

**Eighty four            MARPLE – WATERWAYS CIRCULAR.**

If you don't like countryside views, canals, rivers and woodland then don't do this walk. It's only short but very varied. You ascend the Marple Flight of locks, pass a busy canal junction and then descend to return along the Goyt Valley.

Take the train to Manchester Victoria and from there a tram to Manchester Piccadilly Station. From here catch a train to Marple (NOT Rose Hill). *Option: - turn right as you get off the tram and on Fairfield Street use the lift on the left to the link bridge lounge.*

Alight at Marple Station. Go straight ahead, up the steps and turn right uphill.

Cross the canal at lock 9 and walk along the towpath. *This is the Peak Forest canal, built to carry limestone from the High Peak. Samuel Oldknow's warehouse is on the opposite side.*

Ascend the flight of locks up to No16. *Notice that some of the pounds (stretches between locks) have stubs off for docking on the far side –very nice having one of these at the bottom of the garden!*

After lock 16 pass the old lock office on the right on Sutton Lane.

Cross the canal bridge (*over the Macclesfield Canal*) and drop down towards the left to rejoin the bank of the Peak Forest Canal.

At bridge 19 swap to the other side of the canal (left, left, left) and continue on to pass under a footbridge. *There are now beautiful open views of the hills.*

Just prior to bridge 21 turn left off the canal bank and left onto the road.

At the hairpin bend to the right there is a stile on the left.

Cross the stile to go ahead through the field (*this stretch could be very muddy in wet weather!*) and left around the large tree.

Cross the next stile and walk along the path behind the houses.

At the main road, cross and go to the footpath sign to your left.

Go right onto this path *and you start an immediate steep descent of many, many steps on the wooded valley side. The river Goyt is at the bottom.*

Cross the river on the attractive pack horse bridge and turn left at the lane (Lakes Road).

A little way on there is an octagonal cottage – *was it a toll house?*

There is a weir and then you pass under the railway viaduct.

On you right now are the Roman Lakes. *These were ponds for Samuel Oldknow's Mellor Mill. Take a look in. Tel: 0161 427 2039. They are now used*

*for boating and fishing - daily rod hire is available for fishing. Tel: 0161 427 1621.*

Follow along Lakes Road and pass in front of Bottoms Hall (*Charmingly named, impressively sited - Georgian?*).

Continue until you come to Bottom's Mill Road. *You may see some of the foundations of the old mill on your left on this stretch.*

Turn right up Bottoms Mill Road (*It becomes Low Lea Road part way along*) and follow this along into Marple Bridge. *Marple Bridge is an attractive stone village. There are two churches opposite.*

Turn left along Town Street and past the shops. *On the right is The Royal Scot - selling Robinson's real ales.*

On the left is the River Goyt with The Midland overlooking. *The Midland is a free house selling cask marque real ales, tea, coffee, snacks and full meals.*

Cross the main road ahead and turn left over the river.

Ascend opposite The Midland and past the entrance to Brabyns Park - *a large public park.*

Just after the lych gate fork right across the station car park to Marple station.

Enter the station and cross the footbridge to catch a train back to Manchester Piccadilly. *Notice the brick staithe supports - presumably once for loading trains from the canal barges above.*

CLASSIFICATION:                    SHORT      MODERATE (a very muddy stretch in wet weather)

COUNTRYSIDE, CANAL, RIVER, PUBS, CAFE, VIEWS, WOODLAND

RAIL FARE:                    category one

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Philip's Street Atlas Greater Manchester