



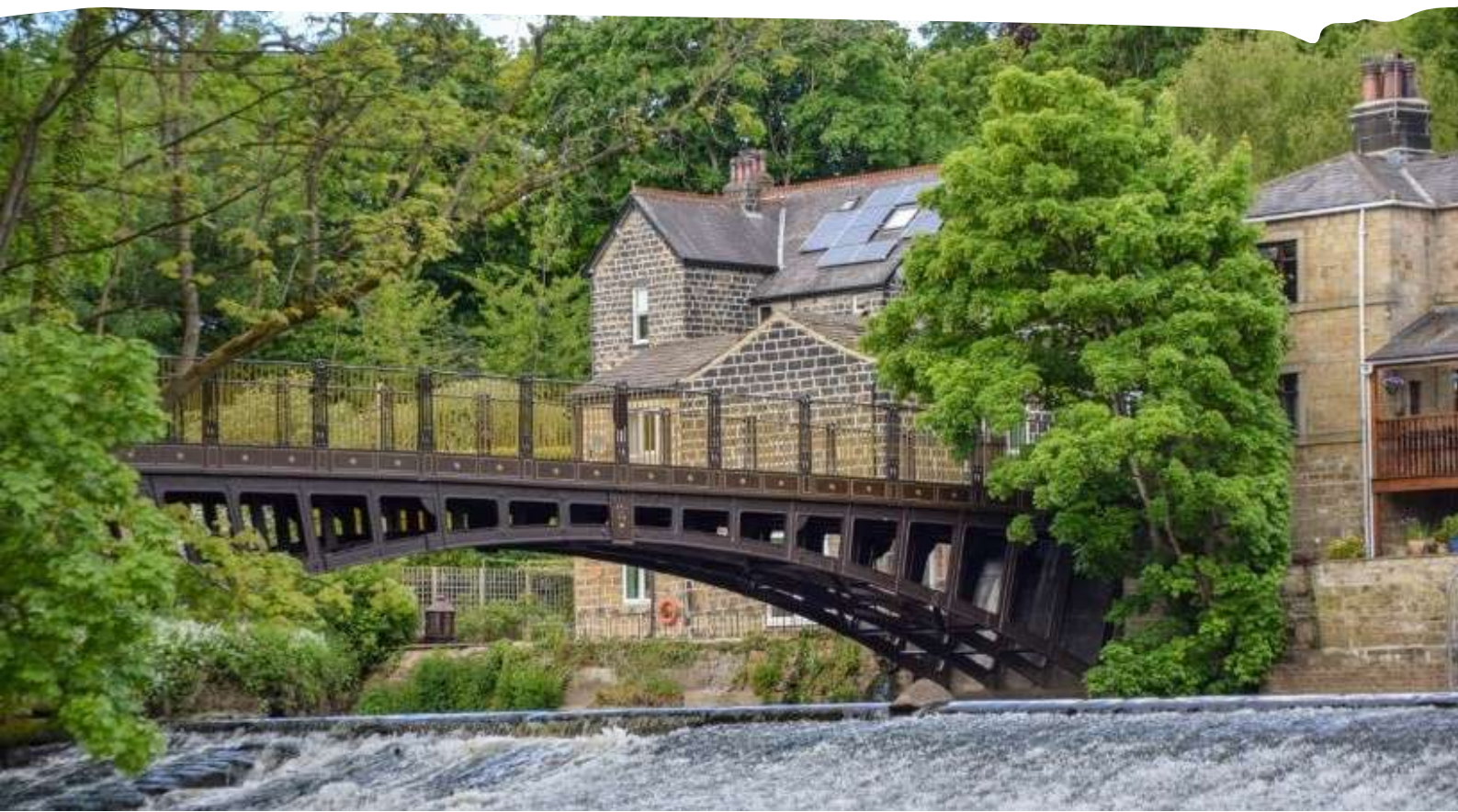
3 kilometres / 1 hour

Accessibility – May be unsuitable for wheelchairs, pushchairs, etc. See notes at the end of the walk

Pioneering women and haunted pubs in hidden Newlay

This walk was written during lockdown 2020 by Mark Stephenson. Mark writes the popular blog, Mark's History on Facebook. It was a strange time when we were not allowed to visit museums. Not deterred Mark suggests this walk as an open-air museum. We've extended the original walk into a loop with help from our own volunteers

It has everything, including a haunted pub.



Pioneering women and haunted pubs in hidden Newlay

A65



Pollard Bridge ● Weir & fish pass

Abbey ●
Inn



Photograph
reflections



Go on a 5 senses
svavenger hunt

Start

Finish

Kirkstall
Forge

Leeds and Liverpool Canal

Bramley Fall
Woods

Toads Hole
Wood



Hawksworth
Wood

Little Hawksworth
Wood

Hawksworth Road

Craigside Walk

New Road Side
The Outwood

Newlay Wood Dr

Newaites Road

Pollard Lane

River Aire

Start at Kirkstall Forge train station (LS5 3NF). Exit through the rear on the station along the path that leads into woodland. Turn left at the T junction and head towards the canal.

The site we are leaving was once Kirkstall Forge. Metal has been smelted on this site since 1200 by the monks from Kirkstall Abbey. Amongst its many owners, one of the most remarkable was a woman called Betty Beecroft. Despite initial ridicule, Betty transformed a largely derelict forge in 1778 in just four years into a thriving business that laid the foundation for production at the site until 2002.

The noise and bustle of the Forge would once have dominated the valley. The noise of the hammer could be heard for quite some considerable distance. Now it is being reinvented as a desirable suburb with good connections to Leeds city centre.

Little remains of the forge but the Grade II listed hammer mill will form a focal point for the development.



At the canal turn right and follow the signpost marked Horsforth.

As you walk along the canal you will pass Hunters Greave. Below you can see a large hut. This all that remains of a National Ordnance Factory here that manufactured shells for the Great War.

The factory was staffed only by men at first, but one day in June 1916, thirty blue-overalled women took their place in the machine shop. This was absolutely unheard of in those days. It caused great discussion amongst the men on how they would 'stick it'. Stick it they did though, their numbers swelling to several hundred and bringing the total workforce to over thousand.



Like many pubs in the area, the Abbey Inn was used as a mortuary from the 1600's until the 1950's. Line up a shot on the pool table and you're standing in the space previously filled with a mortuary slab. Bodies did not stop customers from drinking . Bodies found in the river or canal were brought here. It wasn't unknown at that time for a body to be pushed further down the river if it would cause a problem.

The Abbey Inn is said to be haunted.

From the Abbey Inn walk down the road over the railway bridge and down towards Newlay Bridge.



There have been at least six crossing points of the River Aire at Newlay since 1154. First a ford and then the first stone bridge built for the monks of Kirkstall Abbey.

Today's iron bridge was once a toll bridge and until not so long ago it was a busy road. The bridge was paid for by John Pollard in 1819 and cost £1500. A toll of ½d. per person raised income of £600 / year.

The local community the 200th anniversary of the bridge's construction with a street party on the bridge.

If you look to the left, you can see the old and new railway bridges crossing the River Aire. To the right you will see the weir, but you will most likely hear it before you see it.



Walk across the bridge and when you come to Rein Road turn right and walk ahead until you see the river on your right.

As you explore along the riverbank and you can see the remains of the old goit which was all connected to the weir at one time dating from around 1690. Water from here went to Kirkstall Forge to power the site.

Follow the track along the riverbank.

As this tracks turns left away from the riverbank you can see the remains of Newlay Lower Weir. It is understood that a weir was built, along with a mill (St. Helen's woollen mill), at this location sometime between 1820 and the early 1830s. Ordnance Survey maps in the early 1900s show the weir and suggests it was probably then supplying water to The St. Helen's Leather Glue and Gelatine Works and the St. Helen's Chemical Works (on the right bank looking downstream).



The St Helen's Works was demolished in the 1900s and the site is now part of the Kirkstall redevelopment. The weir fell in to disrepair and was demolished in 2015. This reconnected stretches of the river and provided more habitat for fish and other wildlife.

When the track comes out on Leeds and Bradford Road turn right and head down the hill back to Kirkstall Forge. You should soon find yourself at the entrance to the Kirkstall Forge development.

Accessibility: This walk is level but includes a section of unmade road. It may not be suitable for wheelchairs or buggies.

Paid car parking is available at Kirkstall Forge train station but there are excellent public transport links. Kirkstall Forge train station links to Leeds and Shipley.

Refreshments: If you're hungry after your walk, Butler's Cafe Bar in Kirkstall Forge provides an excellent range of refreshments. Alternatively pause your walk at the Abbey Inn and risk a spooky encounter with your drink.

Thank you to Mark Stephenson (Mark's History on Facebook) and Newlay Conservation Society for helping write this walk.



With support from



We have produced a number of family activity postcards to accompany our walks

Why not try one the next time you take in some fresh River Aire?



Top thing to do by the river

Photograph reflections



Top thing to do by the river

Make a mud monster



The calm river above Newlay weir is perfect for taking photos on a sunny day

Find these and lots, lots more about our project at www.dnaire.org.uk



Top thing to do by the river

Go wildlife watching

