on your left. Continue along the towpath. You will eventually cross over Southport Road where you will then pass **Scarisbrick Marina**.
- 26 Continue along the towpath until you reach **bridge 25**; temporarily **leave the tow path here at the Halsall Navy - Canal Workers' Monument**. With the canal behind you, **turn right onto Summerwood Lane**.
- 27 Continue forward reaching the village of Halsall, **St. Cuthbert's Church** to your right and the War Memorial at the junction to Halsall Road. At this point **retrace your route** back to the canal. Once back on the tow path, **continue onwards passing under bridge 25**.
- 28 Continuing along the tow path you will eventually reach a **Leeds/Liverpool marker post adjacent to a barrier controlled bridge**. **Turn right** here, travelling away from the canal, proceeding down **Green's Lane**.
- 29 At the next junction with **Eager Lane and Hall Lane** take the **right fork in the road**. Continue along **Hall Road** reaching the junction with **Southport Road**. To your left you will see **Our Lady's Church**, Lydiate.
- 30 **Turn Left** onto **Southport Road** and continue forward, soon you will reach a wooded area on your right containing the remains of **St. Catherine's Chapel**. Next to the grounds of the Chapel you will find **The Scotch Piper**, the oldest Inn in Lancashire dating back to 1320.

- 31 Passing the first row of cottages to your right, **take your first right turn into Station Road**. Continue forward, take your **next right turn into Punnell's Lane**.
- 32 At the end of the road, with the junction of **Acres Lane and Altcar Lane**, **turn left**. Follow the road around into Bell's Lane, continue forward, reaching the canal once more at a **barrier controlled bridge crossing**. **Turn left**, rejoining the canal tow path.
- 33 **Leave the tow path at Bridge 19**, exiting via the shallow steps, before crossing the canal bridge onto Pygon's Hill Lane, continuing forward, **take your first left turn into Sudell Lane**.
- 34 Follow the road around into **Back Lane**; continue forward before **bearing to the left into Swan Lane**.
- 35 At the end of the road, **turn left onto the cycle path**. At the junction for Beaconsfield Farm cross the dual carriageway (Northway) and the cycle path on the other side, reaching **St. Michael Road**, **turn right here**.
- 36 At the next junction **turn left into Smithy Lane**.
- 37 Continue forward into **Bold Lane**, Aughton. Continue forward **merging into Town Green Lane**, passing over the railway before **carefully turning immediately right into Middlewood Road**.
- 38 **You have now returned to Town Green Station.**

**VISIT Sefton and West Lancashire Cycle Hire**

- A** CYCLE HIRE POINT - Park Pool, Park Road, Ormskirk
- B** CYCLE HIRE POINT - Burscough Wharf, Burscough
- C** CYCLE HIRE POINT - Edge Hill University

**BICYCLE SHOPS**

- A** **The Bicycle Lounge** - 46/48 Moor Street, Ormskirk
- B** **Jack Parkers** - 62-64 Liverpool Road North, Burscough
- C** **High on Bikes Ltd** - 1 Hurlston Court, Scarisbrick Business Park
- D** **L. Cray Limited** - 207 Liverpool Road North, Liverpool

**SYMBOLS**

- Church/Monument
- Café
- Pub