

Socialscene

Out and about in Oldham

life in Oldham

On your bikes!

This is our sixth 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 cycle and bridle route, that is also fine for our more ambitious walkers.



Cycle route/Walk: The Medlock Valley
Distance: 18 miles.
Time: Four hours cycling at a leisurely pace
Calorie burn: 1,000+
How do I get there?: This route starts from the Daisy Nook Visitor Centre. Follow Ashton Road out of the centre of Oldham and turn right onto Coalpit Lane and left onto Stannybrook Road. Pass the garden centre onto Newmarket Road and the countryside centre is signposted on the left.
Public transport: The nearest bus stop is on Newmarket Road. Call GMPTE on 0161 228 7811 for bus details.
Parking: Free parking at countryside centre.



Oldham road (A627). Continue under the tunnel and follow the brideway to the tarmac road at Fennyfield Bridge.

2 Turn right onto the road and take the right hand fork into Alt Hill Lane. Continue to Lees New Road (B6194). Use caution as you will now be crossing the busy Lees New Road to follow Twirl Hill Road to the junction of Lily Lanes. Turn left into Lily Lanes and follow the road until you come to a rough track which continues behind

THIS week we move from two feet to two wheels, although our more energetic walkers may fancy taking on this ramble over the course of a sunny day.

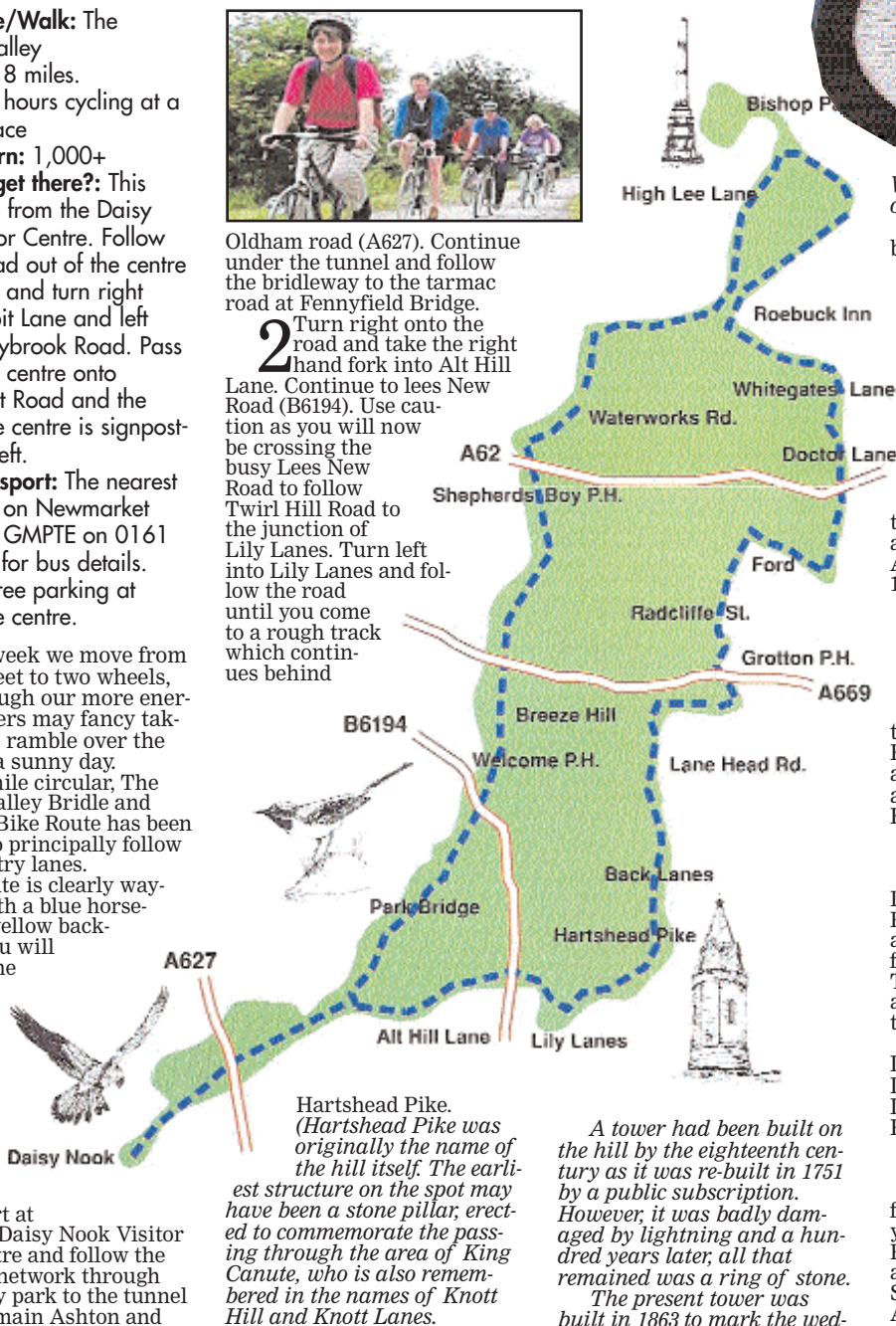
An 18-mile circular, The Medlock Valley Bridle and Mountain Bike Route has been designed to principally follow quiet country lanes.

The route is clearly way-marked with a blue horse-shoe on a yellow background. You will take in some of the high points of the area, with stunning views, and areas of natural beauty.

1 Start at the Daisy Nook Visitor Centre and follow the brideway network through the country park to the tunnel under the main Ashton and

Hartshead Pike. (Hartshead Pike was originally the name of the hill itself. The earliest structure on the spot may have been a stone pillar, erected to commemorate the passing through the area of King Canute, who is also remembered in the names of Knott Hill and Knott Lanes.

A tower had been built on the hill by the eighteenth century as it was re-built in 1751 by a public subscription. However, it was badly damaged by lightning and a hundred years later, all that remained was a ring of stone. The present tower was built in 1863 to mark the wed-



ding of the Prince of Wales to Princess Alexandra of Denmark.)

Take the track on the left before the Colliers Arms (time for a break?) then bear right and follow Back Lane to Lane Head Farm. Turn left and follow Lane Head Road down to Knowls Lane. Turn right into Knowls Lane and follow to Station Road.

3 Turn left into Station Road to the Grotton Hotel (in need of another break?) on the A669. A time for caution again as you turn left into the A669 and follow it for about 100 metres before turning right into Radcliffe Road.

Continue along Radcliffe Road and then along Stone Breaks Road. At the end of Stone Breaks Road, turn right and proceed down to the ford and up to Platting Road. It's look both ways time again, as you cross the A62 and follow Doctor Lane to the High Moor Quarries.

4 Turn left into Whitegates Lane and follow to the Roebuck Inn (thirsty or hungry?). At the Roebuck Inn turn sharp right and take the right hand fork to follow the brideway to Hill Top Lane. There now follows a mini loop that takes you past the half-way point...

Turn left into Hill Top Lane and follow to High Lee Lane. Turn left into High Lee Lane and follow back to the Roebuck Inn.

5 Follow Green Lane down to the side of the Roebuck Inn and then follow the waymarkers until you reach Waterworks Road. Ride along Waterworks Road and turn left down Culvert Street until you reach the A62. Caution: you will be

crossing it to ride down to Sidebottom Street.

6 Follow the narrow track between the Orme and Cairo Mills into the valley and follow the track until you reach the old railway line at Bank Top. Turn right and follow the track to the gate at the end. Turn left into Constantine Street and follow to Lees Road (A669). Be careful crossing the main road and follow the track through Breeze Hill and into the Holts Valley. At the end of the track turn right and ride up holts Lane towards the Welcome Inn on Abbeyhills Road.

7 Be aware of the traffic and cross the main road to follow Alt Lane for three-quarters of a mile until you come to Dean Terrace. Turn right into Dean Terrace and continue down the hill past the Park Bridge Visitor Centre (refreshments are available here at certain times of the day).

8 Follow the road until you rejoin the surfaced brideway on Park Bridge Road. Follow the brideway until you reach Fennyfield Bridge, where you can rejoin the Daisy Nook brideway back to the start.

This week's walk is available as a leaflet from any tourist information point in Oldham, including libraries.

The Ramblers

Special price for ramblers

THE Oldham Advertiser has teamed up with the Ramblers' Association to offer readers the chance of saving 20 per cent on their first year's membership. For over 70 years, the association has been working on behalf of walkers everywhere, safeguarding the beauty of the countryside, maintaining paths and increasing access to Britain's landscapes. As a registered charity, the group's work is funded almost entirely by subscriptions and donations... and members get a terrific range of benefits:

- 'Walk Britain' - a year-book and accommodation guide.
 - Discretionary discounts in many outdoor stores.
 - Quarterly magazine 'Walk'.
 - Access to Ordnance Survey map library.
 - Free information service.
 - Optional membership of a local group, with walks and social activities.
- To join, simply complete the coupon below or call 020 7339 8500 quoting "GRM" to pay by credit/debit card. In addition, if you pay by Direct Debit you will receive 13 months membership for the price of 12. Return this coupon to: The Ramblers' Association, Freeport SW15, London SE1 7BR

- I/we would like to join at the special reduced price (tick box):
- Single annual membership of £19.20 (normally £24)
- Joint annual membership of £25.60 (normally £32) for two adults at one address
- I/we enclose a cheque made payable to the Ramblers' Association for

£.....

● Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss (delete as appropriate)

● Initials.....

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(Offer ends June 30, 2005. Offer is not open to existing members)

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