

# Walk the Way in a Day

## Walk 42 Stoodley Pike and Rochdale Canal

A short but varied walk encompassing a wooded valley side, a moorland ridge, an attractive dene and a canal towpath. The imposing monument on Stoodley Pike is the principal landmark in the area, offering spectacular views over Upper Calderdale.

Pennine Way

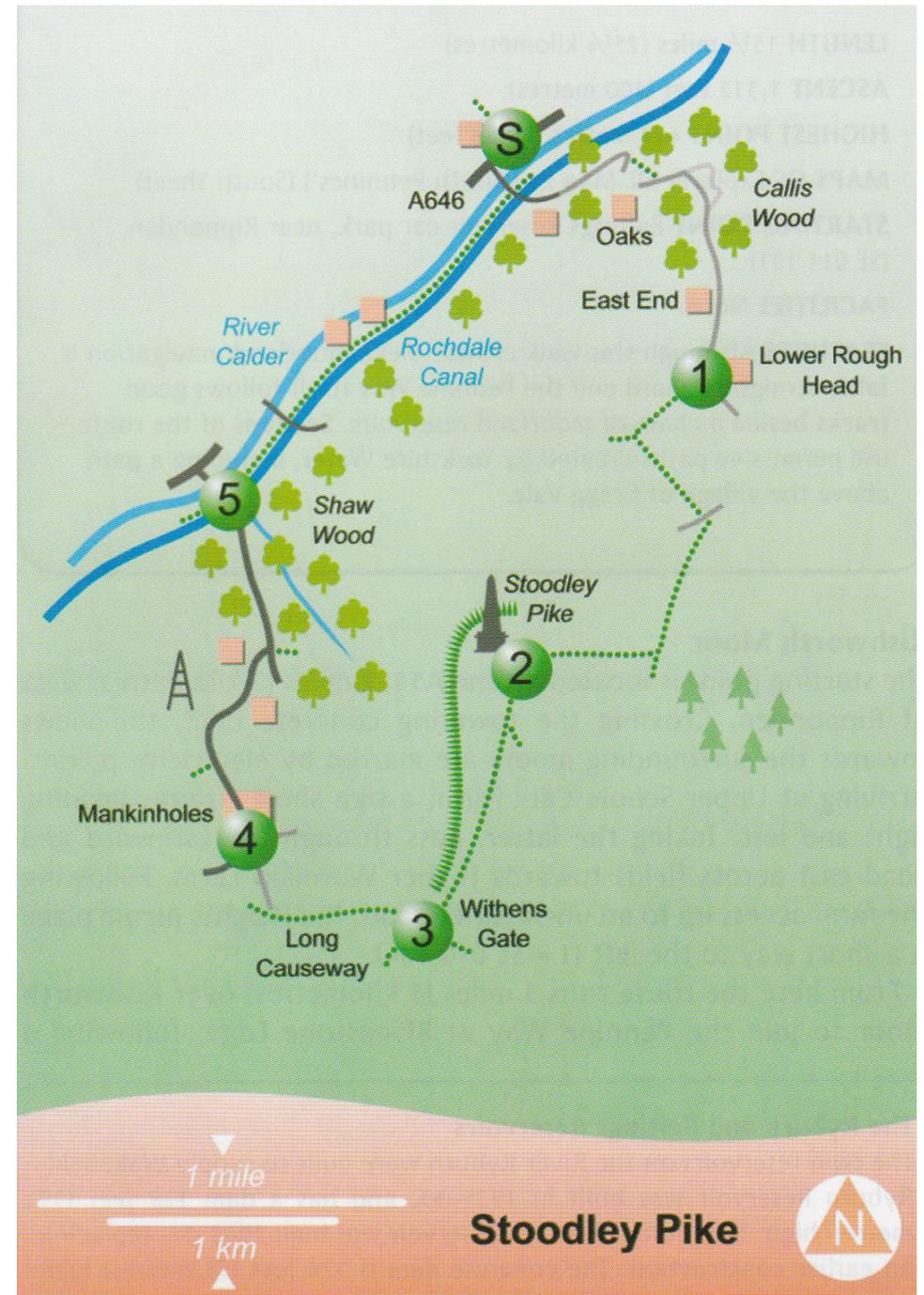
50 YEARS



Length:	6¾ miles (10¾ kilometres)
Ascent:	968 feet (295 metres)
Highest Point:	400 metres (1,312 feet)
Map(s):	OS Explorer OL Map 21 ('South Pennines') (South Sheet)
Starting Point:	Pennine Way car park, near Charlestown (SD 972 265)
Facilities:	Full range of services at Hebden Bridge.
Website:	<a href="http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/pennine-way/route/walk-way-day-walk-42-stoodley-pike-and-rochdale-canal">http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/pennine-way/route/walk-way-day-walk-42-stoodley-pike-and-rochdale-canal</a>

### Callis Wood

The first part of the walk follows the Pennine Way for 1¼ miles (2¼ kilometres) as it heads up through Callis Wood. Starting at the car park beside the A646, this time cross over the busy main road and join an access road crossing the River Calder and the Rochdale Canal before heading up the wooded valley side. As the track turns towards Oaks farm, the Pennine Way cuts the corner, following a path threading through birch trees. Rejoining the track, a finger sign marks a choice of ways, with one route heading steeply uphill and another taking a more circuitous course through a materials store. Continuing south, the track eventually emerges into the open before entering a walled lane running through pasture. Ahead are views of Stoodley Pike, while the group of farm buildings off to the north-east is Erringden Grange, a 17th century model farm. At Lower Rough Head farm, as the lane turns left, the Pennine Way crosses a stile



on the right (1 = SD 980 253).

### **Stoodley Pike**

From here the Pennine Way is followed over Stoodley Pike for 2 miles (3¼ kilometres). Heading south-west along the edge of a field, then diagonally over rushy ground, the path swings around to head south-east beside a drystone wall. Crossing straight over a stony track (London Road), a finger sign shows the path heading uphill, passing an overgrown quarry set among grassy moorland. Climbing over a tall ladder stile, turn right (west) and head towards a narrow gap in an intersecting wall. From here a cairned path runs towards the monument on Stoodley Pike (2 = SD 973 242).

#### **Stoodley Pike**

*Stoodley Pike is a promontory above a steep, boulder-strewn scarp, reaching 1,312 feet (400 metres) above sea-level. The name is popularly applied to an imposing monument, taking the form of a stone obelisk some 120 feet (37 metres) high. This was built in 1814 to commemorate Napoleon's abdication and the Peace of Ghent, but collapsed in 1854, being rebuilt two years later to mark the end of the Crimean War. Stoodley Pike is thought to have been a prehistoric burial site, and human remains were discovered here when the monument was erected. Up close the soot-blackened monument is not particularly appealing, although it does offer tremendous views. A viewing platform is gained by means of a winding staircase, although this is pitch-dark and few brave the ascent.*

The moorland ridge is cut-off sharply, with a steep scarp running away from Stoodley Pike. This is a rugged place, but it is by no means remote. Below the escarpment is modern housing estate, hopelessly out of character, occupying the site of the former Stansfield View Hospital (which was built as a workhouse for Todmorden's poor). A ribbon of development running up the valley floor leads towards Todmorden. Wind farms can be seen on the moorland plateaux to the north-east (Ovenden) and north-west (Cliviger), while to the south is the Windy Hill transmitter.

After taking time to enjoy the views and perhaps have lunch, a cairned path runs south-south-west along the edge of the scarp. Looking ahead, Gaddings Dam can be seen on the moors above Langfield Edge. Many of the reservoirs in this area were built to supply the Rochdale Canal, although this example was created for the benefit of the cotton mills. Continuing through an overgrown quarry, the path heads down towards a saddle, passing a tall standing stone. Ahead is Withens Gate, where we leave the Pennine Way and turn onto the Long Causeway (3 = SD 968 231).

#### **The Long Causeway**

*The Long Causeway (or Long Stoop) originated as a corpse road and pack-horse route crossing the ridge between Cragg Vale and Mankinholes. Most of the flagged causeys in this area were created during the early 18th century. This is a particularly fine example, with scuffed stones recalling centuries of use. Today it is part of the Calderdale Way - a 50-mile (81 kilometre) circular walk created in 1978, starting at Halifax.*

#### **Mankinholes**

The causey zigzags steeply downhill, then continues in a westerly direction between a drystone wall and a rushy gully. Looking ahead, the tower at Lumbutts Mill can be seen. Arriving at a gate, turn right, leaving the flagged path and joining a walled lane heading north through pasture towards Mankinholes, where it meets an unclassified road (4 = SD 960 235).

#### **Lumbutts Mill**

*The tower at Lumbutts once contained three waterwheels, stacked vertically, providing 54 horse power for the adjacent cotton mill. It was fed by water siphoned from the nearby Lee and Heeley Dams. The buildings now serve as an activity centre.*

Ignoring a turning on the right signed as the Pennine Bridleway, follow the quiet road through the cluster of attractive Millstone Grit cottages. This

place was the location of a Quaker meeting place from 1667. Beside the road is a row of stone water troughs once used by pack-horses. Passing the youth hostel, continue along the road as it leaves the village. The stone cross in a field on the left was placed here to commemorate a visit by John Wesley. The road (New Road) was built during the cotton famine to provide a route for a local mill-owner (Honest John Fielden) to travel to his lodge in Cragg Vale. Continuing along an avenue of sycamore trees, another road is met at the head of Shaw Wood. Ignoring a gap in the low wall opposite (which marks the start of an overgrown path with very slippery steps), follow the road down through the dene. Arriving at the bottom, cross over the canal next to Shawplains Lock (5 = SD 959 247).

### ***Rochdale Canal***

The final part of the return route follows the towpath for 1½ miles (2¼ kilometres). At Holmcoat Lock, cross straight over an access road and continue along the towpath. Passing another lock (Callis), head under a stone bridge and turn off the towpath, rejoining the access road before it crosses the river to reach the A646. Arriving back at the starting point, there should be plenty of time to visit Hebden Bridge, with its range of specialist shops.

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