



Itinerary 14 Bowland's Tracks to Trails

Taking the train along the Clitheroe Line opens up access to a wide range of hikes and rides in the Forest of Bowland National Landscape. This two-day itinerary explores the sustainable travel options from Clitheroe and Whalley.

CRL

Community Rail Lancashire



in partnership with Community Rail Lancashire
and funded by the Community Rail Network



DAY 1: Arrive by rail and catch the bus to Hurst Green for the Tolkien Trail and Stonyhurst College

Other Day 1 Options:
Walk the Tolkien Trail, Chipping and Little Bowland, Walk to Whitewell

DAY 2: Train to Whalley

DAY 2: Walks & Rides

DAY 1: ARRIVE BY TRAIN IN CLITHEROE

Whilst waiting for the bus at Clitheroe Interchange, have a look around Clitheroe's independent shops and thriving market (open Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday), and if time permits, take a quick tour of the Norman Castle keep just a short walk from the station. Catch the Number 5 bus from Clitheroe Interchange.

MORNING:

VISIT STONYHURST MUSEUM

From the pretty village of Hurst Green, the options for exploring range from a short walk through the village to reach the spectacular avenue leading up to historic Stonyhurst College. The college isn't open to the public, but the adjacent Museum is open on selected days during the summer months and is home to an eclectic collection of priceless treasures. Lunch at the Shireburn Arms, Hurst Green – eat al fresco in the beer garden to the rear for expansive views over the Ribble Valley.

AFTERNOON:

WALK THE TOLKIEN TRAIL

A variety of walking options to choose from either from Hurst Green or Chipping - accessible by hopping back on the Number 5 bus.

The Tolkien Trail circular walk is one of the most popular hikes in Lancashire, exploring the picturesque landscapes of the Ribble and Hodder Valleys – thought to have provided J R R Tolkien – who taught at the college during WW2 – with inspiration for the 'The Shire' in his Lord of Rings Trilogy. Click below for a downloadable route guide. If you'd like to stay locally, a great base from which to explore for a few days is the fantastic Little Oakhurst Glamping – which is right beside the route of the Tolkien Trail.

There are plenty of other walking options from Hurst Green – including Hurst Green Woods & Water. Just keep in mind that the last bus back to Clitheroe leaves at 19.48.

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/walking#807432603>

CHIPPING AND LITTLE BOWLAND

For a change of scenery, head for the former mill village of Chipping at the far northwestern edge of the Ribble Valley. The rustic stone-built village nestles under the steep flanks of the western Bowland Fells and it's the swift-flowing upland streams which cascade off the hills that made Chipping a hive of activity in the 19th Century. At one point, at least seven mills were operating in the village – the looms powered by waterwheels located in the steep-sided river valleys. Today, Chipping remains a bustling village with a pub, cafe, farm shop and pretty local walks.

If you're spending a few days in the area, Bowland Escapes, a home to Bowland Wild Boar park, offers luxury lodges and whole array of glamping options.



CHIPPING CIRCULAR WALK

This short circular walk explores the undulating landscape in the foothills of the Bowland Fells. In the middle ages, this area was part of an ancient deer park while in the 18th century, the fast-flowing streams provided power for the many water wheels that drove the rural cotton mills which flourished in Chipping.

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/walking#47400848>

LITTLE BOWLAND LINEAR WALK

For a slightly more adventurous hike, head out of Chipping village into the tranquil countryside between Chipping and Whitewell. Known locally as 'Little Bowland', because it encapsulates all the distinct characteristics of the area in miniature: ancient woodland, green hills and swift-flowing rivers. This 4-mile linear route provides outstanding views from the craggy limestone outcrops of New Laund Hill before descending steeply to cross the River Hodder on a set of stepping stones to reach the hamlet of Whitewell, with its famous coaching inn, where you can catch the Number 11 bus back to Clitheroe.

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/walking#807264011>

DAY 2: WALKS AND RIDES AROUND WHALLEY AND WISWELL

Leave Clitheroe for the 12-minute journey to Whalley by train. Check Timetables [here](#).

The bustling little town of Whalley is famous for its cafés and shops and the remains of a 14th Century Cistercian Abbey standing in its own gardens beside the River Calder and including a rather grand gatehouse. Grab a table at one of the town centre's many cafés and plan your day. Try Deux Amis on George St or Holden's & Co on King Street.

A WOODLAND WALK

Just a short way from the town centre lies Spring Wood, popular walk for locals and visitors alike. Wander along the River Calder into this pretty patch of native woodland and enjoy the birdsong and wild woodland flowers. Spring wood is especially attractive in spring, when the understorey is studded with fragrant stands of bluebells.

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/walking#806506114>

LUNCH AT THE FREEMASONS

From Spring Wood, it's just a short walk to the Freemasons Arms in the pretty village of Wiswell in the foothills of Pendle. Regularly featured in the UK's top 50 gastropubs and winner of multiple awards, the Freemasons is a village local with a difference: outstanding, locally sourced food. Booking is essential. From Wiswell, it's just a leisurely 25-minute amble downhill to Whalley.

FOR MORE ADVENTUROUS SOULS

For the more energetically inclined, tackle iconic Pendle Hill from either Whalley or Clitheroe. The Forest of Bowland's 'Summit Else' routes start direct from Whalley or Clitheroe. These are both challenging routes with some steep and sustained climbs. Walking boots, waterproofs, drinks and some snacks are essential.

Whalley: <https://www.forestofbowland.com/walking#65818175>

and

Clitheroe: <https://www.forestofbowland.com/walking#65237630>

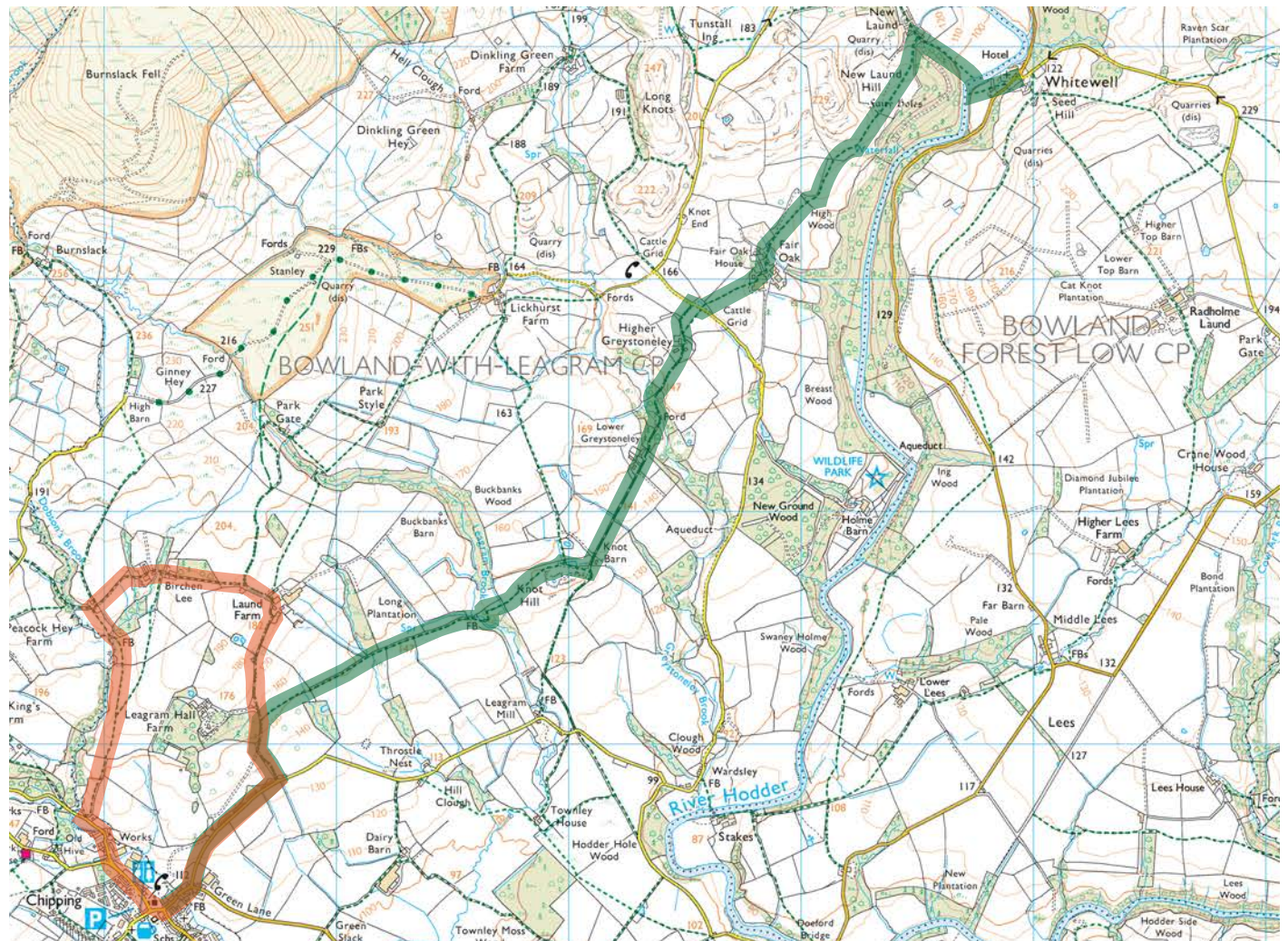
We've also plotted a challenging 20-mile mountain bike tour of Pendle Hill. While this demanding ride doesn't go right to the summit of Pendle, it does feature some very steep climbs and descents in a mixture of on and off-road riding on quiet country lanes, bridleways and gravel tracks. With almost 2000ft of climbing, allow at least three hours to complete the entire circuit – more if you are planning to rehydrate at the multiple inviting pubs en route. For the less athletic, consider hiring an e-bike for the day from Icycle in Clitheroe.

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/walking#806505846>

THE TOLKIEN TRAIL



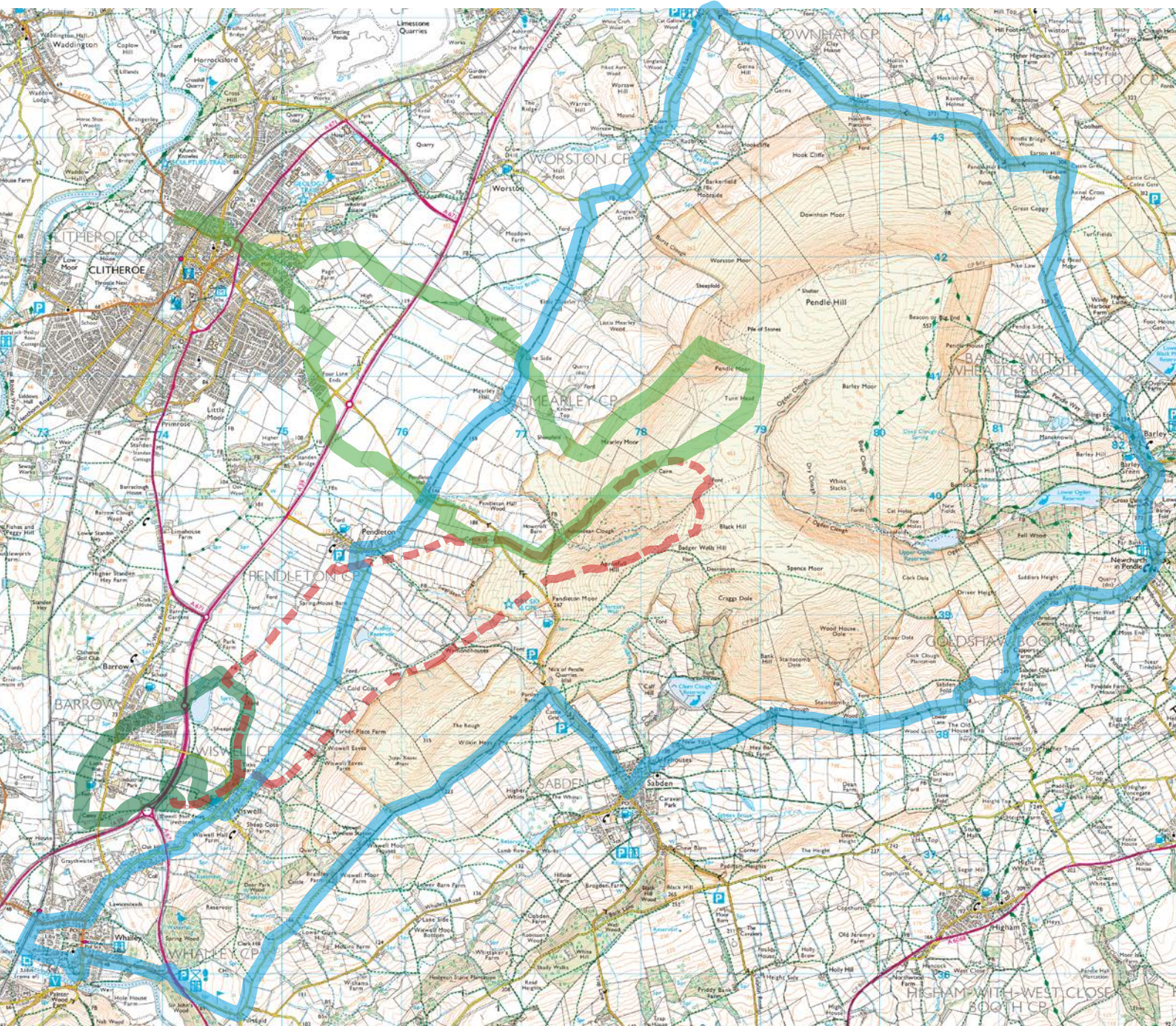
CHIPPING CIRCULAR WALK



A WOODLAND WALK

SUMMIT ELSE ROUTES

20-MILE MOUNTAIN
BIKE TOUR OF
PENDLE HILL



ACCESS FOR ALL: TRAMPER FOR HIRE IN SABDEN

A trumper all-terrain mobility scooter is available for hire in Sabden, opening up access to a delightful Access for All trail up the Sabden Valley to Churn Clough Reservoir. The service in Sabden is run by local volunteers and links directly to the easy access trail. The Trumper is free to hire, although donations to Champion Bowland are appreciated to help cover the running costs.

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/walking#61981607>

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/sabden-tramper>