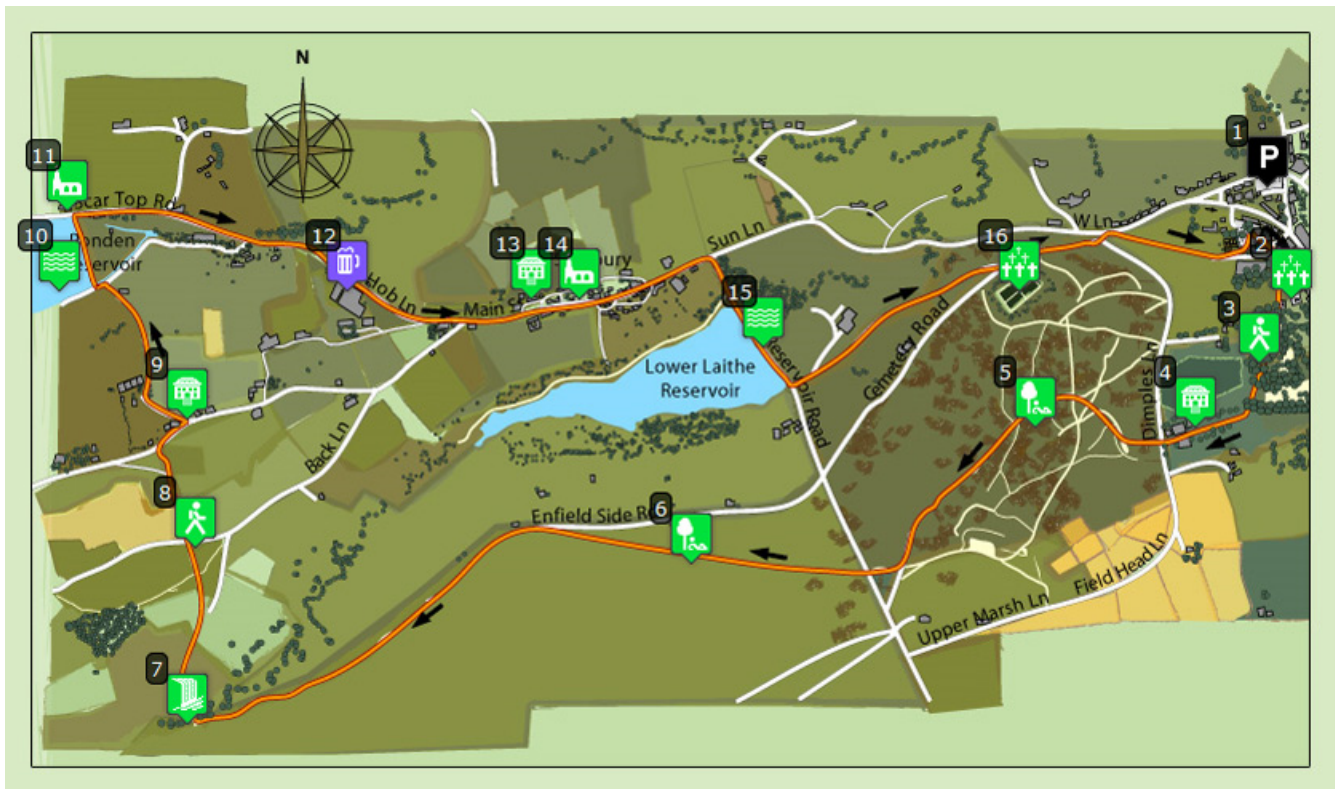


# Haworth Moors and Stanbury

A walk on Pennine Moorland taking in Brontë landmarks and places of worship in outlying villages.



## 1 West Lane Car Park

Starting point for both walks. If arriving by car, park here rather than the Changegate car park which is privately run and operates an infamously stringent clamping policy.

The car park owner and its actions have been the subject of a television documentary and prompted debate in parliament, following the clamping of former Speaker Betty Boothroyd's car in 2008.

## 2 St Michael and All Angels Graveyard

Atmospheric churchyard dating back to seventeenth century including graves from Brontë contemporaries.

The churchyard of St Michael and All Angels lies between the church, the Parsonage and the open fields that lead out onto the Pennine moors. There are estimated to be about 40,000 people buried in the churchyard, interned in close packed graves and marked with a diverse range of memorials, table and flat gravestones. The overcrowding and poor drainage in the churchyard and its effect on the health of villagers was a cause for concern for Patrick Brontë, who campaigned for improvements. Gravestones were ordered to be placed vertically to allow shrubs to grow and improve decomposition and trees were planted around and inside the site. These now mature trees, the shadows cast by the surrounding buildings and the mist that rolls in off the moors add to the dark, atmospheric feel of the churchyard.

A walk around the churchyard is a sad lesson in social history. In Victorian times, overcrowding and poor sanitation meant that life expectancy in the village was very low. A health report of 1850 stated that 2 in every 5 children did not reach their sixth birthday and this fact is borne out on the inscriptions on the gravestones. The graves of the Brontës' servants Tabitha Ackroyd and Martha Brown can be found here, but the Brontës themselves are buried in a vault inside the church, apart from Anne who is buried in St Mary's churchyard, Scarborough.



## 3 Footpath from churchyard

Footpaths leading out of the village in area known as Heartbreak Hill

To the left of the footpath from the churchyard is a large car park which was a quarry from the late 1890's until the 1970's. Some locals still refer to this area as Heartbreak Hill due to its reputation as a tough place to work. The quarry owner is remembered for saying he liked to see a man walking up the path to work in the morning whistling and going home holding the handrail.

## 4 Sowdens

The home of the church incumbents prior to the building of the Parsonage

William Grimshaw, the incumbent of Haworth Parish Church, lived at Sowdens farmhouse between 1742 – 63. When Charles Wesley, one of the pioneers of the Methodist movement, first visited Haworth he was not allowed to preach within the church but he did address one of the meetings Grimshaw held in his kitchen at Sowdens. Grimshaw was soon converted to the Methodists' beliefs in God's grace and began to adopt their evangelical approach in his own preaching. The house is in private ownership but a plaque on the side commemorates its famous visitors.

## 5 Penistone Hill Country Park

An open moorland area with excellent views of the Worth Valley and Ilkley Moor. The rocky landscape contains evidence of the area's quarrying heritage.

The stone underneath Penistone Hill consists of layers of rock laid down over 300 million years ago, collectively known as millstone grit. Although the stone would have been quarried for building and walling work from early times, it was the increased demand for rock to build the mills and houses of the industrial revolution that led to commercial quarries springing up all over the Upper Worth Valley. A handful of these quarries are still working and the remains of many more can be seen across the landscape.

Penistone Hill was a number of separate quarries in operation between 1840's and 1960. Depending on the properties of the rocks, the stone that was extracted from here was used for the lintels, sills, flagstones, slates and gravestones of the nearby industrial towns. The piles of discarded rock which litter the hill are likely to be the softer shale which was of little use. Occasionally it is possible to see in the discarded stone the workings of the stone masons, who worked the extracted stone on site. In the middle of the country park you can see the Forth ponds which were part of a drainage system and to the western end the remains of a coal mine, which was extracted from here before the railways brought cheaper coal from elsewhere.

On a clear day Penistone Hill Country Park offers fantastic views of Keighley and the South Pennines hills. To the North East is Rombalds Moor and the famous Ilkley Moor and to South West you can sometimes see Top Withins Farm, the supposed setting for Wuthering Heights.

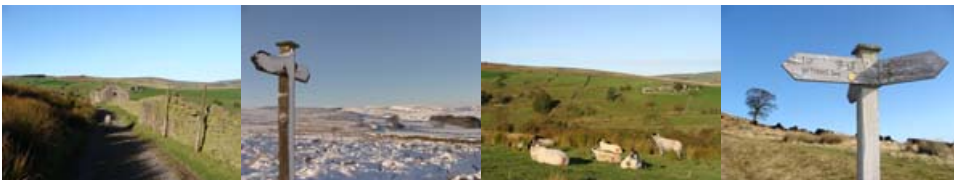


## 6 Stanbury Moor

Open heather-topped moorland where Emily Brontë liked to roam

After leaving Penistone Hill the footpath crosses Haworth Moor, now a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest for its varied bird and plantlife. This includes ring ouzels, lapwings, meadow pipits and acid-loving bog plants. Listen out for the distinctive call of the curlew and in high summer pick bilberries from the low growing bushes which nestle amongst the bright purple of the bell and ling heather.

Today Haworth Moor is grazed by sheep and managed for grouse shooting. Since 2004 it has been designated open country and is a popular walking route for people retracing the steps of Emily Brontë who enjoyed the freedom of its open spaces.



## 7 Brontë Bridge and Brontë Waterfall

Picturesque spot where the Brontë sisters were said to come for inspiration

The point where the path crosses South Dean Beck is known as Brontë Bridge as the sisters reputedly enjoyed walking to this spot. The original bridge was swept away in floods in 1989 and was replaced in 1990. In the gully to the left of the bridge are the Brontë Falls which, although picturesque, need a good deal of water coming down them to justify their title. There is also a chair-shaped rock (the Brontë Chair, inevitably) where Emily was said to sit and gather ideas for her poems and stories.



## 8 Pennine Way

A short step along Britain's original long distance footpath

The acorn symbol on the waymarkers indicates our path has met the Pennine Way, a well-known footpath that links the Pennine uplands of Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Northumberland and the Scottish borders. The Pennine Way was the idea of Tom Stephenson, a keen Rambler who had been inspired by long distance trails in America. It was officially opened in 1965 and its popularity was assisted by Alfred Wainwright who wrote

one of his famous pictorial guides to the route. He described his experiences as 'the experience of a lifetime, which is not to say that it offers you continuous enjoyment. It is a tough, bruising walk and the compensations are few.' Perhaps because of this he offered half a pint of beer to any walkers who completed the route, a bar tab which he honoured until his death in 1991. This point is approximately at the 52nd mile of the 267 mile route that, while not Britain's longest, is often considered to be its toughest long distance footpath.



## 9 Buckley Green

Home of Timmy Feather, last of the handloom weavers

Buckley Green was the home of Timmy Feather who died in 1910, the last handloom weaver in the area. Since around 1700 handloom weaving had been the occupation of a large proportion of the population in the Upper Worth Valley. Each area was known for creating its own type of cloth and in the Worth Valley it was worsted, a lightweight but coarse woollen cloth. Families worked a handloom in an upstairs room of their house and weavers' cottages can often be recognised by the row of windows on the first or second floor to allow in extra light. Clothiers provided them with the yarn and then the weavers would create finished pieces which the clothiers would collect to sell at markets like the Piece Hall in Halifax. In effect the handloom weaver was self-employed. Without bosses looking over them, the weavers were able to work when they liked and often combined the work with farming a relatively small piece of land. This self-sufficiency is thought to have shaped the character of a proudly independent, some would say stubborn people, making it fertile ground for the wave of non-conformism that was to come.

The industrial revolution that began here in the late eighteenth / early nineteenth century was to change the shape of the area and the lives of its people for ever. Work moved into the small water-powered mills and then later the large steam-powered factories transforming the lower valleys and creating factory drudges of the men, women and children who worked there.

By staying at home and weaving by hand Timmy had made himself into a local tourist attraction and would boast '*Ya con buy me fer tuppence on a paast-card i' Stanbury or Haworth*'. No doubt he supplemented his income through photographs as many people came to see what had become a dying industry. Timmy is buried in Haworth churchyard.

## 10 Ponden Reservoir

Nineteenth century reservoir built to supply water to the mills.

Ponden reservoir was one of a number built locally to supply water to steam-powered industry in Keighley or Bradford or to compensate local mill owners for the water being diverted elsewhere. It is now owned and managed by Yorkshire Water and supplies water via the grid to the whole of the Yorkshire region.

Straight across the water looking up the valley you can see Ponden Hall which dates from 1634. The Brontë family visited the Heaton who lived there and the house is considered to be the inspiration for Thrushcross Grange, the Lintons' home in Wuthering Heights.



## 11 Scar Top Sunday School

Independent Methodist Chapel

It may seem surprising to find a surviving chapel this far from the main villages, but when it was first built in 1818, Scar Top had many more inhabitants than it does now. Residents lived in large families in the local farms and cottages dotted across the hillside and many adults and children were employed at Ponden Mill just down the valley. In these early days before publicly-funded education, Sunday schools provided basic literacy and numeracy for children who worked six days a week. It appears that for its first fifty years the school was non-denominational although the school room was used by the Methodists for services in their Circuit Plan.

It must have attracted large numbers because in 1869 the chapel was rebuilt and at this point officially became a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. The old building bore a plaque bearing the inscription 'Stanbury and Oakworth General Sunday School, built by voluntary subscription for all denominations Anno Domini 1818'. When the building was demolished this was broken, some believed deliberately. The Wesleyans proposed a new plaque bearing their name, but this was rejected and the plaque, above the door, is still bare.

Like other Sunday schools in the area, the highlight of the year was the Anniversary service, known as the Charity. This would be an open air service with choir, band and visiting preachers. The events would attract hundreds or even thousands of people travelling from neighbouring villages or those as far away as Lancashire or the Calder Valley. People would wear their best clothes, bring a picnic and make a day of it. Chapels would be in competition for who had the best Charity, often focusing on the takings of the collection plate. It was well-known as an event at which relationships would form, giving rise to the nickname 't'Coppin' on Charity'.

Scar Top Chapel has been independent from the Methodists since the 1970's and some claim it had never belonged to them in the first place. A small congregation still meets every Sunday and the Anniversary continues to be celebrated on the second Sunday in June, although these days it is an indoor service followed by a generous tea. A series of annual events such as concerts and carol services attracts larger audiences helping the building to cling on to its function as a centre for this sparse community.



## 12 Old Silent Inn

Reputedly haunted inn with restaurant. Recently won the Best Food Pub of the year 2010 in the Great British Pub Awards.

This 400 year old pub is rumoured to have its fair share of ghosts, including a headless soldier, a ghostly bell and a male figure seen at the bar. Legend has it that Bonnie Prince Charlie stayed at the inn whilst a fugitive and the pub name refers to the locals' silence regarding his whereabouts, but why the exiled prince should chose to hide in Haworth after his bloody defeat again the English is a complete mystery. Perhaps the silence was once more to do with late night drinking at this out of the way inn. The pub has real fires in winter and two beer gardens for the warmer weather. There is also a restaurant serving traditional meals and bed and breakfast accommodation.



## 13 Stanbury

Small farming village with long established tradition of non-conformity.

The small village of Stanbury stands in an elevated, isolated setting looking down over two valleys. The village was an agricultural settlement dating from pre-Saxon times. Situated on an important route between Yorkshire and Lancashire, it later developed into a thriving industrial village. The village is a collection of houses facing the main street, although almost all the pre-nineteenth century buildings are on the north side of the road, suggesting that the south facing slopes were maximised for cultivation. A century before the evangelical revival that spread non-conformism across the Worth Valley, missionaries brought Quakerism to the area and a Quaker community had established in Stanbury by the middle of the seventeenth century. A house on Main Street opposite the village school was thought to be used as a Meeting House and a stone cross in the wall of the adjacent field, Horton Croft, commemorates the 45 Quakers who are buried there. Later these Quaker families probably converted, because by the nineteenth century both the Methodists and Baptists had meetings, and started Sunday schools and chapels in the village, stealing a march on the Church of England who expected worshippers to travel to Haworth for services.

For such a small community the village is surprisingly well catered for with its own primary school, a playground and two pubs, the Friendly Inn and the Wuthering Heights. The village is a conservation area containing several listed buildings built in the unadorned vernacular style. Standing out amongst the farm houses, barns and weavers' cottages are a number of houses converted from the non-conformist chapels and Sunday schools that once existed here, such as the former Methodist chapel opposite the Wuthering Heights pub.



## 14 St Gabriel's Church, Stanbury

Chapel at Ease established by Patrick Brontë.

In response to the growing popularity of the dissenting Methodist and Baptist movements, the Church of England realised it needed more clergy to spread the word within the community. In 1835, Patrick Brontë, the vicar of the parish of Haworth was granted funding to employ a curate and ten years later he was able to employ another to help him with his duties in Haworth and Stanbury. Brontë raised a subscription to build a 'chapel at ease', a church within the boundaries of the parish for those who cannot easily reach the parish church.

The Stanbury Chapel was built in 1848 and was the responsibility of Brontë's curate Arthur Bell Nicholls, who later married Charlotte Brontë. Nicholls was also instrumental in building a Board school for the village, replacing the Baptist Sunday school.

Inside, St Gabriel's is a beautifully simple chapel. The pulpit is the top section of the triple decker pulpit used by William Grimshaw, foermerly in St Michael's in Haworth and it is likely that John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, preached a sermon from it. In 1998, to commemorate its 150th anniversary the church was renamed St Gabriel's. The chapel, with St Michaels in Haworth and St James in Cross Roads, form a cluster sharing ministers and rotating services between them. St Gabriel's acts as the 'village hall' for Stanbury and as well as church services, the room is used for karate lessons, craft group, a pre-school and a film club.



## 15 Lower Laithe Reservoir

Reservoir built to supply water to the Worth Valley after other reservoirs were extracting the natural water courses elsewhere.

Like Ponden Reservoir, Lower Laithe was built as a compensation reservoir. Work began on Lower Laithe reservoir in 1912 but was disrupted by the 1st World War, so was not finally finished until 1925. Stone from Dimples Quarry on Penistone Hill was transported down the valley by a narrow gauge railway that ran along the current footpath back towards Haworth. The octagonal building that rises out of the water is a valve tower. Underneath the visible decorative storey are five further storeys of water-drawing mechanisms.



## 16 Haworth Cemetery

Haworth's new cemetery containing the grave of daredevil parachutist Lily Cove

This cemetery was built in 1873 when the overcrowded graveyard next to Haworth Church was closed. It contains the grave of Lily Cove, daredevil parachutist who met a tragic end at Haworth Gala in 1906. Lily was a young woman from London who travelled the country with a stunt balloonist impressing the crowds by jumping from the balloon and parachuting to the ground. On this occasion, jumping somewhere above Ponden Reservoir near Scar Top she somehow became detached from the parachute and, in front of huge crowds, fell to her death.

