



6 *Accrington and Haworth Art Gallery*

A hidden gem of a walk in the centre
of Pennine Lancashire

START: Haworth Art Gallery car park
(GPS waypoint SD 766 272)

DISTANCE: 3.5 miles (5.5km)

DIFFICULTY:  **HEIGHT GAIN:** 

APPROX. TIME: 1 hour 45 minutes

PARKING: Available at the beginning of the route

ROUTE TERRAIN: Hard track, road, farmland

FACILITIES: None along the route

SUITABILITY: Dogs must be on a lead through
farmland, not suitable for prams, trampers or
wheelchairs

OS MAPS: Landranger 103 (Blackburn and Burnley),
Explorer 287 (West Pennine Moors)



Take a trip to Accrington for this three and a half mile walk, starting from the Haworth Art Gallery.

This is a bit of an undiscovered route, with some overgrown parts and navigation required in places, but there are rewards for walking it, with some spectacular landscape and some lovely architecture on offer.

Dogs are permitted but pets must be kept on a lead through farmland, especially at this time of year around breeding season.

The town of Accrington lies in the borough of Hyndburn in the heart of Pennine Lancashire. It's around four miles to the east of Blackburn and six miles west of Burnley.

The name 'Accrington' is said to be Anglo-Saxon in origin and is a reference to the acorn trees that grew around the area – 'aecern' meaning acorn and 'tun' meaning town or village. In records, the spelling of Accrington varies, with the earliest reference to the town in 1194 being Akarinton, changing to Akerunton, Akerinton and Akerynton in 1258, Acrinton in 1292, Ackryngton in 1311 and then Acryngton in 1324.

The town is a former centre of the cotton and textile industries and it is famed for manufacturing the hardest and densest bricks in the world – the Accrington bricks or NORIs – which were used in the Empire State Building's construction and in the foundations of Blackpool Tower. The bricks were famed for their strength and were first produced at brickworks adjacent to the quarry in Whinney Hill, Altham, by the Accrington Brick and Tile Company. The clay there produced bricks of the highest strength and hardness and they were also acid resistant, so they could be used to line flues and chimneys. The site even had its own mineral railway connected to the East Lancashire Line at Huncoat station, and was close to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. There are a number of theories as to where the name 'NORI' came from, with the most popular one being that the letters spelling out 'IRON' were accidentally placed backwards in the brick moulds, thus spelling out 'NORI'.

This walk starts at The Haworth Art Gallery in Accrington; an Edwardian Tudor-style mansion house, set in nine acres of its own parkland, complete with mature woodland and a rose garden. Architect Walter Brierley, who had become known as the Lutyens of the North, designed the house in

the popular Arts and Crafts style of the time. During his career, Brierley built more than 300 commissions across Lancashire, Yorkshire and the North, among them several grand country houses.

Brierley designed the house for brother and sister William and Anne Haworth in 1909, and it was originally called Hollins Hill. The family had made their fortune through the weaving trade and sadly William Haworth, a former mayor of Accrington, died four years after the house was built, and his sister died in 1920. William was a well thought of employer, a staunch liberal and supporter of institutions such as the public library, Accrington Victoria Hospital, and the Mechanics Institute. On Anne's death – and on the wishes of both siblings – the house, along with a collection of paintings and antiques and a sum of money for the building's upkeep, were bequeathed to the people of Accrington.

The house is full of character and detail throughout; there are 12 'grotesques' above the front entrance, such as dogs, birds and squirrels, and the entrance hall features intricate wood panelling and an imposing stone fireplace. The entrance hall has a commemorative plaque above the fireplace dedicated to the memory William and Anne Haworth. This reminder of the museum's origin shows that the house first opened to the public as an art gallery, museum and park on 21st September 1921.

The stunning former residence has become the perfect setting for the internationally-renowned collection of Tiffany Glass. Tiffany was the leading American exponent of the 'Art Nouveau' style in glass. The glass was produced in New York between 1878 and 1933 at the Tiffany Studios by Louis Comfort Tiffany and his team of designers. Tiffany wanted his glass to have texture and rich colours, and he developed a type of glass he called Favrite.



Tiffany's family today operate the world-famous Tiffany & Co of New York, selling jewellery and luxury items.

A local Accrington man called Joseph Briggs gave the collection of Tiffany glass to the people of Accrington in 1933. As a young man of 17, Joseph Briggs had gone to seek his fortune in America. In 1893 he began to work for Louis Comfort Tiffany, and remained there until its closure. By this time, Tiffany glass had fallen out of style and to prevent the glass being sold off or destroyed, Joseph sent a shipment of more than 140 pieces to Accrington's local museum at the time, at Oak Hill Park.

Where to visit

Haworth Art Gallery

Haworth Park, Manchester Road, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 2JS

It's definitely worth popping into the Haworth Art Gallery, with its world famous collection of Tiffany Glass, either before or after your walk. This stunning mansion is the perfect setting for this collection, which is on permanent display here. It consists of more than 140 items, including glass tiles, vases and mosaics, and it's the largest public collection in Europe.

Free admission gives you access to four rooms dedicated to the collection and you can see fine examples of Louis Comfort Tiffany's Favrite glass vases, mosaics, and tiles in both static and interactive exhibits.

Photography is not allowed, however, a range of postcards of the Tiffany collection are available to purchase in the shop, along with a variety of high-quality gifts and Tiffany-related items.



The Gallery also houses a collection of 18th and 19th century oil and watercolour paintings, interesting collections of Chinese porcelain, local history items and a programme of temporary exhibitions throughout the year.

Admission to the Haworth Art Gallery is free and it is open from 12pm until 5pm Wednesday to Friday, then 12pm to 4.30pm Saturday and Sunday.

The walker's view

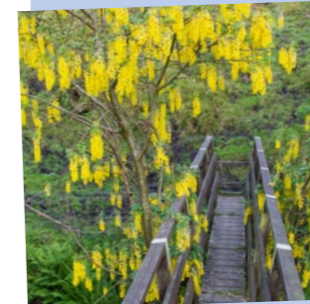


Beth Pipe discovers the countryside around Accrington

Accrington Stanley football club will be forever immortalised in my brain thanks to a milk commercial from the 1980s. I knew little else about the place before my first visit several years ago and, although like any town it has its less than glamorous corners, it also has some superb architecture and is nestled in some quite spectacular scenery.

This is a great walk for those who don't want everything too sanitised and don't mind a bit of grubbing around with the navigation. We have an amazing network of public footpaths in this country and we need to keep walking them all lest they become overgrown and forgotten. Popular walks are easier to follow whereas others, such as this one, take a little more effort but offer up some lovely hidden rewards for those prepared to stick at it.

The enclosed paths towards the start of the walk give an insight into the history of the area before there were roads and motorcars sweeping us hurriedly from place to place; tracks and paths linking



farms and hamlets that were once the only means of communication – food for thought next time you find yourself jabbing at your smart phone or checking your GPS.

When we visited, the fields of buttercups were putting on a fine display and you could tell from the dearth of tracks through them that few folks had ventured this way before us. The fence crossing near

the gorge seems a little odd, but the barbed wire has clearly been deliberately tied off to allow a crossing point, though it is a bit of a hop. Dropping down to the gorge, we were delighted to find the small wooden footbridge was wedged firmly in the branches of a laburnum tree in full flower, one of those wonderful little rewards I mentioned earlier.

Back down on the Hyndburn Greenway it's worth pausing around Shoe Mill to read the information board and explore a little further. Sadly the impressive looking Five Arches Bridge was demolished in 1981 but the remains of the signal box and old cotton mill are still to be found, albeit a little more at one with the greenery than they once were.

The final stretch up through the newly planted Jubilee Woodland gives you a chance to review your route along the other side of the valley and ponder how much this landscape will change again in the next few hundred years.



While you are there!

The Hyndburn Greenway

The last section of this route takes the walker along the Hyndburn Greenway, a mostly traffic free route for walkers and cyclists linking Accrington town centre with Blackburn, Rishton and Great Harwood.

The National Cycle Network is a series of safe, traffic-free lanes and quiet on-road routes that connect to every major city and passes within a mile of 55 per cent of UK homes. It now stretches 14,500 miles across the length and breadth of the UK.

The Greenway is part of the National Cycle Network Route 6, which passes through Watford, Luton, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Leicester, Derby, Sheffield, Manchester, Blackburn, Preston, Lancaster, Kendal and Windermere – and when it's finished, it will connect London and Threlkeld in Cumbria.



Foxhill Bank Local Nature Reserve

Mill Hill Off Union Road, Oswaldtwistle, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 3LX

Close to the centre of Accrington is the Wildlife Trust leased site at Foxhill Bank. Once a former mill site, the area is now an excellent place to see wildlife.

At just 8 hectares in size, the value of this reserve is in its mixture of habitats in such a small area. The lodges were originally constructed for storing water for the dyeing and printing of fabrics at the works, owned by the Brewer family next to Tinker Brook.

Some major work was needed to convert the lodges from concrete-sided reservoirs into their present-day form, however vegetation has since colonised the lodges, producing a mosaic of open water, reedmace, soft, hard and jointed rush, and newly planted common reed. This, along with the undisturbed scrub and bramble, provides seclusion for coots, moorhens, mallard and warblers.

A highlight of the woodland is the avenue of lime trees that would have led up to the former mill owner's house. The buildings and stonework have been completely removed, but a section of the avenue and some specimen trees from the garden, still remain. Other woodland areas were planted when the reserve was being established in the early 1990s – these are being managed to develop into more natural habitats.

The woodland, dense scrub and wetland communities provide good cover and food for a variety of birds, including great spotted woodpecker, siskin, reed bunting and blackcap. Damselflies can often be seen hovering in the lodge vegetation and there is an abundance of pond skaters.

The banks of the brook also provide an ideal habitat for mosses, lichens and liverworts, which thrive on the shaded, moist conditions, plus broad buckler and male ferns can be seen emerging from the cracks in the stone.

No permit is needed for Foxhill Bank and you can visit any time of year, but please keep dogs on a lead.



Cut out this page and take with you...

6 Accrington and Haworth Art Gallery

HAWORTH PARK, MANCHESTER ROAD, ACCRINGTON, LANCASHIRE, BB5 2JS

A bit of an undiscovered route around the Accrington countryside that should take just under two hours to complete.

There are no facilities as such along the route, so make sure you bring something with you or head to Accrington after your walk.



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6 Your walk, step-by-step

START From the art gallery car park, return to the road and turn right. After passing around two bends, take the public footpath between the houses on your left.



At the end of the path turn right, cross the road and after 50 yards turn left onto a broad waymarked track. **A** Follow this path down, across a stone bridge until you reach a large metal gate. Take the path to the immediate right of the metal gate and follow it across a wooden stile, before turning left and crossing the footbridge.



Just beyond the footbridge, turn left and take the waymarked footpath leading sharply uphill. At the top of the gravel track turn left onto the lane and then right

immediately before the stables and farm. Continue uphill until you reach a wooden stile next to a double metal gate. **B** Cross the stile and turn left, following the enclosed path up to another gate.

At the stile just beyond the derelict farm building, turn right heading directly uphill along the left hand field boundary. Continue on, crossing another small stile and out onto the lane into Bedlam. Turn left along the lane towards the houses. When you reach the houses, do not take the kissing gate on your left, instead continue directly ahead crossing a stone stile between a garage and a gate and into a field.



As the field opens out bear left through the large opening and continue directly ahead to a stepped stile over a wall and onto the small road in front of the golf club. Turn left along the road **C** and then left again after 200 yards, following the sign to Icconhurst. Remain on the lane as it swings right then bear right as it forks alongside fields and towards farm buildings. Follow the lane through

the first group of buildings then look for the stone stile on your right immediately before the final farm. Cross the stile, turn hard left and follow the path alongside the farm, crossing another stile before you reach a metal gate on your left.

Pass through the metal gate and turn hard right along the field boundary. Remain on this path, keeping to the right hand field boundary and passing another farm on your right.

"Please note that this section of the walk is a bit indistinct and when we visited, quite overgrown"



Before the final metal gate leading into the wooded area look along the fence on your right – you'll find a small section that has been left without barbed wire where you can cross into the field beyond. **D** Drop sharply downhill before climbing and bearing left towards the gully – after about 50 yards you will find a small wooden footbridge. Cross the bridge and turn left, following the boggy track uphill to a wooden stile.



Cross over the wooden stile and, keeping the gorge on your immediate left, follow the path gently downhill. After crossing the stile at the bottom of the hill, continue on following a small dirt track down to the Hyndburn Greenway. **E** Turn left and follow the Greenway for half a mile until you reach a large open field on your right with a kissing gate. Pass through the gate and bear left to follow the path uphill through the newly planted wood, until you emerge onto the hard track near **A**. From here turn right and retrace the route back to the car park.



Walk images provided by Steve Pipe



Steve Pipe