Newchurch

The village takes its name from St Mary’s Church, established as a chapel of ease in 1544 to serve the outlying parts of Colne Parish. Originally a weaving and farming community, the village was in the wrong place and unsuitable for the mills of the industrial revolution. Spenn Brook at the bottom of the hill provided the nearest mill and so Newchurch remains little changed from the early 19th century. Tradition has it that “Th’kirk”, as it is known locally, was the last place created - “God had a bit of building stuff left over so He just threw it down and that was Th’kirk.”

Boar Clough

Boar Clough is a typical feature of local moorland, a clough being a gully formed by a stream. Certain of the cloughs are known as brasts, created by a build-up of underground water which burst out of the hillside. Barley has been flooded several times in this way.

Pendle Hill

Pendle is just 51 metres short of being a mountain, but it has a huge presence, standing in isolation from the Pennine chain and the rolling Bowland hills. Pendle’s hard gritstone cap is a remnant of a wide plateau of sedimentary rock overlying much more ancient limestone. Pendle is now the gathering ground for much of Lancashire’s drinking water and there are reservoirs clustered on Pendle’s foothills. What it lacks in height it makes up in length and girth, being 5 km (3 miles) long and covering an area of 25 square km (15 square miles).

Its summit - known as The Big End or the Beacon - is the site of a Bronze Age burial mound and there have been settlers here since the Stone Age. This mysterious landmark is most famous for its associations with the Pendle Witches of 1612 who lived beneath the hill.

Later, in 1652, George Fox climbed Pendle Hill and had a vision which moved him to found the society of Friends, or Quakers. It is now a place of pilgrimage.

In more recent times Pendle’s summit was a link in a chain of beacons to warn against Scottish raiders and more recently to celebrate the jubilees of Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II.

There is evidence of its long history in its name, which in the 17th century was simply Penull. Pen is the Celtic word for hill, ull is Anglo Saxon for hill and Hill was added more recently making Pendle Hill mean Hill Hill Hill in three languages.

Barley

Known in the 13th century as Barelegh meaning the infertile lea or meadow, Barley has been a farming community for centuries. In the 1800s there were also two cotton mills until the Barley Green mill was wrecked by a flood in the 1880s.

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Newchurch - Pendle Hill - Barley

The immense presence of Pendle Hill has drawn people for centuries as a place of mystery and pilgrimage. The summit offers outstanding views over this wild and beautiful corner of Lancashire.

Time: 3.5 hours

1. Start at the centre of Newchurch and take the signposted footpath by the public toilets. After 40 yards turn left over a stile. Cross the field towards a gateway in the middle of the wall, and staying in the field, turn left to another stile in the corner. Follow the field boundary on the right to the corner of Fell Wood.

2. Turn right over the stile just before the wood and follow the wall downhill. After 200 yards turn left over a stile into the wood. Take the path down through the wood to emerge at the Ogden Reservoirs. Take the steps down to cross the footbridge, turn right and left, cross the overflow channel and climb the stile into the lane.

3. Turn left and continue over a stile past the wood. Where the track bears right follow the wall to the dam. Take the path up the right-hand side to reach Upper Ogden Reservoir.

4. Follow the path alongside the reservoir and up the valley to a stile near the stream. Bear right uphill until you reach Boar Clough cutting into the hillside on your right.

5. Climb up the left-hand bank, following the cairns to the top of the clough. Cross the stream and follow it, keeping to the right where it forks.

6. After passing two cairns (about 150 metres on) look for a line of cairns slightly to the right and follow these for about 1/2 km. At the large cairn, turn left, heading northwards to the triangulation point at the Big End of Pendle Hill.

7. Continue in the same direction north from the summit. Just before the wall, the path doubles back on itself to begin the steep descent down a cobbled track with steps.

8. At the bottom of the track bear right across the field to the right hand corner of Pendle House Farm. Turn left and follow the wall on the left downhill. Bear right across the next field, through the gully and over the stile to pass Brown House Farm. Follow the path near the stream down to the lane at Ings Ends and turn left.

9. Turn right on to the footbridge, then left, and follow the path leading to the road at Barley. Turn right along the road to the bus turnaround where a stile leads into the children’s playground. The path takes you through the picnic site to Barley Information Centre.