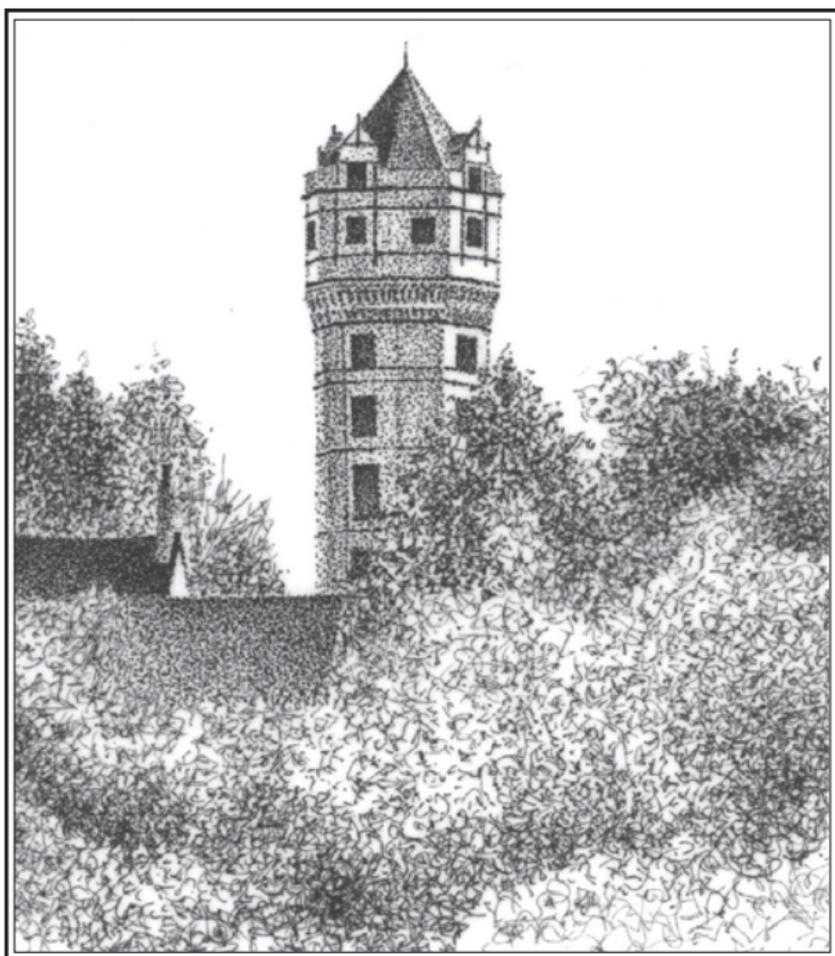


COUNTRY PARK TRAILS

THE
CANAL
WALK

*Leek and the Caldon Canal via
Ladderedge Country Park*



STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

ACHIEVING • EXCELLENCE

1. Leave the car park through the metal kissing gate in the stone wall and bear left to follow the footpath across the field and along the bank of the River Churnet.

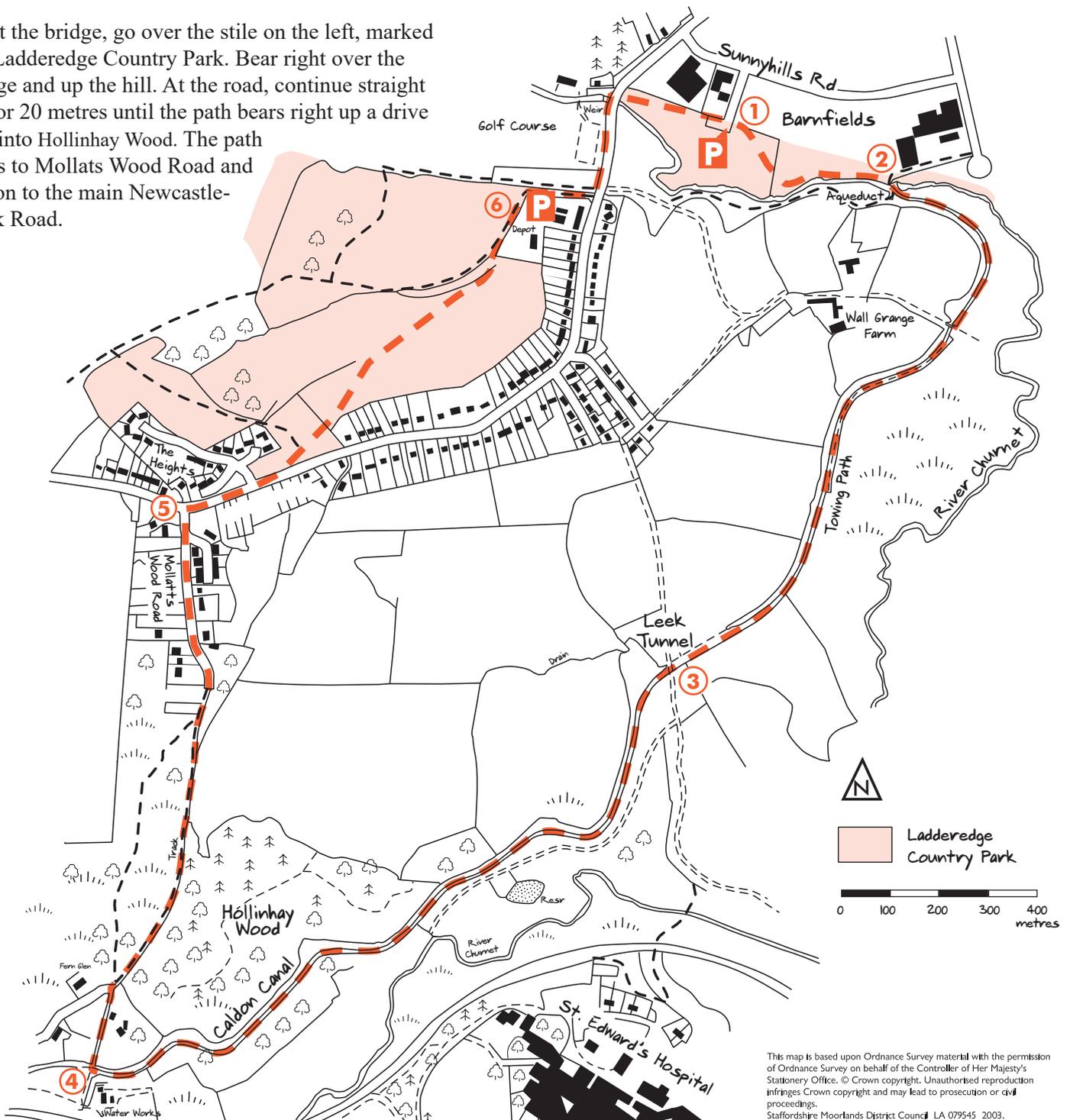
2. The path leads to the aqueduct where the Caldon Canal once crossed the river. An information board on the reverse side of the stone plinth gives more detail about the area. Cross the old aqueduct and bear left through a gate to join the canal-side path.

3. After about ½ mile, the towpath reaches Leek Tunnel. Follow the path up the hill, cross over several farm tracks, and go down the steps on the other side. From the steps, St. Edward's Hospital water tower can be seen rising above the trees on the opposite side of the valley. Continue along the towpath for a further ½ mile, passing below Hollinhay Wood on the opposite side of the canal.

4. At the bridge, go over the stile on the left, marked for Ladderedge Country Park. Bear right over the bridge and up the hill. At the road, continue straight on for 20 metres until the path bears right up a drive and into Hollinhay Wood. The path leads to Mollats Wood Road and out on to the main Newcastle-Leek Road.

5. Cross the main road with care. Turn right, following the main road for about 150 metres, until you reach a gap in the wall on your left-hand side, immediately after the entrance to The Heights. This takes you back into Ladderedge Country Park. Turn right through the gap and continue straight ahead past an information board, which gives more detail about the area. Continue ahead, crossing the stile and go downhill, through several fields. Head towards the highways depot and the Country Park car park. Excellent views of Leek, The Roaches, Hen Cloud and Ramshaw Rocks can be seen from this path on a clear day.

6. Cross the car park and walk down the access track to the main road. Follow the pavement for about 150m, crossing the main road with care opposite a kissing gate. Go through the gate and follow the path back to the car park.



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ENJOY THE WALK

This walk is 3 miles long (4.8 km) and follows mainly level ground along the canal, with some steep slopes up and down within the Country Park. Allow 2-2 ½ hours to enjoy the walk. Stout footwear should be worn, as the ground may be muddy and slippery in places. The walk is not waymarked.

The Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No. 258

'Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle under Lyme' covers this area.

If you have any comments on this walk or would like further information on other walks in the Staffordshire Moorlands, please contact the Parks and Countryside Service on 01538 483577.

BACKGROUND

The Caldon Canal was designed and built by John Rennie, and once extended to the end of Broad Street, Leek. The canal crossed the river Churnet via an aqueduct, which you will cross on this walk, although it has now been filled in. Caldon Canal, Rudyard Reservoir and the reservoir's feeder canal were completed in 1802. The system took 5 years to build.

Another feature of the canal is the 120 metre long Leek Tunnel which was restored by British Waterways and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council in 1984.

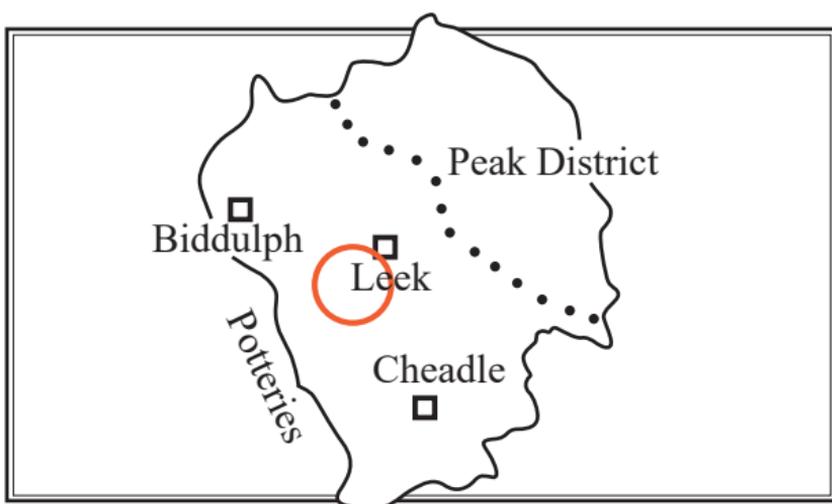
As you walk along the canal, the impressive water tower of St. Edward's Hospital can be seen rising above the trees on the opposite side of the valley. The tower stands 135 feet high and can hold 36,000 gallons of water. The hospital and tower were built by Giles, Gough and Trollope between 1895 and 1899 and are all Listed Buildings.

More natural sections of the walk include Hollinhay Wood, which consists mainly of alder and silver birch. It is a good place to see treecreepers and herons at the canal edge.

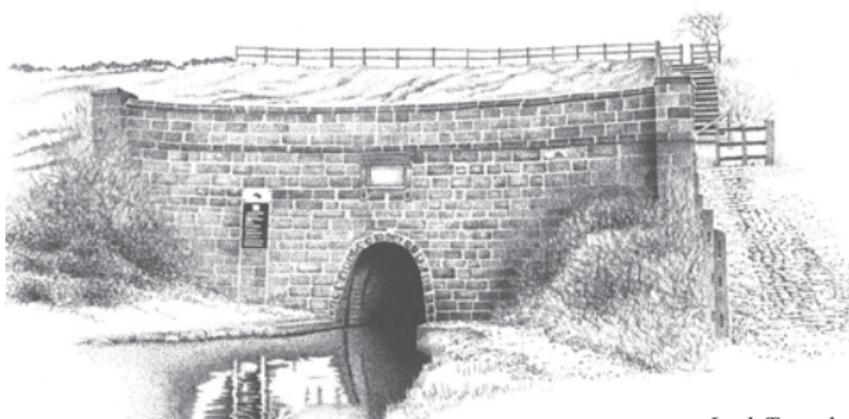
HOW TO GET THERE

Ladderedge Country Park is off the A53 Newcastle to Leek road, about 1 mile south west of Leek Town Centre. If travelling from Leek, a signpost on the left hand-side of the main road, indicates the car park at Barnfields Industrial Estate, off Sunnyhills Road. The car park is about 10-15 minutes' walk from Leek Town Centre.

Location of Walk



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Leek Tunnel

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