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2



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4



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6

Upper Bradshaw Valley Local Nature Reserve

A beautiful woodland valley full of bluebells and birds that follow the gentle Bradshaw Brook.

On a spring visit to this former bleachworks site you'll find gently nodding bluebells have replaced the once billowing chimneys of Bradshaw Works.

Textiles were worked on here from 1542 when a woollen fulling mill was first established and remains of this industry can be seen in the Leat or Mill Race which still follow the line of the Kingfisher Trail.

Now home to a thriving wildlife population, the site is testament to the way in which nature can reclaim the land.

Access: Jumbles Country Park Car Park, off Bradshaw Road, Bolton.

Accessible: Not suitable for those with limited mobility.

Longsight Park & Firwood Fold

Historic houses, great geology and terrific trees make this area a fantastic place to visit.

Home to a wonderful arboretum, this site is a great place to brush up on your tree ID or simply to marvel at the beauty of this international collection.

Alongside the river a rocky outcrop provides a visual reminder of the days when the valley was quarried and mined for coal and if you look closely you may spot a few fossils.

In 1753, house number 10 in the picturesque community of Firwood Fold, saw the birth of one of the key figures of the Industrial Revolution in Samuel Crompton, inventor of the spinning mule.

Access: Longsight Park Arboretum Car Park, off Bradshaw Brow, Bolton.

Accessible: Not suitable for those with limited mobility.

Seven Acres Local Nature Reserve

Home to the Greater Manchester office of the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, this site provides a picture of the Kingfisher Trail in miniature.

The name of this 68 acre site reflects the importance of water to past industry - when the area covered by the various lodges, ponds and brook added up to exactly 'seven acres'.

Despite its industrial past it is now home to everything that makes the trail great: wildflower meadows, heathland, woodland, wetland, and a whole host of wildlife, including the key indicator species, the dipper.

Access: Seven Acres LNR Car Park, off Thicketford Road, Bolton.

Accessible: Riverside paths accessible with radar key. For more information visit www.7acres.org.uk

Leverhulme Park Local Nature Reserve

Better known for its sporting facilities, Leverhulme Park is also home to an array of wildlife.

Lord Leverhulme donated the park to the people of Bolton in 1919 as the first step towards a pioneering connected green corridor of land. Despite his plans never quite coming to fruition, it is in this spirit that the Kingfisher Trail was created nearly three-quarters of a century later and to which we now attach the term 'living landscape'.

The park sees the convergence of two rivers, Bradshaw Brook & the River Tonge, where kingfisher and heron sightings are both common. Large beech trees are home to breeding great-spotted woodpeckers & tawny owl.

Access: Leverhulme Park Car Park, off Long Lane, Bolton.

Accessible: Riverside paths accessible although with steep gradient.

Darcy Lever Gravel Pits

Hidden within the wider woodland, the Gravel Pits are a tranquil oasis... and home to all five of our inland amphibians.

Managed by volunteers, this site is testament to what can be achieved with willpower & time.

Dug up to provide clay for the nearby A666, several ponds were created which have gradually been added to. These are home to nationally important species like the Great Crested Newt and also provide habitat for one of the best dragonfly populations in the North West.

The trail follows the old canal towpath which once carried coal mined at Fogg's Pit on the site.

Access: Via Radcliffe Road at the Northern end, or Hall Lane at the Southern.

Accessible: Not suitable for those with limited mobility. For more information visit www.gpag.co.uk

Moses Gate Country Park

At 750 acres this is Bolton's largest nature reserve and it is home to mill lodges, woodland and plenty of heritage.

During the 19th century Moses Gate was home to Farnworth Paper Mills and under Thomas Bonsor Crompton it became one of the biggest paper producers in the country.

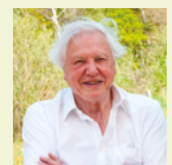
At this time the river was so dirty from all the industry that the water couldn't be used for paper making, with the result that 'Crompton's Lodges' were built. Nowadays these lodges support a wide range of waterfowl including common tern and mute swan.

It was here, during the early 1990s, that the Croal-Irwell Valley Ranger Service first devised the idea for the Kingfisher Trail.

Access: Moses Gate Country Park Car Park, off Hall Lane, Bolton.

Accessible: Pathways around lodges accessible for all.

"The wildlife Trusts play an important role in protecting our natural heritage. I would encourage anyone who cares about wildlife to join them"



Sir David Attenborough, President Emeritus, The Wildlife Trusts

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY...

Giving £5 per month makes a significant difference in helping to protect wildlife on your doorstep.

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We will send you a welcome pack including a 96 page Guide to our Nature Reserves and an introduction to our work. Keep up to date with our membership magazine and e-news where you will find opportunities to get involved.

Family membership

As well as receiving all of the benefits above, children will become Wildlife Watch members and receive all kinds of goodies including posters, stickers, quarterly magazines and the opportunity to join in your local watch group.

Minimum rates apply. Please see www.lancswt.org.uk for full details.

The Kingfisher Trail

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Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Lancswildlife

Visit us at www.lancswt.org.uk

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Photographs by Chris Brown, Stephen Cartwright, James Hall, Brian Hogan, Peter Hunter, Mike Jowles, Salford City Council, Tom Marshall, Brian Moulton and Daniel Parkinson.



7

Nob End Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

This is the jewel in the crown of the Kingfisher Trail, with rare orchids and stunning views of two rivers.

More than any other part of the Kingfisher Trail, Nob End sums up the way that nature has reclaimed this once industrial valley.

Once home to a mill, the site was then a dumping ground for sulphuric acid and washing soda. Time weathered this waste, creating an alkaline rich soil which now supports a rare collection of plants that are unique in Greater Manchester, including marsh, heath and bee orchids, helleborines, autumn gentian and blue-eyed grass.

An entirely artificial site, it is here that the Rivers Croal & Irwell meet, offering some of the most dramatic views on the entire Kingfisher Trail.

Access: From Boscow Road, via Prestolee Road, Little Lever, Bolton.

Accessible: Not suitable for those with limited mobility.



8

Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal

First navigable in 1797, the MB&B Canal opened up the valley to industry, allowing the transport of coal and other goods on an industrial scale.

Closed to traffic since 1961 the canal is now essentially several long ponds, providing excellent habitat for amphibians, dragonflies, fish and waterbirds.

Much of the Kingfisher Trail follows the old route of the canal and where it is still in water it stands above the Rivers Irwell and Croal, providing double the opportunities to see a Kingfisher. Since 1987 the MB&B Society has campaigned and worked towards the canal's restoration.

One of their most notable recent successes saw the installation of the Meccano Bridge, assembled entirely on site using giant Meccano pieces!

Access: From Boscow Road, via Prestolee Road, Little Lever, Bolton.

Accessible: Not suitable for those with limited mobility.

For more information visit www.mbbcs.org.uk



9

Clifton Country Park

One of Salford's best greenspaces, this is a wonderful place to visit whether you are interested in wildlife, geology, industrial history or just going for a nice walk.

Clifton Country Park's main feature is a large lake, created when gravel was extracted for building the nearby motorway. It has left a wonderful place to come and watch a wide range of waterbirds including the delightful springtime dance of the great crested grebe.

From the mid 17th century until the early 19th century the area was used for coal mining and it was here that the famous engineer James Brindley first made his name in the 1750's. It was also a favourite of L.S. Lowry, providing access to the wider valley which he painted and drew throughout his life. Make sure to visit the fantastic Salford Ranger Service run Visitor Centre to find out more!

Access: From Clifton House Road, Clifton, M27 6NG.

Accessible: Path around the lake accessible for all.

For more information visit www.salford.gov.uk/parks-and-open-spaces/salford-parks/clifton-country-park/



10

Philips Park Local Nature Reserve

Set within the 494 acre Prestwich Forest Park, there are stunning remnants of industry still visible against a backdrop of wildflower meadows and plantation woodland.

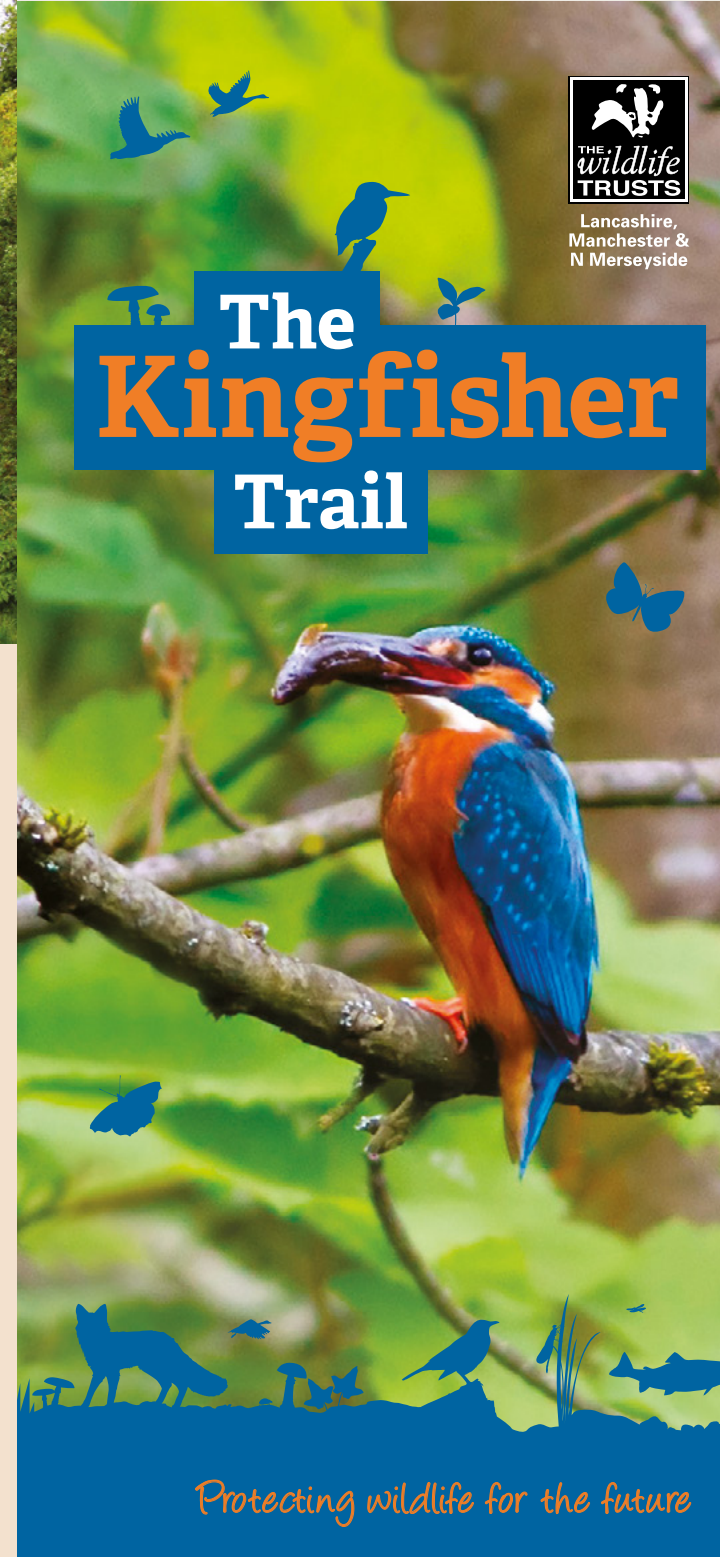
The now disused monolithic 13-Arch railway viaduct dominates this area which was once a thriving industrial hub but is now one of Bury's best greenspaces.

The formal gardens are the last reminder of the large house & estate belonging to the Philips family. Where once you would have seen towering chimneys, you can now spot hovering kestrels and circling buzzards, while you should listen out for the drumming of woodpeckers too.

The park is a haven for cyclists with a purpose built mountain bike trail and connection to National Cycle Route 6.

Access: Park Lane, Whitefield, M45 7QJ.

Accessible: Not suitable for those with limited mobility.



The Kingfisher Trail

Protecting wildlife for the future



Lancashire, Manchester & N Merseyside

The Kingfisher Trail

The Kingfisher Trail is a 14 mile recreational route which connects the rural West Pennine Moors to the urban communities of Bolton, Bury and Salford. This historic trail is home to a wide range of wildlife species and provides a recreation resource which is important for the region's people, wildlife and heritage.



Bradshaw Hall



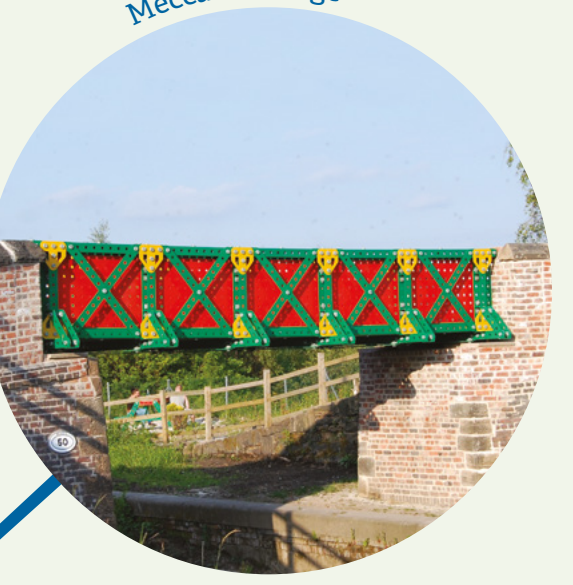
Firwood Fold



Bolton Environmental Resource Centre



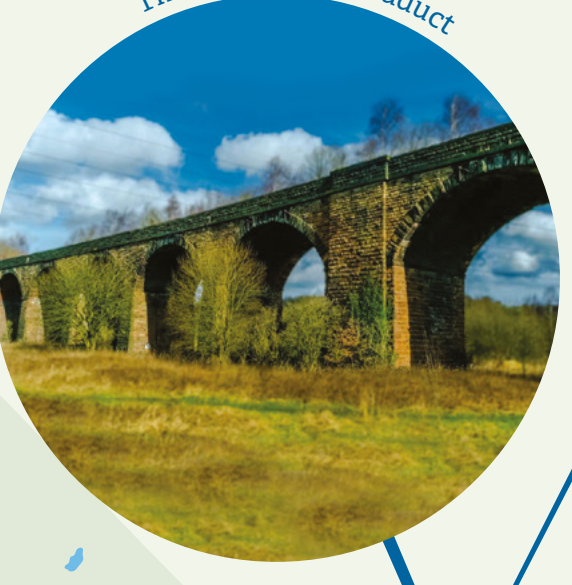
Rock Hall



Meccano Bridge



Irwell Sculpture Trail



Thirteen Arches viaduct



The Barn Visitor Centre at Phillips Park



Giant Hogweed is present at sites along the Kingfisher Trail. This plant can cause burns and blisters if it touches your skin. Keep yourself and your family safe – do not touch.

The trail was originally set up by the Croal-Irwell Valley Ranger Service in the early 1990s to highlight the incredible abundance of wildlife reclaiming a once industrial valley.

Following the disbanding of this service the Trust are re-establishing the trail as a way of focusing attention on this key living landscape which nowadays an army of passionate volunteers and community groups help the local authorities to manage the sites and run a range of events across the valley.

If you think you can help, get in touch by calling us on 01204 663 754.