



The Ribble looking upstream to **Dinckley Bridge** (which replaced a suspension bridge damaged by floods in 2016) and **Pendle Hill**.



Rigby Fold is a traditional Lancashire farmhouse just a short stroll from the Bluebird Inn.



THE BLUEBIRD INN
 Myerscough Road, Balderstone,
 Lancashire BB2 7LE
 tel 01254 813900
 email bluebird.inn@jwlees.co.uk
 web bluebirdinn.co.uk
 f @TheBluebirdInnSamlesbury
 @jwlees.bluebirdinn



Marles Wood and the Ribble

5 miles: moderate

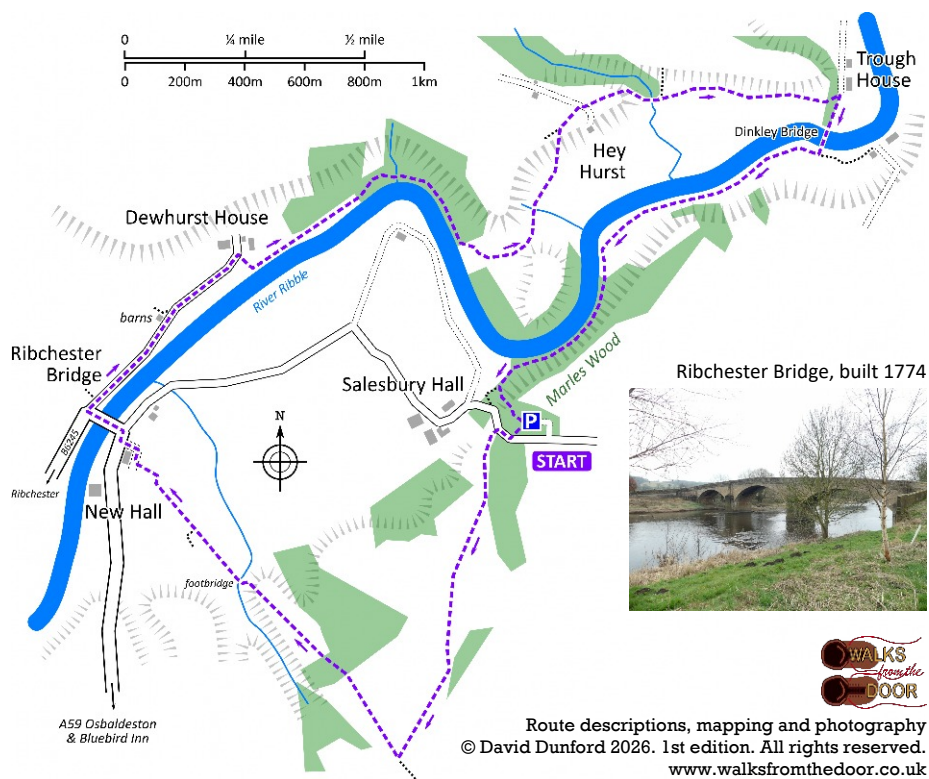
Start: Marles Wood car park (6½ miles). Turn left on A59 past BAE to roundabout. Continue on A59 through Osbaldeston to Clayton-le-Dale. Turn left onto B6245 (signposted Ribchester). Do not cross Ribchester Bridge, but turn right beside river. Pass Salesbury Hall and climb hill to wood, looking out for car park entrance on left.



Allow 2–3 hours. May be muddy in places. Moderate gradients.

- 1** From the car park facing back toward the road, follow a short path from the right-hand corner down to the road. **2** Turn right to a road corner, then turn left over a stile next to a gate. **3** Follow the edge of the wood on your left uphill, then strike out between newly planted trees. **4** Pass through a tall kissing gate at the top and turn half-right across the field. **5** After another gate, follow the field edge, to the right of a strip of woodland. **6** Towards the corner of the field, a path heads off to the left; turn right here and cross the field parallel to the woodland on your left. **7** Go through a gate into scrub and newly planted trees, and follow the path to a further tall gate. **8** Beyond, the path leads downhill through more newly planted woodland to another wooden kissing gate. **9** Cross a wooden footbridge over a small stream. **10** Cross the field to a gap in a hedge, then cross another field in the same direction to a stile. **11** Turn right and follow the fenced path around two sides of a field to a driveway at the rear of some houses. **12** Turn right and follow the driveway out to the road. **13** Turn right then cross the Ribchester Bridge with care. **14** Turn right into a metalled driveway beside the river. **15** The drive leaves the river to pass some barns, then continues to Dewhurst House. **16** Just

before the buildings, turn right onto a path that leads down to the riverside. **17** Turn left and follow the path with the river on your right past a bench. **18** By a sign, the path leaves the river briefly and climbs to the left before descending to a footbridge over a side-stream. **19** Follow the path beside the river through the trees to a kissing gate into a field. **20** Climb half-left, away from the river, then curve left across the field (with views upriver towards Pendle Hill) to a gateway and stile beyond a small stream. **21** Pass a projecting corner of the hedge on your left then bear left, up the slope, to a stile next to a gate in the top corner of the field. **22** Continue in the same direction past a telegraph pole to a hand-gate into the driveway to Hey Hurst. **23** Turn right for a very short distance, then left through a similar hand-gate. **24** Follow the left-hand field edge down to a footbridge over a stream, then follow the fence on the right-hand side of the next field. **25** Cross a stile over the fence (or go through a farm-gate) and continue along the field edge to a gate in another fence. **26** Cross the next field, past an isolated oak tree, to a gate into a farm track. **27** Descend through conifers towards the buildings of Trough House Farm. **28** Turn right through a gate onto a fenced path to Dinckley Footbridge over the Ribble. **29** On the far side, turn right. **31** Follow the riverside path for half a mile through a series of fields before entering Marles Wood. **32** When the river bends right after about 500 metres, follow a path left and uphill, climbing steps to a kissing gate. **33** Bear right over a footbridge and follow the path beyond to Marles Wood car park.



Route descriptions, mapping and photography
 © David Dunford 2026. 1st edition. All rights reserved.
www.walksfromthedoor.co.uk

THREE CIRCULAR WALKS FROM THE



Rigby Fold and Bezza Brook
 1 mile: easy/4 miles: moderate
 Farmland walking with a secluded stream valley.

Hoghton Bottoms (3½ miles: moderate)
 Views and historic buildings around the valley of the River Darwen.

Marles Wood and the Ribble
 5 miles: moderate
 A lengthy exploration of the wooded banks of the River Ribble above Ribchester.

Rigby Fold and Bezza Brook

1 mile: easy/4 miles: moderate

Allow 30 minutes/2 hours. Mostly on field paths, potentially muddy after rain. Several stiles, and steep slopes on the longer walk.

1 From the car park entrance, turn right past the front of the pub and pass the Stuart Taylor building beyond it. **2** At the start of the lay-by, turn immediately right into a farm track and follow the winding drive for ¼ mile to Rigby Fold. **3** In front of the farmhouse, climb a stile in the right-hand corner and skirt a corrugated-iron building to a second stile into a field.

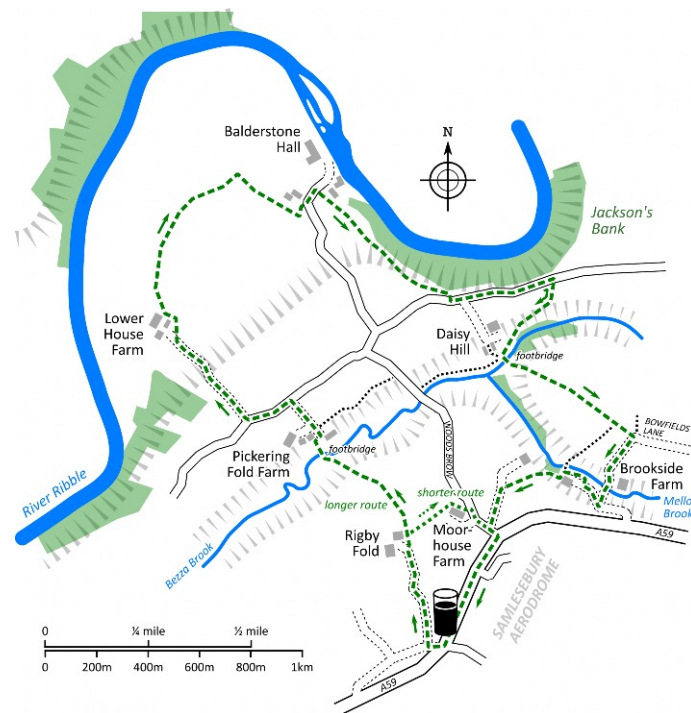
Shorter route (1 mile)

4 Turn right and follow the top of the field to a gateway (or adjacent stile if the gate is shut). **5** Continue along the top of the next field to a double stile in the corner. **6** Bear right past the buildings of Moorhouse Farm to a final stile into a lane (Woods Brow). **7** Turn right to the junction with the A59. **8** Turn right and follow the pavement back to the Bluebird Inn.

Longer route (4 miles)

4 Continue ahead down the left-hand side of the field. **5** Towards the corner, cross a stile on your left into the adjacent field. Cut across the corner to a gateway in the hedge, overlooking the valley of Bezza Brook. **6** Head down the slope, aiming slightly left of Pickering Fold farmhouse on the other side of the valley. **7** Go through a gap in a line of trees then double back right, down a steep bank to a stile over a fence by the stream. **8** Turn left to a footbridge. **9** On the other side of the Bezza Brook, climb the steep valley side, aiming to the left of the farmhouse. **10** A hand-gate leads to a short fenced path out to the farmyard. **11** Follow the driveway away from the farmhouse and up to the road. **12** Turn left along the lane for 180 metres, then turn right into the drive to Lower House Farm. **13** Follow the track for ¼ mile, crossing a cattle grid as the track starts to descend into the Ribble valley. **14** Just before you reach the farm, bear right across a field to a hand-gate in the hedge to the right of the buildings. **15** Head half-right and follow a farm track along the edge of the field. **16** In the corner, take the right-hand of three farm-gates and follow the field edge with a hedge on your left. **17** At the end of the field, turn right along a narrowing, tree-lined way then cross a stile on the left. **18** Continue between the hedge and line of trees, then turn left to a farm-gate. **19** Pass a disused farmhouse and bear right to the lane. **20** Turn left. After about 60 metres, turn right over a stile. (An optional there-and-back diversion continues ahead to the River Ribble via buildings and gardens, but it is a dead end so you will need to return the same way.) **21** Having left the lane, climb the field, keeping to the right of a shallow gully that runs down the hillside. **22** Beyond an isolated tree, the path follows the top of the wooded Jackson's Bank. **23** After a stile in a crossing hedge, continue ahead for a short distance then bear right to a stile into a lane. **24** Turn left. (A public footpath

through Daisy Hill farmstead on the right offers a possible shortcut down to the stream, but access to the stile beyond the farm buildings is overgrown at the time of writing.) **25** For an easier alternative, continue along the lane beyond the farm entrance for a little under ¼ mile, then turn right over a stile in the hedge by a gate. **26** Bear half-right to the top of the wooded bank, then head right along the edge of the trees. **27** Cut through a line of trees and continue to a stile in a fence. **28** Head half-left down the steep slope to the footbridge and cross the stream. **29** Climb the slope to a stile in the top left-hand corner of the field. **30** Follow the left-hand field edge for several fields, with a stile at the end of the first, passing a couple of ponds on the right along the way. **31** Climb a stile by a gate into a hedged green lane (Bowfields Lane) and turn right. **32** As it starts to descend to a gate, the track becomes a rubbly, sunken way. **33** At Brookside Farm, cross the stream to the right and walk up the driveway. **34** Turn right at a junction past a no-through road sign and pass Nancy's Cottage. **35** Continue past a gate then turn right to skirt the garden of a second house, leading close to the stream and down to a bridge of stone slabs. **36** Do not cross, but turn left and follow a path that climbs to the right of the house to a hand-gate into a field. **37** The official line of the path follows the fence-line through the trees to the right, but it is steep, slippery when wet and a little overgrown so, in winter at least, you are advised to climb the bank and stay above the trees, bearing right past a brick water tank. **38** Pass to the left of Fish House and head diagonally across the field to a stile into the farm drive. **39** Turn left and follow the track to a metalled lane (Woods Brow). **40** Turn left to the junction with the A59. **41** Turn right and follow the pavement back to the Bluebird Inn.



Hoghton Bottoms

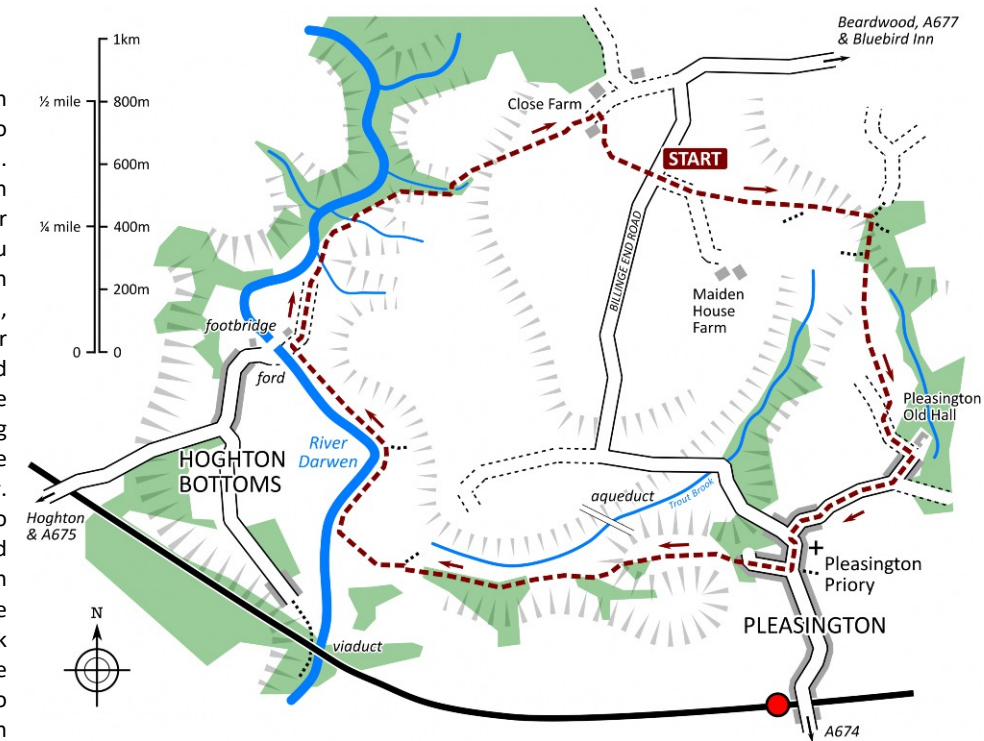
3½ miles: moderate

BLUEBIRD INN

Start: Billinge End Road, north of Pleasington (6 miles' drive). Turn left on A59 past BAE to roundabout. Turn right (signposted Mellor Brook). Turn left at mini-roundabout into Mellor Brook, then right by Fielden's Arms. Follow Branch Road to A677 and turn left. After 1¼ miles, carry straight on at end of A6119. Pass Beardwood Hospital, Tauheedul Girls and The Woodlands on right, then turn right into Billinge End Road. After 1¼ miles, go round left-hand bend by house and driveway and look out for lay-by on left. If both lay-bys near Maiden House Farm are full, continue to Pleasington and start at step 11.

Allow 2 hours. May be muddy in places; some stiles, steps and moderate gradients.

1 Turn left into the drive signposted to Maiden House Farm. **2** When the drive bends right, go through the gate (or over the stile) ahead. **3** Follow the left-hand edge of two fields then cross a third to a stile into woodland. **4** Bear right to meet a perpendicular path, where you turn right. **5** Follow the path down through the trees to a stile into a field. **6** Cross the field, passing left of a pond, to meet a track. **7** Bear left along the track, descending to a gate and stile. **8** Continue to the end of Old Hall Lane (with the hall on your left). **9** Turn right along the road, keeping right at a junction to emerge in Pleasington. **10** Turn left past the Priory. **11** Before the Butlers Arms, turn right into Priory Close. **12** Bear left down a driveway and pass a large thatched house onto a footpath over a stile. Follow the path along the ridge beyond, above the valley of the Trout Brook on your right. **13** Descend past a copse on the left and follow the fence over a stile to another into woodland. **14** Follow the path



along the bottom of the wooded bank, then leave the trees and turn right over a stile in the wall. **15** Bear left along a farm track that curves right to meet the River Darwen. **16** Go through a wooden kissing gate and follow the path parallel to the river until you reach the footbridge and ford in Hoghton Bottoms. **17** Turn right past a barn with a large archway and turn left over a low stile. **18** Follow the path along the hedge until it rejoins the river. **19** The path leaves the riverside to climb out of the wood, before dropping down to cross a small side-stream. **20** Climb rough steps out of the valley to a stile. **21** Head across the field towards a distant farmhouse, then follow the hedge to a gate and stile. **22** Pass left of Close Farm out to the driveway, then turn immediately right over a stile. **23** Beyond the house, follow the hedge round a right hand-bend. **24** Go through a gap in the hedge ahead and turn left, now with the hedge on your left, to return to Billinge End Road.

The River Darwen downstream of Hoghton Bottoms

