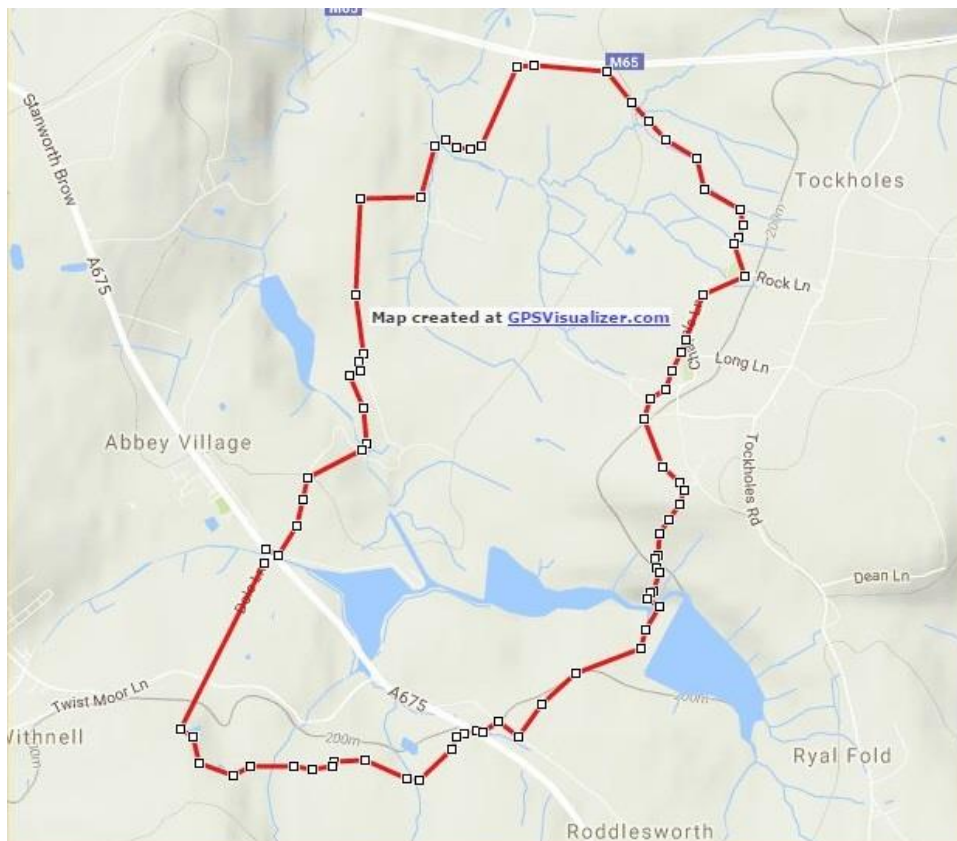


Abbey Village Circular

This is a 5.4 mile walk starting from the Hare and Hounds in Abbey Village. Mainly traversing fields, country paths and farm tracks, it heads north to the M65 motorway, returns through the reservoirs, across the A675 and around the quarry back to the start. The route undulates a lot but gives good views over various local hills on the way. Much of the route follows stretches of the Witton Weaver Way. Reasonable underfoot although some narrow paths may be muddy in wet weather.

Park on the road besides the Fox & Hounds or opposite on Twist Moor Lane.



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

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1 SD643224 Start by walking down the lane at the side of the pub passing some new houses (c.2015) on the left. Continue down the lane as it turns right at Bensons Farm and ignore the style/gate on the left shortly after that. Further down the road look for a footpath on both sides of the lane.



2: SD646227 Go through the opening on the left which promptly leads to a footbridge. Cross the bridge and start up the steps to the right. After a very short distance, watch for the path leading sharp left heading up towards a fence. Follow this crossing one plank bridge and then another leading to a style.



3: SD646229 Cross the style and continue in the same direction following a fence on the left. After a time you reach another style.



4: SD646230 Cross the style and turn immediately to the right to soon find another style which is crossed and a few yards further you reach a farm track. Turn left and follow the track for 630yds (580m) until you reach Bradley's Farm.

5: SD646237 Go through two gates and turn right down the drive to the farm. Follow down the drive for 970yds (890m), through a gate, then turns left and continues downward. It turns right and crosses a bridge to continue right upwards and then bends left. In due course it reaches a motorway underpass.



6: SD652242 Immediately before the underpass is a footpath on the right. It leads to a style into a footpath fenced on both sides and follows a few feet from the motorway on the left. This can be a very muddy path in the wrong weather. Look to the right for good views of Darwen Tower. In due course this leads to a ladder style.



7: SD655241 Cross the style and turn and follow the wall on your right towards another style. Near this style is supposed to be the grave of about 40 horses along with cannonballs from a serious battle around 1664. It is assumed that the nearby church graveyard has some of the resulting dead in it.



8: D656240 Cross the style promptly crossing a footbridge and following the path up to another style. Cross the style and follow the fence now on your right. After about 246yds (225m) through this field there is a gate and a style on your right.





9: SD659238 It is important to cross this style to get on the correct side of the fence. Turn immediately left and continue more or less in the same direction but with the fence on your left now. After this bears left somewhat, you reach another style.



10: SD659237 Cross this style and continue a bit further to cross another style and an immediate plank bridge. Turn right and follow the fence to reach another style just before an attractive house.



11: SD660235 Cross the style. In summer you may pass an attractive garden to reach the drive to the house. Turn left and follow the drive until it reaches Tockholes Road. Turn right (beside a church) and after a few metres you reach the arched entrance to the churchyard.



12: D660234 This is about halfway around the walk and is a convenient place for a refreshment stop, offering seating and shelter. Explore the churchyard. Once refreshed, continue in the same direction along Tockholes Road until you reach Lodge Farm.

13: SD658231 In reasonable weather go through the opening and cross diagonally across the field to a gate (avoid the geese). Go through the gate and across the field to a steel gate. If the weather is very poor, look at a map and see you can use roads/paths to get to the style at **16:SD658226** below (but then on your right).



14: SD658230 Follow the (Shaw Brook) farm drive up to a T junction and turn right to walk down this lane. After a short distance (50yds/45m) there is a set of steps leading to a style on the left. Take care it's easy to miss it!



15: SD657229 Cross the style and head uphill half right to the obvious style at the top of the field. This is an unusual double style/opening. The gate may be easier if in a group. Cross the road and go through another opening into a field. Head up the hill with the wall on your right. In due course you reach an opening leading into Higher Hill Farm.



16. SD658226 Go through the opening and cross the drive to go over the style more or less opposite. Head half right across the small field to another style. But take time to notice this listed house and it's garderope.





17: SD658225 Cross the stile and continue downhill. DO NOT follow the obvious track heading half right. You MUST head to the left of a fence that splits the fields. Continue downhill towards the reservoirs to find a collapsed stile (no fence) and shortly a metal kissing gate. This can be particularly muddy after bad weather



18: SD657234 Go through the gate and promptly cross the path around the reservoirs. Find one of the paths leading directly downhill in the same direction which all lead to a short walled path leading to a metal bridge over the outflow. After bad weather this may have an impressive torrent of water flowing down it.



19: SD657221 Cross the bridge and turn immediately right. You are walking at the bottom of the embankment of the upper Roddlesworth reservoir. Ahead is a footbridge.



20: SD656221 Cross the bridge to reach a track. Turn left and follow the track for 490yds (460m), passing through one gate and later reaching another gate that has the footpath gate in an unusual position on the right.

21: SD652218 Go through the gate and continue down the farm drive. On reaching a T junction turn right and continue for 110yds (100m) passing a drive on your right to reach a stile on your left that is a bit hidden behind a tree.



22: SD651218 Cross the stile and go downhill, with the wall on your left, to cross a minor stream and head half right uphill to reach another stile that leads onto the very busy A675.



23: SD650217 Cross the road and head upwards to another pair of styles separated by a short distance. Continue upwards with the fence on your left and over the brow to head down towards a small river. The final approach to a footbridge is often muddy but with plenty of stones underfoot.



24: SD648215 Cross the bridge and head upwards staying beside the fence on your left. Once you reach the brow of this ridge, there are some good views. Also you will soon see a wood ahead. You are heading for the left hand corner of the wood to find another footbridge.





25: SD643216 Cross the bridge and also the style immediately on the left. Turn right and head uphill. You stay with the fence on the right as you ascend and follow around the quarry, which is now a wood yard. Continue around the quarry and then downhill where you will soon see the starting pub in the distance. You reach a style.



26: SD640217 You need to cross this style and then another shortly ahead to exit onto a wide grass area heading downhill. At the bottom is a ladder style.



27: SD640219 The ladder style crosses onto the road, at the entrance to the wood yard, that leads directly back to the start. Follow the road back to the start.

The End

Eric Crichton 9-3-2016