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Bradfield Walkers are Welcome

<https://bradfield-walkers.org.uk/>

Stocksbridge Walkers are Welcome

<https://stocksbridge-walkers.org.uk/>

Short Walk: Rivelin Corn Mill circular

- Length – 2.6 miles (4.2 km)
- Grade – A mixture of roads, surfaced tracks and unsurfaced paths. When walking near the river, watch out for tree roots. Most of the route is fairly level, but the terrain can be uneven and wet. There are a couple of steady climbs. In inclement weather, parts can be very muddy.
- Start – Rails Road car park
- Grid Reference – SK 291 872
- Parking – Rails Road car park
- Public transport – the 257 bus route from Central Sheffield passes along the A57 close to the start point.
- Refreshments – [The Rivelin Hotel](#)
- Public Toilets – none on the route

Description

We commence by taking the riverside path, before ascending to views over the Rivelin Valley and returning via an ancient route, Coppice Wood, and a bridleway.



The Packhorse Bridge at Rails Road (2)

Route Instructions

The car park is the site of the [Rivelin Corn Mill](#). This mill operated from the early 1600s, making it one of the earliest in the Valley. Rapid development of industry in the 1800s led to the mill prospering. This continued when the water supply improved with the building of dams further up the valley.

In 1856 the mill was sold to the Sheffield Waterworks Company. It continued working until the 1920s before being demolished in the 1950s. The mill pond was reconfigured in 2001 and the valley has been reclaimed by nature. It is now home to an increasingly diverse range of plants and wildlife. Flowers to look out for in spring include bluebells, celandine, foxgloves and violets, as well as mammals such as badgers, foxes, grey squirrels, and weasels. You may also spot frogs and newts, dragon flies and butterflies, as well as blue tits, greater spotted woodpeckers and grey wagtails.

The River Rivelin rises on Hallam Moors, in north west Sheffield, and joins the River Loxley at Malin Bridge. The Rivelin Valley, through which the river flows, is a 3.5 mile woodland valley through which a Nature Trail has been created. For centuries, the river was used as a power source, driving the water wheels of up to twenty industries (forges, metal-working and flour mills). There are 21 artificially created ponds, testament to the twenty mills which were once present on the river. Though most of the mills and forges no longer exist, the ponds which used to feed them, survive: some are used for fishing.

1. Leave the car park and cross Rails Road before joining the riverside path (1).
2. Heading east, walk past the packhorse bridge and take the centre path, along the north bank of the River Rivelin.

This Grade II listed bridge (1790) links Crosspool and Stannington.

3. Follow the path keeping between the road, on your left, and the river on your right. At times, you will take a path between a goit (an artificial channel carrying water to feed mills) on your left and the river (3).
4. When you reach [Plonk Wheel](#), bearing left, ascend the steps (4), passing a large mill pond on your right.

Built in 1737 this wheel was used until the 1850s for cutlery grinding and possibly also as a sawmill (it is also known as Sawbridge Wheel). Nothing remains of the mill buildings and the dam is now heavily overgrown and silted. A small grindstone found in the river nearby is set into the dam bank by the overflow.

5. At the top of the steps, at the T-junction, turn left. When you reach Rivelin Valley Road, cross over.

Rivelin Valley Road was built in 1907 between Malin Bridge and Rivelin Mill Bridge to connect with the main Sheffield to Manchester road, now the A57. Prior to this the valley had no road, just a series of cart tracks connecting the various industrial mills. Road building provided employment for 176 men.

6. Continue, up Tofts Lane, passing the Rivelin Hotel on your right.

The upper part of the valley is flanked to the north by Rivelin Rocks. The rocks re-emerge two miles (3 km) further down the valley above [The Rivelin Hotel](#) on Tofts Lane. Behind the hotel is the Man's Head Rock, a once well-known rock formation shown on many postcards, now hidden by mature trees. The hotel premises were formerly farm buildings before being converted into a pub. The pub has a Gilmour's step and original 'Tap Room' and 'Smoke Room' windows.



7. Bearing left, continue along Tofts Lane for 500 m. Take a right onto Coppice Lane and continue to ascend.
8. After 400 m, turn left onto a signed footpath (8). Cross a field, then passing through a kissing gate enter Coppice Wood.
9. Follow the marked path through the wood as it runs behind the site of the long-closed King Edward V11 Hospital (9).

In 1910, when King Edward VII died, a 130 cot hospital for children was built using a mix of public subscriptions and funding from Sheffield Corporation. The land was donated by the Duke of Norfolk. Until 1948, it was known as the King Edward VII Hospital for Crippled Children, treating patients with tuberculosis, rickets, congenital deformities and poliomyelitis.

In 1944, children were moved out of the hospital to allow for the reception of officer casualties. In July 1948, when the National Health Service was set up, the hospital was renamed the [King Edward VII Orthopaedic Hospital](#). It closed in 1992 and is now apartments. The main hospital building, the boiler house, entrance lodge and the octagonal outbuilding are [Grade II listed](#).

10. At the end of the wood, cross a wooden stile and turning left, cross a field, then a stile to reach Rivelin Valley Road (10).
11. Cross the road and turn right, then bear left to join a bridleway (11). Follow the bridleway to return to Rails Road.



There is evidence of Roman occupation in the area as tablets were found in 1761 on the Stannington side of Valley. These recorded the granting of land to retiring Roman auxiliaries.

In medieval times the valley was part of a large tract of land set aside by the Lords of Hallamshire for deer hunting. It was known as Rivelin Chase (or Firth) and covered thousands of acres on the western upland outskirts of Sheffield.

The valley was especially loved by the "corn law rhymer" [Ebenezer Elliott](#) (1781-1849). There is a rock by the side of Black Brook with his name carved on it where he was known to sit and appreciate nature.

In the 1920s [a group of artists](#) founded a creative colony in the Rivelin Valley. They included Ben Baines, W R E Goodrich, Robert Scott-Temple and Vernon Edmonds.



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

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Layout: Dave Pickersgill

Text: Mary Condon, Dave Pickersgill and Chris Prescott

Photos: Dave Pickersgill

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