

# Burrs Country Park



# Welcome to Burrs Country Park

Burrs Country Park lies on the River Irwell and occupies 36 hectares of scenic countryside, one mile to the North West of Bury Town Centre. The park has achieved the coveted Green Flag that is awarded to parks that are clean, safe and environmentally sustainable.

Burrs features a wide variety of different wildlife habitats - woodland, open space, wetland, ponds and waterways. The Country Park is a great place to visit, an ideal spot for a range of activities including walking, fishing, picnicking, bird watching and nature study. For the more adventurous there is an assortment of outdoor pursuits available at Burrs Activity Centre.

There is also a Caravan Club site which can accommodate 80 pitches for caravans and tents. For more information or to make a booking please phone 0161 761 0489.

Burrs Country Park owes part of its existence to Bury's industrial past, many remnants of which still exist today.

The East Lancs Railway also passes through the site and there are plans to build a halt at Burrs Country Park.

Burrs Showground is home to Bury Agricultural Show which is held annually, usually during July.

This leaflet includes a site map, information about the Industrial Heritage of the park, Burrs Activity Centre, the wildlife at Burrs, a timeline of history at Burrs, the Irwell Sculpture Trail at Burrs and Bury Metro Countryside Service.

Whilst there isn't a definitive circular route at Burrs, there are many footpaths that meander throughout the Park. These are highlighted on the map.

*This leaflet is one of a number describing the Borough's natural and built heritage.*

**PLEASE REFER TO THE MAP AND  
ADVICE AT THE BACK OF THE LEAFLET  
FOR INFORMATION ON THE TRAIL**

# Irwell Sculpture Trail

The Irwell Sculpture Trail is the largest public art project in the North West. The trail passes through Burrs on its journey of roughly 30 miles from Salford Quays to the source of the Irwell on the Pennine Moors. Burrs Country Park is home to a cluster of sculptures with 3 only a short distance apart.

These are:



## **Waterwheel** **by David Kemp 1996**

This sculpture is found at the main entrance to the park. The wheel symbolises the process of constant change - the changing of the river into an industrial site and

its change back into countryside again.



## **Stone Cycle** **by Julie Edwards 1997**

The broken circular layout of the piece signifies the passing of time, people and industry and the subsequent re-invention of the area. The stones were originally

quarried for use in the construction of a bridge and in places the mason marks can still be seen. The carved symbols and pictures were added by the artist as clues to long forgotten stories.



## **Picnic Area** **by David Fryer 1998**

This human scale mouse trap has the words 'Picnic Area' inscribed on the plate. The sculptor created this piece as a wry comment on the hidden history and site use as

a country park. By utilising the words 'Picnic Area' the artist is encouraging the visitor to question whether the artwork is a public amenity or tourist trap.

**Website: [www.irwellsculpturetrail.co.uk](http://www.irwellsculpturetrail.co.uk)**



## Burrs Activity Centre

Burrs Activity Centre is housed within the former Mill workers cottages which have been lovingly restored to provide one of the leading outdoor adventure centres in the area.

The abundance of still and moving water at Burrs makes the site particularly suited to water sports. As well as the River Irwell, the site features a canoe training pool and canal feeder.

The Activity Centre is run by Burrs Activity Centre Ltd on a shared management basis using a combination of voluntary and paid staff.

Burrs Activity Centre employs professional instructors to provide a wide range of activities to members of the public and organised groups. The activities include canoeing, archery, kayaking, rafting, an indoor climbing wall, abseiling, team building, problem solving and orienteering. There is also a bunkhouse with accommodation for 36 people and a café.



For more information about any of the activities or to make a booking please contact:

**Burrs Activity Centre**

**Tel: 0161 764 9649**

**Fax: 0161 763 7610**

**Email: [burrs@activity-centre.btconnect.com](mailto:burrs@activity-centre.btconnect.com)**



## Wildlife at Burrs

Burrs Country Park has a variety of wildlife habitats including woodland, open grassland, wetland areas, ponds and waterways.

The woodland areas support a wide selection of resident birds such as finches, tits, blackbird, jay and robin. In the winter numbers are swelled by visiting birds including redwings and fieldfares.

The larger ponds attract mute swans, canada geese, moorhens and mallard whilst the river is a great place to spot a kingfisher. Goosanders are also regular visitors. In the summer swallows, swifts and sand martins can be seen hawking for insects over the water.

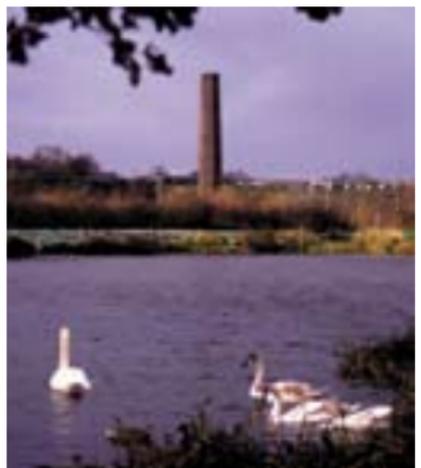
The smaller ponds on the site provide habitats for a range of invertebrates. These include dragonflies and damselflies, newts, frogs and toads.

Burrs is also home to small mammals including water voles, Pipstrelle and Daubentons bats, stoats and weasels are present but are harder to spot.

## Fishing

Fishing is permitted on the Woodhill Mill lodge only and is controlled by the Ramsbottom Angling Association. Tickets are available on the bank from the water bailiff.

**Ramsbottom  
Angling Association**  
Tel: 01706 218497



## Industrial Heritage of Burrs Country Park

Burrs Country Park is overlooked by the impressive natural promontory of Castlesteads where a settlement was established in pre-Roman times.

Burrs is one of Bury's earliest industrial sites notable for its use of water and its association with the Peel family. Although many of the buildings which once made up the two mill communities at Burrs and Higher Woodhill have now gone, enough remains to give an interesting insight into manufacturing technology and life in the early nineteenth century.

The earliest surviving building at Burrs is the Brown Cow Public House, which was built as a farm in 1752 before the Industrial Revolution took hold in Lancashire.

In 1792 the well established group of entrepreneurs, Peel, Howarth and Yates built a water powered spinning mill at Burrs along with a manager's house, smithy, workers' cottages and ash pit. Higher Woodhill Mill was built at the same time for Richard Calrow who was also engaged in the processing of cotton. Initially the mills were powered by water from the river Irwell and a weir and canal were constructed to carry water to the mills.

The construction of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal meant that a water supply was required to feed the header reservoir at Elton. To accommodate this, the canal feeder was constructed around 1803 and connected into the existing mill goit.

In 1808 Burrs Mill was sold to Richard Calrow, who expanded the mills and converted them to steam power. In 1829 a major fire led to the rebuilding of the mill.

The 1850's boom in cotton manufacturing was a time of great prosperity and it is thought that the surviving chimney dates from this time. In 1861 Burrs cottages, now Burrs Activity Centre, consisted of 28 homes, housing 141 people. Facing the cottages are the remains of a midden (toilet block).

The cotton famine of 1861 - 1865, brought about by the American Civil War was the beginning of the end of the cotton mills at Burrs. In 1870, facing mounting financial difficulties the Calrow family sold Burrs Mill and Higher Woodhill Mill to the Yates family and was converted for paper making by 1880. By 1893, following further building it was being used for bleaching and dyeing by Samuel Rothwell Ltd. In 1920 it was taken over by the Star Bleaching Company.

By 1925 Woodhill Road had been constructed along the side of the canal feeder and a manager's house was built, which is now the Garsdale Public House.

In 1930 Higher Woodhill Mill was demolished and in 1933 the depression caused the remaining mill to close.

During the Second World War Burrs Mill and the associated buildings were used as a billet and then to house Italian prisoners of war.

In 1952 the earliest part of Burrs Mill was demolished. The rest of the mill followed in 1982 leaving only the workers cottages and the chimney. The site was acquired by Bury Metro in 1986 and work started on redeveloping the site as a country park.

## **East Lancashire Railway**

The Clifton to Accrington East Lancashire Railway was opened in 1846 and connected to the Manchester to Bolton line. It carried passengers until 1972



and the last freight train ran in December 1980. In 1987 the line re-opened through the hard work of the East Lancashire Preservation Society, with assistance from Bury and Rossendale councils and began to carry passengers once more.

## **East Lancs Railway**

**Tel: 0161 764 7790**

**Website: [www.east-lancs-rly.co.uk](http://www.east-lancs-rly.co.uk)**

# Bury Metro Countryside Rangers

## Bury Metro Countryside Service

Bury Metro Countryside Service is responsible for 46 countryside sites, covering over 1100 hectares throughout Bury. The service consists of a Countryside Officer, a Technical Officer, an Estate Team and the Countryside Ranger Team.



One of the aims of the service is to ensure that Burrs Country Park is a safe and welcoming site for public and wildlife alike.

The Estate Team are responsible for the day to day management which includes emergency responsive work, litter picking and planned project work.



The Countryside Ranger Team aim to improve, conserve and promote a wide variety of countryside areas. They provide advice and information for visitors, environmental education for schools and groups and a range of events. They also promote opportunities for involvement through the Voluntary Ranger Service, local community conservation projects and the 'Friends of Burrs'.



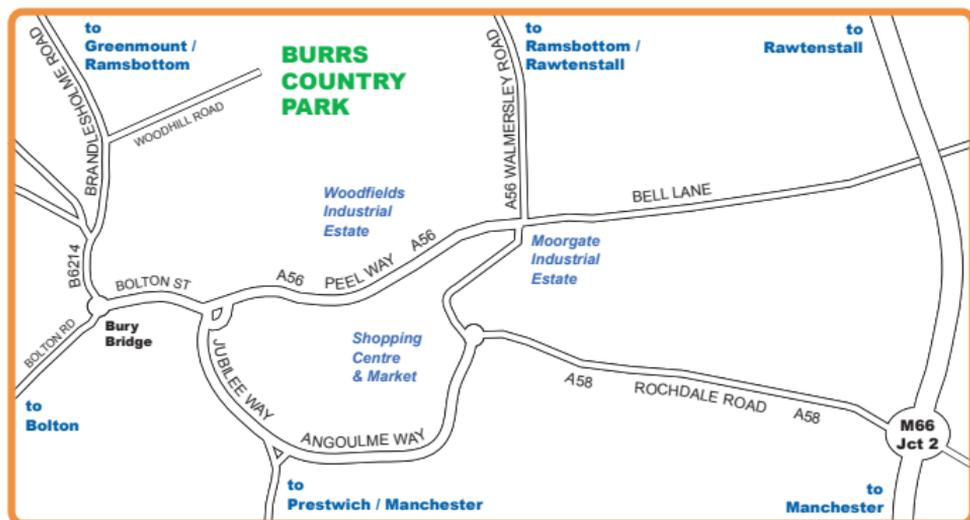
For more information about the work of the Countryside Service, or if you are interested in becoming a Volunteer Countryside ranger, please contact the Ranger Team.

## The Ranger Team

**Phone: 0161 253 7984 Fax: 0161 797 3165**

**Email: [burycountrysideangers@bury.gov.uk](mailto:burycountrysideangers@bury.gov.uk)**

# TRAVEL INFORMATION IN AND AROUND BURY



## BY METROLINK & BUS

The metrolink and buses stop at Bury Interchange. Buses 475 & 477 run to Burrs (not Sundays). Travel information is available from GMPTE on 0161 228 7811 between 8am & 8pm.

## BY CAR

Follow the brown Burrs Country Park signs from Bury Bridge (A58). Free onsite carparking is available (see map).

## BY BICYCLE

Burrs is signposted on National Cycle Route 6 and Bury Tourist Information Centre can recommend cycle routes throughout Bury. Ask for the 'Bike rides around Bury' leaflet.

## EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY

0161 764 7790 (train times) [Website: east-lancs-rly.co.uk](http://www.east-lancs-rly.co.uk)

## CONTACTS

- **Bury Metro Countryside Service** 0161 253 7984

**Email:** [burycountrysiderangers@bury.gov.uk](mailto:burycountrysiderangers@bury.gov.uk)

- **Burrs Activity Centre** 0161 764 9649

**Website:** [www.burrs.org.uk](http://www.burrs.org.uk) **Email:** [burrs@btconnect.com](mailto:burrs@btconnect.com)

- **Bury Tourist Information Centre** 0161 253 5111

**Website:** [www.visitbury.com](http://www.visitbury.com) **Email:** [touristinformation@bury.gov.uk](mailto:touristinformation@bury.gov.uk)

- **The Caravan Club** 0161 761 0489

**Website:** [www.caravanclub.co.uk](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk)

**Email:** [enquiries@caravanclub.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@caravanclub.co.uk)



## Parks and Countryside Service

*Creating a Cleaner, Safer, Greener Borough*  
(May 2006)

Lester Houes, 21 Broad Street, Bury, BL9 0AW

**Phone:** 0161 253 5353 **Email:** [customerserviceseds@bury.gov.uk](mailto:customerserviceseds@bury.gov.uk)

[www.bury.gov.uk/bury/reportaproblem](http://www.bury.gov.uk/bury/reportaproblem)

## KEY

- |                     |                            |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| ① PLAY GROUND       | ⑫ BROWN COW PUBLIC         |
| ② WATERWHEEL        | ⑬ COMMUNAL LATRINE REMAINS |
| ③ WHEEL PIT         | ⑭ STONE CYCLE SCULPTURE    |
| ④ ENGINE BED        | ⑮ CANOE SLALOM             |
| ⑤ CHIMNEY REMNANTS  | ⑯ SHOW GROUND              |
| ⑥ GASOMETER         | ⑰ CASTLESTEADS             |
| ⑦ SCULPTURE         | ⑱ WEIR                     |
| ⑧ PICNIC AREA       |                            |
| ⑨ CHIMNEY           |                            |
| ⑩ ACTIVITIES CENTRE |                            |
| ⑪ CAMPSITE          |                            |

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| <b>P</b>  | PARKING                 |
|  | RIVER IRWELL            |
|  | FOOTPATHS               |
|  | EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY |
|  | ROADS                   |

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