

WEST LEEDS GREENWAY, Newlay canal bridge to Apperley Bridge

Introduction.

This is the second stretch of our route following the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways trail. From Newlay Bridge, we follow the Leeds Liverpool Canal tow-path, which also forms part of National Cycle Network route No.66, all the way to Apperley Bridge.

Leaving the city centre behind, we shall be travelling west, through the more rural outskirts of the Leeds District, discovering along the way a greener landscape which embraces a patchwork of woodlands, meadows and wetlands.



1 Rodley Nature Reserve. Upstream of Newlay Bridge, a meander in the River Aire folds around Yorkshire Water's Rodley Waste Water Plant and the loop of floodplain supports the 30 hectare Rodley Nature Reserve. The original four wetland areas, providing valuable roosting and nesting sites, have been augmented to fourteen different habitats. These support mammals, birds, butterflies and moths, dragon and damselflies, other insects and many plant species.

Open to the public on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, year round from 10am to 4pm the Reserve welcomes human

visitors as well. Toilets and a cafe are provided without charge and an information centre highlights the natural history, the Friends Group and the education programme. Many disabled volunteers work alongside their support workers and able-bodied helpers.

Access to the Reserve is from Mossbridge Road or along the Leeds/Liverpool Canal. Parking is free too.



2 Whitecote House. This three storey house, by the edge of the canal, boasts a sandstone facade, and a central circular window in the gable, typical of the Georgian style. The 1881 Census listed Samuel Westcott, a colliery agent, as resident, along with his wife and seven children.



3 Ross Mills. Mills have been present on this site for over 800 years, the first was gifted to the Cistercian Monks, at Kirkstall Abbey in the 13th Century. In the 19th century the mills on this site prepared and finished woollen textiles. Despite the mills being damaged by fire in 1829 and 1866, milling continued into the Twentieth century. Today the

13 River Aire On warm, still summer days, Mayflies and Alderflies may be seen along the riverbank. Adult Mayflies are generally short-lived as they are unable to feed, and may only survive for a matter of days, dying soon after mating. They are often seen in the late afternoon, swarming above the water's surface. The adult Alderfly tends to be rather lethargic and is often seen sitting on waterside plants, such as Willow and Alder. They have four large dark coloured wings, which are folded back along the body when the insect is at rest.

14 Brookfield Recreation Ground

15 Wellroyd Wood

16 Lodge Wood. Visible on the opposite side of the canal is Lodge Wood. Kirkstall Forge, which was founded in the 13th Century by the Cistercian Monks from Kirkstall Abbey, used wood from Lodge Wood in the manufacture of charcoal, which was then used to heat the metal which was worked at the Forge. The last known date when wood was felled from this woodland for charcoal making was in 1706, when £450 worth of wood was sold to the forge.

17 Beyond lies **Calverley Wood.**

18 West Wood - A Woodland Trust site.

19 Apperley Bridge Just beyond the end of this section of our journey is Apperley Bridge Marina. Formerly a boat yard, it is now a British Waterways office and houses a recently restored forge and workshop. These were originally used by generations of local blacksmiths, employed in the fabrication of lock and swing bridge fittings as well as tools. The forge, which is now in use again for the first time in 50 years, is worked by a local blacksmith.



complex is used by a variety of individual businesses and is known collectively as Rossett Business Park.

4 The Crane Works. Across the canal by Moss swing Bridge, can be seen the former Thomas Smith & Sons Crane and excavator works. The company produced hand operated cranes and winches used in local quarries. They also provided machinery for projects such as the building of the London Underground and the Aswan Dam in Egypt. Little of the extensive crane works remain today, as much of the site was recently demolished to make way for canal side flats, some fine examples of the plant built there can be seen in the Industrial Museum at Armley.

5 Canal - side houses. On the south side of the canal in Rodley is a line of 18th Century houses with stone steps, mulioned windows and stone slated roofs typical of the local vernacular tradition.

6 Rodley Marina. Narrow boat builders & repairers, chandlers and boat storage & mooring area. This wharf-side area dates from the late 18th Century.



7 Swaine Wood, this woodland perches on a steep valley side overlooking the River Aire, and our route, occupying a steep

terrain unsuited to agriculture and development. It is probably due to the precipitous nature of the landscape it occupies that this ancient semi-natural woodland has survived in to the Twenty-first century. Much of it is oak woodland with a scattering of yellow archangel on the woodland floor.

8 Horsforth Hall Park. A popular community park containing a skatepark, playground, bandstand, cricket ground, extensive amenity grassland, paths and gardens.

9 Hunger Hills. A prominent mature beech woodland, mixed with other deciduous species and bluebells which cover the site of former coal bell pits, overlooking Horsforth.

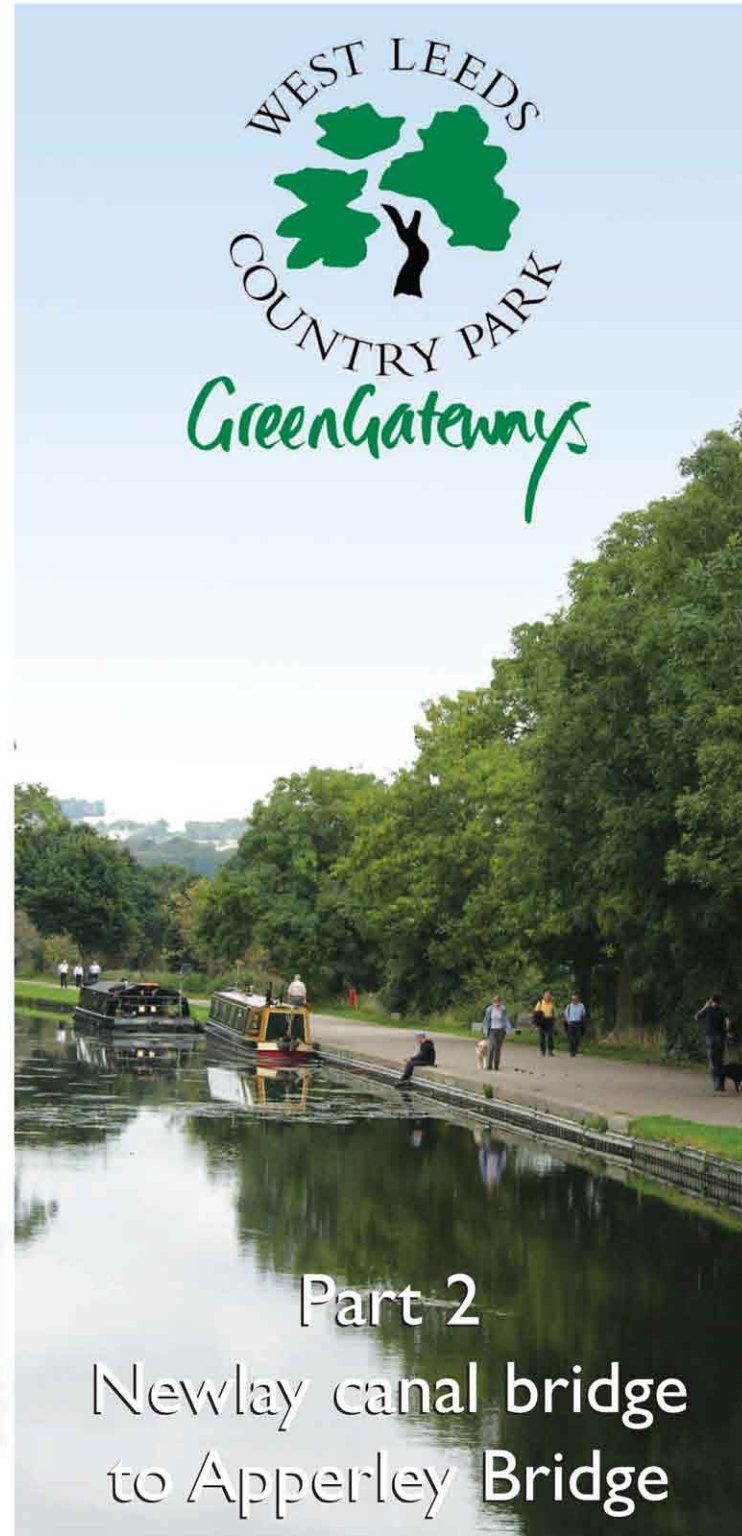
10 Calverley Lane Picnic site This area of open grassland, or meadow, which runs down to the River Aire, provides a valuable wildlife habitat for an assortment of plant and animal species. Meadows like this are probably best explored in the warmer spring and summer months, when the wildflowers they support are in bloom, and are most attractive to nectar seeking insects such as butterflies and bumble bees.



11 Rodley Park. This small community park is located on a hillside and contains gardens, a playground, extensive amenity grassland and paths.

12 Leeds - Liverpool Canal The still waters of the canal offer a wonderful refuge for the jewels of the insect world, dragonflies and damselflies.

Around three quarters of the life cycle of these spectacular creatures is spent in the immature or nymph stage, and is spent entirely underwater. Adult insects are mainly active during the summer months, when they mate and lay eggs. Then, as autumn arrives and the days get colder, the adults fade and die.



Part 2
Newlay canal bridge
to Apperley Bridge



North of Calverley Wood

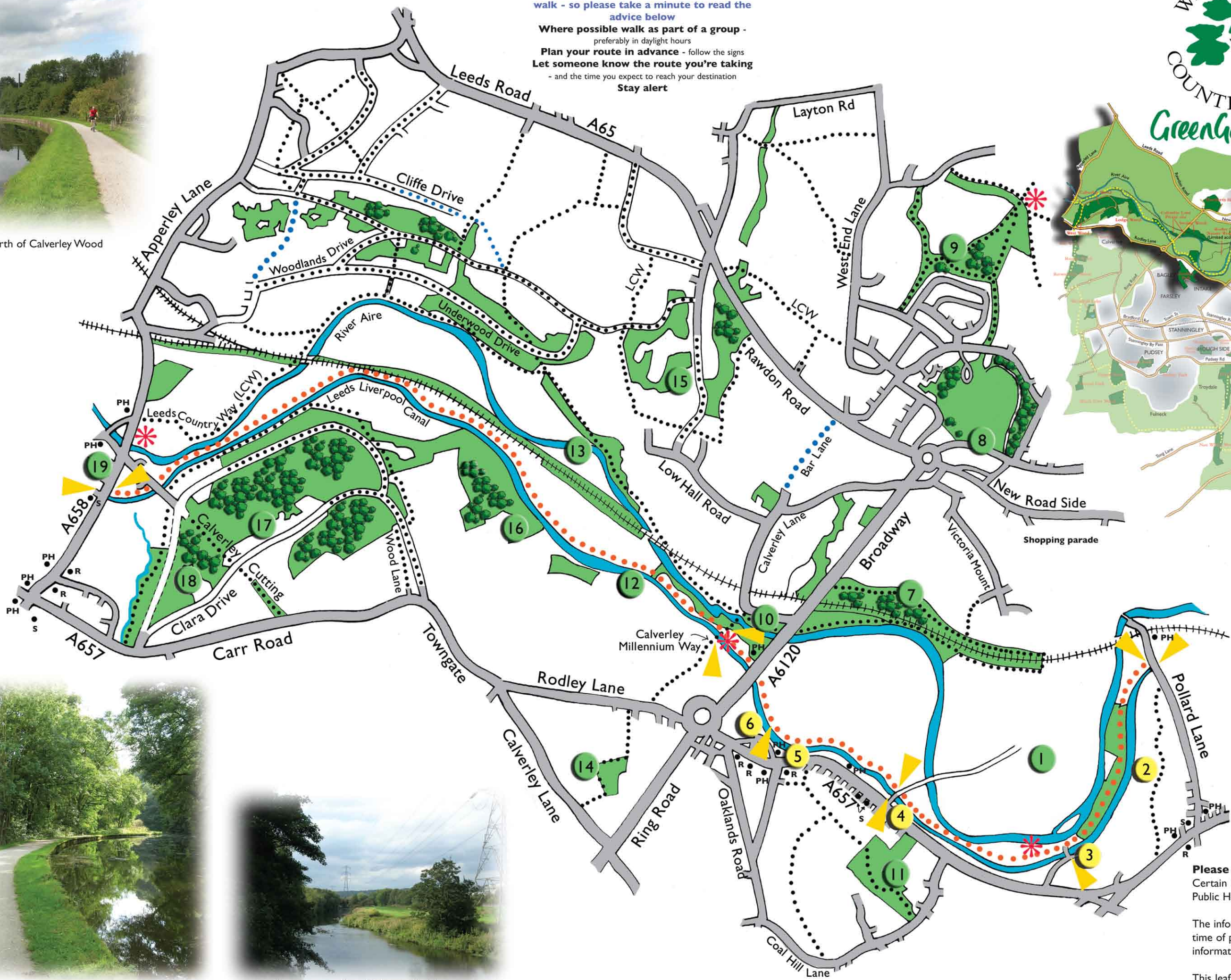
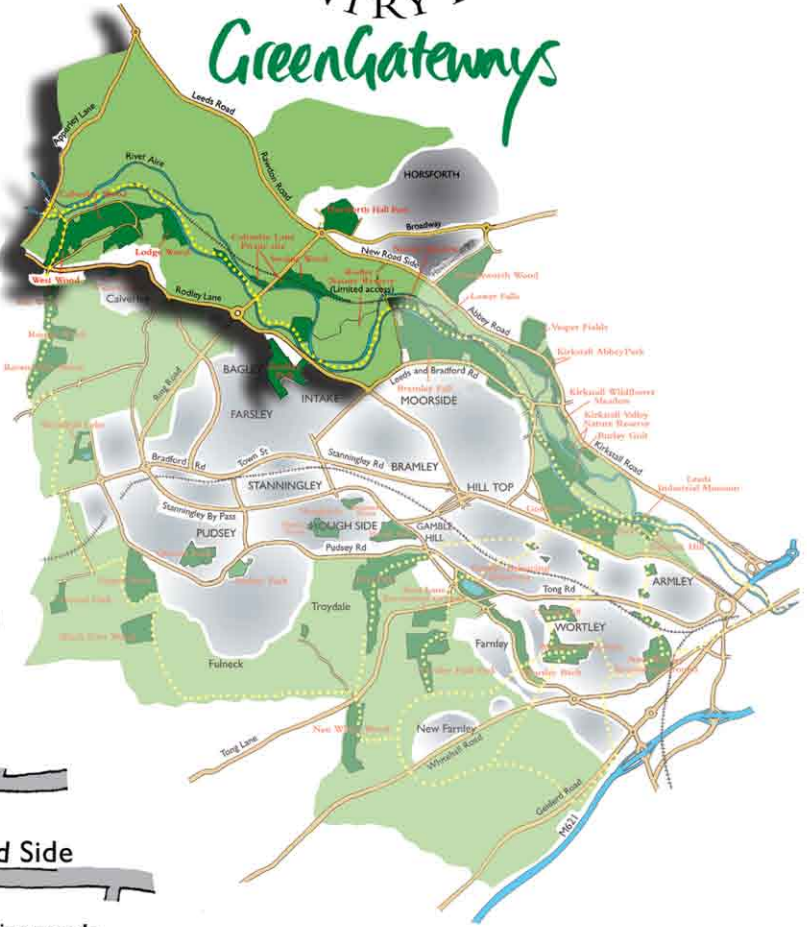
We want you to have a safe and enjoyable walk - so please take a minute to read the advice below

Where possible walk as part of a group - preferably in daylight hours

Plan your route in advance - follow the signs

Let someone know the route you're taking - and the time you expect to reach your destination

Stay alert



- West Leeds Country Park Green Gateways trail
- Additional access routes
- Bridleway
- Green space with public open access
- Places of interest with no public access onto premises
- * View point
- ⚡ Railway line
- ⏏ Canal lock
- PH Public House
- S Shop
- R Cafe/Restaurant
- ▲ Selected access points



Please note
 Certain Restaurants, Museums, Cafes and Public Houses have toilet facilities for patrons only.

The information on the map is correct at the time of publication. Please see web sites for information on the visitor attractions.

This leaflet is available in large print and braille contact Leeds 0113 3957400 for details.



Canal towpath at Lodge Wood



Looking upstream from Calverley Packhorse Bridge