

SUGGESTED START: Ribchester car park, off Church Street, PR3 3ZH (SD 6491 3520).

DISTANCE: 10.1 km / 6.3 miles


TIME: 3 hrs (plus sightseeing)

TERRAIN: This route predominantly crosses farmland with some riverside footpaths. The ground conditions can be a little boggy after rainfall. In Ribchester village, some of the route is on or close to roads: please take care around traffic.

DIFFICULTY: Moderate

OS MAP: It is advisable to use OS Explorer 287 with this guide.


 5 (Chipping - Clitheroe)
45 (Preston - Blackburn)

 Car park off Church Street (pay and display); on-street parking available in Ribchester

 Ribchester car park


 Spar, Ribchester

 White Bull, Black Bull, Ribchester Arms


 Potters Barn Café, Ribchester Taste Buds by Janis, Stydd Gardens

THE RIVERS: Ribchester is situated on the banks of the River Ribble, before it flows on through Preston and out to the estuary. Ribchester has a rich Roman history and was the site of a Roman fort, Bremetennacum Veteranorum. The earliest Roman fort in Ribchester was established in the early 0070s (anno Domini) as part of a network of defensive forts across northern Britannia. At this time, the River Ribble was known as 'Belisama'. The proximity to the river and Roman roads made the location of the fort strategically important.

By the time the Ribble reaches Ribchester, the Calder and the Hodder have already joined the river. Downstream near Preston, the Ribble is joined by the River Darwen, before continuing its journey to the Irish Sea.

 **WILDLIFE:** Herons can frequently be spotted along the Ribble in Ribchester. If you are very lucky and patient, you may even spot an otter!


Grey wagtail



Once on the Ribble Way section of the route, keep an eye out for oystercatchers and grey wagtails.


The farmland on this route lends itself to spotting wading birds such as lapwing and curlew. Buzzards may be spotted soaring up high.


WHAT TO EXPECT:


Beginning in Ribchester, the walk route passes the Roman Baths before joining a section of the Ribble Way. The route then climbs towards Dutton and follows Duddel Brook, then crosses Stydd Brook before returning into the village. Conditions under foot can be wet and muddy, particularly after rain. Wellies or boots are recommended for this walk. There are numerous stiles on this route, it is therefore best suited to walkers with good mobility. Livestock are present in some of the fields, so please keep dogs on a lead. If cattle get too close or become excitable, let the dog off the lead. Please leave all gates as you find them.

LOOK OUT FOR:



1. St Wilfrid's church is predominantly a medieval building. The chancel and parts of the nave and vestry date back to the 1220s. The oak beamed roof was repaired in 1527 and it's likely that the tower was built around this time. The sundial in the churchyard is 17th century, however the steps up to it are more likely 13th or 14th century.


2. On the left, after the church, is the **Roman Museum**. The idea of a museum in Ribchester was conceived by Margaret Greenall, a member of the local brewing family. The objective was to keep precious artefacts in the village after it was recognised as a site of special historic interest.


3. The **Roman Baths** were built in around AD 100. The site consisted of a number of rooms including: a changing room, sauna and furnace. The baths were no longer used after AD 225, but the remains weren't discovered until 1837, when a Mr Patchett was digging in his garden. An excavation in 1978 discovered brooches, beads, gaming counters and stones from rings.


4. The **Ribble Way** is a long distance walking route of just over 70 miles. Starting at the mouth of the River Ribble, the route follows the watercourse to its source at Gayle Moor near Ribblehead. This walk route follows a short section of the Ribble Way.


5. Dutton Hall was built by the Towneley family who rented land here from as early as the 14th century. When the hall was sold to the Rothwell family in the 1760s, the estate included a water powered mill in neighbouring woodland. When the mill closed in the early 20th century, the stone was used to build the Roman Museum. The hall has belonged to the Penny family for over 30 years and is now home to a Plant Heritage National Collection of roses.


6. St Saviour's church was built during Norman times, and there is a record of rent from 1338. The building belonged to the Knights Hospitallers, a fighting religious order who ran hospitals for pilgrims in the Holy Land. The church was restored in 1925 by the Rector of Ribchester.

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FOLLOW US:



This walk has been created by Ribble Rivers Trust as part of a series of circular routes for the Ribble Life Together project. Scan the QR code to find out more or visit www.ribblelifetogether.org. Download the **Ribble Life** app to accompany this route on Android and iPhone.

- Follow the Countryside Code: consider wildlife and other users
- Carry spare food and drinks
- Take a charged mobile phone, first aid kit, map and compass
- Wear sturdy boots and clothing suitable for forecast conditions

Enjoy safely

- Ribchester History Trail
- Ribble Valley Geo Trails: Ribchester
- Lancashire Walks: Ribchester

Nearby trails

Ribble Life Together is working to create a healthier river system by 2020 for people and wildlife. The project celebrates the heritage of the rivers, improving access and using the river to inspire and educate. Through practical environmental action, based on science, we aim to leave a positive legacy for future generations.



River Walks Ribchester



Enjoy part of the Ribble Way and discover a village steeped in Roman history right on the banks of the River Ribble.

Distance: 10.1 km / 6.3 miles

Difficulty: Moderate



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ROUTE DIRECTIONS

A. Ribchester Village

From the car park, facing the playing fields, turn right onto the track and follow it along. At the right-hand bend in the track, go through the small wooden kissing gate straight ahead, on the bend. Follow the stone wall on your left and go through the metal gate into the churchyard. Continue past the village hall and Roman museum, turning left onto the road. Enjoy the River Ribble to your right. Take the riverside path down the right-hand side of the primary school. Follow the path until the brown sign to the left for the 'Roman Bath House'. Walk through the site of the former Roman baths and through the wooden gate at the other side. Turn right onto the road and follow it round to the left to the main road. Cross over towards the Ribchester Arms where safe to do so and head right. After the pub car park, take Stydd Lane to the left. After the small stone bridge, take the track off to the right. Follow the right-hand boundary of the field, crossing the stream at the concrete slab and continue towards the gateway. Continue straight through the next field. At the white footpath sign, head right over the stile in the hedge. Follow the path round and over the footbridge. Go over the stile ahead and follow the right-hand fence line. Go over the stile and continue to follow the fence on your right to a small wooden stile. Continue straight through the next field to the steps and stile in the hedge. Turn left onto the road (Gallows Lane) and be careful of fast-moving traffic.



River Ribble

Ribchester Bridge



riverbank.

B. The Ribble Way

Turn left onto the tarmac track. Follow the track until you reach a collection of properties. Turn right into the yard of Dewhurst House Farm and turn right in front of the buildings, following the sign for the Ribble Way. Follow the path down to the riverside and over a ladder stile. Turn left, following the river. As the path continues, follow the Ribble Way marker uphill to the left. At the bottom of the slope, go over the footbridge. Continue to stay by the riverside, following the well-worn path.



Ribble Way

C. To Dutton

At the end of the woods, go through the metal kissing gate and head left, following the Ribble Way marker. At the top of the slope, continue straight across the field, heading for the gate and fingerpost below. Look out for the bridge at Marles Wood (Dinckley) in the distance with Pendle Hill behind.



Views of Dinckley

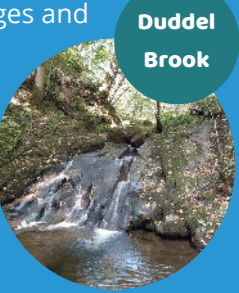
In the next field, head diagonally left, round the right-hand side of the copse of trees. Follow the Ribble Way fingerpost (part-way up the hill) to a stile. Once over the stile, cross the field towards the fingerpost on the opposite side. Go through the gate and turn left onto the track. Go through the farmyard and follow the track to the main road (roughly 1 mile).

D. To Duddel Wood

Cross the main road when safe to do so and head left. Stay on the main road, ignoring the turning for Gallows Lane. Keep an eye out for a stile in the hedge on the left, before the row of houses. Take the stile, then head in a slight diagonal left direction towards the woodland ahead. Find the stile in the corner of the field. Once over the stile, keep the fence to your right and follow the fence line to the stile at the end of the field.

E. Crossing Duddel Brook

Once in the woodland, take the well-trodden path to your left and continue to follow it as it leads down to Duddel Brook. Look out for a small stone waterfall (picture inset) and when you reach this, continue left until the brook is shallow enough to cross (take care as some stones may be slippery). Continue to follow the well-worn path left and uphill. Cross two footbridges and after the second bridge, take the path to the right. Continue to follow the brook until you reach another footbridge. Once over the bridge, continue straight on, uphill and out of the woods, looking out for a stile in the fence. Once in the next field, follow the left-hand fence to a kissing gate. Go into the next field and head straight on, towards a stile at a gateway. Once over the stile, continue straight towards the farm building ahead. Go round the right-hand side of the building and into the farmyard. Go through two gates in quick succession in the farmyard, then over the cattlegrid.



Duddel Brook

F. Return to Ribchester

Look out for St Saviour's church on the left. Level with St Saviour's, look out for the footbridge across the field on your right and make your way over to it. Once over the bridge, head slightly right to the stile in the hedge ahead. In the next field, head straight across to the stile ahead. Continue straight, along the path. Where another track crosses the path, continue straight on. Go over another stile and cross the next field to a stile onto the road.



Stydd Brook

Please be aware of traffic on the road. Turn left and follow Stonygate Lane to the main road (Blackburn Road). Carefully cross straight over onto Water Street and follow it until you reach the White Bull pub (you can also take a ginnel on your right before the pub to cut through to the start point). At the pub turn right onto Church Street and follow it until the left-hand turn back towards the car park and playing fields.

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