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Stocksbridge Walkers are Welcome

www.stocksbridge-walkers.org.uk

Medium Walk: Three reservoirs: Underbank/Midhope/Langsett

- Length - 8.0 miles, with a shorter variation of 7.0 miles
- Grade - Mostly well-defined paths. Some rough ground and stiles. Can be muddy in places.
- Start - Smithy Moor Lane / Unsliven Road, Stocksbridge S36 1FN
- Grid Reference - SK 253 990
- Maps – OL1 Dark Peak, OS Explorer 278
- Parking - on Smithy Moor Lane / Unsliven Road, Stocksbridge
- Public transport – 57, 57a (from Sheffield) buses to Unsliven Road. SL1/1a (from Middlewood) buses to Unsliven Road.
- Refreshments –
[Underbank Outdoor Activity Centre – Café](#)
[‘Ye Olde Mustard Pot’ at Midhopestones,](#)
[‘Bank View Café’ and the ‘Waggon and Horses Inn’ at Langsett.](#)
- Public Toilets – Langsett Barn car park
- Mobile Phone Coverage - mostly good. Intermittent signals can be received on higher ground

Description

This walk takes you past three reservoirs, taking in farmland, woodland and a disused railway line. It starts by following Underbank reservoir before a climb up to Midhope. Excellent views across the valley are afforded before the route drops down to the River Porter and then up to Langsett. We return to Underbank along the line of the railway that was originally built to supply materials during the construction of Langsett Reservoir between 1889 and 1905.



Underbank Reservoir (1)

Route Instructions

1. Walk up Smithy Moor Lane and then pass through the gate opposite Cross Lane, taking the path to the left of the reservoir spill-way (1).



- Follow the path by the side of the reservoir, past [Underbank Outdoor Activity Centre](#), all the way to the top end of the reservoir at Midhopestones.

Just after passing Underbank Outdoor Centre, you will cross over a stream. There is a path into the woods on your left. About 50 m along this path is the remains of a WW2 anti-aircraft gun emplacement. This faces ENE and was situated in order to protect Underbank Dam wall from enemy attack. The concrete base slab and various metal fixings can be clearly seen (grid reference: SK 245 991).



- Pass through the gate onto Mortimer Road and turn left. Go up the hill and turn right at '[Ye Olde Mustard Pot](#)' onto Chapel Lane, passing the old school which is on the opposite corner on your left. Follow the lane as it swings left.



At (3), instead of continuing up the hill, spend some time in and around St. James' Church, a Grade II listed building. Foundations were laid around 1360 by the Barnby family of Cawthorne. Thomas de Barnby, Vicar of Kirkheaton, became Lord of the Manor of Midhope in 1337 and was succeeded by his nephew Robert in 1354. The church was built as a Chapel of ease for the main church of Ecclesfield, St. Mary's. The Barnbys' used St James' as their private chapel until 1622 when they were forced to sell the entire manor because of financial hardship brought on by fines levied after the English Reformation for hearing Mass and not attending the state church. It was owned by Puritans between 1622 and 1690 falling into disrepair.

The church was restored in 1705 by Godfrey Bosville. He had his coat of arms along with his and his wife Bridget's initial carved above the porch door as a sign that he regarded the church as his personal family chapel.

Until 1847 services at St James' were performed by clergy from St Mary's Church, Bolsterstone where records were kept. 1978 renovations included lowering the pulpit, replacing brass candlesticks and cross with wrought iron and the removal of the front box pews. The oak was used to make inner doors and a desk and chair for the priest.



4. When Chapel Lane swings right take the path on your left (Stony Croft Lane), up the hill, by the side of the farm (4).
5. Follow the path as it climbs the hill. The path occasionally turns and opens up at field boundaries. The path is marked with arrows and/or stiles/ gates.
6. At the top, the path goes through a large gate, with open moor ahead. Veer left and drop to the road 50 m away. Turn right back onto Mortimer Road.
7. Follow the road for about 200 m. Go through the large gate on your right, towards the woods (7). This is Yorkshire Water property. Take the path, turning right and then left as it runs parallel to a wall and descends.
8. After a level section the path turns right and goes up steeply. The top of this climb is the highest point of the walk (288 m). Turn left parallel to the wall and continue. The path drops with views of the valley to your right and Midhope reservoir, through the trees, to your left.
9. Keep the wall on your right and as the path starts to descend, pass through the wooden gate (9).
10. Follow the path out onto open grassland. Continue across the field and down the hill to a stile over the wall onto Midhope Hall Lane. Turn left and proceed along the lane. The lane swings left then right, passing the reservoir dam and spillway to your left.
11. When the lane turns sharp left, take the farm track (Dark Lane) that goes straight on at the same level (11).
12. When the track opens out into a field, keep close to the stone wall on your left and continue in the same direction. Go through the narrow metal gate into the copse by the river (12).
13. At the bridge, on your right, do not cross the bridge, instead cross the stone stile and continue through the woods, with the river on your right. Climb up the path away from the river. The water treatment works are on your right. Continue straight across the farm track, following the path which is marked by fence posts.



Route Variation – at (13), cross the bridge, walk to, and cross the main road (A616), turn right for 200 m, then turn left onto the marked path, cross the field and turn right onto the old railway track. When the line was in use, an unusual ‘coffee-pot’ style locomotive called ‘The Don’ was used. This was nicknamed ‘Coughin’ Sally’ from the sound it made when working.

Rejoin our directions at (19).



14. Cross the stone stile. Turn right and go up the wide farm track. Pass between the old gate posts Go up the track, crossing another stone stile as you turn right onto Midhope Cliff Lane.
15. Turn right. Follow Midhope Cliff Lane over the reservoir dam wall and on to Langsett Village (15). The '[Waggon and Horses](#)' is on your left and '[Bank View Café](#)' is across the road. Toilet facilities are in Langsett Barn, which is up the hill to your left.



Langsett Reservoir was constructed between 1889 and 1905, and is now managed by Yorkshire Water. It is around a mile long, with an area of 51 hectares and a depth of 29 m. It supplies water to Sheffield and Barnsley. A temporary village of corrugated iron huts, including a hospital and canteen, was built near Langsett village to house construction workers.

16. When you reach the main road, the A616, cross. Turn left then right up a track (16), with cottages on your left and the ex-Langsett Youth Hostel (YH) on your right. This turn is just before the right turn marked Penistone. Go through the kissing gate, just to the left of the ex-YH. After 20 m, bear right following the line of the dry stone wall.
17. The path down through these fields is not immediately obvious, however as you progress down the hill you will find well-made metal kissing gates, one of which is no longer in a fence! (17).
18. At the bottom of the final field cross the wooden stile and turn left over the bridge onto the old railway track. Follow the path.





This railway was originally built to supply materials during the construction of Langsett Reservoir between 1889 and 1905. However, the residents of Midhopestones did not receive piped water until the mid-1930s.

At Midhopestones, you cross over Mortimer Road. On your right, you can see a large building situated at the crossroads with the main road, the A616. This was originally The Rose and Crown public house. It was built by William Payne (1760-1831) when he was Lord of the Manor of Langsett. It closed as a half-way house in 1876 and has since been converted into private dwellings. The year, '1881' is marked on the rear of this building.

On the opposite side of the main road is the ex-Midhopestones Post Office.

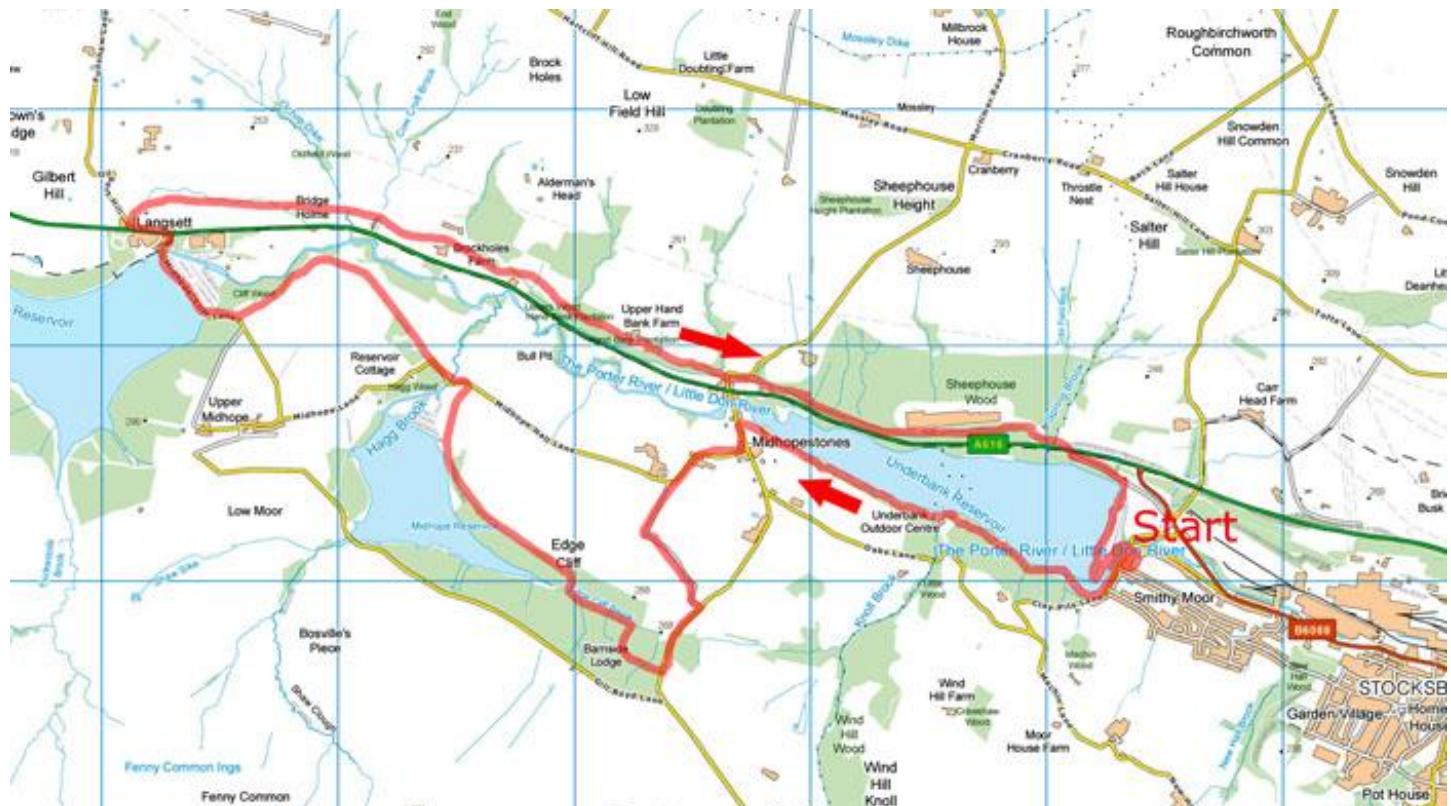
19. About 1 km after crossing Mortimer Road, take a footpath perpendicularly off to your right (19) descending to the main road, the A616. This path is easy to miss. It is 50 m after a brick building and directly opposite a factory building which has a series of red panels.

20. Turn left. Then cross the A616 at a lay-by. Pass through the kissing gate which is opposite (20a) and turn left. This path opened in early 2017 and takes you through trees, alongside Underbank reservoir. After 300 m, take the left turn (20b) then immediate right back onto the old A616.

20b. If you miss the turn and reach the end of the old railway line without turning right, you can either (i) reverse your steps or (ii) about 10 m before the path ends, bear diagonally right across rough ground (brambles, nettles) before emerging just to the left of the large metal EQUI-TREK sign. Cross the A616 and take the path off to the right onto the old road.

21. Just after the metal gate, take the path on the right across Underbank Reservoir dam wall. Follow the path round and over the bridge and back up to the gate, and interpretation board, at the start of the walk.





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Historical information on the area is available from Stocksbridge and District History Society: <http://www.stocksbridgehs.co.uk/>

Please utilise the 'contact' link on our website if you wish to suggest any amendments to these instructions

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