

# Darwen Tower Walk 2



A West Pennine  
Moors Trail



A walk of 2 miles,

1.5 hours –

one short steep ascent



# Darwen Tower Walk No. 2 A walk of

This circular walk takes in some fantastic views of the surrounding countryside from Darwen Moors.

You are strongly advised to use these walk details in conjunction with OS Explorer map No. 287, West Pennine Moors.



1

Start from Sunnyhurst Wood Lychgate car park. Brown tourist signs off the A666 direct you up Earnsdale Road to this car park.

2

Turn right out of the car park up the lane leading past Waterman's Cottage. At the fork keep left, climbing up the hill. Below to the right is Earnsdale Reservoir constructed in 1854 to supply Darwen water. Now sheltered by trees it provides a haven for waterfowl in the winter. Note also Sunnyhurst Wood nestling in the valley bottom and Darwen Golf Course on the hillside beyond.



The Lychgate at Sunnyhurst Woods

3

Continue along the farm track passing Higher Wenshead Farm on your left going through a farm gate. Keep ahead and go through a second farm gate. Carry on along the track until it bears to the right. Here climb the stile on the left by the farm gate. Bear immediately left and climb the steps up the hillside. Note the stone waymarker with the carving of Darwen Tower and direction arrow as you pass over the stile. This is the first of several markers you follow on your route to Darwen Tower.

who burgled the cottage and stole £5. It later became a refreshment house serving teas of oatcakes and buttermilk which became a favourite rendezvous for local picnickers. It fell into disrepair earlier last century.

5

Carry on up the path to the top of the hill. Turn left at the wooden bench which overlooks Stepback Clough. This is typical of the small wooded valleys to be found on the fringes of the high moorland in this area. Stepback is also steeped in local history. It is believed to have got its name when Oliver Cromwell, on the moor with his troops in bad weather said, 'step back, go no further'. How true this is, no one can really be sure! There is however some evidence to suggest that opposing forces

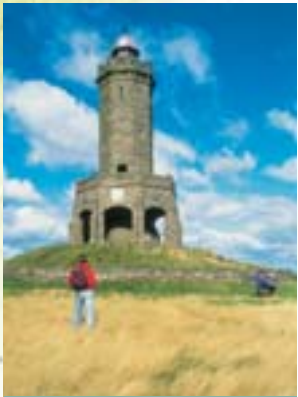
4

Turn right at the top of the steps following the path in front the remains of Stepback Cottage better know as 'Owd Aggies'. The name derives from the owner who was murdered in 1860 by thieves



Sunnyhurst Visitor Centre

# 2 miles, 1.5 hours – one short steep ascent



At the foot of Darwen Tower. An ideal spot for a picnic stop.

# A WEST PENNINE MOORS TRAIL

skirmished not far away in Tockholes. As you turn left at the bench note the stone waymarker again as you continue along the path.

Along this path you can enjoy fine views to your left. Note Ryal Fold, a small group of farmhouse and whitewashed cottages. Amongst the trees is Roddlesworth café and information centre (Tel: 01254 704502)

6

Continue along the path, forking right past a stone waymarker. To your left is Sunnyhurst Hey Reservoir completed in 1875. At one time, during dry weather when levels were low, water was pumped out of old flooded mine workings to replenish the reservoir.

7

Ahead a short path on the right leads up to Darwen Tower.

## DARWEN TOWER

Darwen Tower stands overlooking the town at a height of 1225 feet and is 86 feet tall. It is the most prominent landmark in the area. It has a circular viewing platform on the way up as well as the parapet walk at the top. Its history is written on the shield on the front of the tower.

## WILDLIFE ON THE MOOR

If walking early in the morning, look out for the occasional fox out hunting.



Family Walking on Darwen Moor

Red Grouse can be seen all year round on the moor, with Curlew and Meadow Pipit in the rough pasture. Peregrine Falcons can sometimes be spotted circling overhead. Alongside the drystone walls in the spring look out for Wheatear. The walls are also home to mice, weasels and the Common lizard.

8

After visiting the Tower, retrace your steps down the hill to the Ordnance Survey triangulation point. Take the path on the right and at the next junction carry on straight ahead down the broad path. As you follow the path down note the kissing gate on your right. This is NOT the route back but is the top of Sniddle Hill Lane as it winds downhill to Darwen town centre. A separate leaflet 'Darwen Tower Walk No 1' covering this route was devised in 1996 to commemorate the granting of public access to the moors a hundred years earlier.

9

With the kissing gate on your right continue down the track. To the left you can see the Water Treatment Plant adjacent to Sunnyhurst Hey Reservoir.

10

Continue on passing through a farm gate and on down the track. As the path splits into two, take the fork to the left. At the end of the path turn left (opposite the Sunnyhurst Pub) along Tockholes Road back to Sunnyhurst Wood Lychgate car park.

## THE VIEW FROM THE TOWER

To the south nearby are Winter Hill (1,498ft) with its TV and radio mast and also Great Hill merging with distant Snowdonia and Great Orme's Head, with the Irish Sea beyond. On a clear day the Isle of Man can be seen.

Further along the coast, Southport, Preston and the Ribble Estuary, Blackpool and its tower lead to the River Lune and Black Combe in Cumbria.



Abundant Wildlife.

The hills of the Lake District beyond grace the northern skyline and join the Forest of Bowland and the Yorkshire Dales, where the three statuesque giants, Whernside, Ingleborough and Pen-y-ghent towering beyond Pendle and the Ribbles Valley in the foreground.

A splendid view of Darwin can also be obtained. Note the 300-foot India Mill chimney, which was modelled on the style of a Venetian campanile.

### SUNNYHURST WOOD

Adjacent to the car park is a Lychgate giving access to the woods.

Sunnyhurst Wood was originally planted in the early 1800's to provide cover for game birds, but was purchased by public subscription in 1902 and developed as a woodland park. Covering some 85 acres the wood lies in an attractive valley which is rich in both bird and plant life. Over 280 species of flowering plants can be seen together with a variety of woodland birds including the great spotted woodpecker, nuthatch, tree creeper, tawny owl and the very shy jay. Along the stream the grey wagtail, kingfisher and dipper can also sometimes be glimpsed.

Information on walks, wildlife and local history can be obtained free from the Visitor Centre. The centre houses an exhibition gallery for local artists and also childrens' environmental activities.

The centre is open Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays 1pm – 4.30pm. For more information (01254) 701545 during opening times.

Along the banks of Sunnyhurst Brook in Sunnyhurst Woods is the picturesque Olde England Kiosk, erected in 1911 –12 by public subscription to commemorate the Coronation of King George V.



Red Grouse

The Kiosk serves drinks and snacks, is fully licensed and is also registered for marriage ceremonies. For opening times contact (01254) 701530.



Ramblers at the Lychgate Hotel



Sunnyhurst Woods Bridge. Photo: Lancashire Evening Telegraph

### USEFUL INFORMATION

**Blackburn Tourist Information Centre** (01254) 53277 or [www.tourism.blackburnworld.com](http://www.tourism.blackburnworld.com)

**Travel Centre** (01254) 681120

**Roddlesworth Café & Information Centre** (01254) 704502

**Sunnyhurst Woods Visitor Centre** (01254) 701545

**Lychgate Hotel** (01254) 775632

**Sunnyhurst Pub** (01254) 873035

# THE COUNTRY CODE

- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work.
- Guard against all risk of fire.
- Fasten all gates.
- Keep dogs under close control.
- Keep to paths across farmland.
- Avoid damage to fences, hedges and walls.
- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone.
- Leave no litter.
- Help to keep all water clean.



- Protect wildlife, plants and trees.
- Go carefully on country roads.
- Make no unnecessary noise.

## NOTES FOR WALKERS

### ESSENTIAL KIT

The OS Explorer Map No. 287 (West Pennine Moors) provides excellent aid and information on all areas covered in this guide. (Ordnance Survey *tel:* 08456 050505 / [www.ordsvy.gov.uk](http://www.ordsvy.gov.uk))



### FURTHER INFORMATION

If you are travelling to the start of the walk using public transport, please contact **Blackburn Travel and Local Information Centre**. *Tel:* 01254 681120.

**Blackburn Central Railway Station** (Enquiries). *Tel:* 08457 484950.

For information on local attractions, events, places of interest and accommodation, please contact **Blackburn Tourist Information Centre**. *Tel:* 01254 53277. *Email:* [askus@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:askus@blackburn.gov.uk)

Alternatively visit the **Blackburn with Darwen website** at: [www.tourism.blackburnworld.com](http://www.tourism.blackburnworld.com)

**Blackburn with Darwen Countryside Services Office**. *Tel:* 01254 691239 for countryside information and events.

Please note that every effort has been taken to ensure details are correct at the time of printing. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions, nor any consequence arising from use of the information.

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*Photos:* Mike Tattersall, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council