

WHITTLE-LE-WOODS

Carwood Lane Footpath

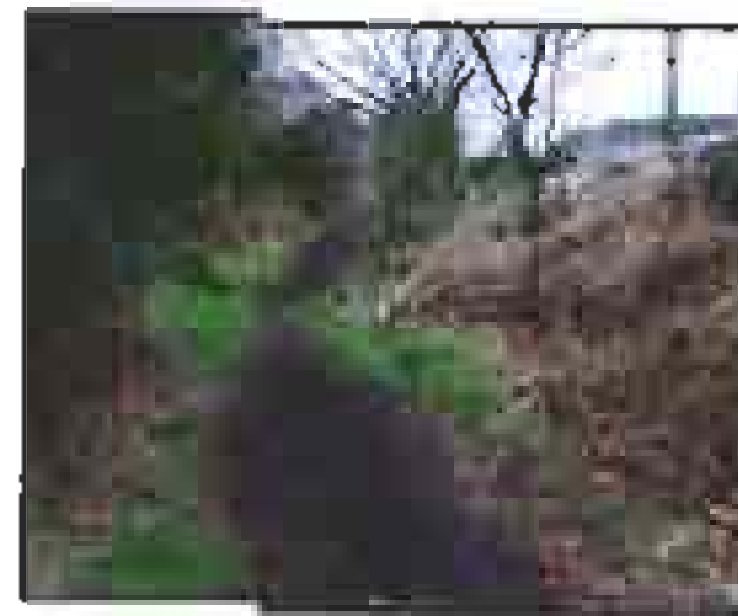
In 2002 a project was undertaken to improve Carwood Lane footpath, look into the history of the area and provide information to people who might want to use the path. What started as a simple plan to improve the surface, developed into a major project involving Parish Councillors and residents.

Volunteers looked at old maps and documents and talked to elderly residents. They found that the footpath is part of the old road from Leyland to Brindle but there was no evidence of a proper surface. The first section from Carwood Farm to the dry stone wall was probably covered when the land known as The Delph was quarried for within living memory, the footpath went up and over part of the quarry. There has been so much stone removed that the path has now reverted to its original line.

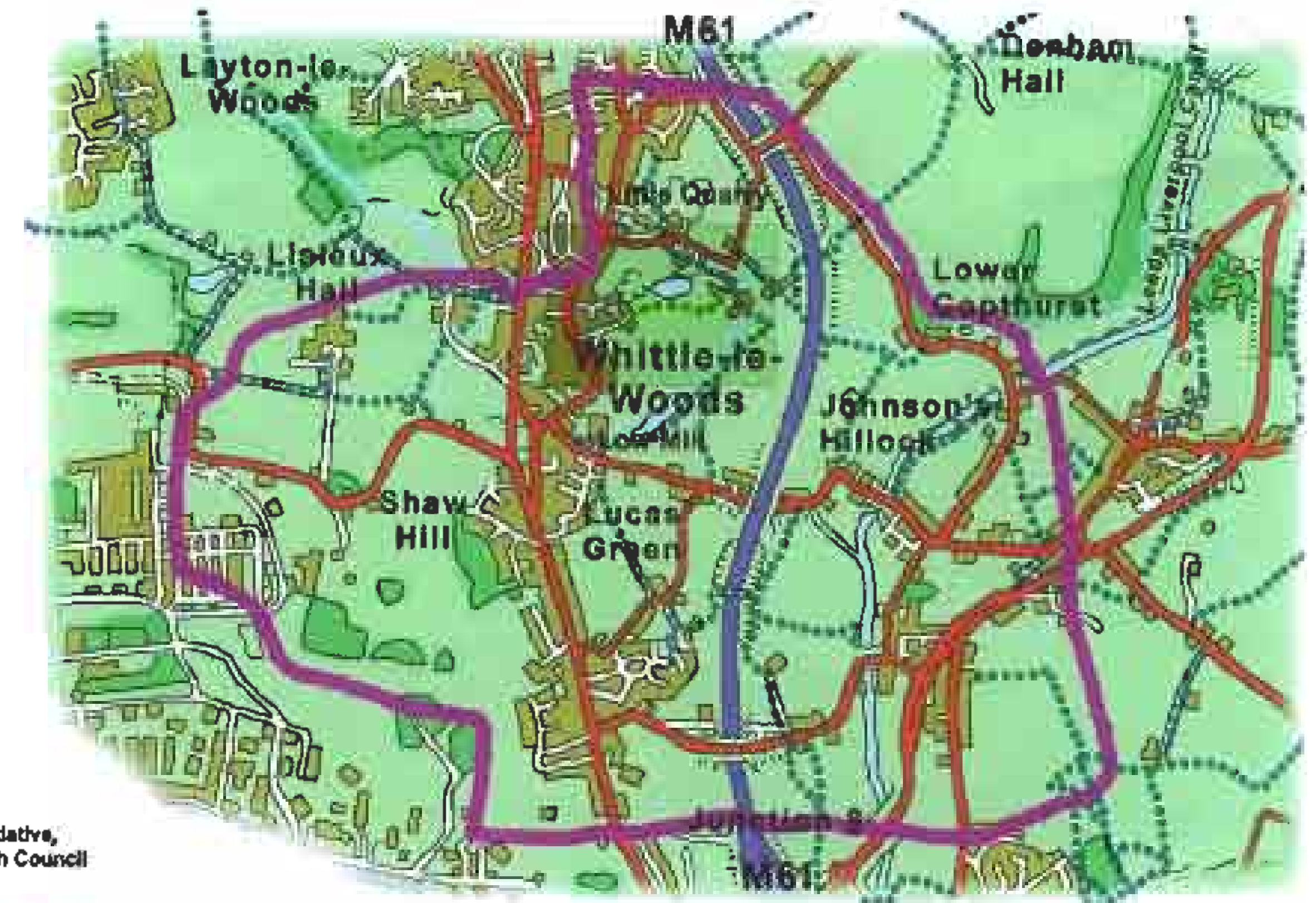
About 15 local residents, under the watchful eye of a trainer, rebuilt the dry stone wall. Many of them earned a qualification in dry-stone walling. The footpath was cleared and a contractor resurfaced it. An artist worked with children from St Chad's and Whittle-le-Woods St John's Schools to design a bench, which can be seen alongside the path.

This information board (and the one at the other end of the footpath) was designed by volunteers from the history group. A free leaflet is also available from local shops.

During the whole project, a photographic record was kept of progress. The photographs here show what the path looked like before and after.



The project was funded with grants from The Local Heritage Initiative, Lancashire County Council Green Partnership, Chorley Borough Council and Whittle-le-Woods Parish Council.



LITTLE QUARRY



Carwood Lane footpath is known locally as The Paradise. The derivation is unknown but may be named after a former quarry owner or could be a corruption of Carwood House Lane which is the name on the 1931 Ordnance Survey map. The footpath follows the line of the old road from Leyland to Brindle but was cut when the Lancaster Canal was built in 1800. Travellers then had to use Hill Top Lane and Chorley Old Road. This year, 2003, marks the Bicentenary of the first barge to use the canal through Whittle-le-Woods.

The footpath begins at Carwood Farm. As you walk past the houses on your right, the land opposite was once a small quarry which was flooded and known as The Delph. Local children played and swam there. It was filled in, in the 1950's and all you can see is the shape of the field on the map.

As you walk along, you will see lovely views. To the southeast in the distance is Rivington Pike. To the south is the steeple of the Mormon Temple.

Down in the valley you can see the fields and footpath which leads to Low Mill. This was once a Calico-printing mill; it closed down in the 1930's but we are fortunate to have the lodge which has become a wildlife area and provides fishing. If you look carefully in the valley, you will see two cuttings going from the River Lostock to the lodge (a lodge is another name for a mill pond); these were cut many years ago to keep the lodge topped up. No-one seems to know why there are two!

On the opposite side of the path, the land slopes up steeply to Whittle Hill Quarry. This is a sandstone quarry which is now disused and is reverting back to nature. The stone was quarried for millstones, for the construction of the Royal Ordnance factory in Euxton in the 1930's and more recently for the widening of the M6 near Preston in the early 1990's. Little Quarry nearby is a landfill site. Whittle Hills was a popular spot for picnickers and when there was a total eclipse in 1927, buses were laid on from all surrounding districts to travel to Whittle Hill to watch. The hills have now been quarried away.

Alongside the path you will see two benches. Bench A was made and installed by a local resident, Joe Breen, in 1998. If you look carefully you will see a plaque giving the latitude & longitude. Bench B is part of the Carwood Lane Project. An artist, Paul Hodgson, worked with the children of the two schools in the village to design the bench. It bears the schools' crests.

Just near the second bench you will see a dry stone wall. This is the wall rebuilt by volunteers. They did the whole stretch in eleven days in the summer and autumn of 2002.

At the end of the path there is a stone cottage facing you. Behind it is a deep cutting which was once the Lancaster Canal leading to Waton Summit. The canal served the industries of Whittle-le-Woods for many years bringing in coal to feed the boilers of two weaving mills and exporting stone from the two quarries. Millstones were the main product of the quarries and they were exported all over the world through Liverpool. The Lancaster Canal joined the Leeds Liverpool Canal in Whittle-le-Woods near Dark Lane.

At the cottage you can turn left or right. LEFT Walk along the unmade road to Hill Top Lane. Whittle Hill Quarry is on your left. Look over the wall and you will see a deep cutting. This was used to be a tunnel for the Lancaster Canal but it fell in shortly after it was opened and had to be dug out. Little Quarry is on the opposite side of Hill Top Lane.

RIGHT Follow the path down the drive and you will eventually see a stone parapet. This is the top of the aqueduct which was built to carry the Lancaster Canal over the River Lostock. It is a testament to the work of the stonemasons who built it. It is still in near perfect condition after 200 years. You can walk under the tunnel or carry on along the footpath to Low Mill lodge.

LOW MILL MORMON TEMPLE TO LOW MILL & TOWN LANE

RIVINGTON PIKE AQUADUCT M61 LOWER COPTHURST