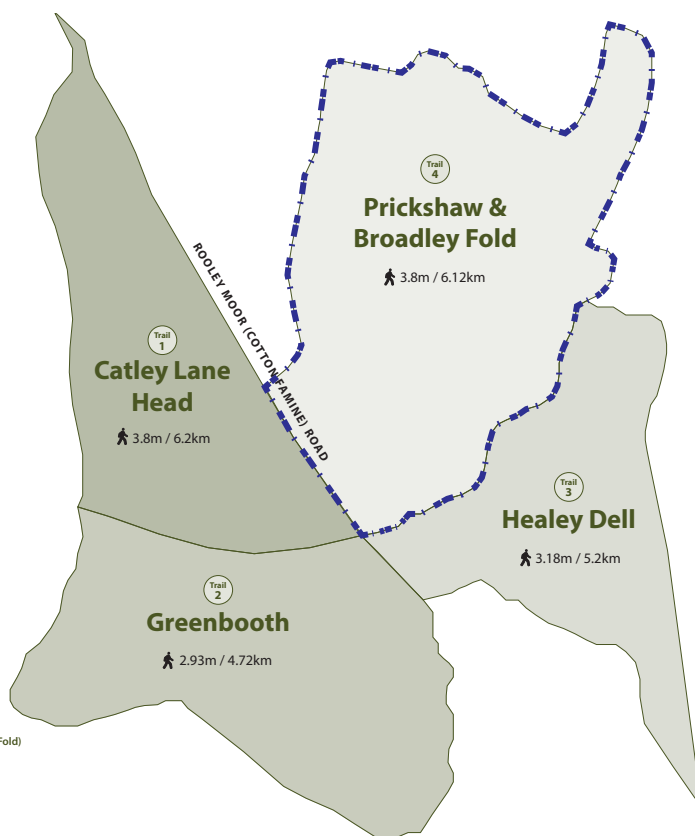




# HERITAGE trail 4

## PRICKSHAW & BROADLEY FOLD FROM ROOLEY MOOR



### KEY:

— Heritage Trail 4 (Prickshaw & Broadley Fold)

Walking Distance



Access all Heritage Trail  
information through  
this QR Code

[www.RMNF.org.uk](http://www.RMNF.org.uk)

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# Prickshaw and Broadley Fold

Nestling on the lower region of Rooley Moor and overlooking Healey Dell Nature Reserve, Prickshaw and Broadley Fold is a fine example of an historic Pennine Hamlet and former textile community. The hamlet was designated as a Conservation Area in 1987 and the restoration in 1993 won awards. The early 19th Century census states the population was around 80 people; cotton carders, weavers, slubbers, stone masons, coal miners and shoemakers were all resident in the hamlet. At the heart of the community was a public house named the 'Star Inn', which is now a private residence. Views to the North take in the beauty of open unspoilt moorland which, along with the Conservation Area, is steeped in history.



# The Heritage Trail Description

**Recommended Start Point:** We recommend you start the walk from Catley Lane Head village on Rooley Moor Road, OL12 6BN. OS Grid Reference SD 872 158. There is ample roadside parking in and around the village, but please park with consideration for the local residents. There is also a regular bus service from Rochdale and Bury to Daniel Fold, from where it is only a short walk uphill to the village.

**Distance:** 3.8 miles (6.12 kilometres)

**Walk Overview:** Uncover the past and find out more about the rich history of the area on this moderate circular walk. It is important that you wear appropriate footwear and warm waterproof clothing as some sections of the walk can be muddy and the weather can change very quickly. In poor weather the route can be encased in cloud. We suggest you take some food and a drink with you as well.

Dogs are welcome but must be kept on a lead at all times. You may encounter some farm animals and farm traffic on your route.

There are litterbins at the top and bottom of the village – please put any rubbish in there (including from your dogs). The last page of this booklet gives you some other ideas of places to visit in the area, and we recommend you take a look at the Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum website ([www.rmnf.org.uk](http://www.rmnf.org.uk)) for more information about the routes and about the tremendously varied history of the area.



# THE ROUTE

## **Catley Lane Head (A) to Whimsy Hill (B)**

Starting at the BBC Plaque by the cattle grid in Catley Lane Head, continue up the hill through the gate past the cattle grid. On your left you will see Syke Bank Farm, which until recently lay derelict for many years. As with many other properties in the area it has been sensitively restored to retain its original architectural features.

Walk up the cobbled road that stretches for some distance in front of you. The first section of the road is cobbled but the road surface will become a mixture of cobbled areas and crushed stone. In front of you in the distance you will see two lines of pylons and overhead power cables crossing the road.

Before you reach the overhead cables, the road is crossed left and right at Knacks Lane. To the left you will see some farm buildings and the road to the right takes you to Prickshaw. At this junction on your right you will see a wooden finger post indicating you are now on the Pennine Bridleway.

Stay on Rooley Moor Road as the road climbs and passes under the overhead power cables. Once under the power lines you are now in the area of Whimsy Hill. Because this is now a bridleway you may encounter people on

horseback. It is best practice to step aside and allow the horses to pass. You will also see another public bridleway sign on your right, 100 mtrs further on take a turn on the right towards Bagden Hillocks.

## **Whimsy Hill (B) to Broad Lane (C)**

Follow the track and on the skyline ahead you will see Lobden Golf course with Crook Hill wind farm behind. Scanning the view from left to right you can see Saddleworth Moor, the 'Seven Sisters' tower blocks in Rochdale, Oldham in the distance, Hilton Tower in Manchester (on a clear day, beyond Hilton Tower you can see Jodrell Bank). Continue to scan right across the Cheshire plain and you can see Alderly Edge and to the far right is Fiddlers Ferry power station in Warrington. The track bears to the left and up the hill, the view opens out so you can see Whitworth in the valley below, Spring Mill Reservoir, Prickshaw Dam and Prickshaw village. In places the track has cobbles and well-worn stone slabs, presumably laid for quarry traffic. In the distance you can see the track ahead going between rows of dry stone wall s. You can see the Reap Moss and Todmorden wind farms ahead.

continued on **page 6**







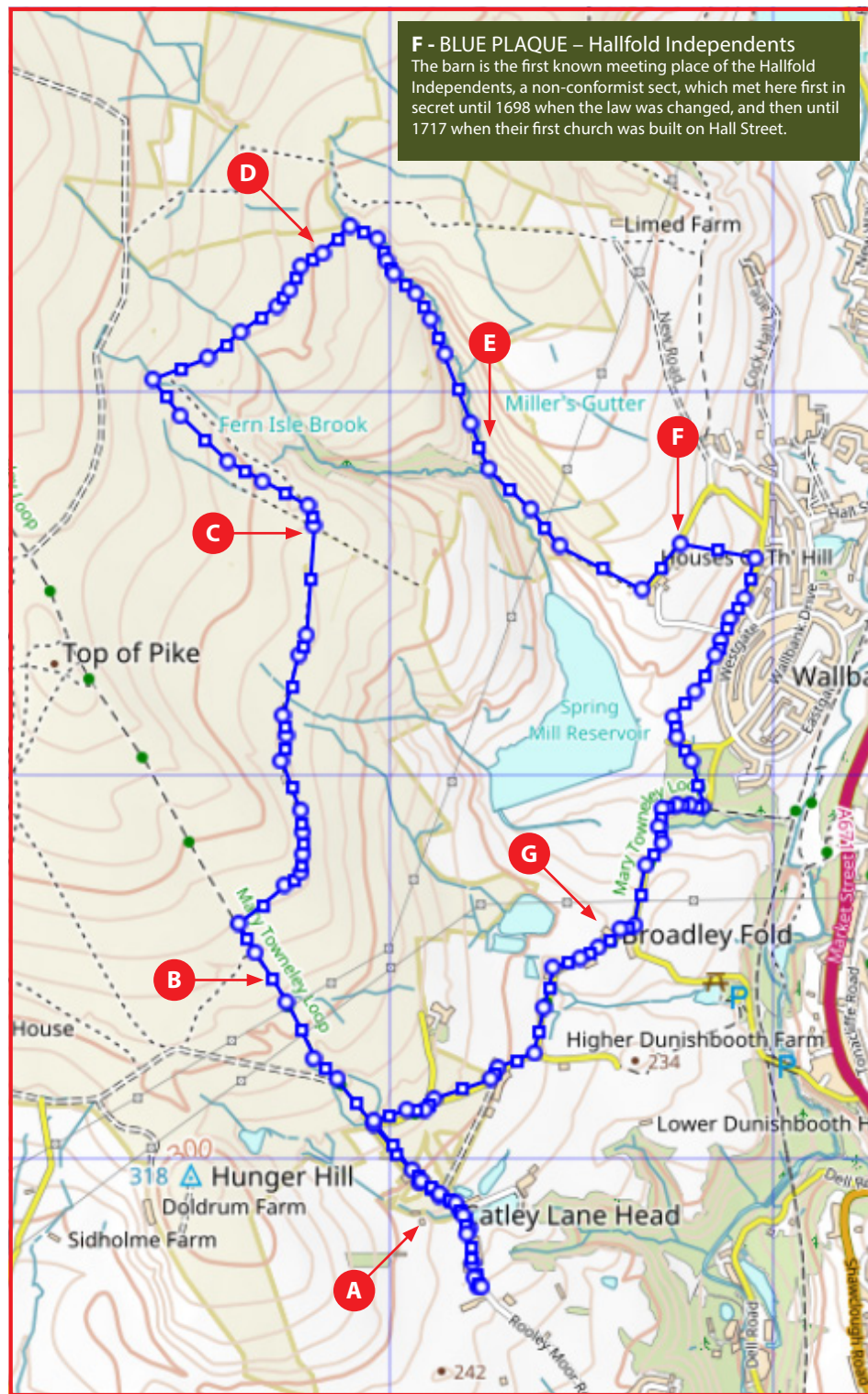
A - Catley Lane Head – **ROUTE START**



B - The Cotton Famine Road near to Whimsy Hill



C - Path & Gate at Broad Lane



D - Derelict Buildings Overlooking Fern Isle Wood



E - Rossendale Way



G - Prickshaw Village



# THE ROUTE continued

Immediately to the left of the track is the derelict body from a vehicle that has been used for storage. The landscape is very different with boulders strewn across the moor. Scanning the skyline to the left you can see spoil heaps from quarrying, note the boulders in the photo below.

The path goes through a boggy area and splits off to the left and right. Take the path to the right and head for a stile that will take you over a dry stone wall .

Having crossed the stile you will see a raised bank ahead that has been breached in the middle. Head towards this bank and when you get to the breach take the path down to the left and scramble back up the other side. The track passes through a lot of rush and grass, which in damp weather will be very boggy. Go over the remains of a dry stone wall and through a wooden gate.

## **Broad Lane (C) to Fern Isle Wood (D)**

Having crossed Broad Lane and through the gate, keep the dry stone wall to your right and follow it to a stile. Cross the stile and head across the moor, keeping the stile directly behind you. Shortly you will notice two derelict buildings, which overlook Fern Isle Wood. Head towards the nearest building and bear left when you see an overgrown track.

## **Fern Isle Wood (D) to Rossendale Way (E)**

Keeping the track to your right, follow the line of the track until it intersects with another track

where you will bear right. Note Fern Isle Wood to your left and below. This new track is the Rossendale Way and will take you down the hill; in the distance you will see Spring Mill Reservoir and to the left there is a footbridge crossing the brook.

## **Rossendale Way (E) to BLUE PLAQUE (F)**

Head for the footbridge crossing the brook and when you cross it, bear right and follow the path up the hill. You will pass a wooden sign, marked 'Footpath' and shortly come to a gate and stile. Pass through the stile and keep the reservoir wall to your right. As the path flattens out you will see some houses and another stile, step over the stile and take the path to your left. Follow this path until you see some houses in front of you. Carry on past the houses and you will come to a barn with a Blue Plaque. This is Fold Head High Barn, which was the meeting place of the 'Hallfold Independents', a nonconformist sect. Their meetings were in secret until 1698 when the law was changed.

## **BLUE PLAQUE (F) to Prickshaw Village (G)**

The road doubles back to your right. Follow this road down the hill to the right. Looking ahead you will see a school and a road. Take the track to your right before you get to this road. Follow the track, note the modern housing estate to your left and the fields to your right. Keep to the left and walk past some garages – keep to the path and DO NOT take the road.



The path opens out into open countryside. Continue to follow the path down hill to the left and you will pass a metal barrier on your left, which leads to a housing estate. Continue to follow the path to the right until it comes into a wooded area. Follow this path gradually up hill until you see a 'T' junction, which has a 'Pennine Bridle Way (PBW)' marker. Turn left at the 'T' junction and you will shortly pass the ruin of a red brick building on your left that used to be part of Spring Mill. On your right you will see a stone structure associated with Spring Mill Reservoir. Keep following the path up hill on the stone flagged road. There are stone walls on either side. Going gradually up hill you will pass a barn on your right with corrugated sides and roof. Having passed the electricity pylon and under the cables you will reach a stone built house. Take the cobbled road to your right. Keeping to the cobbled road walk through the village of Prickshaw and out the other side.

The track bends to the left and up hill it bends to the right where you will come to a cattle grid. Passing through the wooden gate to the left of the cattle grid you will walk between Knacks Cottage and Knacks Farm. DO NOT take the track to the left, which goes past the buildings, you should take the track to the right and as you walk up this track notice the fantastic views to your left over Manchester and beyond. Shortly you will arrive at a junction where you will turn left back down onto Rooley Moor Road and back to the start of the trail. Look out for Hunger Hill Farm on your right as the road continues down. Notice the mullion windows picked out in lighter colours. These are typical of the 16th and 17th century cottages designed to let in as much light as possible for the weavers to work.

Arriving at the cattle grid and back at the BBC plaque, you are back at the start where the walk also ends.

## About Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum CIO

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Working together to protect and enhance our environment! We created the Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum because we share a common purpose and objective to protect and enhance our neighbourhood and to make it an area that is vibrant, socially inclusive, and generally the greenest, safest place to live, work and enjoy. Forum members are individuals who either live, work or regularly pursue leisure activities (walking, horse riding, cycling, ornithology, fishing, etc) in the Rooley Moor area.

Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum is a registered charity, Charity number 1165601

Contact us for more information at [www.RMNF.org.uk](http://www.RMNF.org.uk) and if you would like to support our aims, please join us or make a donation! Email: [info@rmnf.org.uk](mailto:info@rmnf.org.uk).

## Thanks to our Supporters

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The work of the forum would not be possible without the fantastic support of the local community. We are truly fortunate to have a network of people who are interested in understanding and sharing the fascinating and varied heritage of our area.

We would also like to thank the Heritage Lottery Fund who are supporting us with a Sharing Heritage grant to research and develop our website, area signage and heritage trails. The Ramblers Association have helped us to develop and present this trail, and we continue to work alongside Rochdale Council to develop our Neighbourhood Plan and promote this amazing area here on the outskirts of the Borough.

# Other Things in the Area

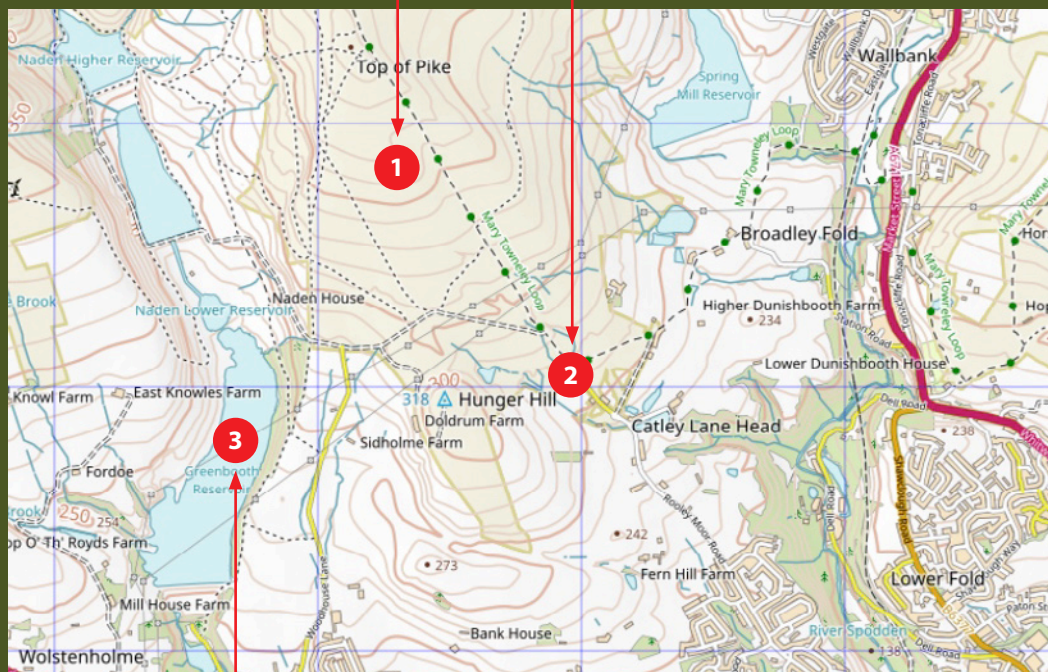
We really do hope you enjoyed your walk around Rooley Moor. The Neighbourhood Forum have been doing lots of other work in the area and we recommend you visit our website to find out more about other local history and alternative routes.

## 1. The Old Moorcock Inn

For many years the Old Moorcock Inn welcomed people traversing Rooley Moor along the cobbled cotton famine road.

## 2. The Cotton Famine Road

The Cotton Famine Road was built by impoverished cotton millworkers who supported the abolition of slavery during the American Civil War (1861-1865).



## 3. Greenbooth & Naden

Greenbooth Village, which once stood here, was flooded in the mid 1960s to make way for the larger reservoir which serves the majority of the Rochdale area. There is parking at the top of Woodhouse Lane giving easy access to the reservoirs.



Please scan the QR code to find more information about the Rooley Moor area.  
You can also pick up a GPX of the route from our website.  
Pictures provided by Forum members.  
Leaflet produced by Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum in November 2018.