Disclaimer: The route on this leaflet was checked in Spring 2007, all routes are on public rights of way or permissive routes. Environmental Alliance takes no responsibility for changes to the route or accidents occurring on the walk. The information in this leaflet was correct at the time of publishing.
This route takes in five reservoirs Blackmoorfoot, Wassenden, Weisdene Head, Blakeley and Butterley. It is a walk of contrasts and certainly has something for everyone – from little wooded lanes to vast open moorland, from small bubbling becks to great reservoirs. Despite its length, it is a fairly level walk with a few steep climbs and some good wide tracks.

**Map Reference Points**

1. Start from Slaithwaite railway station, follow the road downhill to the village centre. Follow the canal in the direction of Heidersfield, continue along Spa Lane across the canal and turn right to see black railings and a public footpath sign. Cross the bridge over the river and turn immediately left through Slithwaite Spa Park (see points of interest). Pass through the recreation ground, bear right up to a gateway and turn right along the edge of the field up to Manchester Road. Cross over the road and bear left, look for concrete bollards marking the public footpath up to Banks Road.

2. On Banks Road turn left onto the road until the play area on the right. Follow the footpath past banks of bilberry and heather until the metal stile. Pass over the metal stile, turn right, follow the length of the stone wall continuing through two stone walls and turn right onto High House Lane.

3. Follow the road up the hill. Pass the scrapyard, turn left along the road. Enjoy the view from the seat on the verge. On reaching the junction, turn left and follow Blackmoorfoot Road passing the Bulls Head Pub on the left. Take the first right (bus turning circle). Continue up Reservoir Side Road and right again, you will see the village centre. Follow the canal in the direction of Huddersfield, continuing along Spa Lane, turn left up the track and take the right fork over the footbridge. Bearing left, cross over the water along the huge boulder bridge. Turn left up the track and take the right fork over the footbridge. Turn left at the waymarker post and then right through the gate. Follow the track all the way to the road, there is an attractive beech wood on your left.

4. Turn right on to the road and here begins a 40-minute climb up to Wessenden Head. Pass through the gate on the right to begin part of the Pennine Way. The car park is on the left.

5. Once through the gate, follow the track, enjoying good views of the Wessenden Valley Reservoirs ahead. You will pass through the dramatic landscape of Marsden Moor including Boulder Bridge. Listen out for calls of curlew in summer, you might also see red grouse, twite and golden plover (see points of interest).

6. Passing Butterlaw Reservoir, you will reach a keep. Keep left, pass through the gate with the Colne Valley Circular waymarker. Turn right down Reservoir Side Road and right again, you will see some attractive rock and heather outcrops on the left.

7. Enter the gate on the right to Blackmoorfoot Reservoir and turn left following the stone path alongside the Reservoir as far as the road. Turn right out onto the road and look for a waymarker post indicating a left turn down between stone walls. Follow this track turning left onto the road and pass over the bridge. Turn right to follow the public footpath sign along the conduit. Do not take the bridleway.

8. Enjoying the open views, follow the conduit all the way to the road, cross this and a second road shortly after, follow the conduit once more. Continue crossing over a series of walls until you come to a track. Cross the track and continue along the conduit.

9. Do not cross the bridge but continue straight on climbing the right of way steps ahead, pass through the gate and over the footbridge. Bearing left, cross over the water along the huge boulder bridge. Turn left up the track and take the right fork over the footbridge. Turn left at the waymarker post and then right through the gate. Follow the track all the way to the road, there is an attractive beech wood on your left.

10. Turn right on to the road and here begins a 40-minute climb up to Wessenden Head. Pass through the gate on the right to begin part of the Pennine Way. The car park is on the left.

11. Once through the gate, follow the track, enjoying good views of the Wessenden Valley Reservoirs ahead. You will pass through the dramatic landscape of Marsden Moor including Boulder Bridge. Listen out for calls of curlew in summer, you might also see red grouse, twite and golden plover (see points of interest).

12. Passing Butterlaw Reservoir, you will reach a keep. Keep left, pass through the gate with the Colne Valley Circular waymarker. Turn right down Reservoir Side Road and right again, you will see some attractive rock and heather outcrops on the left.

13. Enter the gate on the right to Blackmoorfoot Reservoir and turn left following the stone path alongside the Reservoir as far as the road. Turn right out onto the road and look for a waymarker post indicating a left turn down between stone walls. Follow this track turning left onto the road and pass over the bridge. Turn right to follow the public footpath sign along the conduit. Do not take the bridleway.

14. Enjoying the open views, follow the conduit all the way to the road, cross this and a second road shortly after, follow the conduit once more. Continue crossing over a series of walls until you come to a track. Cross the track and continue along the conduit.

**Points of Interest**

### 1. Slithwaite Spa Park

This is now an amenity site with attractive river views. Slithwaite Spa has a fascinating history. Established in 1625, the Slithwaite Spa Pleasure Grounds, as it was known then, is a legacy of wealthy Victorian times. It once had a large mineral spa bathing complex, tennis courts, a bowling green, a bandstand and a dance hall standing in manicured gardens. Formed in 2002, the Friends of Slithwaite Spa help to maintain the area and improve its value for both people and wildlife. For more information contact the River Colne Project, via Environmental Alliance.

### 8. Marsden Moor Estate

Taking in the Northern part of the Peak District National Park, Marsden Moor Estate covers an area of some 5,685 acres and has been managed by the National Trust since 1955. Despite its bleak and barren appearance it provides important habitat for a huge variety of plants and animals. Moorland birds such as Golden Plover, Grouse, Curlew and Twite breed here in such numbers that the Estate is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Protection Area (SPA).

### 9. Bank Bottom Mill

Built in 1801, John Crowther established Bank Bottom Mills – one of the many opened in Marsden and the Colne Valley by Crowther and Sons. Employing 1900 people, this textile mill covered 14 acres, used 680 looms and 43 carding machines and finally closed down in 2003.

**Notes**

If using public transport start from Slithwaite train station or use bus links to Blackmoorfoot. Finish at Marsden railway station and return to Slithwaite by train or along the canal towpath.

**Context**

This walk has been devised as part of an initiative by the River Corridor Greenway Project, which aims to create a better environment for people living and working in the River Colne area.

With funding from Big Lottery under the Transforming Your Space programme, the project has been managed by Environmental Alliance in partnership with Paddock Community Forum, the River Colne Project, Milnsbridge Enhancement Group and Longwood Village Group. Projects undertaken in these areas have been designed to link to a wider network of green spaces and greenways being developed along the river corridors. This network can be used in many different ways for recreation, relaxation and, as an environmentally friendly means of travel. It is a safe, healthy and heritage-rich environment.

**Credits**

The River Corridor Greenway Project is grateful for the support it received from Kirklees Council and the many volunteers who have contributed to the project.

**Time:** 5hrs

**Distance:** 9.3 miles

**Grade:** Some steep climbs

**Terrain:** Some easy wide tracks and narrow muddy tracks

**Start:** Slaithwaite Railway Station

**End:** Marsden or Slithwaite Railway Station

**5.  Enjoying the open views, follow the conduit all the way to the road,** cross this and a second road shortly after, follow the conduit once more. Continue crossing over a series of walls until you come to a track. Cross the track and continue along the conduit.

**6. Do not cross the bridge but continue straight on climbing the right of way steps ahead, pass through the gate and over the footbridge.** Bearing left, cross over the water along the huge boulder bridge. Turn left up the track and take the right fork over the footbridge. Turn left at the waymarker post and then right through the gate. Follow the track all the way to the road, there is an attractive beech wood on your left.

**7. Turn right on to the road and here begins a 40-minute climb up to Wessenden Head.** Pass through the gate on the right to begin part of the Pennine Way. The car park is on the left.

**8. Once through the gate, follow the track, enjoying good views of the Wessenden Valley Reservoirs ahead.** You will pass through the dramatic landscape of Marsden Moor including Boulder Bridge. Listen out for calls of curlew in summer, you might also see red grouse, twite and golden plover (see points of interest).

**9. Passing Butterlaw Reservoir, you will reach a keep.** Keep left, pass through the gate with the Colne Valley Circular waymarker. Turn right down Reservoir Side Road and right again, you will see some attractive rock and heather outcrops on the left.

**10. Enter the gate on the right to Blackmoorfoot Reservoir and turn left following the stone path alongside the Reservoir as far as the road.** Turn right out onto the road and look for a waymarker post indicating a left turn down between stone walls. Follow this track turning left onto the road and pass over the bridge. Turn right to follow the public footpath sign along the conduit. Do not take the bridleway.

**11. Enjoying the open views, follow the conduit all the way to the road, cross this and a second road shortly after, follow the conduit once more. Continue crossing over a series of walls until you come to a track. Cross the track and continue along the conduit.**