

## **Crumbly, creamy or tasty**

A self guided walk around fields and farms near Preston



Explore the tranquil home of a busy dairy industry

Discover how Lancashire cheese is made

Find out how farming methods have evolved and adapted

See how the landscape is shaped by political and economic forces

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*the stories of our landscapes  
discovered through walks*







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Cover image: Cattle grazing in fields near Inglewhite © Mike Jackson

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# Crumbly, creamy or tasty

## Explore the milk fields of Lancashire

Just to the north of Preston lies an area of small fields divided by hedges that were laid out over 400 years ago. Crops grew here until dairy farming took over in the nineteenth century to meet the demand for milk from Lancashire's growing industrial towns.

Dairy farming methods have changed a lot since then. Technology, economics and politics have all played a part.

Discover how this landscape is still changing as some farms strive for efficiency by becoming bigger while others stay small and specialised.



A selection of Lancashire cheese on sale  
© Mike Jackson

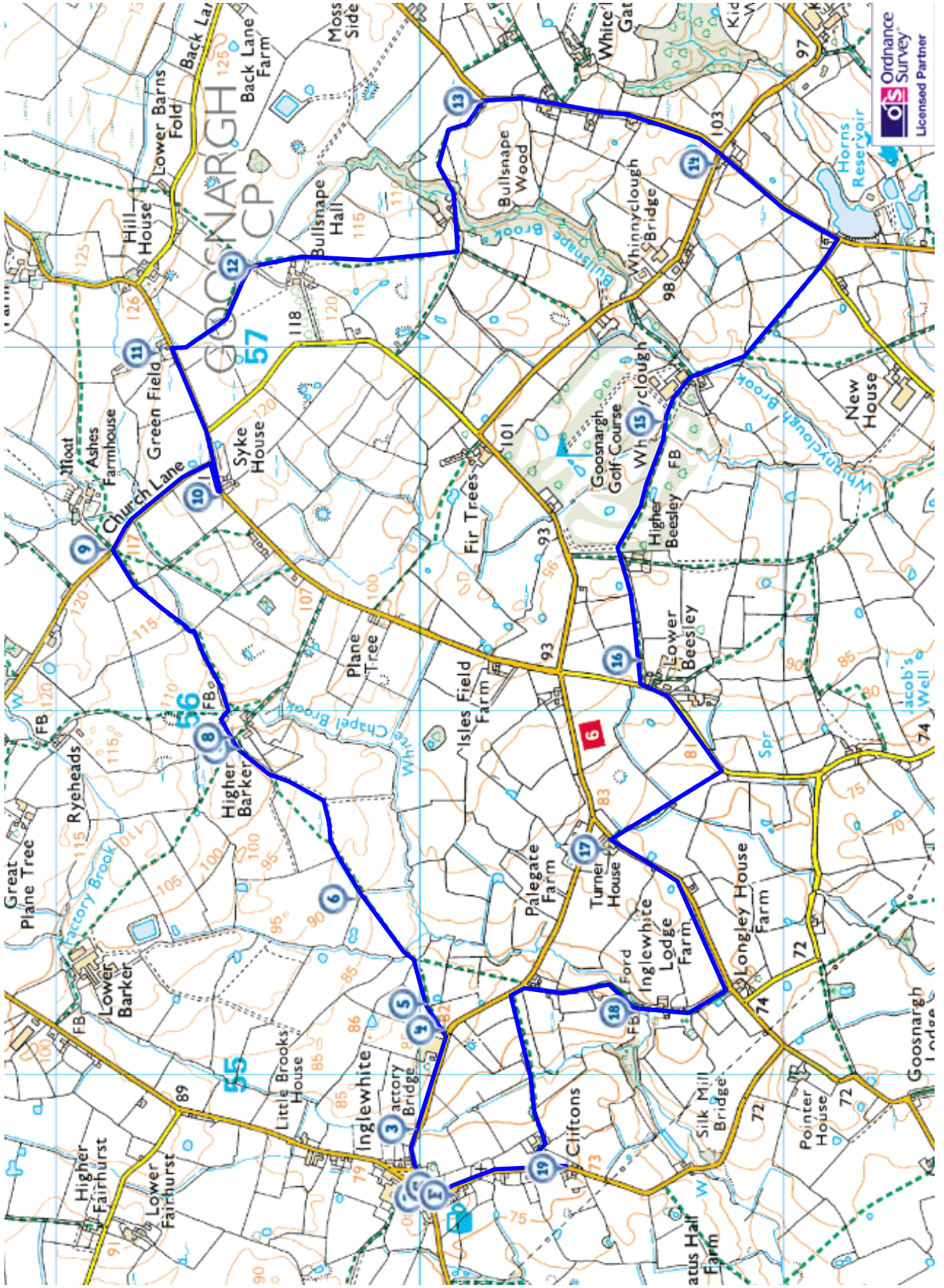


Holstein-Friesian cow  
© Mike Jackson

A handful of traditional cheese makers can also be found here. Find out how they make crumbly, creamy and tasty Lancashire cheese and why it is so different from other types. Learn why these cheeses almost disappeared during the Second World War but later gained European protection.

This walk through the Lancashire milk fields is about the cows that produce our milk, the farmers who look after them and the traditional Lancashire cheese makers.

# Route overview



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## Practical information

<b>Location</b>	Inglewhite, Lancashire, Northwest England
<b>Getting there</b>	<p><b>Car</b> - Inglewhite is located 3 miles east of the village of Bilsborrow which is on the A6 between Preston and Lancaster. Access via the A6 or M6 (Junction 32). Parking is available in Inglewhite in roadside lay-bys.</p> <p><b>Train</b> - The nearest station is Preston (7½ miles away). Preston station is on the West Coast Main Line and served by direct trains from London Euston, Manchester Piccadilly, Liverpool, York, Birmingham, Edinburgh and Glasgow.</p> <p><b>Bus</b> - No buses serve Inglewhite village. The nearest bus stop is 2½ miles away on the A6 at Bilsborrow. This is served by buses from Preston, Garstang and Lancaster.</p> <p><b>Bicycle</b> - Inglewhite is on National Cycle Route Number 6 (Preston to Kendal).</p>
<b>Start &amp; finish</b>	The Green Man, Inglewhite, PR3 2LP
<b>Distance</b>	6 miles
<b>Level</b>	Gentle – A rural walk through fields and quiet lanes ( <b>see Conditions</b> )
<b>Terrain</b>	A mixture of rural lanes, tracks and field paths. The fields can be very muddy at times, especially after rain, so wear sturdy shoes.
<b>Conditions</b>	Though a gentle route there are 25 stiles to cross along the way so the walk is unsuitable for pushchairs, wheelchairs and those with limited mobility.
<b>Navigation</b>	The route is 'Whey marked' as the Tasty Lancashire Cheese Trail - look out for the yellow markers.

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### **Suitable for**

**Families** – Children will enjoy seeing cows up close and sampling the cheese.

**Dogs** – Must be kept on a lead in fields where livestock are grazing.

### **Refreshments**

Two pubs on the route serve food:

- **The Green Man** in Inglewhite (start and end of the route)

- **Ye Horns Inn** (Stop 14) half way round the walk

Alternatively you may like to take a picnic.

### **Toilets**

There are no public toilets along the route. Customers can use the facilities in the pubs.

### **Best time of year**

The walk is best in the summer when you can see cows grazing. Cows are likely to be in the pastures between May and September. Do not disturb them and keep dogs under tight control.

### **Places to visit**

The walk passes **Mrs Kirkham's** (Stop 16), a dairy farm that makes traditional Lancashire Cheese. Ask at the office and they are normally happy to show visitors round the dairy.

At **Dewlay Cheese Shop** you can see traditional cheese making. Located 5 miles from Inglewhite at Garstang Bypass Road, Garstang PR3 0PR. Tel: 01995 602335 Web: [www.dewlay.com](http://www.dewlay.com)

**Beacon Fell Country Park** (viewed at Stop 9) is 300 acres of open access countryside home to many species of wildlife and a range of outdoor activities. Free entry all year. Tel: 01995 640557

### **Visitor information**

#### **Preston Visitor Information Centre**

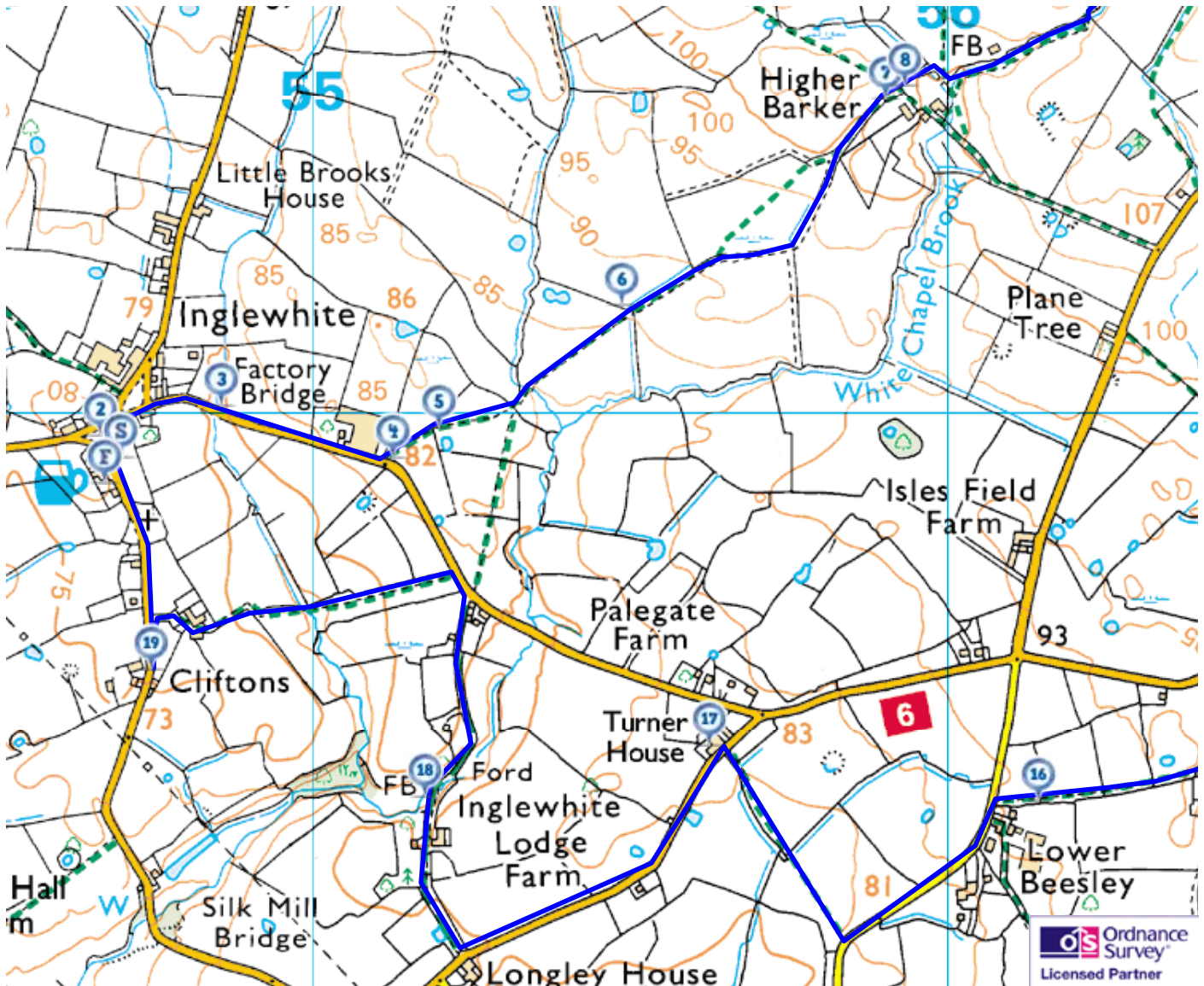
The Guildhall, Lancaster Road, Preston PR1 1HT

Email: [tourism@preston.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@preston.gov.uk)

Tel: 01772 253731

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## Start and end of the route



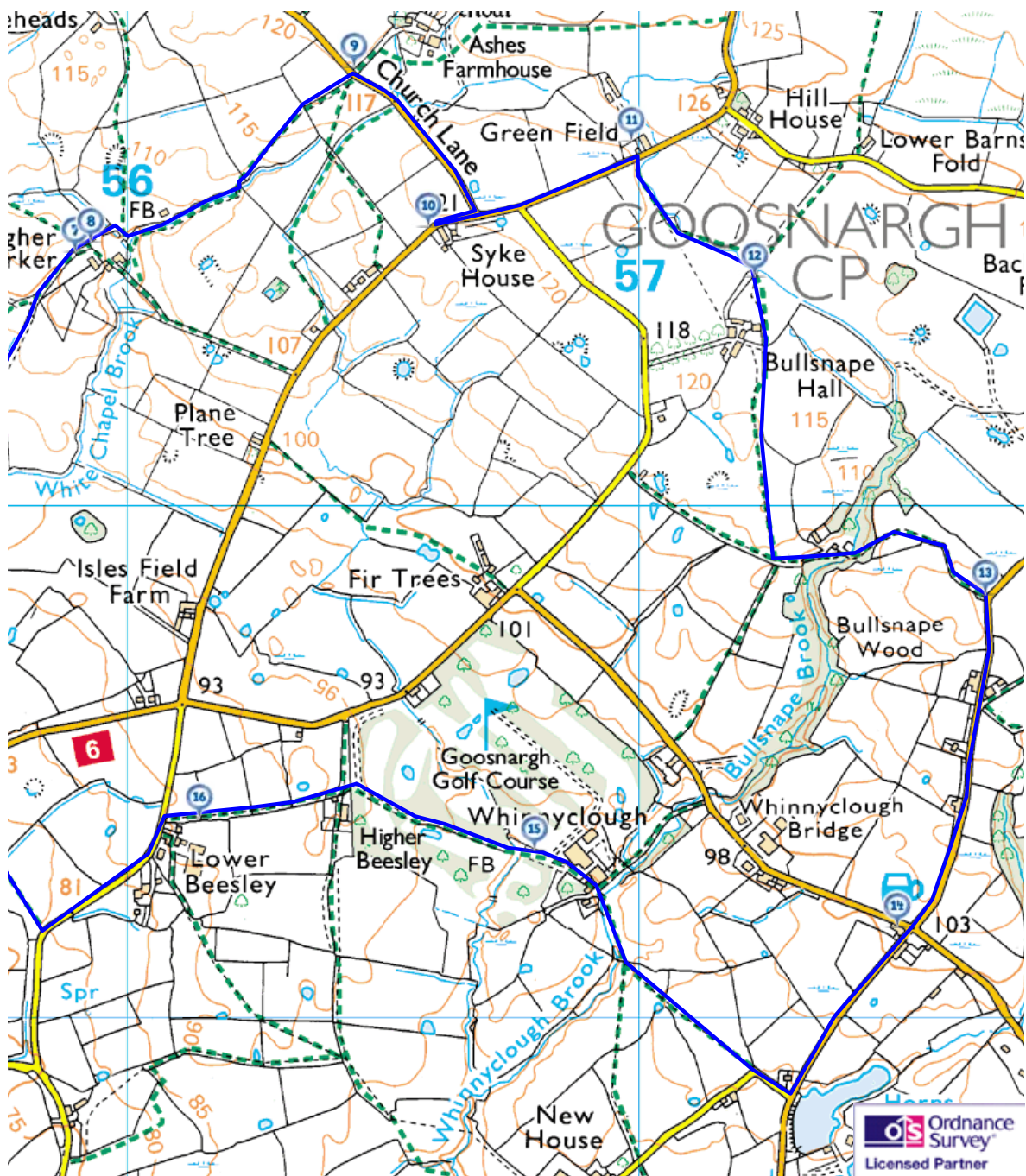
### Stopping points

- |              |  |               |                                 |
|--------------|--|---------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Start</b> | The Green Man, Inglewhite                  | ...           |                                 |
| <b>2.</b>    | Market cross, Inglewhite village green     | <b>16.</b>    | Beesley Farm, Mill Lane         |
| <b>3.</b>    | Bridge over Factory Brook, Inglewhite Road | <b>17.</b>    | Turner House Farm, Langley Lane |
| <b>4.</b>    | Corner of first field off Inglewhite Road  | <b>18.</b>    | Sparling Brook                  |
| <b>5.</b>    | Pond in the corner of the second field     | <b>19.</b>    | Cliftons Farm, Silk Mill Lane   |
| <b>6.</b>    | View of dairy field hedgerows              | <b>Finish</b> | The Green Man, Inglewhite       |



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## Middle part of the route



### Stopping points

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>7.</b> Muck heap before Higher Barker Farm   | <b>11.</b> Greenfields Dairy, Greenfield Lane  |
| <b>8.</b> Higher Barker Farm                    | <b>12.</b> Bullsnape Farm                      |
| <b>9.</b> View of Beacon Fell, Church Lane      | <b>13.</b> View of Edenfields Farm, Horns Lane |
| <b>10.</b> Silage clamp, Higher Syke House Farm | <b>14.</b> Ye Horns Inn, Horns Lane            |

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## 1. Welcome to Inglewhite

### The Green Man, Inglewhite

The countryside north of Preston has been described as the 'Lancashire milk fields'. Here you will find cattle that produce a large amount of Britain's milk, cheese and other dairy goods grazing in low-lying fields.

This walk explores why and when this became a dairy producing area. We will also find out how economics and politics have influenced farming and how this has changed the landscape.

We will learn about the cows that produce our milk, the farmers who milk them and, of course, the dairies that make traditional Lancashire cheese.



Young heifers grazing  
© Rory Walsh



Inglewhite village AA signpost  
© Mike Jackson

This walk has been created by Mike Jackson, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

**Mike:** "I now live in Buckinghamshire so you might be wondering why I have developed this walk in the Northwest of England. The reasons are quite simple. I was born and brought up in Preston, just south of the Lancashire milk fields. I spent many happy childhood days around here."

"I also developed a taste for Lancashire cheese. In fact I never travel south from here without a large piece of my favourite creamy Lancashire cheese!"

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#### Directions 1

Walk to the market cross on the triangular village green.

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## 2. All the fun of the fair

### Market cross, Inglewhite village green

Market crosses like this one can be found in many British towns and cities. Some date from as early as the seventh century and they were usually built to mark the site of the market square or trade centre. They were a kind of signpost.

Look at the top of this cross and you will see the inscription HCIW 1675. The initials HC are those of Hugh Cooper who was High Sheriff of Lancashire and lord of the manors of Goosnargh and Chipping. The other initials are of his son-in-law, Justice John Warren, who also became lord of the manor. It was he who procured a royal charter to hold an annual cattle and sheep fair right here on the greens. These became known as “t’ Inglewhite Bull Fair i’th’North”.



Inglewhite market cross  
© Mike Jackson

Inglewhite is a very quiet place today but that certainly wasn't the case during the fairs which were quite an event. A history of Goosnargh written by Richard Cookson tells us that the charter allowed ale and porter (a dark beer) to be sold without a licence. This led to the village green being “the focus of the scum and dregs of all the neighbouring district”. The Reverend Robert Shuttleworth, vicar of Goosnargh, eventually stopped the fairs being held on Sundays. He became known as the Inglewhite Reformer.

These ancient fairs show us that this has been a farming area for a long time but there is evidence of other economic activities that villagers were involved in too. Look at the names of the two roads that lead off the green – Button Street and Silk Mill Lane. These refer to the water powered mills which were in the village until the nineteenth century after which they were put out of business by steam powered mills.

#### Directions 2

With the Green Man behind you turn right out of the village along Inglewhite Road. Please be careful on this stretch of road - it is not normally very busy but there is no pavement and traffic can be fast moving. Stop after about 100 metres where the road crosses a small stream.

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### 3. Wet and mild

## Bridge over Factory Brook, Inglewhite Road

The small stream below is Factory Brook which once powered the silk and button mills that we heard about at the last stop. It is one of many streams that drain this undulating lowland area.

Look at the exposed banks and you will see a rich soil on top of deep clay sediments that were left by the glaciers of the last Ice Age. This fertile soil and the climate here are ideal for dairy farming. Here in the northwest of England the predominant wind blows from the south west. It is influenced by the Gulf Stream and brings mild temperatures with relatively high rainfall. That is just what is needed to grow lush grass pastures.



Lush grass pastures ideal for dairy farming  
© Mike Jackson

Dairy farming is the largest agricultural sector in the UK and most milk comes from the wetter western side of the country. Lancashire accounts for about four per cent of the 13 billion litres of milk that is produced each year. About half is drunk as liquid and the rest is used to make products such as cheese, butter, yoghurt and dried milk.



Supermarket milk aisle  
© Mike Jackson

On average each person in the UK consumes about 1.6 litres of milk a week. However, you might be surprised to know that the majority of the world's population can't drink milk because they are intolerant to a sugar in it called lactose. More than 90 per cent of people from Africa and Asia are intolerant.

In fact most mammals become intolerant to lactose after weaning. The reason why only five per cent of Northern Europeans are intolerant is genetic. It is thought to be caused by natural selection in regions where milk was readily available as a food source.

### Directions 3

Continue along the road for about 200 metres and you will reach a group of farm buildings on your left. You will see a footpath on your left just after these buildings. Go through the metal gate and stop just inside the field.

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## 4. Dutch breeding

### Corner of the first field off Inglewhite Road



Holstein-Friesian cows - around 90 per cent of British dairy cows are this breed  
© Mike Jackson

Don't be surprised to find that there are no cows in this field. The reason is that not all dairy fields are used to graze cattle, as we will find out later. Fields will also be empty in winter. Cows are kept and fed indoors from about October to April because there is little grazing available. During wet winter conditions cattle also churn up the fields, which damages the soil.

Most of the cows that you will see are the iconic black and white Holstein-Friesians. There are almost two million dairy cows in Britain and about 90 per cent of them are this breed. Holstein-Friesians originate from northern Holland and have been bred specifically to produce high quantities of milk. They can produce up to 25 litres a day - 8,500 litres of milk each per year.

Young cows are known as heifers and they only begin to produce milk after they have had their first calf. This is normally when they are about two years old following a nine-month gestation. Milking begins after about 48 hours when the calf is taken from its mother. After about three months of milking the cows are impregnated again. They continue to be milked until they become dry about two months before they next give birth. That means that cows are milked for about 305 days every year.

Calves are fed separately from their mother using milk substitute for the first 6 to 8 weeks until they are introduced to grazing or conserved grass. Generally female calves are reared to join the herd while male calves are sold for beef or veal. Adult cows typically become unproductive when they are six years old, after four lactations, and this is when they are sent for slaughter.

#### Directions 4

Cross the field diagonally to a stile. Cross the stile and stop immediately by a pond.

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## 5. Heavy drinkers

### Pond in the corner of the second field

This is one of many small ponds that we will pass on the walk. Earlier at Factory Brook we saw exposed layers of clay in the soil. Clay soil holds high levels of water and many of the fields here were boggy until drainage was added in the nineteenth century. Natural ponds were left in some of the fields to provide the cattle with drinking water.

Cows still drink from ponds or streams but you will also see lots of water troughs including plastic ones, stone ones and even an old bath.

Cows drink a lot of water. In fact they need more water per kilo of body weight than any other land mammal. A lactating dairy cow might drink 100 litres or more in a day.

Perhaps that is not so surprising when you consider that 87 per cent of the milk they produce is, in fact, water. If you see any cows drinking, stop and watch them. A cow will typically spend 30 seconds drinking and take in an incredible ten litres.

Managing water on a farm is important. Providing clean water is expensive and an average farm spends over £30 per cow each year. Not only do cows drink a lot of water but large quantities are also used elsewhere on the farm. Water is used to cool the milk before it is stored and it is also used for cleaning down the milking parlour and equipment.



Keeping the cattle supplied with water  
© Mike Jackson

#### Directions 5

With the pond on your right go directly across the field to another stile. Cross the stile and walk straight across the next field to another stile by a gate. Stop here.

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## 6. Historic hedges

### View of dairy field hedgerows



Field boundaries are much as they were 400 years ago  
© Google Earth / Mike Jackson

Have you noticed that the fields we have been crossing are quite small and irregular-shaped? They are also divided by hedges which zig-zag across the land. These are all indications that these field boundaries are very old. It is likely that individual farmers enclosed this land over 400 years ago.

As you walk through the fields look out for rows of bumps in the land. These are the signs of ancient ridges and furrows which are an indication that the fields were once ploughed. It wasn't until the nineteenth century that many of these fields were switched from crops to pasture. This change occurred at a time when the rural population was falling: people were moving to the growing industrial towns where the demand for fresh milk was also growing.

Hedges are an important feature of the lowland pasture landscape and they provide a breeding ground for birds and other wildlife. In many parts of the country, hedges were ripped out in the second half of the twentieth century as farming methods changed. This was particularly the case in arable farming areas where mechanisation meant that large fields were more efficient.

However, here the field boundaries are much the same as they have always been. That's because smaller fields are useful to dairy farmers. By moving cattle from one field to another they can manage the pastures. Hedges also provide cattle with natural weather and wind barriers.

#### Directions 6

Continue through the field with the hedge to your left until you reach a gate. Bear left here and follow a track until you reach another gate. Stop just the other side of the gate where you may be standing by a muck heap.

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## 7. Where there's muck there's brass

### Muck heap before Higher Barker Farm

There is often a large muck heap here, although it may not be present when you walk past. If there have been cattle grazing in any of the fields, you will know only too well that they produce a lot of manure. Cows also spend a lot of time inside which makes managing it a key task for dairy farmers. However, most farms do not regard it as waste but rather a resource.

Cow manure is a rich and natural fertiliser which can help grass and other crops to grow. Some farmers pile manure up and then spread it on the fields but most now collect it with waste water as slurry. This is kept in a tank or a lagoon and then spread onto the land in the spring.



Muck heap  
© Mike Jackson



Muck spreader at Higher Syke House Farm  
© Mike Jackson

Some large dairy farms have now found another use for it. They use an anaerobic digester to turn cow manure into energy. Manure is broken down to produce a biogas which feeds a generator. This produces electricity that can be fed into the National Grid.

Other waste products of dairy farming include greenhouse gases which contribute to global warming. This comes from the energy used on the farm as well as manures and fertilisers. But the biggest contributors are the cows themselves. They generate methane in their stomachs which they burp into the atmosphere. Did you know that about two per cent of all the greenhouse gas produced in UK comes from cows?

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#### Directions 7

Continue up to a group of houses on the right. Stop here.



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## 8. Consolidation and conversion

### Higher Barker Farm



Adapted farm buildings including Higher Barker Farm (left) and Longley House barn conversion (right)  
© Mike Jackson

You can probably tell that these buildings were once part of a farm. This was Higher Barker Farm and it is the first of many examples on our walk where farm buildings have been sold for residential development.

The number of dairy farms in the UK has been falling for a very long time as economic factors have driven many farmers out of business. In fact, in the ten years to 2010, the number of dairy producers in the UK almost halved.

As a result many farms have been amalgamated and there are now fewer farms but larger herds. Back in the 1970s the average herd was 30 cows; in 2012 it was 125.

Farmers have been able to consolidate larger herds in existing farm facilities and so many farm houses and barns have become surplus. Planning regulations aim to protect the character of the countryside by preventing inappropriate conversion of farm buildings for other use. However where planners have permitted sympathetic conversion to residential use these country properties make very desirable residences and have been snapped up by people from nearby towns.

#### Directions 8

Pass the houses and just after the track turns sharply to the right look for a footpath on your left by a very small stream. Cross the stile here and follow the path along the edge of the stream. Take care as this section can be very muddy. Cross over two more stiles and then follow the path straight across the next field to another stile by a gate. Continue along the track and stop when you reach a stile by a gate which leads onto a lane.

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## 9. A European beacon

### View of Beacon Fell, Church Lane

The small wooded hill ahead is Beacon Fell which is a very popular country park. Its isolated position affords splendid views but in the past it was the site of a warning beacon, hence its name.

Today it has become a beacon for traditional Lancashire cheese. Before the Second World War there were over 200 farms producing around 4,800 tonnes of Lancashire cheese per year. However, during the war production was banned in favour of harder cheeses which could be cut into ration portions more easily.

The industry never really recovered and by 1948 there were only 22 cheese producing farms left. Matters got even worse in the 1960s and 1970s when an imitation Lancashire cheese appeared. This white characterless cheese was produced and sold outside the county in large volumes and it gave Lancashire cheese a bad name.

By 1992 just 11 traditional cheese producers were left. They were making 1,650 tonnes per year, less than one per cent of the UK cheese market. To help save the local cheese they applied to the European Union and were granted Protected Designation of Origin status (PDO).

The Lancashire Cheese PDO applies to creamy cheese sold under the label Beacon Fell Traditional Lancashire. It must be produced in this area, in the traditional fashion and with local milk.

It is one of just ten British cheeses that are protected. Others include Blue Stilton, West Country Farmhouse Cheddar and Single Gloucester. Although most traditional Lancashire cheese is not branded this way, two producers do sell cheese under the Beacon Fell Traditional Lancashire label.



Lancashire cheese sold under the Beacon Fell Traditional Lancashire PDO  
© Mike Jackson

#### Directions 9

Turn right into Church Lane. Follow it to a T-junction with Syke House Lane. Turn right and continue for 100 metres to Higher Syke House Farm. Continue just past the entrance to Higher Syke House Farm and stop by a metal gate into the farmyard.

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## 10. Clamping up

### Silage clamp, Higher Syke House Farm

The large concrete walls you can see here are a silage clamp. Depending on the time of the year you might see a large pile between the walls covered in plastic sheeting with old tyres on top.

Silage is what cows usually eat in the winter when they are kept indoors. It is made from grass or other fodder crops grown during the summer months and usually supplemented with dry feeds, including cereals and protein feeds with added vitamins and minerals.



Cut grass waiting collection for silage  
© Mike Jackson

Grass silage is usually produced two or three times a year starting in May. Grass is cut and left in the field for a day or so until it has the right moisture level. It is then collected and placed in a large heap which is covered in plastic sheeting to exclude air. Old tyres or straw bales are often placed on top to weight it down. By excluding air the grass ferments over a few weeks and is then ready to be used when required.



Piles of silage bales  
© Mike Jackson

Good quality silage is essential to keep cows healthy and it can make a big difference to milk yields. Silage is preferred to hay because it has a higher feed value and producing it is less weather-dependent. Hay requires three or four days of fine weather to make.

Some farmers now make silage in individual bales wrapped in plastic film. Look out for piles of large cylindrical bales covered in black or green plastic.

#### Directions 10

Retrace your steps back along the Syke House Lane. Continue past the junction with Church Lane and the junction with Bullsnape Lane. Stop after about 400 metres when you come to a group of buildings on your left.

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## 11. Curds and whey

### Greenfields Dairy, Greenfield Lane

This is a small family-run cheesemaker called Greenfields. Here they make traditional Lancashire cheese as well as other speciality cheeses. All their milk is sourced locally and you can see milk tanks to the side of the dairy.

Look in through the window and you might see cheese being made. Cheesemaking starts by heating milk and adding a starter culture to sour it. This starter plays an important role in the taste of the final cheese and each cheesemaker guards their own recipe.



Milk tanks at Greenfields Farm  
© Mike Jackson

An enzyme called rennet is also added to split the milk into solid curds and liquid whey. The whey is drained off and salt is added to the curds. These are then pressed before the cheese is left to ripen.



Cheesemaking seen from the viewing gallery at Dewlay Cheesemakers, Garstang  
© Mike Jackson

Lancashire cheese is creamy and buttery. What makes it unique is that curd from two or three days milk is mixed together.

This method goes back to the days when each small farm made its own cheese. They didn't have enough milk to make a whole cheese every day and so they made the curd and stored it to mix with curd from the next day.

Traditional Lancashire cheese comes in three varieties: Creamy, Tasty and Crumbly. All are lightly pressed for two days into a cylindrical shape and then bandaged and waxed or buttered.



Traditional cheese presses  
© Mike Jackson



The finished product  
© Mike Jackson

Each cheese usually weighs ten kilograms and is left to mature. Creamy is left for 4 to 12 weeks while Tasty is left for three months or more.

Crumbly was introduced in the 1960s to counter competition from Cheshire, Caerphilly and Wensleydale cheeses. It is a crumbly, fresh, high-acid cheese made from a single days curd and is only matured for 6 to 8 weeks.

Crumbly is Greenfields' most popular cheese.

### Directions 11

Cross the stile opposite the house next to Greenfields Dairy. Go into the field and follow the left hand edge. Cross another stile in the far left corner. Continue along the left of the next field then go through the gate. You should see a group of buildings to your right.

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## 12. Beware of the bull

### Bullsnape Farm

The properties you can see here have been converted from a former farm. The taller building is Bullsnape Hall. The word 'snape' is thought to be an old word for pasture, so presumably there was once a field here where a bull was kept. Traditionally, farms kept at least one bull to run with the cows.

You might be glad to know that you are unlikely to come across one on your walk today as very few farms now keep bulls. Dairy cows are normally impregnated by artificial insemination. Frozen bull semen is transported across the world and farmers have access to high quality genes this way. It is also much more cost-effective than buying and keeping a bull.



Engraving of a charging bull (1884)  
Wikimedia Commons (CCL)



A cow with identification tags in each ear  
© Mike Jackson

Keeping detailed records of a cow's history is very important and all cattle are required to have passports. These are unique for each cow and record the animal's mother, place of birth and any movements throughout their lifetime.

Any animals you see will have identification tags in each ear. These are important for tracking the movement of cattle and controlling disease. You will also see individual numbers which are easy to read painted on the rear of cows. These are useful in the milking parlour.

#### Directions 12

Continue towards Bullsnape Hall and cross the stile beside it. Then cross two more stiles in quick succession. Follow the left edge of the field then turn right when you reach the corner. Continue down to a stile into a wood and follow the path to a house. Follow the track here over a stream and onto a gravel path. Follow the path until you reach a road which is Horns Lane. Stop here.

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## 13. Super sizing

### View of Edenfield Farm, Horns Lane

Along the road to your left you can see Edenfield Farm. This is a large dairy farm with a milking herd of about 500 cows. The farmer here has taken up the opportunity to expand his herd as other farmers nearby have switched from cattle to sheep.

He has invested in a 50-point rotary milking parlour where cows are milked three times a day. It has sufficient capacity to allow him to double the size of the herd in the future should he wish. Low milk prices have encouraged many farmers in the country to increase their herd size as a way to reduce the cost of production.



Sheep have replaced cattle on some local farms  
© Rory Walsh



Cattle at an indoor rotary milking parlour  
Wikimedia Commons (CCL)

The herd at Edenfield is much larger than the current average of 125 but still much smaller than some recently proposed 'super dairies' of up to 8,000 cows. Units like this already exist in the United States of America but they are highly controversial as cows are kept indoors all year round in a practice referred to as 'zero grazing'. Freshly cut grass is transported to the cows during the summer and in the winter they are fed silage.

The cows are well cared for and a high standard of welfare can be achieved but many people are concerned about environmental issues and the ethics of such large units.

'Zero grazing' would also bring an end to one of the traditional views of our countryside; many people would say rural Britain just wouldn't feel the same without cows grazing in the fields.

#### Directions 13

Turn right onto Horns Lane and follow it for about 600 metres until you reach Ye Horns Inn.

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## 14. Travellers rest

### Ye Horns Inn, Horns Lane

Ye Horns Inn dates back to the early 1700s when it opened as a coaching inn. It is about half way round our walk which makes it a good place to stop for a break.

Three generations of the same family have owned the Horns for the last 60 years. They serve traditional foods which are sourced locally including their signature 'Roast Goosnargh Duckling'. They also brew their own beer and serve Lancashire cheese.

There has been a growing appreciation of traditional foods in recent years and many people seek out food that has been produced locally. Lancashire cheese falls into that category and most of it is supplied and eaten in the northwest.

Once upon a time people would buy cheese from a specialist cheesemonger but now the vast majority is bought from supermarkets. The local chain Booths has almost 30 stores across the northwest and is a big seller of Lancashire cheese.



Ye Horns Inn / Lancashire cheese for sale at Booths  
© Rory Walsh / Mike Jackson

Most people buy cheese pre-packed. With refrigerated vehicles and better packaging available than in the past Lancashire cheese can also be transported longer distances. You will now find it on the shelves of many supermarkets across the country.

#### Directions 14

With Ye Horns Inn on your right continue into the road ahead. After about 400 metres turn right into Ford Lane. After 50 metres do not follow the lane to the left but take the kissing gate directly ahead into a field. Cross this field diagonally to two stiles by a pond. Cross these and continue across the next field to a kissing gate on the right. Then follow the hedge on your left to a bridge over a stream. Go through two gates and straight through the farmyard. Stop when you reach the starting hut for Goosnargh Golf Course.



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## 15. Diversification

### Goosnargh Golf Course

This stop might come as something of a surprise. After walking through a farmyard where you may have encountered hens and geese you are suddenly at the starting hut of the nine-hole Goosnargh golf course. This is another sign of the changing fortunes of the dairy industry.

These fields were once part of a dairy farm belonging to the uncle of the lady who owns the golf course. He fell on difficult times as a dairy producer and decided to try and diversify.

He was good at growing grass so he started to grow and sell turf. He even provided turf for the football pitch at Preston North End football stadium. Several years ago the fields were then turned into this very attractive golf course but it is not as well used as the owner would like.

The planning permission to build the golf course recognised that the streams, ponds and ditches around it are a haven for wildlife. The club rules specify these as conservation areas that are out of bounds. Golfers must not enter them, even to retrieve a lost ball!



Course and starting hut at Goosnargh Golf Course  
© Mike Jackson

Building a golf course might seem an extreme form of change but you will find other examples of diversification in this area. For example, some farms offer bed and breakfast or holiday cottages to rent. Not far away another farmer has developed a herd of 1,000 goats which are milked to make cheese.

#### Directions 15

Follow the track past the starting hut. After about 300 metres leave the track as it turns right and take the stile on your left. Continue past Higher Beesley, crossing two more stiles and going through a gate. Go through a kissing gate to a road and stop here.

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## 16. Kirkham's cows

### Beesley Farm, Mill Lane



Cheese making equipment and ripening cheeses at Mrs Kirkham's  
© Mike Jackson

This is Beesley Farm, home to Mrs Kirkham's Lancashire Cheese. Graham Kirkham has his own herd of about 125 Holstein-Friesian cows which you might have met on your way here. He is also a third generation cheesemaker. He uses his mother's recipe and the same starter culture and rennet used by his grandmother.

Kirkham's is a very small producer, only making about twenty cheeses a day, but are very proud of their product. This Lancashire cheese is different because it is the only one made from unpasteurised milk. It is also cloth-bound and covered in butter rather than wax to mature. This gives Kirkham's its own distinctive flavour. It is sold at a premium to other Lancashire cheeses and you can find it at top cheesemongers across the country including the famous Neal's Yard Dairy in London.

Almost all milk in Britain is pasteurised to remove potentially harmful bacteria. This involves heating it to a high temperature then cooling it rapidly and keeping it refrigerated. Most cheese is made from pasteurised milk but there are a number of hard-pressed cheeses made from unpasteurised milk. They are safe to eat because they have been stored for a long time.

Kirkham's welcomes visitors so if you have the time, go to the office and see if anyone is available to show you round.

#### Directions 16

With the farm behind you turn left and follow the track to the road. Turn left and after 300 metres where the road bends to the left take the stile on your right into a field. Follow the path across two fields until you reach a gate by a road. Go through the gate and stop here on Langley Lane.

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## 17. European mountains

### Turner House Farm, Langley Lane

Here is yet another farm that has become redundant. At the time of creating this walk it was waiting to be redeveloped. We have already found out about the economics of dairy farming but politics has played a major part too.

As long ago as 1933 the Government established the Milk Marketing Board to control milk production and guarantee a minimum price to farmers. In 1946 the Free Milk Act provided a third of a pint a day to all British schoolchildren.

Today, as a member of the European Union, the UK comes under the Common Agricultural Policy. This aims to ensure a fair standard of living for farmers while providing a stable and safe food supply at affordable prices for consumers. However, it has always been controversial.



Children with free milk, Baldock County Council School (1944)  
Wikimedia Commons (CCL)

Financial incentives given to farmers in the 1970s and 1980s led to the oversupply of milk and other food products. In response the EU intervened into the market to buy up the excess production. Many of you will be familiar with the headlines about European 'butter mountains' and 'wine lakes'. Milk quotas were introduced in 1984 in an attempt to limit production and avoid the need for intervention.

Under the quota system each country in the EU has a production limit which is divided up among farmers. Milk quotas can be transferred or sold between farmers but anyone who produces more than his quota has to pay a levy to the government. The quota system is due to come to an end in 2015 when farmers will be free to produce as much milk as they want. We will have to wait and see what effect this has.

#### Directions 17

Turn left and with the farm on your right continue along Langley Lane. After about 500 metres you will come to a converted barn on your left. Take the track to the right directly opposite and continue past houses on either side. Go through the gate before the path descends into a wooded area. Stop when you reach a stream at the bottom.

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## 18. Mr Brock

### Sparling Brook

This stream is called Sparling Brook. We have seen several small streams along the way and most of them feed into the River Brock. The word 'brock' is another name for a badger and you could imagine them living around here.

Badgers live in setts underground. They are shy and largely nocturnal animals but in recent times they have become the centre of a huge controversy relating to tuberculosis (TB). Badgers can carry TB without showing symptoms and have been blamed for spreading the disease to cattle.



Sparling Brook  
© Rory Walsh



A wild badger  
© James Lindsey, Wikimedia Commons (CCL)

Bovine TB has become a huge problem to farmers. Once TB is detected on a farm any affected animals are slaughtered. Cattle movement is restricted until the herd is declared clean again. Over 35,000 infected animals were slaughtered in 2012, the worst affected areas being Wales and Southwest England. As of 2014 this part of Lancashire had been spared but cases have been reported just to the north of the county.

The bovine TB problem has been getting steadily worse. In autumn 2013 the government sanctioned a trial cull of badgers in some areas to see if it reduced the spread of TB. There are many opponents of the cull who believe it is cruel and will not be effective. The dairy farmers here will be watching the results closely.

#### Directions 18

Continue along the track and past Colbourn Cottage to a road. Turn left and after 50 metres take the stile on your left into a field. Keep to the left of the field and cross it down to a stile and a bridge over a small stream. Continue towards a house. The path goes over a stile then through the garden and front drive. At the road turn left and stop after 100 metres by Cliftons Farm.

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## 19. Raw and organic

### Cliftons Farm, Silk Mill Lane

The boards outside Cliftons Farm advertise fresh milk, eggs, cream and yogurt. Organic farming expanded rapidly in the 1990s and Cliftons was one of the first farms in the north of England to convert. However, organic farming is still a niche business; less than four per cent of the milk sold in the UK today is organic.

On organic farms artificial fertilisers and pesticides are not permitted and there is a strong emphasis on the protection of wildlife and the environment. Animals must have access to fields when the weather permits and are fed a natural diet when indoors. Drugs can be used to treat illness but the routine use of antibiotics is banned.



Sign outside Cliftons Farm  
© Mike Jackson

Most organic dairy farms keep native breeds and they typically produce one-third less milk than non-organic farms. Clifton's Farm has a herd of about 40 Jersey cows and the milk produced is used on site to make yoghurt and ice cream.



Jersey cows at Cliftons Farm  
© Mike Jackson

The milk here is not pasteurised and this is one of only 100 or so farms in the UK where you can buy raw milk. Tight regulations restrict the sale of raw milk to farms that are free of tuberculosis and brucellosis. The milk is regularly sampled for bacteria and can only be sold direct from the farm or at farmers' markets.

A small but growing number of people have been campaigning for a return to real milk. They want to see raw milk more freely available. They also want milk that has not been homogenised. This is a process that breaks up the fat and spreads it evenly throughout the milk. You may fondly remember the milkman delivering bottles of milk with a thick layer of cream at the top.

#### Directions 19

Retrace your steps back along the road. Continue past the small church on your right to the Green Man where we started. Stop here.

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## 20. Village local

### The Green Man, Inglewhite

We hope that you have enjoyed this walk through Lancashire's milk fields. We end back at the Green Man, once one of three pubs in Inglewhite. At the time of creating this walk it had reopened after being closed for almost a year, another sign of the times and the changing landscape of our countryside and its small villages.

On our walk we have seen ancient fields that once grew crops but were turned over to pasture as demand for milk grew from the nearby industrial towns. Although field patterns have remained the same for centuries, farming methods have changed.



The Green Man pub  
© Mike Jackson

We have seen how economics has driven some dairy farms to get bigger; others managed to stay small by being specialised and charging a premium for their products. We have also passed many redundant farm buildings that have been converted into desirable homes and former pasture now used for different purposes.



A piece of Creamy Lancashire  
© Rory Walsh

Depending on the time of year you may have seen cows along the way and perhaps now appreciate the milk that they produce a little more. Hopefully you might have also gained an appreciation for traditional Lancashire cheese.

If you would like to try some we recommend a trip to Dewlay cheesemakers at Garstang which is only five miles away. There you can find out more about Lancashire cheese and watch it being made from a viewing gallery.

Then taste Crumbly, Creamy and Tasty and decide which you like best!



Scenes from the Lancashire milk fields  
© Mike Jackson

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## Lancashire dairy farms and cheesemakers

### Featured on the walk route:

#### **Cliftons Farm**

Silk Mill Lane, Goosnargh, Preston PR3 2LP

[cliftonsfarm.wordpress.com](http://cliftonsfarm.wordpress.com)

#### **Greenfields Dairy Products Ltd.**

Syke House Lane, Goosnargh, Preston PR3 2EN

[www.greenfieldsdairy.co.uk](http://www.greenfieldsdairy.co.uk)

#### **Mrs Kirkham's**

Beesley Farm, Mill Lane, Goosnargh, Preston PR3 2FL

[www.mrskirkhams.com](http://www.mrskirkhams.com)

### Near to the walk route:

#### **Butlers Farmhouse Cheeses**

Wilson Fields farm, Inglewhite, Preston PR3 2LH

[www.butlerscheeses.co.uk](http://www.butlerscheeses.co.uk)

#### **Carron Lodge**

Park Head Farm, Carron Lane, Inglewhite, Preston PR3 2LN

[www.carronlodge.com](http://www.carronlodge.com)

#### **Dewlay Cheesemakers**

Garstang Bypass Road, Garstang, Preston PR3 0PR

[www.dewlay.com](http://www.dewlay.com)

#### **Hollywood Cheese**

Halliday's Farm Dairy, Moss Lane, Bilsborough, Preston PR3 0RU

#### **Leagram Organic Dairy Limited**

Green Lane, Chipping, Preston PR3 2TQ

[www.cheese-experience.com](http://www.cheese-experience.com)

#### **JJ Sandham Ltd**

Rostock Dairy, Garstang Road, Barton, Preston PR3 5AA

[www.jjsandham.co.uk](http://www.jjsandham.co.uk)

#### **Shorrocks Cheese**

Newhouse Farm, Ford Lane, Goosnargh, Preston PR3 2FD

[www.lancashirebombs.co.uk](http://www.lancashirebombs.co.uk)

#### **Singleton's Dairy**

Mill Farm, Preston Road, Longridge, Preston PR3 3AN

[www.singletons.uk.com](http://www.singletons.uk.com)



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## Further information

**British Cheese Board**  
[www.britishcheese.com](http://www.britishcheese.com)

**DairyCo**  
[www.dairyco.org.uk](http://www.dairyco.org.uk)

**Goosnargh Golf Course**  
[www.goosnarghgolf.co.uk](http://www.goosnarghgolf.co.uk)

**Soil Association**  
[www.soilassociation.org](http://www.soilassociation.org)

**This is dairy farming**  
[www.thisisdairyfarming.com](http://www.thisisdairyfarming.com)

**UK Agriculture**  
[www.ukagriculture.com](http://www.ukagriculture.com)

**Ye Horns Inn**  
[www.yehornsinn.co.uk](http://www.yehornsinn.co.uk)



The deli counter at Dewlay Cheese Shop, Garstang  
© Dewlay Cheesemakers

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## Credits

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- **Caroline Millar** for editing the audio files
- **James Lindsey** for additional photographs reproduced under Creative Commons Licenses



View of Beacon Fell from Longridge Fell  
© Rory Walsh

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