



Smithills Hall



Smithills Hall

HISTORIC HOUSES, HIGHEST HILL

Manchester's Countryside

There's another side to Manchester

SMITHILLS HALL - COAL PIT ROAD -
WINTER HILL - WALKER FOLD -
BARROW BRIDGE - SMITHILLS HALL



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At the ruined building, bear right along the roughly-walled track away from the stream and follow it past the fingerposts and through the gate ahead. Where the track turns right uphill, turn left by the footpath sign and along the right-hand side of the left-hand of the two walls ahead of you. Keep the wall on the left until it finally turns away to the left in the direction of the farm. You keep along the track as it swings along the foot of Burnt Edge.

Cross the track which goes up to the gate on the right and continue towards the left-hand wood until you reach another track, and then turn right along that to a gate at the corner of the wood.

Through the gate the track takes you along the right-hand side of the wood and down to the road opposite the buildings of Walker Fold.

Together with those who have taken the shorter route, go down the track between the houses and through the kissing-gate beyond. Follow the obvious path from kissing-gate to kissing-gate and then down the centre of the field. You emerge through a final kissing-gate and continue downhill to the top of the 63 steps. Descend and keep on downstream to the road corner by the bridge and along the road past the houses with footbridges, built for the manager and overlookers of the mill that stood downstream at Barrow Bridge. ⑤

At the end of the group of houses, turn left over the climbing bridge and up the steps beyond (unless you want to continue down the road to see the rest of Barrow Bridge with the attractive cottages on each side of Dean Brook and, up the steps on the right, "workers' model dwellings", and then return to this bridge). ⑥

The path from the bridge takes you across a little stream. Then follow the signs and stiles to keep along the left side of Sheephouse Farm and out on the drive beyond. Finally, turn right down the road and back to Smithills Hall. ⑦

This walk forms part of a series of walks and trails developed by Manchester's Countryside. For more information on Manchester's Countryside, including downloads of the walks visit

www.manchesterscountryside.com

Telephone: 0161 253 5111

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Barrow Bridge



Visit Manchester



HISTORIC HOUSES, HIGHEST HILL

DISTANCE:

4 miles/6.5km or 8 miles/13km

STARTING POINT:

Smithills Hall Drive entrance, Smithills Dean Road, Bolton – map reference 697117 on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 287 West Pennine Moors.

HOW TO GET THERE:

By Car - to the junction of the A58 (Moss Bank Way) and A6099 (Halliwell Road) take Smithills Dean Road away from the town centre for 1/4 mile to the drive of Smithills Hall on the right. On the drive, follow the signs to the main car park.

By Bus - Monday-Saturday bus 526 from Bolton town centre; Sunday bus 527.

GREATER MANCHESTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION

0871 200 2233 www.tfgm.com

REFRESHMENTS

Smithills Coaching House - meals only (not snacks).
Tel: 01204 840377

Smithills Open Farm - café only for visitors to the farm. Tel: 01204 595765

Smithills Hall - vending machine, biscuits.
Tel: 01204 332377

WALK SUMMARY

This walk takes you from the medieval manor house of Smithills Hall up to the television mast on Winter Hill, which reaches a height of over 1000 feet and is the highest hill in the West Pennine Moors. From these heights there could be views over to the Peak District and Pennines, to North Wales and even to the Isle of Man. The route returns to the start of the walk by way of the classic mill village of Barrow Bridge. The shorter, 4-mile circuit provides easy walking but the full 8-mile walk takes you over high, rough moorland.

THE WALK

①

Turn into the grounds of Smithills Hall by the black and white lodge. Follow the drive, taking the left fork at the first junction. For those travelling by car, follow the signs to the car park, from there return to the drive and turn right just past the Coaching House. For those on foot, take the left turn at the second junction just before the Coaching House. When the drive swings right, keep straight on along the track. Over the stream in the belt of trees, you reach a high wall and turn left along the near side of the wall to follow the path up through the trees and out into the fields by a cattle-grid. Continue along the track uphill and then, at the T-junction, turn left in front of the attractive Tippet House. ②

As the track swings along, the vertical of Winter Hill mast to the right is matched by that of Barrow Bridge Chimney to the left. By Dean Gate Farm you join Smithills Dean Road, up which you turn right as far as the top of the wood. Turn left along the track on the top side of the wood.

Continue past Pendlebury's Farm to the road and turn right, uphill again. At the road junction by the old Colliers Row School, turn left until, just before a row of cottages, you can bear right up the drive to Hampson's Farm (or, for the shorter walk, continue along the road, over Dean Brook, and then turn left between the houses of Walker Fold). ③

Keep on the drive, bearing right uphill to the road. At the road, turn left. Beyond Green Nook, the house with the tall, narrow windows and fine gates, and just before Gilligant's Farm, the tarmac lane bears left. But you must keep straight on through the gate, past the memorial to Bolton's mass trespass. Go up this rough track of Coal Pit Road, which rises gently.

Keep along by the wall, round to the right, descend the steps to the stream, cross the bridge and climb the steps beyond to follow the clear path aiming for the mast. The wall you have been following bears left, but the path



is clear enough keeping straight on, with the stream on its right hand-side. The path swings to the right by the meagre remains of Holden's Colliery and then back left to head for the mast again. Just before a mound, turn left on a path of slabs and duck-boards which leads you across the peat to the road near the mast. Only slowly does the scale of the mast become apparent, and it's difficult to believe that it's towering 1015 feet above you! ④

At the road, you can make a detour to the right to visit Scotchman's Stump and to look over Winter Hill to Belmont and the great sweep of view to the north if visibility is good, but your way home lies left. As you walk down the road, heading for the cairn on Two Lads, Rivington Pike and its tower appear on the right.

Follow the road round to the left and, where it begins to swing right again, bear left before the crash barrier and across to the kissing-gate. The path beyond the gate is clear as it winds through the heather along by a gully, which widens out into a rushy pool.

At the end of the pool, where the stream flows through a narrow gap in the earthen dam, descend the steps, stride across the stream, and then follow the path downstream on its right bank.



The 63 Steps