

Socialscene

Out and about in Oldham

life in Oldham



# There are giant kitchen utensils on those hills!

This is our tenth feature in a series of seasonal articles aimed at encouraging people to get out and about, explore the borough and get healthy in the process. With the help of the Oldham Ramblers' Association, Oldham Council and Countryside Rangers we hope to reintroduce you to the beauty on our own doorstep. This week we focus on a popular Saddleworth walk that shouldn't prove too demanding for beginners.



GILBERT Howcroft in WW1 uniform. He designed the memorial pictured top left

**Walk:** Pots and Pans  
**Distance:** Four and a half miles.  
**Time:** Two to two and a half hours at leisurely pace  
**Calorie burn:** 500+  
**How do I get there?:** The route starts from Pobjreen Church, which is east of Uppermill.  
**Public transport:** There are plenty of buses running to within half a mile of the start point. Call GMPTE on 0161 228 7811 for bus details.  
**Parking:** Free parking around the vicinity of the church.

**T**HIS week we have chosen a relatively gentle circuit on the hillside above Uppermill. You can look forward to some fantastic views, each of which is subtly different. As such, choosing a nice clear day would be a good idea.  
**1** The walk begins beside Saddleworth parish church. (It was built in 1831 and dedicated to St Chad. The saint was born in Northumbria, probably in the Middle Ages, but he is more associated with the Midlands kingdom of Mercia than the north. In front of the church are the village stocks, which

carry the date of 1698.) Take the overgrown lane east from the corner of the church (not the footpath next to it which runs diagonally up the hillside). Follow the lane ahead, past farm buildings and the front of Ivy Bank Farm and then turn left, picking up the field footpath running in a northerly direction.

**2** Briefly follow the Oldham Way route (a 40-mile circular walk promoted by Oldham Council. As Saddleworth is home to many Yorkshire irridentists you may notice that certain of the 'Oldham Way' signs have the word 'Oldham' scratched out). Continue on the footpath until a tarmac road is reached. Turn right and walk up the hill. At the top continue ahead into an old lane. Carry on up here to open country, leaving the wall in due course to follow the left side of Broadstone Clough uphill. Near the top of the hill make for the trig point.

**3** This is Broadstone Hill. (Standing at 1,489 feet, this is the first of several viewpoints. To the



north-east is the distinctive shape of Pule Hill with the cliff face of Shooter's Nab on Deer Hill Moss also visible further to the right. To the north-west the Standedge Ridge is followed by the Pennine Way north, whilst one of the two Castleshaw reservoirs is just in sight on the left. Over to the west are the

tower blocks of Oldham.) From Broadstone Hill, turn back to follow the well walked path which runs southwards along the ridge of the hill, passing the gritstone outcrop called Slade Rocks.

**4** The Shaw Rocks are just beyond and are perched at the edge of the hillside. This is another place to stop and admire the views. (From here it is readily apparent how the hills enfold Uppermill and the other Saddleworth settlements.) From here you cross the hillside to pass the big rounded boulder known as Sugar Loaf and make for the prominent rocky outcrop at Upper Wood Edge on the eastern side. (Ahead and below are the three reservoirs of the Greenfield Valley: Dovestone to the right, Yeoman Hey ahead and Greenfield to the left.) Now take the path which runs along the brow towards Alderman Hill at the southernmost point of the hill in front of you. (Here the view has changed again to include Alphin Pike across the valley and long clough of Chew

Brook making its way up the hillside from Dovestone.)  
**5** Turn back to make for the commanding obelisk to the north-west. (This landmark is Saddleworth's memorial to the dead of two wars. The architect was Saddleworth man Gilbert Howcroft, who fought in the Great War and survived to return home, set up his business in Uppermill and eventually become Mayor.) A few yards from the obelisk is the outcrop known as 'Pots and Pans'. (So called as many locals felt the stone looked like kitchen utensils!) It is worth clambering up the rock to see the natural water-filled cavities at the top.

**6** From the obelisk, head away from the Potts and Pans stone along a set of old iron railings and aim to pick up a path heading north-westwards down the hillside towards Birch's farmhouse. Just before Birch's take the footpath running northwards close to the foot of the open hillside. You can now follow this path back to the cottages at Pobjreen and the starting point.

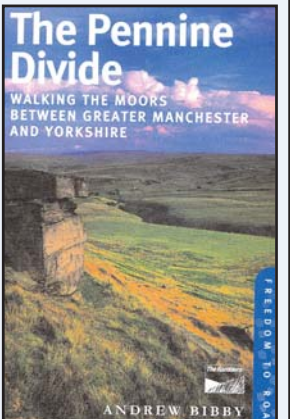


## Join a great day out with the ramblers

THE Oldham branch of The Ramblers' Association is planning a special day out next month and a warm welcome is being extended to Advertiser readers.

A coach is being laid on to Matlock Bath, Derbyshire, on Sunday, August 7. There will be three walks for those who want to get active (at 9 miles, 12 miles and 14 miles), although you can simply go on the trip and spend the day pottering around the attractive spa town and pass on the rambling if you want. The coach will be leaving from B&Q at Mumps at 8am and will also pick up at the Pennine Way Hotel and Chadderton Park. It will arrive back in Oldham at around 8pm.

If you would like to join the party, the price is £6.50 or £5.50 if accompanied by a child. Call Shirley on 01706 841506 or John on 0161 652 7718. Please make sure to let them know at which of the three pick up points you want collecting from and dropping off at.



**T**his week's walk is available in the book 'The Pennine Divide' by Andrew Bibby, which can be purchased from all good bookshops. The book includes numerous good walks around the region. You can find out more at [www.franceslincoln.com](http://www.franceslincoln.com)

**Next week: Don't miss our guide to a great circular and scenic Oldham walk**

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