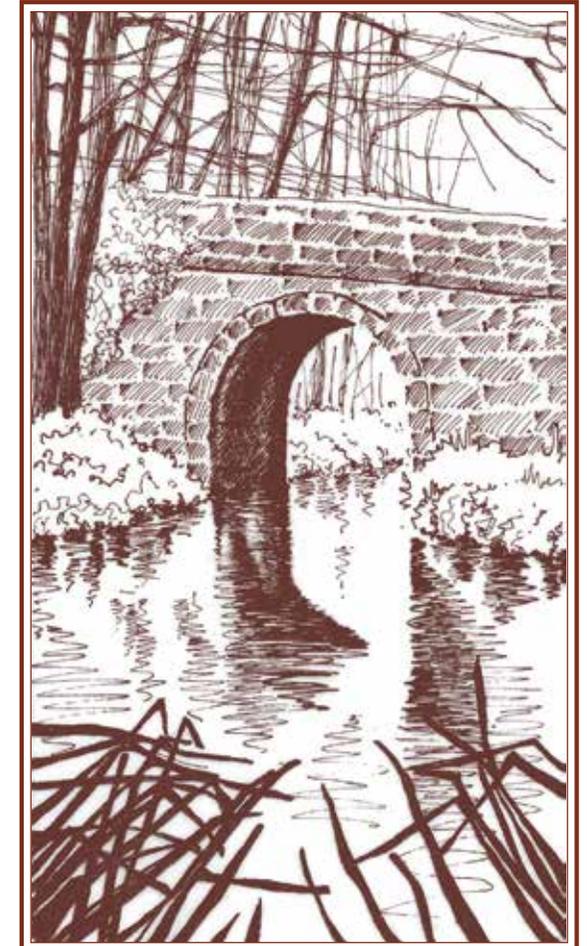
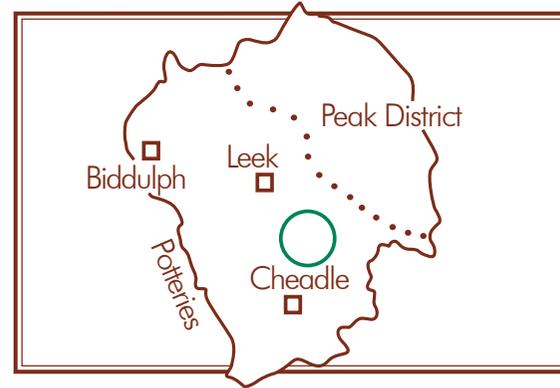


# Caldon Connections

A walk around Froghall



## LOCATION OF WALK



### How to get there

Froghall is on the A52, Stoke-on-Trent to Ashbourne Road, north east of Cheadle. The Wharf is located on the road from Froghall to Foxt 200m from the A52, where parking is available.

### Historical Background

The Churnet Valley became a very important transport route when the Caldron Canal linked Froghall to the national network in 1778. It was primarily constructed to transport limestone, flint and coal, but was also a vital water supply for the Trent and Mersey Canal.

The route, surveyed in 1772 by James Brindley, went to Froghall and a tramway then climbed to the Cauldon Low limestone quarries. Brindley did not however see the construction of the canal as he caught a chill during his initial visits and died the same year. A large wharf and extension of the canal to Uttoxeter were later added.

Iron ore was another very important resource in the valley. Smelting can be traced back to 1290 when charcoal was burnt in the woodlands for use in primitive iron works. This industry continued into the 17th century when water powered mills were used to smelt and hammer the ore.

In the 19th century the iron ore was mined on a much larger scale but transported elsewhere for refining. The miners were known as the 'redmen' as the distinctive ore dust stained their skin.

A walk around Froghall reveals that most of the old industrial sites are now quiet and reclaimed by nature.

### Enjoy the Walk

The walk takes you north of Froghall and Foxt into some beautiful wooded areas. It is approximately 4 miles and you should allow 2-2 ½ hours to enjoy the scenery. Good stout footwear is recommended as the ground is steep and wet in places.

Remember these paths cross private land.  
Please:

- Keep your dog under control
- Fasten all gates behind you
- Take all your litter home
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees
- Follow the country code

For comments or more information please contact:

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*Details correct at time of publication.*

**1.** To start the walk, turn right out of the wharf car park onto the Foxt Road. Immediately over the bridge take the left hand path onto the canalside.

**2.** Cross over Blackbank Brook and head into the woods. The stream was named after the 'Blackband' coal seam in this valley which gives it a very black appearance. Follow the path for approximately half a mile noting that the small ditches crossing the path are vividly coloured. This is not pollution but limonite from the iron ore in the area.

**3.** On the gentle incline through the woods, look out for evidence of iron ore mining. The path is wide and even as it was once the route of a nineteenth century railway, transporting iron ore to the canal loading wharfs. Two old mine shafts (conical depressions) can be seen at points a and b.

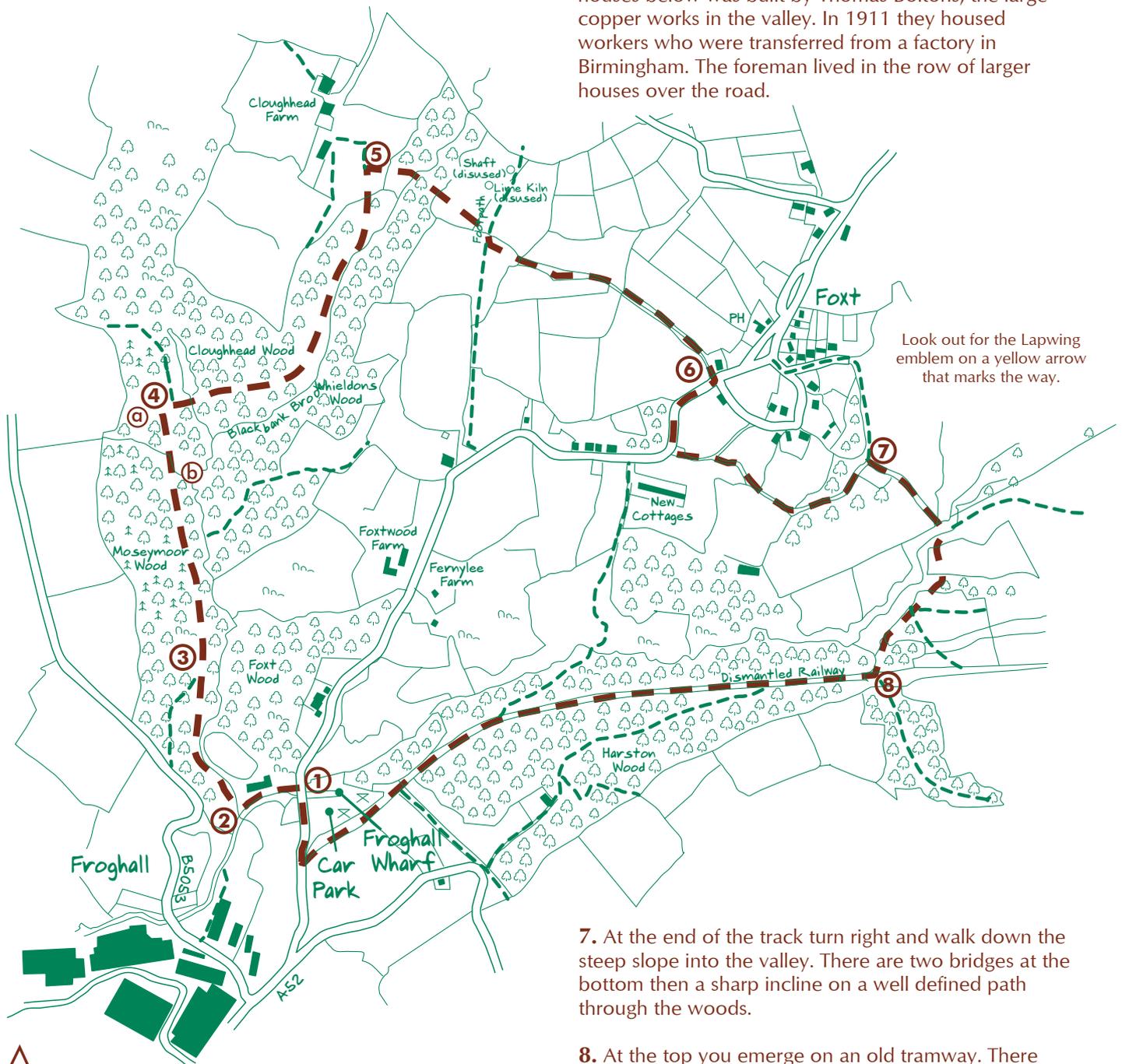
**4.** When you reach a small reservoir at the top of the incline turn right. The ridge was probably built across the valley to take the tramway to Foxt but a smaller dam may have existed before that to power water wheels in the valley mills.

**5.** Continue along the valley to a footbridge. Cross over the stream and follow the path up a steep bank until it emerges out to open fields. Stay close to the right side of the field then cross through the gateway so that the hedge is on your left. In the first field are the remains of lime kilns where locals once burnt lime for use in building and as a manure.

**6.** When the track joins the Froghall/Foxt Road, turn right and follow it for approx. 200 metres. Take the first left on a sharp bend in the road. Follow the farm track bearing right at the fork. The row of houses below was built by Thomas Boltons, the large copper works in the valley. In 1911 they housed workers who were transferred from a factory in Birmingham. The foreman lived in the row of larger houses over the road.

**7.** At the end of the track turn right and walk down the steep slope into the valley. There are two bridges at the bottom then a sharp incline on a well defined path through the woods.

**8.** At the top you emerge on an old tramway. There were in fact four tramways built to the Cauldon Low limestone quarries between 1778 and 1847. This is the route of the final tramway which boasted ten bridges and a tunnel. Turn right and follow the track for almost a mile down to Froghall Wharf.



0 100 200 300 400 500 metres

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