

⑧ In 180m just beyond a large metal post on the right-hand side, drop down to the right, crossing what was the original bed of the River Irwell. Follow the path as it ascends up a short slope to another metal post on the left. Continue straight along the linear woodland path enjoying its natural flora and wildlife. You may see the occasional train passing on your left. The other side of the rail track was once the site of the Steelworks factory. At the end of the park emerge onto the roadway and keep straight on up Preston Avenue towards Liverpool Rd. Carefully cross straight over the road towards Station Park.

⑨ At the entrance to the park go through the gap and wooden gate onto Station Park. Follow the gravel path looking out for unique pieces of 3D artwork found nestling amongst the trees and shrubs of what was once a railway embankment. After taking in the magical Hobbit style cottages ascend the steps from the turning circle seating area. Continue along the gravel path towards Irlam Station, passing more 3D art pieces and a large railway display. Several heritage boards shed light onto the history of the railways and the many former local industries. Take time to explore Station House and its surroundings with its wealth of heritage information showcasing the rich history of Irlam Station, the Manchester Ship Canal and the many heavy industries that once occupied the district.



⑩ From the Station House retrace your steps back through Station Park to leave the park via the gate you entered earlier. Carefully cross Liverpool Rd to go down Preston Avenue and then left up Tramway Rd, keeping the houses on your left-hand side to emerge onto the main road opposite St Teresa's church. Turn right along Liverpool Rd and shortly cross the road at the pelican crossing to proceed towards the bus shelter and black and white building (formerly The Ship Hotel) beyond which stands a heritage board 'The Kings Highway' depicting the history of Liverpool Rd. At the traffic lights cross Roscoe Rd and then Liverpool Rd. Turn left then enter Princes Park and continue through an avenue of trees to return to the car park to end the walk.

All heritage is FREE to view, including items inside Irlam Station House which offers refreshments served all day in a unique and architecturally beautiful setting.



This is the seventh in a series of local walking guides available to download from www.hamiltondavies.org.uk
Your feedback will be much appreciated - please email us at hello@hamiltondavies.org.uk or call 0161 222 4003.

Original illustrations by local artist David Tudor
Researched and written by John Eccles © Copyright 2021
Publication sponsored by The Hamilton Davies Trust
Reviewed June 2024



The 3 Parks of Irlam

A 4-5 mile circular walk that takes in the open green spaces and woodland of Princes Park, Irlam Linear Park and Station Park. There is also a wealth of heritage information to see along the way, for those interested in the history of the area.

Easy walking on level terrain with a short climb via steps in Station Park - boots or strong footwear recommended.

- 🕒 Allow 2 to 2½ hours
- 🅑 Leisure Centre, Liverpool Rd, Irlam M44 6BR
- 🚗 No 100, 67 & 67A Liverpool Rd / Latham Rd Manchester & Warrington
- 🚩 OS Explorer™ 27
- 🍷 Roosters café, Princes Park, Irlam
The Boat House Inn, Ferry Rd, Irlam
The Station - Irlam café bar

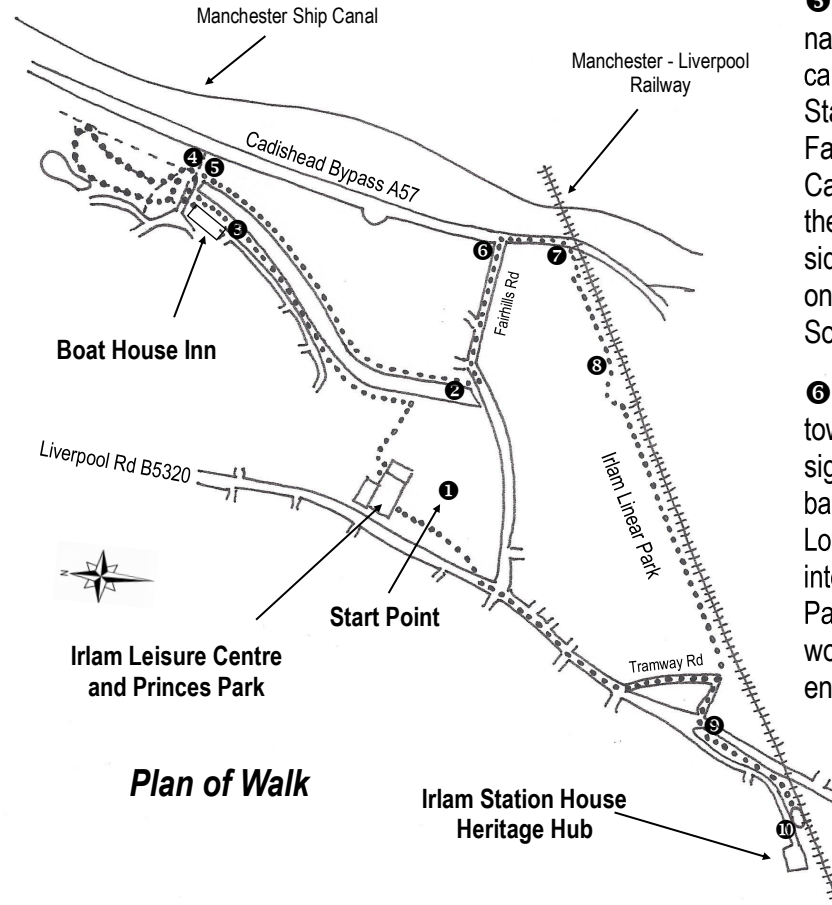
The walk starts from the car park adjacent to Irlam Leisure Centre on the A57 Liverpool Road. On route the walk takes in many points of interest, including heritage boards, 2D & 3D art pieces, a life-sized railway display, signal box and signalling museum. Numerous artefacts, artworks and old photographs can also be seen in the heritage hub inside Irlam Station House.

1 Leave the car park keeping the skate park on your right and progress to the path on Princes Park at the back of the Leisure Centre. Follow the tarmac path alongside the skate park then cut across the grass through the trees to another tarmac path. At the tarmac path turn right passing the Cenotaph on your right-hand side before passing through another avenue of trees.

2 In 140m at the T-junction of the paths turn left. In 135m at the Y-junction turn right on the tarmac path then bear right on an earth path along the edge of the trees. Continue along the path for 380m, passing a carved owl and squirrel to your left, until reaching the Boat House Inn. The path follows the bed of the old River Irwell, which has become an idyllic backwater for birds and wildlife.



3 At the end of the Inn take the narrow path to the left to head to the heritage board under the Boat House sign in the car park. The board tells the interesting history of the Commercial Waterways - Mersey & Irwell Navigation. Leave the car park to join the small side road, turn right and, after passing through the first gate, proceed towards the metal gateways on either side of the track.



Plan of Walk

4 From the track turn left through the metal loop gateway and in 25m take the left-hand fork up to the left. In 145m take the right-hand fork along path through the trees. In 140m the path joins another path at T junction. Turn left and in another 15m take the left-hand path towards the pond. Follow this path, with the pond on your right, then in 150m, turn left up the grassy path. In 40m go over a main path and continue straight ahead on the grassy path, heading towards the powerplant chimneys in the distance. In 120m the path begins to descend between the trees. In a further 40m turn left at the T junction. The path swings to the left before descending to meet another path. Turn right and right again to the metal loop gateway where you entered this section. Cross the track to the metal loop gateway opposite.

5 Go through the metal loop gateway onto a narrower tarmac path. The remnants of the River Irwell can be seen on your right through the trees and bushes. Stay on this path for 800m before emerging onto Fairhills Rd through another metal loop gateway. Carefully cross the road and then proceed left towards the bypass, passing Sandywarps Rd on your left-hand side. You pass the old CWS Soap Works brick building on your right - you can read about the history of the Soap Works later, when you reach Irlam Station.

6 As Fairhills Rd joins Cadishead by-pass, turn right towards the railway viaduct. As you approach the large sign for Irlam Linear Park in about 30m, stand and look back over the Manchester Ship Canal to view Irlam Locks. Turn right into Irlam Linear Park through the wooden fenced entrance.



7 Follow the path keeping the green railings on your right-hand side and in approximately 85m turn sharp right and follow the metal railings to the end and turn left onto the woodland path. This path follows the original railway line and the industrial estate to your right stands on what was the original Soap Works site.

