

Feel Good!

Countryside
Walks in Tameside



Distance: 1½ miles

A walk with occasional hills and mainly surfaced paths

Lower Brushes Valley Trail

An easy 1½ mile walk with a mixture of open grassland, woodland and the open water of Walkerwood reservoir.

There are good views of the Brushes Valley and surrounding hills.

Lower Brushes Valley Trail

The walk starts at the car park on Hartley Street, off the B6175 Huddersfield Road, one mile from Stalybridge, next to the Royal Oak public house, SK15 3EP.

Go up the wide path to the right and follow this for about 400metres rising gradually, with the back gardens of the houses on the right.

As you get to a point where there is more open ground between the path and the garden fences, turn left onto the path, signposted Walkerwood Reservoir. There is a bench by the signpost.

Reach a crossing path in a few metres and turn left through the woodland (Walker Wood).

Look out for the jays in the wood. Although they are the most colourful members of the crow family, jays are quite difficult to see. They are shy woodland birds, rarely moving far from cover. The screaming call usually lets you know a jay is about and it is usually given when a bird is on the move, so watch for a bird flying between the trees with its distinctive flash of white on the rump.

The path forks in 200 metres, take the left fork with Brushes Road to your right. Bear right up to the gate.

Turn left onto the road and follow it left across the dam of Walkerwood Reservoir with good views into the wilds of the valley.

The high rainfall made Stalybridge an ideal town for the many cotton mills and was one of the first centres of textile manufacture during the industrial revolution. The damp climate was perfect for the spinning of cotton and the many streams and River Tame provided the water-power for the mills. The four reservoirs, including Walkerwood were commissioned by the Ashton under Lyne and Stalybridge corporations were begun in 1864, again taking advantage of the high rainfall.



Lower Brushes Valley Trail

At the far end of the dam, leave the road and bear left on an unmade walled lane. In 500 meters, this lane reaches a road, (Besom Lane). Turn left for 150 metres. Just before the houses begin on the left, go through the kissing gate on the left and follow the grassy path gently downhill.

As you reach the dam, which was used to supply water to mills in Millbrook.

There were four cotton mills in Millbrook, two of which became woollen mills. Staly Mill built in 1803 was rebuilt in 1837 after a fire. Staley Mill Howards began cotton spinning in 1805 and turned to wool in 1896. Spring Grove Mill was cotton from 1818 to 1868 and then was in wool production for 100 years, it was the last steam-powered mill in the area. Oakfield Mill began in 1851 and closed to cotton in 1961 when it became a bleaching company.

Turn right and follow the path around. Beyond the end of the dam, keep forward to a gate and into a small car park to the rear of houses. Go across the car park and through a gap in the low fence.



Follow the stone path, signed Oakgates, bearing left as another path comes in from the right.

Go down the steps to the bottom of the shallow valley and up the short slope back to the starting point.

 **Tameside**
Metropolitan Borough
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