

Whalley Walk Route Description

Start at Whalley railway station at the bridge over Station Road. Straight in front of you is Whalley Cricket Club (img01)

Cross over Station Road and walk down Broad Lane. At the end of the road turn left on to The Sands and go under Whalley Viaduct. (img02).

Continue along The Sands and through the arch of Whalley Abbey Gatehouse (img03)

Shortly after the Gatehouse on the right hand side is the entrance to the grounds of Whalley Abbey (img04 to img09)

After walking around the Abbey grounds leave the same way you came in and continue along The Sands to Whalley Parish Church (img10/11)

Walk through the grounds of the church and onto King Street. Turn left up King Street through the centre of Whalley village. When you get to the mini roundabout the Old Grammar School is on your left. (img12)

Whalley Walk

Img01 – Whalley Cricket Ground

The ground was established in 1860, five years after the founding of Whalley Cricket Club. The first recorded match on the ground was in 1864, when Whalley played an All-England Eleven. Three years later the ground held the only first-class match to be played there, between Lancashire and Yorkshire in what was the first Roses Match. Yorkshire won this first fixture by an innings and 56 runs, with Lancashire's Arthur Appleby taking the first five wicket haul in the match with 6/62 in Yorkshire's first-innings, but he was surpassed by Yorkshire's George Freeman who took 7/10 in Lancashire's first-innings and 5/41 in their follow-on. The ground is still used by Whalley Cricket Club.

Img02 – Whalley Viaduct

Known locally as "Whalley Arches", Whalley Viaduct is a 48-span railway bridge crossing the River Calder. It is a listed structure.

It was built between 1846 and 1850 under the engineering supervision of Terrence Wolfe Flanagan and formed part of the Bolton, Blackburn, Clitheroe and West Yorkshire Railway. It is a red brick arch structure and the longest and largest railway viaduct in Lancashire.[6] It carries the railway, now known as the Ribble Valley Line, 21.3m over the river for 620m.

Over seven million bricks and 12,338 cubic metres of stone were used in construction. 3,000m of timber were used for the arch centring, temporary platforms and the permanent foundation piles. During construction on 6 October 1849, two of the 41 arches then completed collapsed, with the loss of three lives.

Img03 – Whalley Abbey Gatehouse

This two-storey gatehouse is a reminder of the 13th-century Cistercian monastery of Whalley Abbey. The abbey was founded in 1296 by the De Lacy family for monks from Stanlow Abbey in Cheshire and grew to become the second most powerful abbey in Lancashire. The north-west gateway and associated walls stand in a lovely setting beside the River Calder.

The gateway was begun around 1320 and finished by 1350. It is built of sandstone rubble and stands two storeys high, though the top floor is now roofless. The gatehouse is roughly 25m long and 11.5m wide (about 82ft x 38ft). The passage is beautifully vaulted. Close to the east end, the passage divides into two, with a smaller opening for pedestrians and a larger one for vehicles.

In the eastern wall of the main passage are two blocked doors. The southern door led to a guest house (now torn down) while the northern one led to a chamber over the gateway arch that was used as a residence by the vicar of Whalley. Another door in the western facade was used by parishioners visiting the vicar. The roofless upper floor was probably used as a chapel.

After the abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1537 that chapel area was used as the first home of Whalley Grammar School.

The gatehouse is owned by English Heritage. It stands in isolation in a rural setting on The Sands, on the edge of Whalley village.

Img04/05/06/07/08/09 Whalley Abbey Ruins and Grounds

In 1296 the Cistercian monks from Stanlow Abbey moved to Whalley. Stanlow Abbey had been founded on the banks of the River Mersey in the 1170s by John fitz Richard, the constable of Chester. This abbey had suffered a series of misfortunes, including flooding in 1279, the destruction of the church tower in a gale in 1287 and a fire in 1289. In 1283 Henry de Lacy, tenth Baron of Halton agreed to the move from Stanlow to Whalley but this was not achieved until 1296. The first stone was laid by Henry de Lacy in June 1296 and at least part of the site was consecrated by the Bishop of Whithern in 1306. Building proceeded slowly and the foundation stone was laid in 1330. Stone for building the abbey was obtained from quarries at Read and Simonstone. A royal licence to build a crenellated wall around the site was obtained in 1339. The church was completed in 1380 but the remainder of the abbey was not finished until the 1440s. In 1480 the North East Gatehouse, which provided a new entrance to the abbey, was completed. In the 16th century, John Paslew, the last Abbot of Whalley, reconstructed his own lodgings and added a Lady Chapel. The abbey closed in 1537 as part of the dissolution of the monasteries.

Img10/11 Whalley Parish Church

A church probably existed on this site in Anglo-Saxon times; there are three well-preserved Anglo-Saxon crosses in the churchyard, as well as fragments from that time in the exterior

walls of the current building. The crosses are protected as Scheduled Monuments. The "Church of St Mary held in Wallei" was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. Its endowment of "two carucates of land free of all custom" has been interpreted as the church being one of the wealthiest in what would become Lancashire.

Most of the present church was built in the 13th century, replacing a simpler structure which probably consisted of an aisleless nave and chancel. The tower was added in the late 15th century. A porch was added to the south of the building in 1844, and one to the north in 1909. Restorations took place in 1866 and 1868.

Img12 Whalley Grammar School

The origins of schooling in Whalley date back to the late 1300s when the monks at the Abbey provided education for the sons of the local gentry. The first schoolroom was in the North West gatehouse, probably in a former chapel. After the dissolution of the Abbey, the school was reinstated in 1548 by Edward VI and later Elizabeth I who issued Letters Patent to provide money for the stipend of a schoolmaster. These early classes continued to meet in the North West gatehouse of the increasingly derelict Abbey.

Due to the deterioration of the Gatehouse land was purchased and, in 1725, the present building was built. The pupils, some of whom were boarded at the School, were taught up to the age of 16 classics, mathematics, woodwork and science. It served as a Grammar School for boys until 1910, when it closed. On 9th March 1914, George V signed a scheme establishing 'Whalley Educational Foundation'. The purpose of this charitable trust was to help with the education of children of the area and for the building to be used for educational purposes, both for children and the community.