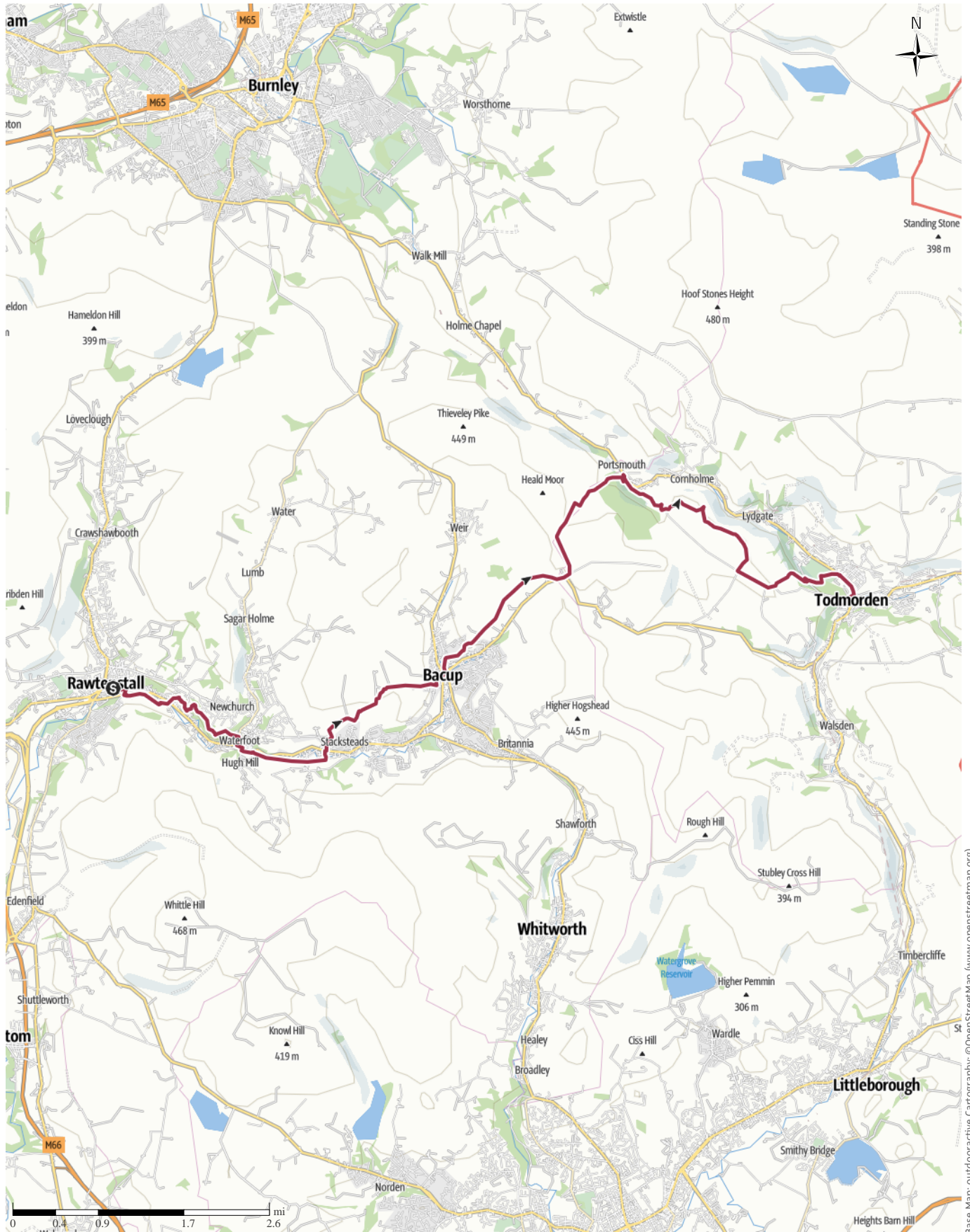


TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

↔ 12.2 mi | ⌚ 5:35 h | 🏔️ 1516ft | 🏔️ 1601ft | Difficulty moderate



Base Map: outdooractive Cartography; ©OpenStreetMap (www.openstreetmap.org)

TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

↔ 12.2 mi

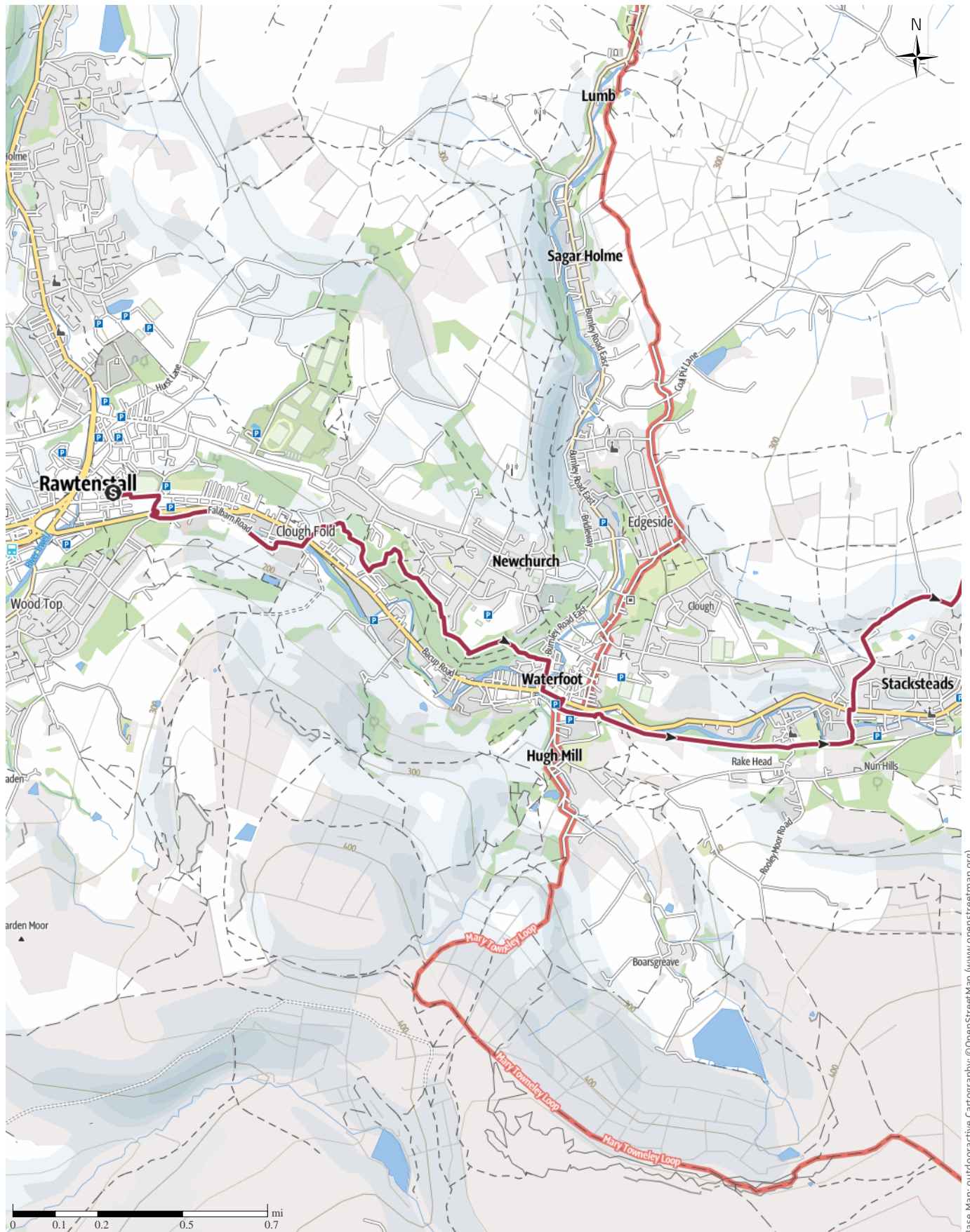
🕒 5:35 h

⬆️ 1516ft

⬆️ 1601ft

Difficulty

moderate



Base Map: outdooractive Cartography; ©OpenStreetMap (www.openstreetmap.org)



TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

↔ 12.2 mi

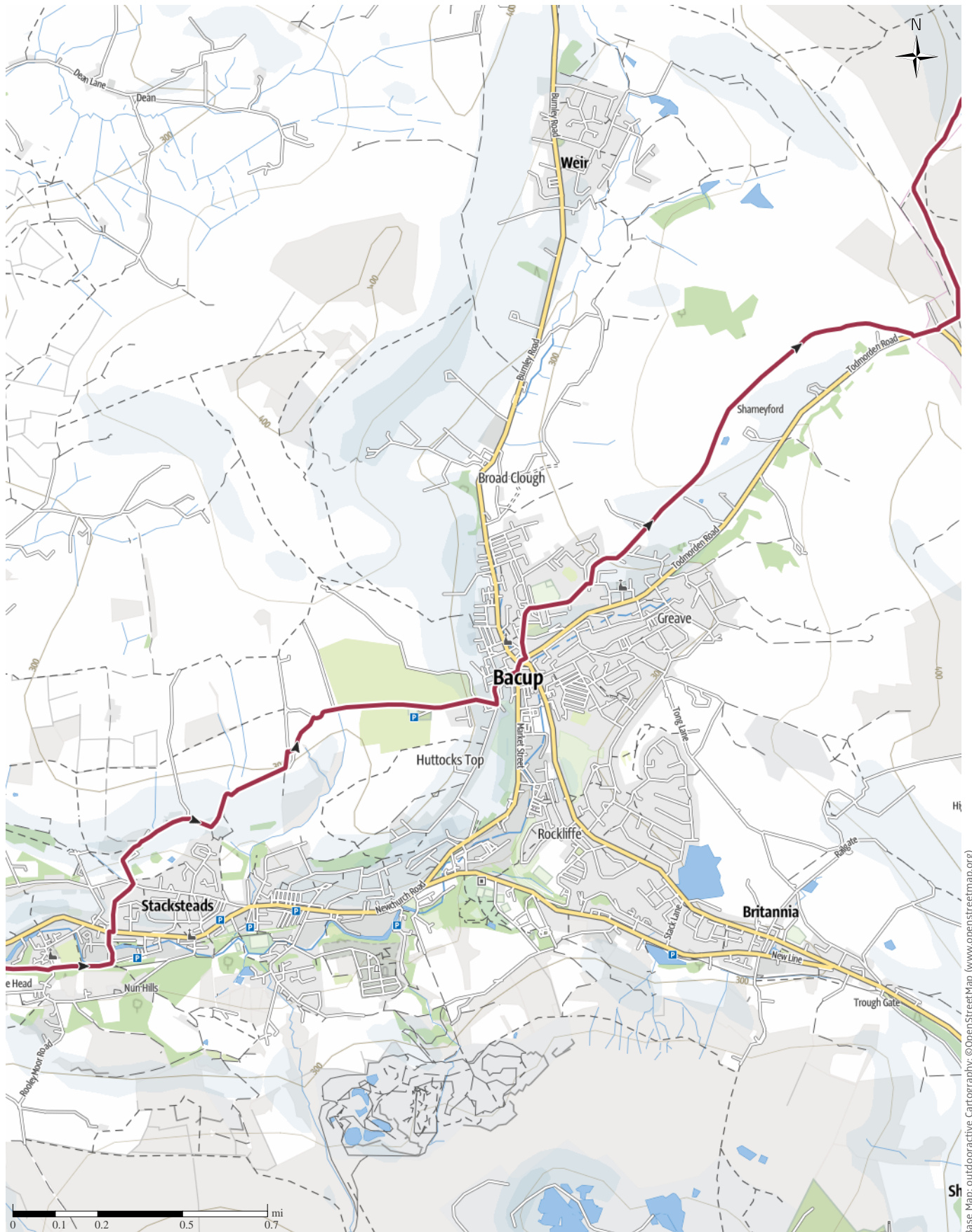
⌚ 5:35 h

▲ 1516ft

▼ 1601ft

Difficulty

moderate



Base Map: outdooractive Cartography; ©OpenStreetMap (www.openstreetmap.org)

TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

↔ 12.2 mi

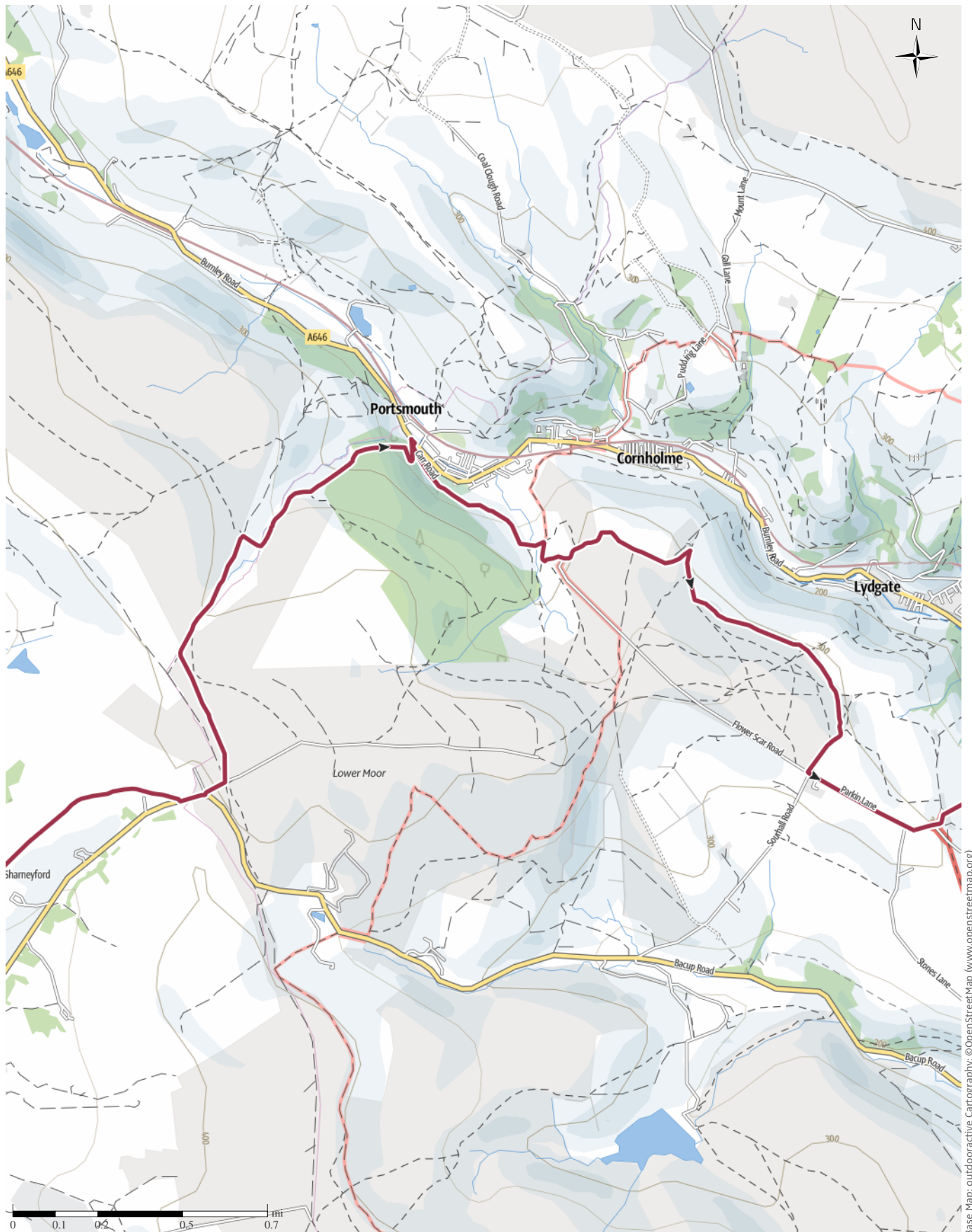
🕒 5:35 h

⬆️ 1516ft

⬆️ 1601ft

Difficulty

moderate



Base Map: outdooractive Cartography; ©OpenStreetMap (www.openstreetmap.org)



TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

↔ 12.2 mi

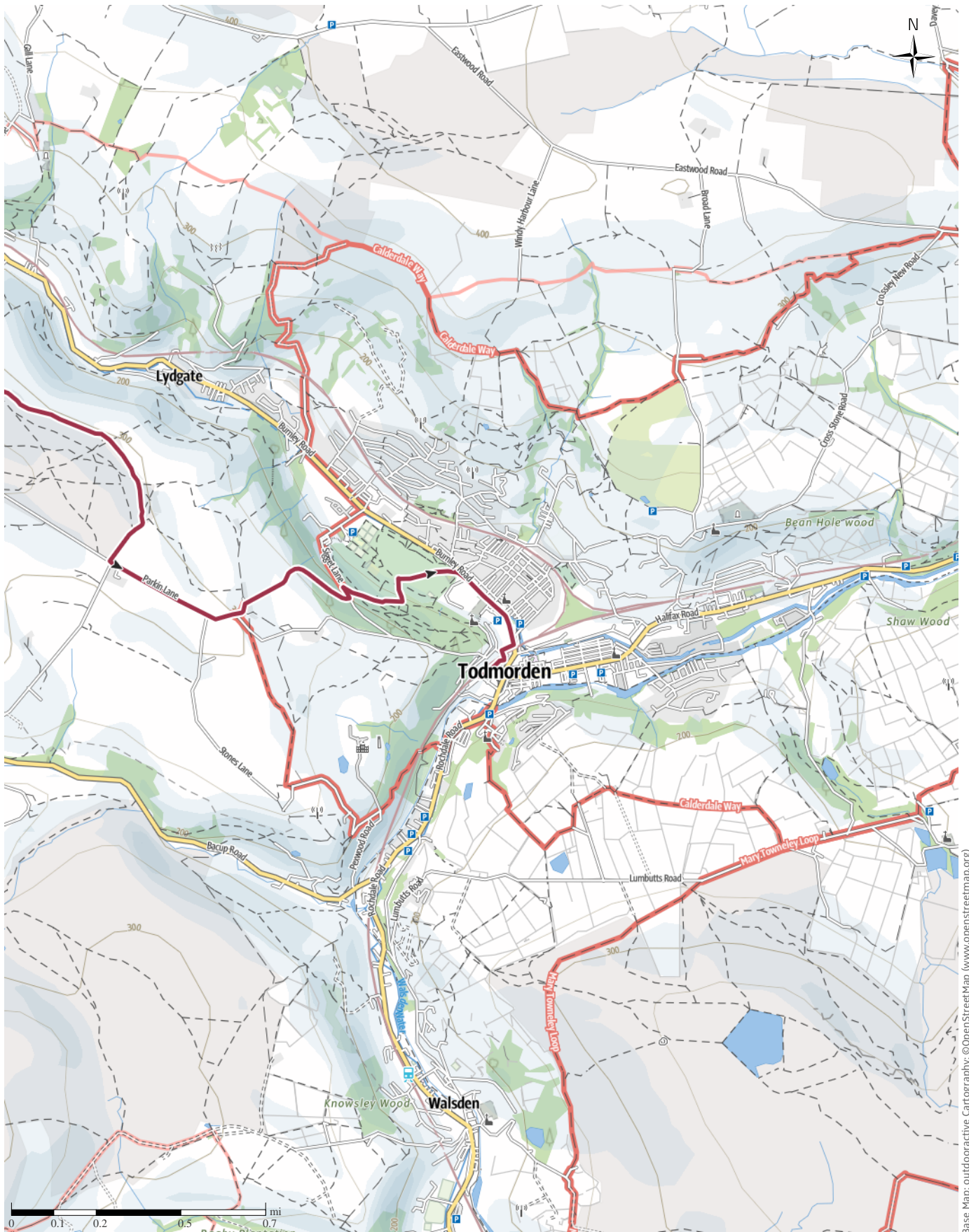
🕒 5:35 h

⬆️ 1516ft

⬆️ 1601ft

Difficulty

moderate



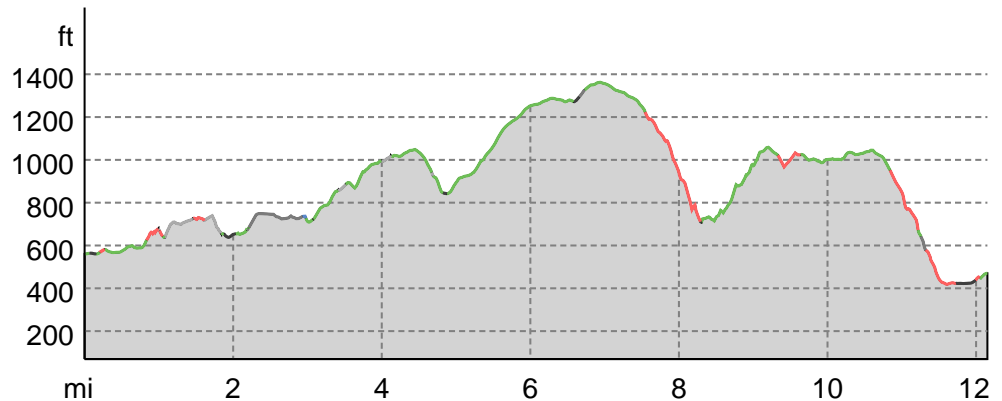
Base Map: outdooractive Cartography; ©OpenStreetMap (www.openstreetmap.org)

## TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

## Road surface

Asphalt	0.9 mi
Dirt road	0 mi
Way	7.4 mi
Path	2.3 mi
Street	0.7 mi
Unknown	0.9 mi

## Elevation profile



## route data

## Hiking route

Distance	↔ 12.2 mi
Duration	🕒 5:35 h
Ascent	⬆ 1516 ft
Descent	⬇ 1601 ft

Difficulty	moderate
Stamina	●●●●●
Technique	●●●●●
Altitude	<div> <div></div> <div>1362 ft</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div>420 ft</div> </div>

## 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

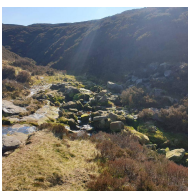
Public-transport-friendly	Linear route
Multi-stage route	Scenic

## Geological highlights

## Awards



Refreshment stops available



## Matthew Ball

Update: September 16, 2021

## Stage 8 of the Round Manchester Hiking Trail:

## Rawtenstall to Todmorden via the Newchurch

## Tunnels and Beater Clough

Starting from the Bus Station, we cross the main road to head along the River Irwell for a bit before heading back across the road to a playing field. This takes us to a flight of stairs up into Rawtenstall Wood, which we

stay in for over a mile, enjoying some shade from the deciduous trees. We then cross the road again to reach the Newchurch Tunnels, a former railway line route that was opened to the public in 2019. Heading northwards of the main road again, we now cross farmland and moorland to reach the pretty town of Bacup, just under half way along our route.

From Bacup's town centre, we head north along a good track the used to be the main road to Todmorden. Then, after a brief stretch on the new main road (the A681) we head along a gravel track that takes us easily over the moors and then leads us along the edge of a deep river valley called Beater Clough. We then descend through some impressive scenery to the pub stop on the A646 at The Roebuck (the first pub on the Yorkshire side of the Yorks/Lancs boundary), before turning south-eastward to head uphill towards the moors again.

We follow at first a tarmaced road, and then a good gravel path that takes us to Height Top Farm. From there the quality of the path takes a nosedive, but fortunately this rough period only lasts for about 20 minutes – after which time the path emerges as very

## TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

good again, taking us across some tranquil moorland until we reach Todmorden Edge and begin our (steep) descent into the town, enjoying some great views as we go. We go through dense woods at first, before emerging through Centre Vale Park right into the heart of Todmorden.

### Author's recommendation

*This route was walked by Manchester Weekend Walkers (a branch of the Ramblers) on Saturday 12th June 2021.*

*As well as being a walking route in its own right, it is also Stage 8 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

Take care crossing the A681 and A646.

### Equipment

Good walking boots and otherwise sensible hiking gear.

### Additional information

#### Tips and hints

Assembly Point:

There is plenty of space inside the bus station and also a large area immediately outside the eastern entrance.

Stiles:

7, all in good condition.

Toilets:

There are free toilets at Chorlton Street Coach Station, and at the bus station in Rawtenstall there are more, but these charge 20p per person.

Obstructions:

None known as of June 2021.

Timings:

0:30 - Entrance to the wood at Hareholme

1:00 - Entrance to Newchurch Tunnels

1:30 - Leave the Irwell at Brandwood

2:30 - Bacup town centre

3:20 - The A681 at Sharneywood

4:15 - The Roebuck

5:10 - Height Top

6:15 - Todmorden

Bail-Out Points:

The number 7 bus runs between Todmorden and Rawtenstall, following a route that stays on the A681 all the way. Since the route stays close to this road for the entire first half of the walk to Sharneywood, then anywhere on this stretch of the route could be considered a bail-out point. Buses are only once every two hours in each direction on a Saturday. However, more frequent services are available from Bacup town centre as services 8 and 464 are added to the mix,

**TOP** RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

going to Burnley and Rawtenstall respectively.

From the Roebuck, the 591/592 go once every half hour in each direction between Todmorden and Burnley along the A646. The bus stop is just a couple of minutes south of the pub.

**Alternative Routes:**

For an alternative that takes in the charming Gorpley Clough: after Bacup follow Higher Change, Parrock Farm, Holden Gate, past the Astronomy Centre to Clough Foot, Gorpley Clough, Stones Wood, Gauxholme, and back along the Rochdal Canal to the station.

**Lunch Stop:**

The most promising place for a lunch stop is the brow of the hill on Todmorden Old Road, near Stake Moss and just before Sharneyfold – there are grass verges here and also stone walls where people can sit down, although no shelter.

For a sheltered lunch stop we have to go further, to Beater Clough where there are trees, and also places to sit with great views. Alternatively, there are plenty of pubs and eateries in the town centre of Bacup.

**Pub Stops En-Route:**

In Bacup, whilst only the Queens Hotel is directly on the route, there are several more just off it, including te Cornerstone, the New Inn, the Waterloo, the Old Boot, and the 1832.

The Roebuck, 2/3 in to the walk, on the other hand, won't always be open. On weekdays it shuts between 2pm and 4:30pm. However, if it is open it has a lovely beer garden and a rather eccentric back story, which the owner and staff will happily share with you (although they won't serve food, they won't mind you eating any of your own packed lunch).

**Post-Walk Refreshments:**

There is a large selection of places to go near the railway station in Todmorden. The White Hart, however, is probably the best for outdoor space and also being able to accommodate a large number of people.

**Turn-by-turn directions****Starting point / trailhead**

Rawtenstall Bus Station

**Coordinates:**

DD: 53.701110, -2.284435

DMS: 53°42'04.0"N 2°17'04.0"W

UTM: 30U 547239 5950505

w3w: ///deal.gross.motion

**Point of arrival**

Todmorden Railway Station

**Turn-by-turn directions**

From the Bus Station we follow the Irwell Sculpture Trail eastwards along the road to Bacup. The Trail then turns right near the NHS facility and crosses the A681 to head left again along the south bank of the River Irwell. We stay on the Trail until Cloughfold, where we turn left to cross the river and the A681 (at the pelican crossing) on to Peel Street, heading upwards and north. After about 75 yards we take a cobbled footpath to the right which heads further (steeply) uphill, before reaching a public park, which we now skirt to the right. After about 100 yards we reach a gate-stile and a new footpath leading through some wooded territory downhill and to the right. After another 100 yards we reach the entrance to a large country house, and just beside this entrance is the start of a footpath that leads us uphill with a tall wooden fence to our left.

This path takes us deeper in to Rawtenstall Wood, which we now stay in for about a mile. After the fence runs out we carry straight on uphill for 50 yards before taking a sharp right. After approximately another 100 yards the path forks, with a leftward branch heading downhill and a rightward one uphill – we go upwards and right, leading to a zig-zagged path that leads us to some higher ground which we now stay on for most of the rest of our time in the wood. Shortly after a brief paved section, we reach another 3-way junction, this time with each of the paths at about a 120 degree angle to each other, and a triangular patch of grass in the middle. This time, we turn right.

This leads us on a path near the northern edge of the woods, near some houses in the suburb of Staghill. For the next 1/4 mile we always keep all buildings to our left as we head eastwards along the northern edge of the wood. Once we have past the buildings at Staghill, keep on eastwards through the woods, heading gently downhill. From this point, there are many interlocking paths through these woods, so it is possible to take the "wrong" one and still come out at the right point, which is the staircase down towards Schofield Street at the south-eastern corner of the wood. On entering Schofield Street, we turn left and head towards a main road, the B6238 – the main street of the suburb of Waterford.

We now cross the B6238 and turn right to join the A681



## TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

after 200 yards, at which point we turn left before immediately taking the pelican crossing to the southern side of the road, before turning right to rejoin the path along the River Irwell, which soon enters the Newchurch Tunnels, where the old railway line was blasted through the hillside before emerging at Rake Head. About 500 yards after this we reach the suburb of Brandwood, at which we take the left fork in the path before a road junction, and then actually turn left near the Viking Factory, to head across the A681 for the last time and up towards the hamlet of Tunstead, which we reach by heading straight on from Rock Hill Road, including going straight uphill across Booth Road.

On reaching the cottages at Tunstead turn right to head east, until you merge with some other footpaths at a point where the track now bends slightly left. We leave the track here to follow a narrow (but well-defined) footpath across fields towards Folly Farm. We then follow a broad track eastwards and downhill for about 100 yards before turning left and heading back uphill for another 200. At the path crossroads, turn right to head towards Whitegate Farm, which we skirt to the north before heading back east again at Top o' th' Bank. We now head on a straight track eastward and past the golf club toward Bacup for about 2/3 mile. Eventually this heads steeply downwards and ultimately down some steps that lead down to Bankside Lane, which we now follow downhill to reach the town centre of Bacup.

In Bacup we meet the A681 again, but this time stay on its left hand pavement to pass the Town's main roundabout before turning 90 degrees left to head up the narrow side street, Lane Head Lane, just before The Queens pub. We now head northwards and steeply uphill, before turning right onto Greensnook Lane near the Cricket Club. We follow the Lane for 300 yards before reaching the left hand turn for Todmorden Old Road, just behind the last houses at Lane Head. We now follow this road for just under two miles, following it uphill through Higher Change (where there is a good stop for a lunch break by the side of the road at the brow of the hill), until it meets the A681 again. At this point we keep to the left hand side of the road, following it north-east, very briefly, until we can veer off leftward at the first exit along the track towards Slate Pit Hill.

About 100 yards after leaving the A681, we reach a path crossroads at which we turn left. The path then immediately forks, and we take the right hand fork, a gravel track that takes us conveniently away from Heald Top Farm. After half a mile on this track, we turn right at a path T-junction to follow another broad track northwards, overlooking Green's Clough to our right. After 500 yards along this path, we pass an old mining site and turn right to follow a sketchy and narrow

footpath across Green's Clough, marked out by some steaks with yellow paint at their tips. On reaching the other side of the clough, we turn left again to head north-east along a path that starts off very narrow and which can be boggy, but which gradually improves.

The scenery improves too, as we head in to Beater Clough. We now just keep following the path all the way downhill to the next main road, the A646, at which point we meet The Roebuck, our pub stop. After taking in the Roebuck we re-cross the A646 back to the south-west side to join Carr Road. We follow Carr Road uphill along a winding path for about 3/4 mile - as part of this we take a 90 degree right shortly after crossing a stream known as Tower Brook before heading steeply uphill and then turning 90 degrees left again. At the very next sharp turn of the road (to the right), just a few yards later, we leave the road to head straight on and follow the track that leaves it to meander in between some mounds.

We now keep following this track along the edge of the south side of the Calderdale Valley for about 500 yards until we reach Height Top Farm. Rather than following the path around to the right of the farm, we head over the stile to carry straight on through the farmyard and past other houses, to the exit stile at the other end. From here we continue straight on, although the path now deteriorates and becomes very narrow and boggy. We are now heading for a ruined farmhouse called Roundfield, and keeping sites fixed on this can help to clarify the way. Once we reach Roundfield we turn sharply right to follow a drystone wall along a very boggy path towards the next farmstead, Lower Moor.

From Lower Moor the path improves and soon becomes a broad track, which we now follow for about 2/3 mile whilst it bends round to the right and hence higher up the moors, until we reach a crossroads at Sourhall. Here we turn 90 degrees left to follow the main road (Parkin Lane) for about 1/3 mile eastwards over the brow of the hill to Todmorden Edge. Here we leave Parkin Lane to follow the Calderdale Way downhill through Todmorden Edge Farm. After the farmstead the Calderdale Way bears right and heads steeply downhill towards a large wooded area; on entering the trees we veer right and keep on downhill through beautiful scenery until we reach another road, Siggert Lane.

At Siggert Lane we perform a left-right shimmy to keep on downhill on another track that keeps heading toward Centre Vale Park for another 300 yards, at which point there is a clear left turn towards the Park, and the statue of Henry Fielden. At the statue we turn right to head west towards the corner of the park near to the cricket ground. At this point we meet the A646 again,

**TOP** RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

which we follow on the near side for half a mile before we reach the railway line and Todmorden Station.

**Getting There**

This route is conveniently accessible by public transport.

**Public transport**

Buses to Rawtenstall from Manchester leave from Chorlton Street Stop EZ around every 20 minutes on a Saturday morning (the service is the X43). A single fare is £5.20, but five people can travel for £19.

**Getting there**

Return services from Todmorden leave on Saturday afternoon about four times an hour, and carry on twice an hour till late. A single to Manchester will cost £9.70, as of 2021.

**Takeaway route for iPhone and Android**

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

Website

<https://out.ac/IlkVSK>

**TOP** RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden



Beater Clough

Photo: Matthew Ball, Community



TOP RMHT Stage 08: Rawtenstall to Todmorden

## 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