

A Walk to Foster Dams

This is a lovely short circular walk alongside the River Hebden and back by a hidden 19th century water system for local mills.

Distance – 3km, 2 miles, about 4000 steps. It should take you about an hour.

Start and Finish: St Pol Car park

How Strenuous: Nearly all on the flat

How uneven? All on minor roads and good footpaths

Obstacles: No stiles, but there are two flights of steps and some parts may be a bit muddy after rain.

1. Leaving the car park turn left down the pedestrianised road called Bridgegate.
2. Turn left at the fustian knife in Saint Georges Square, cross the bridge over the river and immediately turn right to follow a riverside path. At the end, the route turns left and you will come out onto a tarmac road where you turn right
3. Follow the road over the river, round to the left where it becomes Victoria Road. Pass Leedham Court and some industrial buildings and towards the end turn right on Groove Road. Turn left and cross an old packhorse bridge.

The turning to the riverside path



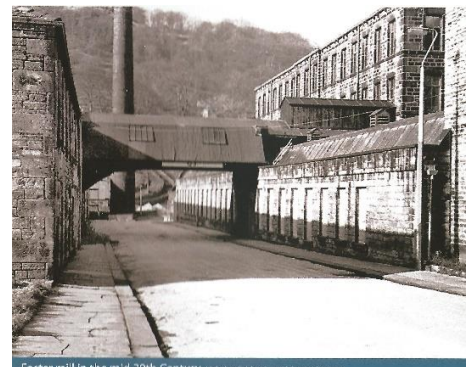
4. Turn right along the riverside path (sections of the path can be a little bit muddy after rain).
5. After 500 metres the path bears left and you reach the bowling club house, turn right across the foot bridge and then immediately turn right going back down the stream on the other side. You are now walking on the water system for Foster Mill which was demolished some time ago.
6. Keep following this path, you will go down and up some steps and then at the very end you go through a gap in the wall onto a rough tarmac road called Windsor View.
7. Turn right down here to the very end and at the bottom you turn left which is the same road that you started your walk and retrace your steps.

Foster Mill was originally a water powered fulling mill, but it had been converted into a corn mill probably in the early part of the 18th century.

In the 19th century it was used for various textile processes and burnt down twice during that time.

It was bought by the Redman Brothers in 1879 and by 1890 it employed 6-700 people, making about 15,000 garments a week.

Redmans shut the mill in 1978 and it was demolished in 1985.



Foster mill in the mid 20th Century. © Hebden Bridge Local History Society