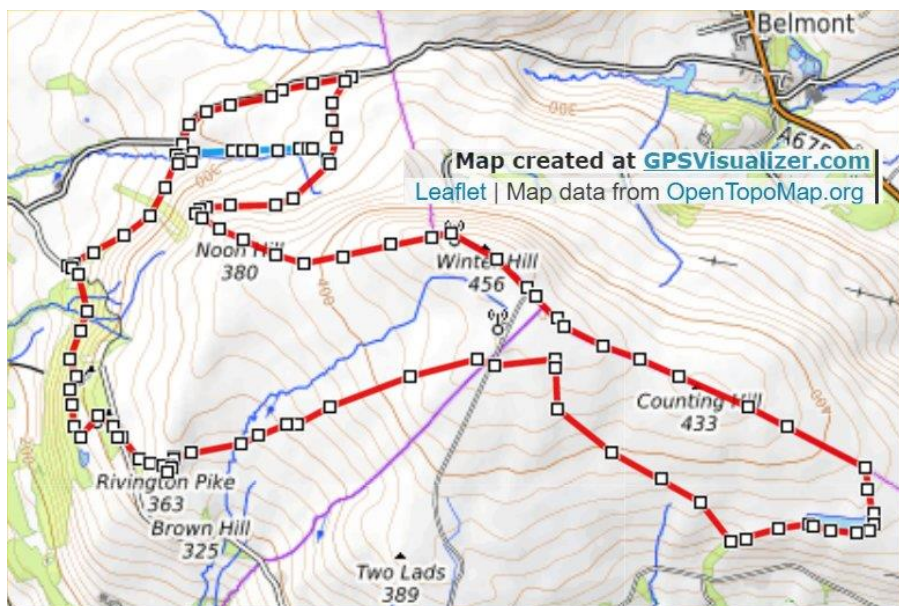


Winter Hill 2

This is one of a series of Winter Hill walks. Here an 8+ mile (optionally 5.5) walk starts from the Pigeon Tower car park and takes a relatively steady ascent to the start of the moor. The moor is crossed on an established, if a touch soggy, path to reach the masts. A circuit around Smithhills moor and past a small reservoir returns to the main mast. From there the moor is crossed directly to (optionally) ascend the Pike and from there a fairly easy descent back to the car park. The route is feasible most of the year but after poor weather some stretches could be difficult.

There is a convenient lunch stop shortly after reaching the masts and a further pleasant rest stop by the reservoir.

The start point is the Pigeon Tower Car Park. SD638149 BL6 7SB (that's Rivington Hall Barn but not that nearby). There is a voluntary £2 charge done by phone.



It is important to always be appropriately dressed for the conditions and carry, and know how to use, a suitable map for the walk.

This description can be used/printed/shared for personal use, or to lead a walk but not for commercial use without the author's written consent. 2-June-2016



1: SD 638149 At the lower entrance to the Pigeon Tower Car Park there are three roads. The left most one goes to the upper car park. Whichever car park you use the start of the walk is at the entrance of the Upper car park. Look for an opening on the right going uphill.



2: SD 638149 Follow this clear path uphill. After passing through a kissing gate there are open views over the Lancashire plain. You can stay with this path for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile(800m) although there are some alternatives. After under $\frac{1}{3}$ rd mile(550m) another kissing gate leads to two paths.



3: SD 643151 This route will go straight (leftish) ahead but the right hand steep incline is a short cut to **Point 6** close to the start of the moor ascent. It cuts off about 1.5miles but climbs 240ft rapidly. Continuing ahead pass a style and kissing gate and in 289yds(250m) reach a style leading down into a gully.



4: SD 644154 The main route is down through the gully and up onto the road. However from this style you can see a path heading uphill to the right. This is a clear and more interesting shortcut, But it does involve stepping over one barbed wire fence. If taken, turn right when it meets a road and find **Point 7** in $\frac{1}{2}$ mile(800m)

5: SD 644155 On the main route ahead you reach the road around a collapsing gate. Turn right and follow the (fairly busy) road for 2/3rd mile(1Km) looking for a road going sharply right near the top of the road. On the way you pass a footpath sign that is probably another access to the path mentioned in Point 4.



6: SD 653158 Turn right onto this rocky path, through the gate and follow it for 3/4mile(1.2Km). On the way pass some steps on the left which is a more direct route to the masts. Look for a kissing gate on the left with a stile on the right (that's from Point 3 above). (if you miss this gate there is another in 130yds (120m) leading to the same track.



7: SD 645151 Go through the gate and continue uphill on an obvious grassy path to reach the cairn on Noon Hill. Other paths merge on the way. From the cairn look towards the main mast to observe a number of paths ahead. All may be soggy but the right hand higher one contouring the slope tends to be easier. (The paths lead to the left most mast).



8: SD 658150 Depending upon which path is taken, the left most mast is reached from slightly different directions but find the tarmac road leading from it to the other masts. Continue on the road (visit trig point and views on the left?). Reach a cross roads, which on the right leads to the main mast. On the left is a gate.





9: SD 662147 Go through the gate. A few yards down the road is a bench on the left if a refreshment stop is required. But to continue return to the gate. There is a path heading SE (right when looking downhill!) on both sides of the gate. The two paths shortly merge at a gate. Continue beside the fence for 1.2miles(1.9Km) passing 2(3?) styles on the way. Watch for a kissing gate.



10: SD 680138 Go through the gate and continue ahead to find a small reservoir in some 270yds(240m). A pleasant place for a rest. Continue around the reservoir to the diagonally opposite corner and then continue on the path leading downhill, in due course towards some steps.



11: SD 672134 Go down the steps and back up the other side. Follow this wide track for 1 mile(1.6Km) to reach the road near the main mast. The track can be very rutted. Near the end it curves right and then left onto a board walk before reaching the road.



12: SD 660143 Across the road find a path that goes between the two mast restraints in this picture. That crosses the moor to reach the Pike. The path is wide, possibly soggy and can be busy! It is almost exactly 1 mile(1.6Km). At the lowest point is a collapsed bridge.

13: SD 647139 At the bridge it's easy to cross in most weather, in poor weather it can be muddy/soggy but a way around can be found. The pike is obvious ahead. This path arrives at the road that weaves around the Pike.



14: SD 644138 On reaching the road through this gate either use the road to ascent the Pike, OR to bypass the Pike go RIGHT which will lead to the other side and to the return route.



15: SD 643138 There are good all round views from the Pike and it's likely to be quite busy. When ready to continue, go to the opposite (south) side where there are steep steps down. (or return down the upward track). In either case continue down southwards to reach a road beside a building (toilet block).



16: SD 643139 Go through the gate and across the road to reach the road on the other side of the toilet block. Follow this road as it zig zags downward and eventually reaches the car park. On the way take notice of the information boards and perhaps look at some ruins. You can take a bit of a diversion if preferred. If so follow the next steps.





17: SD 641140 At the Bolton Lodge information board, turn left down the steps.



18: SD 640140 Reaching one of the “zigs” cross straight over and shortly turn left down some lengthy steps heading towards an arch. At the bottom of the steps is an information board about the “Lawns”. At the arch, turn round for a better view. Then go through the arch and promptly find the final zig of the road.



19: SD 639140 At the road turn right and follow it back to the car park. There are more information boards and an interesting bridge.



20: SD 638142 Levers Bridge.
A visit to all of these gardens will need about ½ day.

End of Walk.
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