



2 kilometres / 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Accessibility – All this route is on pavements and avoids steps.

## A lunchtime stroll in Leeds City Centre

There are numerous bridges and river crossings in Leeds. However, there is only one referred to affectionately as “Leeds Bridge”. This is where our walk starts.

There has been some form of crossing here since the middle ages. The bridge you see today was built out of cast iron in the early 1870's. In 1888 the bridge was witness to a world first. The “Father of Cinematography”, Louis Le Prince, shot what is considered to be the world's earliest moving pictures from the bridge.

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Walk across Leeds Bridge and take a right along Dock Street.

Dock Street began its life as a commercial entity in the 1800's. Then, during the Industrial Revolution, the canal network provided the catalyst for the city's growth. As its name suggests, boats used to dock along Dock Street. A deep dock allowed the loading and unloading of barges into warehouses.

Today Dock Street still looks familiar, but the warehouses have become housing and business spaces. Converted and conserved in the 1980's.

Continuing along Dock Street you will pass Centenary Bridge. This bridge was built in 1993 to celebrate 100 years since Leeds was granted city status. It also created better pedestrian access across the Aire.

Dock Street c. 1930  
By kind permission of Leeds  
Libraries, [www.leodis.net](http://www.leodis.net)



Continue along Dock Street and you will come to Brewery Wharf.

Once owned by Tetley's Brewery this was once a Brewery museum. Here it offered snapshots of pubs through history, from the monastic hostelries of the 1300's to the austerity of the Second World War. Like a lot of the riverside properties, these former industrial buildings are now restaurants and bars.

Walk through the red tunnel and you will emerge with a view of the river. Follow the Royal Armouries Riverside Walk.

Riverside photographs and walk kindly produced  
by Abby Carroll from the University of Leeds





Carry on walking alongside the Aire towards The Royal Armouries and you will pass Crown Point Bridge.

Crown Point Bridge was the main passing point in and out of Leeds towards Hunslet. Built in 1842 it is a grade 2 listed building. It was designed by George Leather, but attributed to George's son, John Wignall Leather. The pair played a key part in development in the Leeds area at the time, developing the Aire and Calder Navigation, and a series of bridges, including Monk Bridge (1827) and Victoria Bridge (1839).

A great deal more wildlife calls the river in Leeds city centre their home than you may realise. Herons are frequent visitors and otters have been caught on CCTV in the city centre.

Once at Crown Point Bridge either duck under the bridge on the river side footpath or take a slight right and pass through the painted tunnel.

Passing through the mural, on the other side you will see artwork by the Canal and Rivers Trust. This highlights influential people in the health, sport, arts and innovation industries who have spent part of their life in Leeds.

Keep walking and we are now at Leeds Dock. The dock was constructed for boats using the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and the Aire and Calder Navigation in 1843. It was primarily used to bring coal from collieries around Rothwell and Wakefield to supply heavy industries in Hunslet and for businesses in Leeds city centre. On the dock you can see this map listing the industries present at Leeds Dock from 1843 – 1990.



From here you will also be able to see the Royal Armouries, a national museum that opened in 1996. This contains collections that were previously stored in the Tower of London. Displays include topics such as war, peace and hunting. It was the building of the Royal Armouries in 1996 that kick started the regeneration of Leeds Dock into the contemporary tech, media, and creative industries hub that it is today.

### Walk and cross the Knights Way Bridge.

Whilst crossing the bridge its worth standing and taking in the view. The weir before you can be lowered by deflating the huge air bags that hold it up to reduce the risk of flooding to Leeds. To the left you can see a fish pass allowing fish to cross the weir.

You might be surprised by what wildlife you can find in the Aire

This walk is part of the Developing the Natural Aire programme. This partnership programme between the Environment Agency and The Aire Rivers Trust is reconnecting sixty kilometres of your river with fish passes to enable wildlife to thrive and Atlantic salmon to return.

Some day soon Atlantic salmon will be swimming past you on their way to breed in shallow, gravelly river and stream beds around Skipton.

Atlantic salmon caught and returned by the Environment Agency in the River Aire below Leeds in 2010



Walk across Knights Bridge and turn left walking back alongside the river towards Crown Point Bridge. Once there go up the steps and cross the main road, turn right and then turn left along The Calls.

Walking along The Calls you may spot the blue plaque honoured to William Turton. William Turton was a corn and hay merchant who pioneered horse drawn tramways across Northern England.

You may also spot Leeds Minster, a Grade 1 listed building. It has existed in some form since the 600's although the current structure comes from the Gothic Revival era in the mid 1800's. If you have longer to explore on this walk, it is worth going over to look at the architecture and interior design. This imitates the English Gothic Style of the late 1300's.

The dramatic gothic style interior of Leeds Minster  
© Michael Beckwith (cc-by-sa/2.0)



Whilst walking along The Calls keep looking to your left to see if you can spot the river. For parts you can divert down to look at the river and come back to The Calls. Unfortunately there is not a direct path that continues alongside the river all the way along. Keep walking along The Calls until you reach Bridge End, turn Left and you will be able to see Leeds Bridge once again. This is the end of our walk.

**Transport links:** The starting point of this walk is easily accessible by train and bus, with Leeds station a 7-minute walk away. Car parking is available in Brewery Wharf Car Park or Trinity Leeds Car Park. A yellow water taxi runs between Leeds Armouries and the train station.

We have produced a number of family activity postcards to accompany our walks. There are ten walks along the river.

Find them and more at [www.dnaire.org.uk](http://www.dnaire.org.uk)



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