

The Leeds & Liverpool Canal, with a total length of 127 1/4 miles, was opened in 1816. It links the sea port of Liverpool with the Aire and Calder Navigation at Leeds so forming a through route between the Irish Sea and the North Sea. Although no longer vital to local industry it is now an important attraction for the leisure industry.



Pendle Canal Walks

Circular Walk 1

Mile Tunnel & Slipper Hill

ON THIS WALK

Points of interest:

Look for the small round chimneys in the fields along the line of the tunnel. These shafts are essential to provide ventilation for the tunnel.

Traffic lights just under the entrance to the tunnel. If they are red you may be lucky enough to see a boat coming through from the other side.

Slipper Hill Reservoir – locally known as Old Ebbies - built to supply water to the canal.

Leggers Cabin at the side of the Mile Tunnel - where the leggers used to wait for the short boats.

Flora and Fauna:

The area is home to a wide diversity of life.

Watch out for: Yellow Wagtail, Curlew, Bullfinch, Wren and Dipper. Bats, Fox, Rabbits and Deer. Meadowsweet, Soft Rush, Primrose, Speedwell and Red Campion. The beautiful Hawthorn, Guelder Rose, Oak and Beech. Red Admiral and Meadow Brown Butterflies, Damselfly and Dragonflies.

HOW TO GET THERE

From end of M65 turn left onto Vivary Way, ahead at traffic lights to the roundabout. Take first exit left onto Harrison Drive, continue to the top, going straight across at next roundabout, until the road forks right up to the rugby club car park.

Alternatively...

Walk up to the top of Alkincoates Park, onto the lane past Rookery Cottage until you reach the woodland entrance on the right. On entering the woodland follow the path until you reach the first way marker pointing left.

Please Note: There is no parking adjacent to the woodland on Red Lane.

Further Information

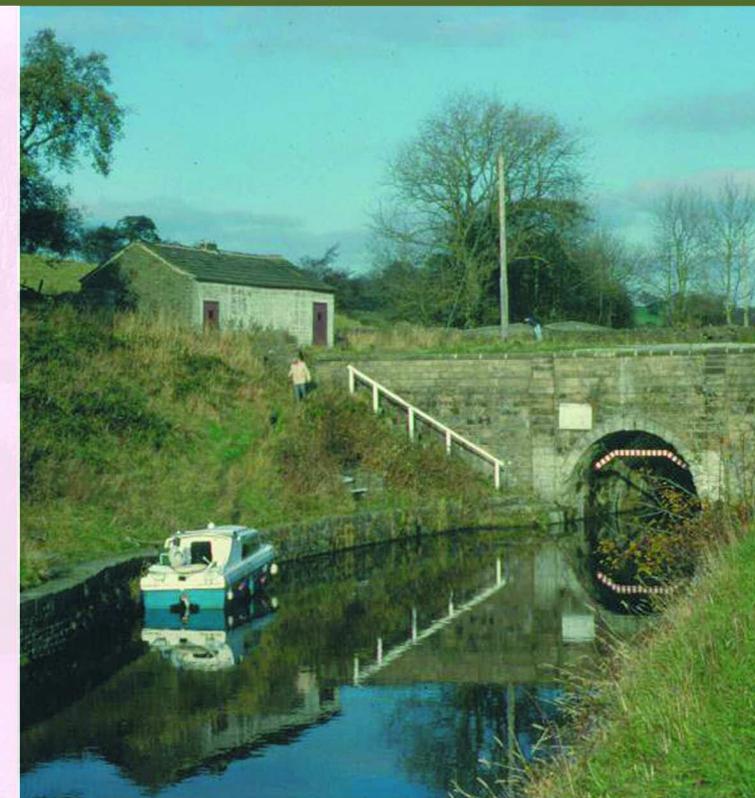
Contact tourist information on 01282 661701 for answers to queries or to be put in touch with members.

Alkincoates Woodland Nature Reserve Group are supported by: PCN, PEN, Groundwork, Pendle Borough Council, Forestry Commission/ ELWOOD, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Green Partnership Awards and Canal Corridor/ Big Lottery. Photographs kindly donated by group members, Peter Laycock and Sacred Heart School.

Funding for this leaflet



2.5 miles approx 1hr 30 minutes - Moderate - level and steep walking
Suitable footwear as can be muddy



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LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

2.5 miles approx 1hr 30 minutes - Moderate - level and steep walking
 Suitable footwear as can be muddy

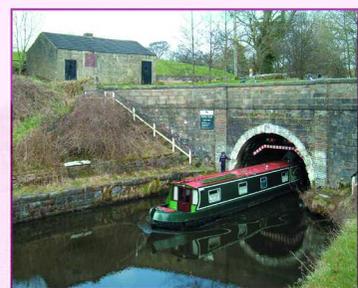
Arrive Rugby Club car park and walk directly across rugby field to access woodland. Follow the stone Waymarkers through the woodland to Red Lane exit.

Cross the road, go down Smithy Lane and take 1st left going past Blue Slate Farm. Just before bridge turn left along path by river, through the stile/gate to reach the head of the Mile Tunnel - the Leggers Cabin is on the right.

Go back to the bridge, cross over and take the stile on the right into a field. Ragged Robin grows wild in this field. Go uphill to the stile accessing the path around Slipper Hill Reservoir. Turn right and follow the path until you come to a stile, then a further stile into a field.

Cross the field until you come to a stile onto an unmade road aptly named Holly Bush Lane. Turn right past Sand Hall House and follow the road until you reach the cycleway. Turn right and follow cycleway back to the road.

At the road take the stile on the opposite side of the road (do not cross stream) into a field. Follow the footpath up the hill exiting onto Red Lane. Turn left and walk a few yards back to the entrance to the woodland, retracing your steps to the car park



The Foulridge Mile Tunnel on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal is exactly 1640 yards long (120 yards shorter than its name suggests)

Completed in 1796, the tunnel was the single most expensive item on the canal. A major engineering achievement taking over 5 years to build at the cost of many lives.

It has no towpath so towhorses were walked along the surface whilst the boats were legged through. Leggers were men laid on their backs, pushing with their legs along the tunnel wall - the journey took a minimum of one and a half hours. A two hourly timetable was used but this has now been replaced by traffic lights

'Buttercup' a dairy cow belonging to farmer Robinson Brown of Blue Slate Farm fell into the water at the Barrowford end of the Mile Tunnel on Tuesday the 24th of September 1912. On emerging at the Foulridge end of the tunnel 'Buttercup' was hauled to dry land by her owner and two farm hands revived her on the bank with a large measure of whisky. Just fifteen days later the remarkable Bovine legend became the proud mother of a sturdy calf. Today almost a century on from Buttercup's legendary feat no other cow has been known to swim the Mile Tunnel.

