



06 The Wycoller Panopticon Walk

Atom, Foster's Leap and the ancient bridges

The perfect hour for small legs. Start inside Atom, a strange, beautiful pod perched above the valley, where each round window frames a different view and a hidden steel ball reflects the whole landscape back at you. Then follow a narrow path past Foster's Leap, where a daredevil Cunliffe is said to have jumped a rocky chasm, and down past waterfalls to Wycoller's prehistoric Clam Bridge and the willow tunnel.



DISTANCE
2.5 km (just
over 1½ miles)



TIME
About 1 hour



ASCENT
Not stated by the source



DIFFICULTY
Easy, but a very narrow
path in places



DOGS
Ladder stile
and a private
garden: dogs
on leads



START & PARKING
Haworth Road car park, Wycoller Country Park (by
Atom)



PUB STOP
Wycoller tea rooms (check)



The map

INDICATIVE SKETCH



Indicative only: this is not the path. The pins show where the main places named in the route sit (positions from OpenStreetMap), and the dotted line shows the order you reach them. Follow the waymarks, OS Explorer OL21 and the source guide. Base map: OpenTopoMap · © OpenStreetMap contributors.

Getting there

From Laneshaw Bridge, take the minor road signposted Haworth; after about 2 miles turn into the Wycoller Country Park car park on the right. About 1.5 miles straight-line from Trawden.

Map & kit

OS Explorer OL21 South Pennines. Waterproof boots and layers, water, snacks and a charged phone. Directions below follow the source guide step by step.

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The route

STEP BY STEP, FROM THE SOURCE GUIDE

- 1 From the Haworth Road car park, take the short meandering path downhill to the large entrance in the side of Atom, and look out of each of its windows.

Look out for...

Atom: a panopticon for Pendle

Designed by Peter Meacock with Katarina Novomestska and Architecture Central Workshop, Atom is made of ferro-cement with a metal-based paint. Inside, a polished steel ball reflects the views. One window looks to Foster's Leap and Parson Lee; another to Raven's Rock with Boulsworth beyond; a third to Walton's Cross on the skyline (its spire added in 1835 by the Rev. Walton); and the last to Pendle Hill in all its glory.



- 2 The walk proper begins at a waymarked post between the car park and Atom, where a footpath runs along the side of the valley towards Foster's Leap. The path is very narrow and soon divides: take the right-hand path, down towards the farmhouse and former barn of Foster's Leap Farm. From the second kissing gate there's a good view of Foster's Leap Rock above the sycamores by the barn.

Look out for...

Foster's Leap

The rock is mentioned in Colne church records of 1714. It's believed to be named after Foster Cunliffe, a relative of the Cunliffes of Wycoller Hall who claimed King Charles II as his godfather, and who made a daring (some would say insane) jump across the gap onto the top of the rock.



- 3 You enter the garden of Foster's Leap Barn. It is private property: cross the lawn on the route shown by the yellow waymark arrow to join the metalled road linking the barn with the farmhouse further down the valley side.

- 4 Next to the farmhouse is a gate. Enter the field, follow the wall to the left and cross into the next field by the ladder stile (the gateway beside it is usually open).

- 5 Two more posts show the right of way downhill to a footbridge over the stream next to Parson Lee Farm, an 18th-century farmhouse. By a stile at the end of the barn there's a great view back to Atom.

- 6 Walk down the farm track, past waterfalls and fine larch and beech trees, to Water Meetings, where two streams unite to form Wycoller Beck. A short way downstream the beck is crossed by the prehistoric Clam Bridge.

Look out for...

Water Meetings

Look for the waterfalls and the larch and beech on the way down. Seven small bridges cross Wycoller Beck; the Clam Bridge, a single great slab, is the oldest.



- 7 Beyond the Clam Bridge is Copy House Bridge, rebuilt in 1992. Choose between the live willow tunnel in the Conservation Area, or the picnic area with its duck pond to the Old Coach Road behind the Aisled Barn visitor centre.

Look out for...

Willow sculptures

Local people worked with professional artists to make a series of willow structures here, including a life-size horse and rider. Wycoller has been a conservation area since 1973.



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Either way, follow the old road uphill to the Haworth Road car park, where the walk began.



Fuel stop

- The 2008 leaflet recommends the Wycoller Craft Centre & Tea Rooms. Wycoller's tearooms have closed in recent years, so check before you go and bring a snack.
- Old Rock Café & Cake Shop, Keighley Road, Trawden: the village café, on your way back to the cottage.



Countryside Code & safety

- Leave gates as you find them and keep to marked paths unless you are on open access land.
- Don't block gateways or lanes when you park.
- Take your litter home, and bag and bin your dog's poo.
- Dogs: keep them under control and in sight, and on a lead around livestock. On open access land (most of the moorland here) dogs must be on a lead from 1 March to 31 July, and near livestock at any time. If cattle threaten you, let your dog off the lead so you can both get to safety.
- Moorland fires are devastating. No fires or BBQs.

These are real Pennine walks across working farmland and open moor, and the weather can change fast on the tops. Wear waterproof boots, carry a waterproof layer, water and a map (OS Explorer OL21 South Pennines covers Trawden, Wycoller and Boulsworth; OL41 covers Pendle Hill), and tell someone your route. Phone signal can be patchy.

Sources. These directions follow the guides below; check them before you go, as paths, stiles and opening times change.

Place Pendle, The Wycoller Panopticon Walk (leaflet, 2008): https://placependle.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Wycoller_Panopticon_Walk-5.pdf

Countryside Code: GOV.UK. Facts checked October 2026.

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