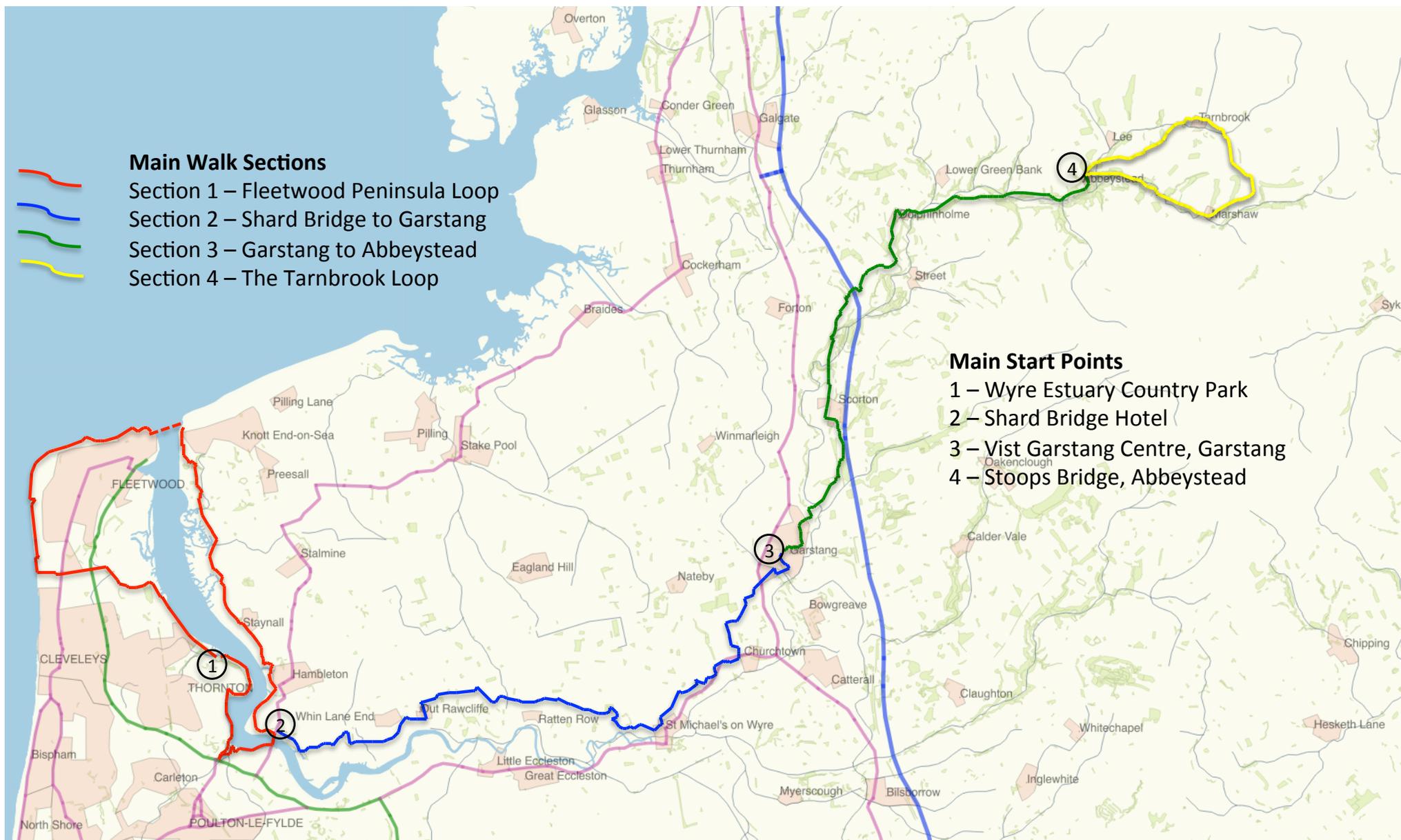


Wyre Self Guided Trails: Wyre Way (Overview Only - detailed Route Covered in individual Section sheets)



Start Points

The primary start point locations are:

- Wyre Estuary Country Park, River Road, Thornton-Cleveleys FY5 5LR
- Shard Bridge Hotel, Old Bridge Ln, Hambleton, Poulton-le-Fylde FY6 9BT
- Visit Garstang Centre, Cherestanc Square Garstang PR3 1EF
- Stoops Bridge, Abbeystead

Distance / Time

Total distance and approximate time for each walk section:

Section 1 - 26 km (16.2 miles) / 6.5-8.5 hours
(Plus Ferry Crossing Time)

Section 2 - 19km (11.8 miles) / 5 – 6 hours

Section 3 - 16km (10 miles) / 4 – 5 hours

Section 4 - 10.5km (6.5 miles) 3 - 4 hours

Maps

OS Landranger 102 - Whole Route at 1:50000 scale

OS Explorer 296 - Sections 1 and 2 at 1:25000 scale

OS Explorer OL41 - Sections 3 and 4 at 1:25000 scale

Terrain

The route follows roads, farm tracks, fields and footpaths. There are stiles, gates and steps, and paths can be wet and muddy after rain.

Gradients are very gentle for most of the walk, however, the final section, the Tarnbrook Loop, has a height gain of 200m (600ft).

There may be animals in the fields and farm yards. Dogs should be kept on a short lead at all times.

THIS WALK IS NOT SUITABLE FOR TRAMPER VEHICLES

About This Walk

The Wyre Way is part of the UK national network of long distance walking routes. The route follows the course of the river Wyre from its estuary outlet into Morecambe Bay to the fells above Abbeystead where the river has its source. The Wyre is the only river in UK where the source is visible from its outlet to the sea. The scenery along the route varies enormously from the wild Irish Sea and Morecambe Bay coastline, busy seaside towns, wide tranquil estuary through undulating pasture land and on up to wild moorland.

Important - Estuary Safety

The initial sections of the walk border the river Wyre Estuary and pathways can flood during high tides when there is a definite risk of drowning. Walkers should plan to do these sections during the period of 3 hours either side of low tide at Fleetwood.

If in doubt find an alternative inland route or contact the Coastguard before setting off.

The route crosses salt-marsh in some places along the estuary, please be aware of deep narrow gullies, often hidden under vegetation, that cross these areas. Also please stay away from areas of open mudflat – these can be dangerous!

Summary Route Description

The route is described in four major sections in the more detailed guides on the website, although these can be divided into smaller sections depending on available time and fitness.

The following text is only meant to provide a short introduction to the route. Consult the Web pages for detailed route descriptions and maps of the individual sections.

Section1: Fleetwood Peninsula Loop

We have chosen the Wyre Estuary Country Park as the starting point, but as this is a circular walk other locations (e.g. Fleetwood or Knott End) could be used. Please be aware that you will need to use the Knott End ferry to cross the Wyre so **check the ferry timetable (available on the internet) before setting out to ensure the ferry service is operating.** Your planning should also ensure you will **avoid periods of high tide when walking between Knott End and Shard Bridge.**

The route begins heading North along the Wyre estuary (a haven for wading birds) before turning inland, crossing the peninsula to join the Irish Sea coast at Rossall. We follow the coast, past the impressive Rossall Point observation tower and marine lakes to the sea front at Fleetwood – with a great outlook over Morecambe Bay to the Lake District. Continue along the sea front, past the lighthouse, to the Knott End Ferry terminal, just past the lifeboat station. Take the ferry across the Wyre Estuary to continue the walk heading South along the river, past the location of old salt mines, along sections of sea defences and salt marsh to the wide span of the Shard Bridge. Cross the river here and return to The Wyre Estuary Country Park past the Skipool Creek yacht moorings (once a busy port) and the Blackpool and Fleetwood Yacht Club.

Section 2: Shard Bridge to Garstang

Starting at the Shard Bridge Hotel, this section begins along the estuary margins before turning inland across the mixed farmland of Northern Fylde. We pass within 2 km of the village of Great Eccleston before eventually re-joining the riverside path through the village of St Michaels, with its beautiful 13th century church. Past the village of St Michaels our route diverges from that shown on the OS map due to lack of public access along the riverside. However, after a short section of road-walking we rejoin the river for most of the way to the village of Churchtown, where you will find another 13th century church and an ancient sundial perched high on a stone pillar in the village centre. Leaving the river, we take a 'short cut', crossing farmland and a couple of busy main roads, before re-joining it again on the way into the busy market town of Garstang, with a final short section along the historic Lancaster canal.

Section 3: Garstang to Abbeystead

From Garstang we head North, initially following the river Wyre, then one of its tributaries – Grizedale Brook. After crossing the bridge over the M6 motorway there's a section of farmland and woodland before joining a quiet country lane into the picturesque village of Scorton. The next section is a very watery landscape dotted with many lakes; evidence of large-scale gravel workings that have now been sensitively returned to nature. After passing through the Wyreside Lakes fishery and caravan site the route re-joins the river Wyre through a lovely stretch of countryside to the former mill village of Dolphinholme. The route to Abbeystead begins high along the side of the river Wyre valley, offering great views across to the North Bowland Fells of Ward's Stone, Grit Fell and Clougha. After

descending to the riverside we pass the site of the tragic Abbeystead water-works explosion of 1984. The final stretch passes in front of the, now disused, Abbeystead dam – which in former times was used to store water for the many mills sited downstream along the river.

Section 4: The Tarnbrook Loop

The Tarnbrook loop is a relatively short walk round the headwaters of the River Wyre, crossing its two main feeder streams – the Marshaw Wyre and the Tarnbrook Wyre. The route touches the edge of the high moorland of the Forest of Bowland and has a much wilder feel than the downstream sections. After crossing pasture land up to the hamlet of Tarnbrook, the route climbs steadily to its high point on Hind Hill, from where, on a clear day there are views down the Wyre Valley to coast, and across Morecambe Bay to the Lake District. The return to Abbeystead follows the course of the Marshaw Wyre, descending through a mixture of grazing land and woodland, past the large country estate house of the Duke of Westminster, and back to Stoops Bridge in Abbeystead.

If you need to speak to someone about this route or report a problem use the following Wyre Council contacts:

Website: Wyre.gov.uk

Address: Civic Centre, Breck Road, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire, FY6 7PU

Telephone: 01253 891000

E-mail: mailroom@wyre.gov.uk