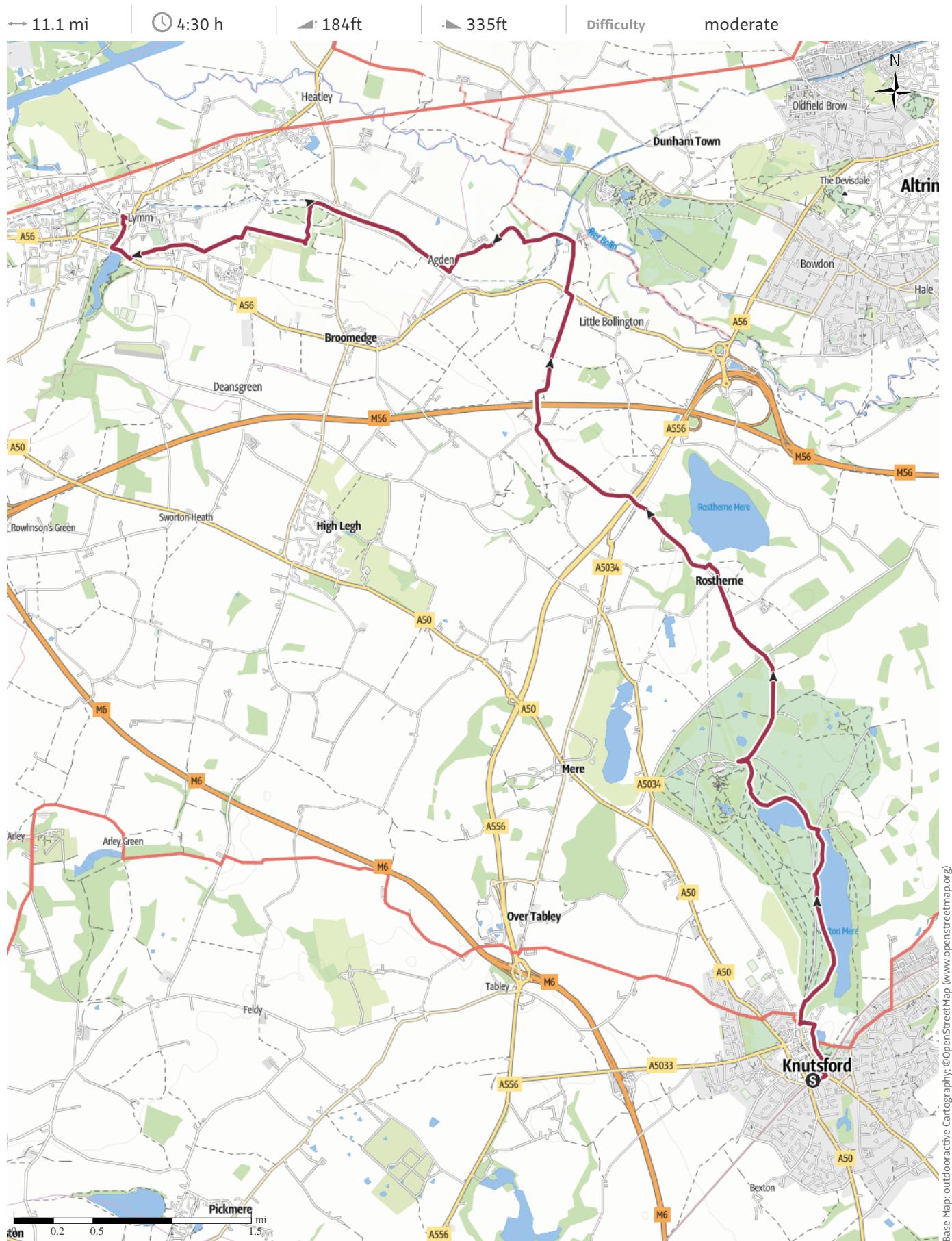
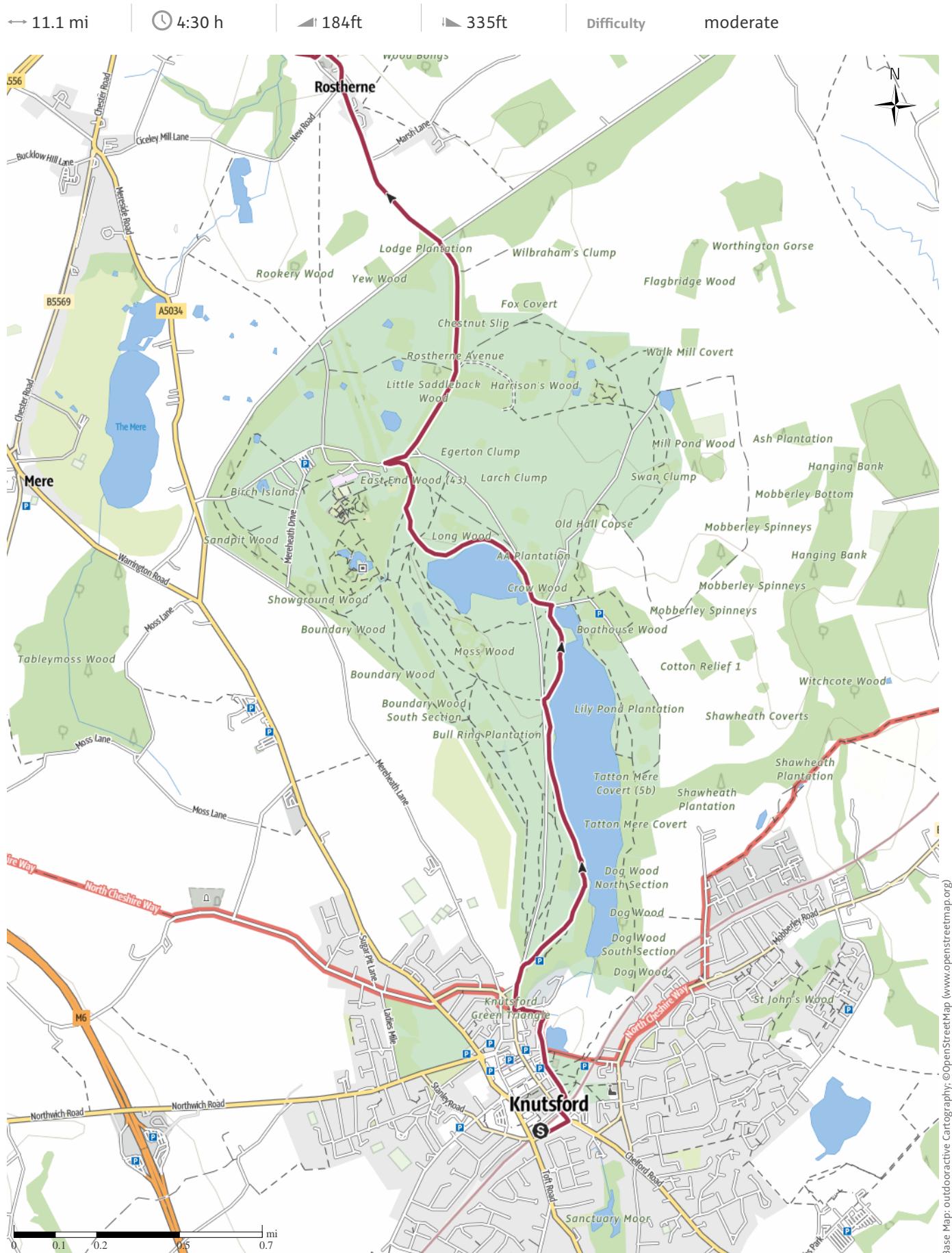


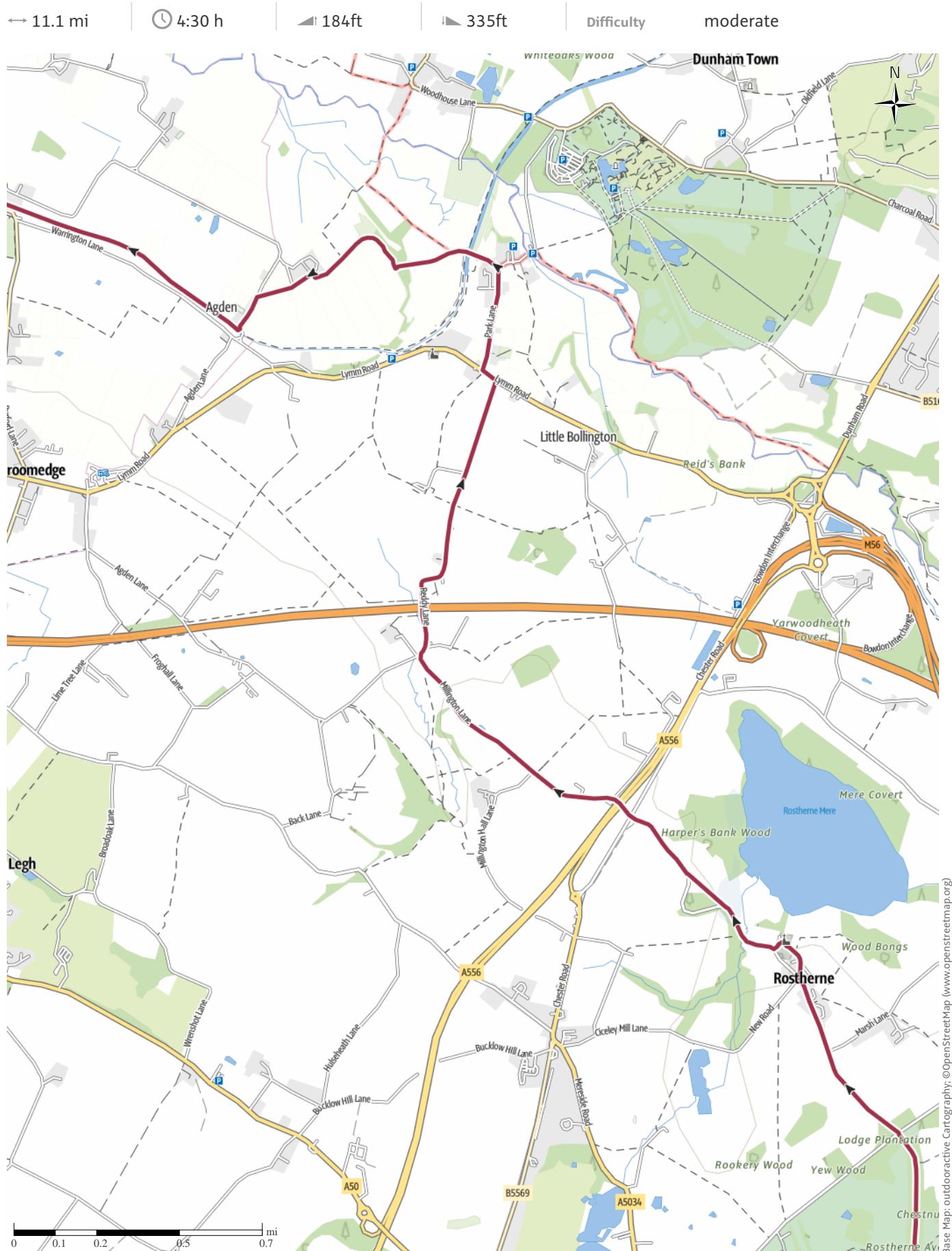
TOP RMHT Stage 03: Knutsford to Lymm



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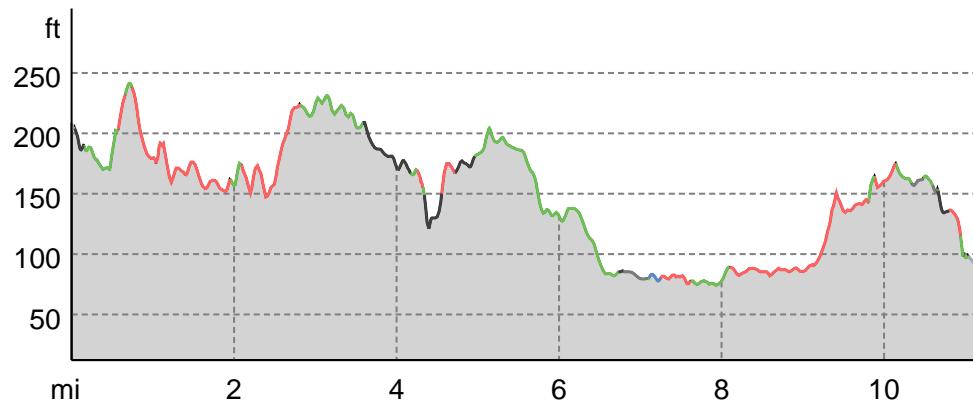
TOP RMHT Stage 03: Knutsford to Lymm



TOP RMHT Stage 03: Knutsford to Lymm

Road surface

Asphalt	0.5 mi
Dirt road	0.1 mi
Way	4.3 mi
Path	4.7 mi
Street	1.4 mi
Unknown	0.1 mi

Elevation profile

route data
Hiking route

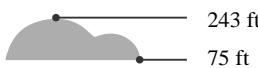
Distance	↔ 11.1 mi
Duration	⌚ 4:30 h
Ascent	▲ 184 ft
Descent	▼ 335 ft

Difficulty **moderate**

Stamina 

Technique 

Altitude


Best time of year

JAN | FEB | MAR
APR | MAY | JUN
JUL | AUG | SEP
OCT | NOV | DEC

Ratings
Authors

Experience 

Landscape 

Community
More route data
Properties

Public-transport-friendly Linear route

Multi-stage route Scenic

Botanical highlights
Awards

 Refreshment stops available



Matthew Ball

Update: September 16, 2021

Stage 3 of the Round Manchester Hiking Trail:
Knutsford to Lymm via Little Bollington

Starting from Knutsford Railway Station, we head through a pretty part of the town to reach Tatton Park, where the route takes us past Tatton Mere and Melchett Mere to Tatton Hall, before heading out of the

park and northward to the postcard village of Rostherne with its stunning 16th century church. We then cross the A556 dual carriageway on our way to the tiny hamlet of Booth Bank, where we will pass under the M56 (a possible lunch stop). Very gently rolling farmland then takes us to Little Bollington (where you could stop for a quick pint at the Swan With Two Nicks) before joining the Bridgewater Canal for most of the remaining distance to Lymm. Starting with Spud Wood, some woods, fields, a housing estate and a park take us back to the bus stop at Lymm Cross. This walk is actually easier than mileage figure suggests, as it is practically all on country roads, canal towpaths and maintained green spaces such as Tatton Park.

Author's recommendation

This route was walked by Manchester Weekend Walkers (a branch of the Ramblers) on Saturday 21st December 2019.

As well as being a walking route in its own

TOP RMHT Stage 03: Knutsford to Lymm

right, it is also Stage 3 of the Round Manchester Hiking Trail, a 13-stage long distance walk that completely encircles the city of Manchester. The Trail is designed to be accessible by public transport, and to take in a varied selection of the best scenery in the Manchester area. It is 157 miles long in total and has about 6,000m of ascent.

The Trail starts in Macclesfield, and then proceeds in a clockwise direction via the other twelve staging points (Wilmslow, Knutsford, Lymm, Leigh, Blackrod, Entwistle, Rawtenstall, Todmorden, Marsden, Hadfield, Edale, and Buxton) before the last stage takes it back to Macclesfield again to complete the loop.

Since 2019, Manchester Weekend Walkers (a branch of the Ramblers) have been walking each of the stages in order roughly once every four weeks (pandemic permitting), which results in the full loop being completed once every year. The first five stages cover mostly lowland territory, and so are walked in the winter months, leaving the sunnier parts of the year in which to tackle the hills that otherwise nearly surround Manchester on three sides.

As of the summer of 2021, it is intended that the Trail will at some point be registered with the Long Distance Walkers Association as an "official" long distance path, although this hasn't yet happened at the time of writing. However, all 13 stages are available on the Outdoor Active website and can be downloaded as GPX files.

Safety information

No safety problems on this route.

Equipment

Decent walking boots and otherwise sensible hiking gear.

Additional information

Tips and hints

Assembly Point:

The car park immediately out from the front of the

Station, heading out left from the platform in the direction of travel.

Stiles:

3 on the route, all in good condition.

Toilets:

There are no facilities at Knutsford Station. The King Street car park, about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in, has a 20p toilet block, and that can be combined with boot changing at Moor Park. Next option is the Stableyard toilets in Tatton Park. Then the woods on your left after Rostherne. After that, we are looking at the Swan With Two Nicks, about 2/3 way in to the walk.

Obstructions:

None known as of Jan 2021.

Timings:

1:30 - Tatton Hall

2:15 - St Mary's, Rostherne

3:00 - Booth Bank (suggested lunch stop)

3:45 The Swan With Two Nicks

4:40 Agden Bridge

5:30 St Peter's, Oughtrington

6:00 Lymm

Bail-Out Points:

Besides being able to call for a taxi from any of the points on the road walk from Rostherne Gate to Little Bollington, it is also possible to turn right at the latter and head 3 miles east to Hale railway station.

Alternatively, the Cat-5 bus route runs just to the north, going past the Vine Inn and then Woodhouse Lane about a mile from the route. We are near roads again at Agden Bridge and then most of the way till the end.

Alternative Routes:

1. If footpaths were better, then a serious alternative would be the Hope Cottage route from Rostherne Gate to Little Bollington, eliminating the need for so much road walking. With the paths as they are, I would only attempt this variation when conditions are relatively dry underfoot.

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2. If you could walk through Home Farm, then the direct path to Rostherne would have some appeal, but it does cut right across fields, which tend to be ploughed over.

Lunch Stop:

Elevenes at the Stableyard in Tatton Hall, and then lunch at the tunnel under the M56 at Booth Bank. The Stableyard, when it is open, also has shops and toilet facilities.

Pub Stops En-Route:

The Swan With Two Nicks, in Little Bollington, is good for a post-lunch pint. Has plenty of space in the beer garden although it can take a while to get served as it tends to be very busy with diners.

Post-Walk Refreshments:

There are several places to stop for a drink in Lymm – the first one you get to after the Dingle at the end of the walk is the Spread Eagle, on Eagle Brow near the Dinosaur's Footprint. Then there is a brewery tap nearer the Canal, and also the Golden Fleece, near Lymm Cross, along with various other eateries and shops.

Turn-by-turn directions

Starting point / trailhead

Knutsford Railway Station

Coordinates:

DD: 53.301589, -2.372199

DMS: 53°18'05.7"N 2°22'19.9"W

UTM: 30U 541837 5906004

w3w: //songbirds.searched.laptop

Point of arrival

Lymm Cross

Turn-by-turn directions

On disembarking the train at Knutsford, head left to exit the station through a small car park, and then left again onto Adam's Hill, parallel with the rail line, before turning left again onto King Street, heading back under the railway. Immediately after passing under the bridge, turn right onto Church Walk. Then, follow the bend of the road around to the left onto Moorside, where there are houses and a drainage ditch on the left of the road, and a park on the right. Carry straight on, keeping the park to your right until the tarmaced road turns into an uneven track and then turns left and heads uphill along Drury Lane. Follow Drury Lane all the way to the top and the main road, at which point turn

right (past a park bench) to follow the pedestrian entrance into the Tatton Park estate.

From the Park entrance, bear slightly rightwards to follow a muddy path that heads northward between the vehicle roadway and Tatton Mere (the large lake to our right). Keep close to the side of the lake for about 1.25 miles until the path forks on the approach to Melchett Mere, and at this point to the (clearer) leftward path. This path takes us back to the vehicle roadway again, but this time we cross and veer off to its left in order to stay close to the shoreline of Melchett Mere. After about 200 yards on this path (at a point where we are approaching a glade of trees) we come to a fork in the path, at which we turn right to head up the slope away from the lake. After a brief spell on this slightly unclear path we join a better defined path that heads straight towards Tatton Hall. From this point just keep heading northwest towards the Hall entrance.

From the Hall entrance, we head east towards the road junction, and from there follow the road to the north. There is a pedestrian path which runs alongside it to its left, and is presently flanked by a corridor of trees. After about half a mile, this leads us to the Rostherne Gate exit from the Park, at which we head straight on over the main road, taking the (thankfully) quieter road to Rostherne Village. Our first sight of the Village is the posh houses that start appearing on either side of the road after about half a mile from the Gate. We have reached the village centre when we meet New Road, joining from the left. At this point we turn right to head uphill towards St Mary's Church (pedestrians are allowed, in spite of the sign prohibiting road traffic). We head through the graveyard towards the church entrance, and then down some steps to rejoin the main road.

St Mary's is the seat of the Church of England parish of Rostherne, and is also a Grade 1 listed building. It appears to date from the 12th Century, although most of what is currently there was built in the 1740's. The gate that we pass through on the way out is known as a "lych gate", a special type of design meant to keep farm animals out of the church yard. This particular example dates from 1640.

On exiting the church, turn right to join the main road again heading away westward from Rostherne. After about a quarter of a mile the road bends sharply left, and at this point we leave it to follow a footpath that carries us straight on instead. The path is very narrow and straight, but from it we get views of Rostherne Mere to our right. After a couple of hundred yards we rejoin the road again and continue in a north-westerly direction, crossing the Chester Road and then taking the bridge over the new A556 dual carriageway. After

TOP RMHT Stage 03: Knutsford to Lymm

this we stay on the road - a narrow country lane with little traffic - for about a mile before reaching the hamlet of Booth Bank. At the main village green, turn right on to Reddy Lane and head towards the M56 motorway. The tunnel under the M56 makes an ideal lunch stop.

At the point where the M56 passes over Reddy Lane, there used to be a Wesleyan Church (once visited by John Wesley himself) which had to be demolished in 1970 in order to make way for the motorway. The site is commemorated by a plaque in the concrete tunnel.

For those who don't like to have too much road walking, there is an alternative route from the A556 to Little Bollington that uses mainly footpaths. But beware - these paths can get very muddy in winter, and can be waterlogged enough to be impossible. For this alternative turn right immediately after crossing the A556, and follow the dual carriageway northwards for about half a mile. The path then turns left and heads along the edge of a field to a white farmhouse called Hope Cottage. As we approach the cottage, the path turns right over a stile and into a very muddy field (which can get waterlogged and may be very difficult to pass). From here we head northwards on a footbridge over the M56 before reaching the very minor roads Coe Lane and Spodegreen Lane, which take us to the A56. Turn left and cross the A56, and then take the first footpath on the right, and then immediately turn left to stay on the public right of way. We then cross a very broken down stile and follow a very muddy track to rejoin the main route at Little Bollington.

The main route continues northwards from the M56 on Reddy Lane for another mile until the A56. North of the motorway, a change in the surroundings becomes apparent, with the farm buildings beginning to appear more functional than picturesque. On reaching the A56, turn left, and then cross the road and take the first turning to the right. This leads after another half a mile to the village of Little Bollington - home to the The Swan With Two Nicks, a dog-friendly gastro-pub that has plenty of outdoor space and a good selection of ales, making it the ideal stop for a post-lunch pint. Where the route turns left at the main road junction of the village, the pub is just a few yards away down the road leading off to the right.

At the main road junction in Little Bollington, turn left and head west. Soon we leave tarmac behind for proper footpaths again as we head over the Bridgewater Canal and head for Woolstencroft Farm. After leaving the Canal, we take the left option of two pathways, and the path is initially easy to follow, but then seems to lead to a corner of a field with no exit. When you get here, just look a little to your right and

you will spot a broken stile leading to a downward slope towards a stream (Agden Brook) which we now ford to come out of the woods to the other side. The path now turns right and follows the edge of the field, bending round to the left and then joining a more solid track that takes us past the Farm and then continues to Spring Lane, where we turn left to reach the Bridgewater Canal again, at Agden Bridge.

This time we follow the canal, staying on its northern side and therefore not actually crossing Agden Bridge. We head west along the canal for about a mile and a half before reaching our turning, shortly after passing under a road bridge. The turning is to the right, but actually loops round 180 degrees to head left over the canal on a narrow footbridge, taking us into Spud Wood. From here we keep heading straight on (i.e. south) for about 500 yards before hitting a T-junction with a footpath that heads east-west. We turn right to follow the footpath out of the wood and head towards St Peter's Church, Oughtrington - now visible in the distance.

St Peter's is a Grade 2 listed building and also the active seat of the CoE parish of Oughtrington. It was built in 1871 and is made of sandstone with a slate roof.

On reaching Oughtrington Lane, we turn left and once past the church turn right on to a footpath that heads across more fields before reaching the built-up area of Lymm. We then take a slight right and follow an urban footpath (called Longbutt Lane) heading west across a couple of residential roads. After about 200 yards on Longbutt we reach a fork at which one path leads slightly up and left and the other leads slightly right and down. We take the left fork, which carries straight on westwards, keeping May Field to our right and some houses to our left. We now keep straight on (as the path becomes a residential road) until we reach the A56 main road. We cross the A56 and keep heading west, following the path down to the shoreline of Lymm Dam.

Lymm Dam was created in 1824 when the main road was built, to avoid the road having to go through the town centre. The lake behind it isn't a reservoir, but just the product of the Dam built for the road. From the lake side, turn right and head back to the A56, and then head across the Dam. Immediately after the Dam, cross the A56 and head north along The Dingle, a footpath leading through a wooded area that comes out into the town centre at Eagle Brow, where all the main pubs, restaurants and shops are, along with the weir at Lower Dam. To get from here to Lymm Cross turn right and follow the road around to the left. The Cross is a large monument mounted on a pyramid-like structure in the middle of a traffic roundabout. To your right of it are

TOP RMHT Stage 03: Knutsford to Lymm

the bus stops on Rectory Lane, one for buses to Altrincham, the other for buses to Warrington.

Getting There

 This route is conveniently accessible by public transport.

Public transport

Knutsford Railway Station. Trains from Manchester Piccadilly leave every hour for Knutsford, and take about 45 minutes to get there. The ideal ticket is the GM Wayfarer (as of June 2021 this costs £14.70) which will cover all the bus, train and tram options that you need to do this walk from a starting point in or near Greater Manchester. See <https://tfgm.com/tickets-and-passes/wayfarer-adult> for further details.

Getting there

The return journey involves catching the Number 5 Bus from Lymm Cross, to either Warrington or Lymm.

From Warrington, fast trains go to Piccadilly (from Warrington Central, just over the road from where the bus terminates at the bus station), or to Victoria (from Warrington Bank Quay, which the bus passes on the way to the station).

From Altrincham Interchange, trams and trains head towards Manchester town centre on a frequent basis.

If you are staying for a while in Lymm after the walk, bear in mind that buses in the evening are very infrequent.

Parking

If you are coming part of the way by car then the most obvious place to park would be Altrincham, from which the trains will run to Knutsford and to which the Number 5 bus will return from Lymm.

Takeaway route for iPhone and Android



Scan QR code, save this route offline, share with friends and more...

Website

<https://out.ac/lLiWxx>

TOP RMHT Stage 03: Knutsford to Lymm



St Mary's Church, Rostherne

Photo: Matthew Ball, Community

TOP RMHT Stage 03: Knutsford to Lymm

Legend

Topography

	Wood, forest
	Moor, swamp, marsh
	Moorland
	Residential building area with single building
	Industrial real estate with single building
	Cemetery
	Golf course
	Sportsfield, stadium
	Stadium
	Open-air pool
	Vineyard
	Petrograph
	Country border
	State border
	District border
	Contour line
	Special use area
	Nature reserve

Topographic single signs

	Summit cross
	Elevation point
	Rock
	Cave
	Church
	Chapel
	Cemetery
	Palace/Castle
	Abbey
	Monument
	Ruin
	Mine
	Cairn
	Broadcasting tower
	Windwheel
	Water-/windmill
	Viewpoint

Streets and ways

	Freeway with number
	Highway with number
	State, country, district street
	Village road
	Main agricultural road
	Agricultural road
	Trail
	Via Ferrata

Lifts, Railway

	Ropeway lift
	Gondola lift
	Chairlift
	Ski-, draglift
	Aerial ropeways
	Railway
	Suburban train
	Subway
	Tram
	Railway station