



Houldsworth Village and other locations
of the Ashton Canal

STOCKPORT

Walking Podcast

Talks...

Free downloadable tour guide online!

This walk is part of a series, for more information and other walks in the series visit:
www.stockport.gov.uk/walkingpodcasts

Other walks in the series include...

Peak Forest Canal (South)

Manchester & Stockport Canal

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all those involved in the making of this publication, as well as those who volunteered their time to feature on the podcast, without whose help these productions would not have been possible.

A free interpreting service is available if you need help with this booklet/leaflet.
Please telephone Stockport Interpreting Unit on 0161 477 9000.

如果你需要他人為你解釋這份資料的內容，我們可以提供免費的傳譯服務。
請致電 0161 477 9000 史托波特傳譯部。

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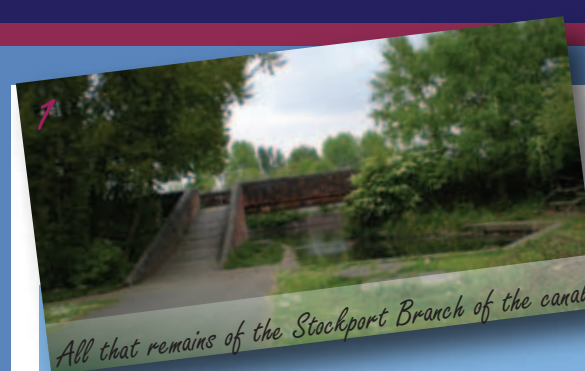
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The Manchester and Stockport branch of the Ashton Canal

The History

Built between 1793 and 1797.

The Stockport and Manchester Canal, or "Lanky Cut" as it was locally known, was used throughout two centuries to bring coal, among other things, to the mills and industries alongside the cut in Gorton and Reddish. The canal, which stretched almost 5 miles from the Clayton junction to the outskirts of Stockport town, fell prey to changes in the economy and dwindling traffic in the early 1900's. Allowed to deteriorate and lie derelict for many years, the decision was made to fill the canal in during the 1960's. An arduous drawout process which continued until 1970.

Whats there now?

The scenes along the canal route have changed drastically over the years, and with the closure of the canal in the 1970's, a large amount of the original canal line has been built over in Reddish, but in Gorton most of the route follows a footpath. The route is full of history, giving an insight into the development of the area's that lay along the canal, and the notable people and industries that drove the growth of the towns.

The future of the canal...

Canal restoration has been going on in the UK for 40 years, and now attention is being brought to the Stockport canal route. As well as providing a green corridor, that will create a habitat for animals, birds and other wildlife. The restoration would bring many amenities for the community and beautify the corridor.

On the Podcast: Manchester and Stockport Canal Society chairman, Peter Scott, talks about the societies aims for the canals restoration.

For more information on the canals history and regeneration visit the MSBC's website www.msbc.org.uk



Lower Gorton reservoir from Debdale Park



Looking down the Ashton Canal

1, 2 & 3. Clayton Junction, Gorton Reservoirs & Debdale Park

We start our journey at Clayton junction where the canal once joined to the Ashton-under-Lyne canal. To get to the starting point, it is necessary to make your way from Ashton New Road and walk down the Ashton Canal locks, as illustrated on the "Where do I start?" section overleaf. Clayton Junction can be found between locks 11 & 12.

Here you can see what is left of the canal, in the form of a short stretch of water heading under a bridge off the ashton canal. Here barges carrying goods would go on to deliver their loads to other destinations on the canal circuit.

Backing on to Debdale Park are the Gorton reservoirs. Built much later than the canal in the 1820's, it is the only reservoir to have had a canal running along the top of its dam. In the 1800's most of the site was owned by Mr J.S. Grimshaw, a local hatter, and was later bought by the city council and was transformed into a formal park after the 1st world war.

A haven away from the busy roads, Debdale park is a lovely location for a relaxing stroll, or why not find a quiet spot for a picnic?

The park offers open green spaces, as well as beautifully kept gardens, a bandstand, tennis courts bowling green and a miniature golf course.



Entrance to Debdale park from Hyde Road

4 & 10. North & South Reddish Parks

North Reddish park is the largest park in Reddish. We arrive into the park through a public right of way passage from Furnival Street. As the park opens up we head towards the south exit. With a little bit of imagination you can see the where the line of the canal would of been, alongside the trees within the park!



Hump Back Bridge, entrance to Gorton Dry Dock

South Reddish park offers good sized football pitches, we will be cutting through this park on our way to Nelstrop's Mill and the end of the route. The map shows that the canal would of cut right through where the fields are now.

On the Podcast: John Bradshaw shares his memories of the dry dock, dredgers and canal boats.



Victoria Mill, Reddish

5. Victoria & Elisabeths Mills

Another two major mills on the route. They have been renovated in recent years as part of the Houldsworth Village project. Formerly cotton mills, originally built in 1874, now serving as commercial and living spaces.



Sir William Houldsworth
1834-1917

On the Podcast: Hear about the strange microclimates caused by the mills output, huge goldfish and other "things" that could be seen in and alongside the canal...



Artist impression of Broadstone Mill with the canal in view

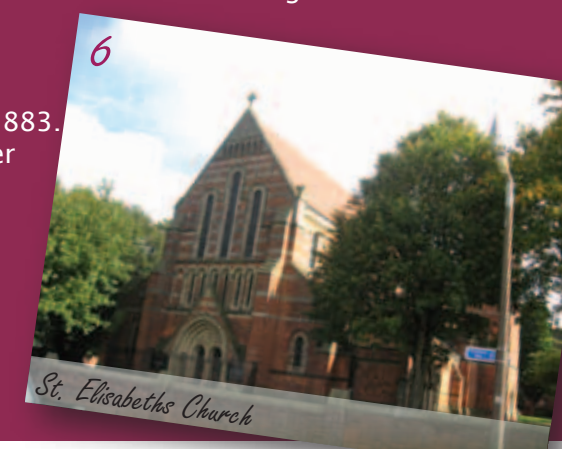
On the Podcast: Mike Kiernan talks us through the growth of the mills and the industrial revolution.

6. St. Elisabeths Church

St. Elisabeths, named after William Houldsworths wife, forms a central part of the community built under Houldsworths' vision. The church, along with the houses surrounding the mill, school, and working mens club, were all built by Houldsworth to satisfy the social, educational and spiritual needs of his employees and the surrounding area.

An exquisite grade II building, the church was designed by renowned architect, Alfred Waterhouse, in 1883. His other works include Manchester Town Hall and Londons Natural History Museum.

Today the church is very much active in the community, housing its own choir and putting on many activities and events!



St. Elisabeths Church

7. Houldsworth Mill

The largest cotton mill in the world at its time! Houldsworth Mill, established as Reddish Mill, was built by Sir William Houldsworth in 1865.

Houldsworth played a large part in the development of Reddish, establishing his mill in what was, at that time, a distinctly rural location. Luring people to the area with the jobs that the mill provided. He built homes for the workers to live in, as well as constructing St. Elisabeths' church, school and Houldsworths working mens club for his employees.

In 1920, the Houldsworth four-faced clock was unveiled in Houldsworth Square for his achievements. The clock is still there today and can be seen if you detour from the route down Rupert Street, opposite Houldsworth Mill.

On the Podcast: Hear from Paula Rands, talking us through the development of Houldsworths' community.

8. Broadstone Mill

There are ambitious plans for the future of Broadstone Mill, with plans to rebuild the mill's south end to accommodate further commercial, retail and residential space, as well as reinstating the canal basin to form a marina at the front of the mill.

- Houldsworth Village

Built in 1903 Broadstone Mill was originally a six-storey double mill, powered by a central engine house. Mills such as Broadstone, drew water straight from the canal for the condensers. In 1957 the 2nd mill was demolished, and later in 1965 the engine house was demolished, leaving the 1st mill standing.

On the Podcast: Broadstone director Richard Sym, describes the mill and the plans for the future.



Broadstone Mill
2010

9. Craven Brothers

What is now known as the Vauxhall Industrial Estate, previously housed the famous Craven Brothers. Founded in 1853 and run by the three siblings, Greenwood, William and John Craven. Makers of machine tools such as huge industrial lathes and plano millers building up a huge export trade with India, Finland, Canada, Australia, and Brazil.



Vauxhall Estate from Greg Street

"Time served apprentices received no indentures except for a pat on the back and advised to, 'Just tell 'em where you're from lad!'"
- Ex-apprentice of the works

11. Nelstrops Flour Mill

We end our journey on Sheffield Road, behind Nelstrops Flour Mill. William Nelstrop moved into the mill in 1821, developing the business and becoming an important figure in the community, serving as Mayor of Stockport. The mill has remained a family business for six generations, and claims to be the oldest family miller in the UK!

On the Podcast: We talk to three generations of the family business, hearing the stories of Martin Nelstrop, about work and life on the canal in the 1930's

As with a lot of mills built in this era, the original structure was destroyed in a fire in 1893, but was rebuilt shortly after.

Interestingly, during the second world war, one side of the mill was painted to look like a row of houses to avoid bombing from the luftwaffe!



At the end of our route:
Nelstrops Flour Mill, backing on to Wharf Street

STOCKPORT Walking Podcast

Look out for these "On the Podcast" bubbles highlighting what you can find out by listening to the podcast!

How It Works

This map is designed to be used in conjunction with an audio walking podcast. The podcast creates a narrative of the route using first hand accounts of local people, heritage experts, and businesses who know about the current and historical points of interest on the route. Spinning a tale of the scenes on the route throughout the years and hopes for the future regeneration.

To download the audio:

1. Simply visit the stockport website at - www.stockport.gov.uk/walkingpodcasts
2. Click the link to the Manchester and Stockport Canal walk.
3. To listen to the audio as you walk, click **download** to begin the .mp3 file transfer to your computer, then upload to an mp3 player before going on the walk.

Alternatively

4. By clicking on **Play**, you can listen to the audio accompanied by a slideshow, illustrating the sights and locations, past and present, along the route of the walk.

If you do choose to listen to the audio as you walk, please do take care and ensure you **pause the podcast when crossing roads**, until you are in a safe environment to resume listening.

Where Do I Start?

See opposite for photo of start point (Clayton Junction)



Gorton Footpath



Broadstone Mill



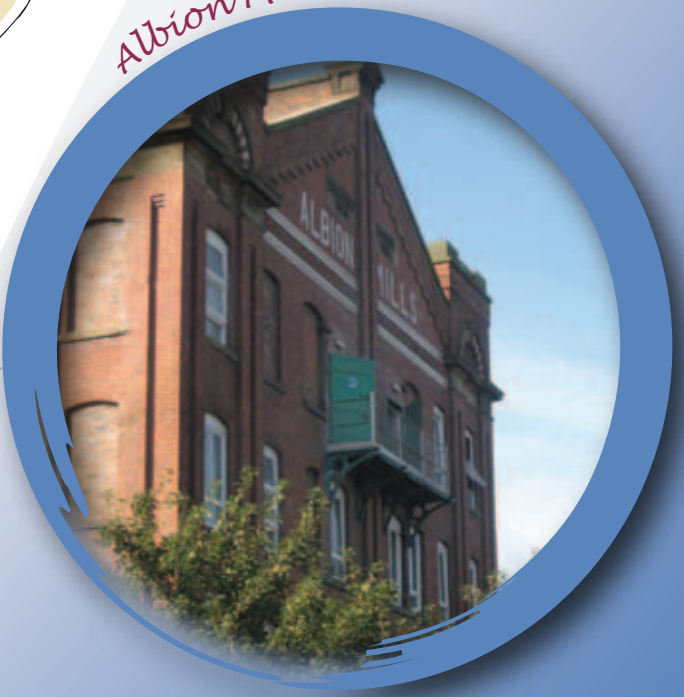
St. Elisabeth's Church



Houldsworth Mill



Albion Mill



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If you have any general comments about the map or suggestions for specific details please contact us.

Map Key

Walking Route		Buildings	
Manchester & Stockport Canal Route		Important Landmark/Buildings	
Railway		Church	
Main Road		Train Station	
Fields/parks		Point Of Interest	

Bus service route numbers are written in **Blue** text on all major roads. E.g. 7,203,317

For more detailed travel information contact GMPTE services on 0161 244 1000

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