

Fifty eight MARSDEN – TUNNEL ENTRANCE.

This is a lovely, short, easy stroll for a warm day or late afternoon. It is very easy underfoot, and through good countryside with ample opportunities for refreshment.

Catch a train from Eccles to Manchester Victoria and change there (or at Stalybridge) onto a Huddersfield stopping train. *Some very fine views on this ride!*

On the left of the train see if you can spot Diggle Station (*Closed - it is now a house - an elegant little Victorian building*), and then the canal entering the Standedge Tunnel (*closed with gates modelled like the prow of a barge*).

How long does it take the train to get through the tunnel?

Alight at Marsden Station.

At the top of the platform steps go slightly right and then left along Reddisher Road. *Along this road you can find honeysuckle, willows, blackberries, and foxgloves and there are lovely views of the Pennine Hills.*

You pass New House cottage on your right. *On the left here you can see Pule Hill with the spoil heaps from tunnel construction. Why do you think they are at the top of the hill?*

Visible below is the 1894 railway tunnel with the River Colne diverted across the top of it. *In steam locomotive days smoke and steam billowed constantly from these tunnel mouths. This great landscape makes the trains look like they are on a model railway!*

Follow the lane to the Tunnel End Inn free house (*real ales, 2009 Good Beer Guide. Open 17.00 on Monday to Friday and 12.00 to close on Friday And Saturday*).

Turn left at the Tunnel End Inn. *Notice the attractive row of cottages (1848) on the right - and the iron door on the chimney-sweeping hole.*

Take the left-hand fork through the gate and go down towards the canal.

On the left is a canal warehouse. *This houses a good exhibition about the building of the various Standedge tunnels (1811, 1849, 1871 and 1894) and the narrow canal (Open 10.00-17.00 daily, free admission).*

Go up to the top of the garden behind the warehouse. From here there is a good view of the entrances to the old and new railway tunnels with the River Colne flowing between them.

Outside the warehouse gate go left down to the side of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the entrance to the canal tunnel *which cuts through Pule Hill to Diggle taking the canal towards Manchester City centre*. There is a café in the building on the right. *Here you can book a barge trip through the tunnel (every hour with a category one charge. Sun block not provided.)*

Leave the café and go right across bridge 82 over the canal.
Turn left to follow the canal bank back to Marsden.

You come to the canal lock at Marsden. On the right is The Railway Inn - *free house, real ales and food*.

Go to the end of the lock and cross left over the canal.

Go onto the nearest platform for the trains back to Manchester.

On the left as the train emerges from the tunnel you might catch a glimpse of the Standedge Tunnel water tank. It is on the platforms of the closed Standedge station. *This tank fed water for the steam locomotives to long troughs between the rails in the tunnel (the only level track on the line for these). Steam engines have scoops they can drop to collect this water as they move.*

Change train at Manchester Victoria for a train to Eccles.

CLASSIFICATION: SHORT, EASY

COUNTRYSIDE, VIEWS INDUSTRIAL HISTORY,
CANAL, PUBS, and CAFE.

RAIL FARE: category three.

MAP OS 1:50 000 sheet 110 Philip's Street Atlas West Yorkshire