

Salford Quays heritage trail

The Lowry Centre,
blue flag waters,
post modern architecture,
Canadian connections,
moving bridges...

A three mile self guided walk
discovering Salford Quays
past and present

...Oh! and a certain Mr Lowry

There's more to Salford than its favourite son and his matchstick men and matchstick cats and dogs.

Introduction

This three mile circular walk takes approximately 1 hour, but can be split into two routes, which can be explored separately or combined to cover the whole site.

The walk is suitable for wheelchair and pushchair users.

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to all those involved in compiling this Salford Quays Heritage Trail:
Christine Ellis
Karen Robinson
Trisha Bradnam
Dan Stribling
Emma Foster
The Tourism Marketing team at Salford City Council
www.industrialpowerhouse.co.uk

If you've any suggestions for improvements to this walk or if you have any memories, stories or information about the area, then do let us know by emailing industrial.heritage@salford.gov.uk

www.visitsalford.com

£1.50



Your journey starts here **IN Salford**



The Trail Background Information

Thriving Salford Quays has seen many ups and downs throughout its long history. Now a major regeneration success story, The Quays has been transformed into Greater Manchester's waterfront, home to bars, restaurants, residences and businesses, as well as internationally renowned venues such as The Lowry, Imperial War Museum North and Manchester United Football Club.

Behind this modern location lies the fascinating history and industrial heritage of its previous life as the bustling Port of Manchester or Manchester Docks as it was known. At the end of the 19th century, Manchester took the initiative to transform itself into an inland port by building a canal to link the city to the sea. Despite fierce opposition to the scheme from the Port of Liverpool and railway companies, the plan succeeded and the Manchester Ship Canal was born. Constructed between 1887 and 1893, the canal was an engineering triumph and measured 35 miles from Eastham on the River Mersey to Woden Street Footbridge beyond Pomona Docks. 16,000 men and boys were involved in the construction – the last great construction project in the western world to use such a large workforce. Queen Victoria officially opened the canal on 21 May 1894, heralding a period of great industrial and commercial expansion in Greater Manchester. Although few physical traces remain, echoes of The Quays' fascinating past can be found within this three-mile walk.

The walk starts from Salford Tourist Information Centre inside The Lowry

The award-winning Lowry was built in 2000 and is an architecturally stunning addition to The Quays, bringing international shows to its two theatres and contemporary art to its galleries. It is also home to the largest Lowry collection in the world.

Walk outside the main Lowry entrance and into the Plaza

Completed as part of the major redevelopment of The Quays, along with The Lowry, the Plaza is a venue in its own right. It has housed big tops, continental markets and Christmas lights as well as being the finishing line for the Salford Triathlon ITU World Cup. Ahead of you is the Lowry Outlet Mall, the only outlet shopping centre in Greater Manchester. You'll find great shopping, restaurants and the Red Cinema inside, making it the perfect place to visit after your walk.



While on the Plaza, notice the series of colourful mosaics set into the floor. Designed by 23 pupils from local schools, and created by renowned artist Mark Kennedy (well known for his mosaics at Afflecks Place shopping centre in Manchester city centre), the mosaic trail is based on the themes of environment, future and Christianity. A plaque detailing the locations of all



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the mosaics can be found on the pillar to the left of the Outlet Mall entrance.

While still on the Plaza, take in the view to your right.



Ahead of you is the impressive Lowry footbridge. The lifting footbridge spans the Manchester Ship Canal linking The Plaza with Trafford. Opened on 28 April 2000, at 92 metres long the single span bridge provides pedestrian and cycle access across the canal while continuing to maintain access for occasional shipping traffic.

During its construction, the arched deck of the footbridge was floated 500 metres along the Manchester Ship Canal on a special barge sailed in from Holland in order that it could be lifted into its final position. The bridge has four tubular steel towers each 30 metres in height allowing the deck to be raised 23 metres above the canal waterline when ships need to pass.



Beyond the footbridge on the other side of the water is the sensational Imperial War Museum North. The impressive building was the first in the UK to be designed by internationally acclaimed architect Daniel Libeskind. The stunning exterior is based on the concept of a globe shattered by war and conflict. Libeskind has taken three of these pieces (or shards) to form the building, representing earth, air and water. Focusing on how war shapes lives, the museum features a programme of exhibitions and activities covering all twentieth century conflicts.

From the Plaza, turn left and walk past the front of the large black glass building (Digital World Centre) and cross the road in front of you, to the side of the dock (Huron Basin)

The impressive curved apartment buildings on the opposite side of the dock are the NV apartments. Constructed by Countryside Properties, they are a powerful sign of the regeneration of the area and the desirability of The Quays as a residential location. Stark contrast to the more gritty lifestyles of the dockers!

Bear right and proceed along the dock edge, keeping the water on your left. At the red bridge (Detroit Bridge) cross the water.

(From May 2005 to March 2006, Detroit Bridge will be closed to pedestrians for essential maintenance and repainting. During this period, the walk can be picked up by continuing straight ahead and bearing right after the dock edge – i.e. keeping the water on your right hand side. Continue down until you reach the Detroit Bridge, just after the NV buildings.)



Built by Dorman Long and Co. of Middlesborough, Detroit Bridge was formerly the twin-track railway bridge linking the extensive cargo railway system on the docks to Trafford Park Industrial Estate. It was erected in 1942 near Trafford Road Bridge to replace the previous single track bridge. With the closure of the docks in the 1970s, due to the decline of traditional industries and changing patterns of trade, the bridge was redundant, but a decision was made to retain it as a feature of the redevelopment of The Quays. In 1988 the bridge was jacked up, lowered onto two pontoons and floated down the canal to its present position. This was only possible once the bridge had



acquired a licence as it was classed as a sailing vessel!

Detroit Bridge now marks the turning point of the swim section of the annual Salford Triathlon, the UK's only ITU World Cup event. The water in Huron Basin and the other basins has been awarded the blue flag for water cleanliness. This makes it not only suitable for triathletes, but also an abundance of fish.

From the right hand side of the bridge it is possible to see the dramatic anchor sculpture by Wendy Taylor CBE called 'Anorage'. Standing 26 _ ft high, it weighs 5 _ tons – an appropriate scale for such an imposing building. When viewed from Detroit Bridge the sculpture appears to be anchoring the building.

As you come off the bridge turn right along the dock edge (water on your right) and walk in front of the large red brick and glass building (The Victoria). Keeping The Victoria on your left go down the steps (or, if you have difficulty with steps, use the ramp) to the water's edge.

Look straight across the water and you can see down the length of Mariners Canal (a good photo opportunity here).

Winnipeg Quay, Vancouver Quay, Huron Basin, Detroit Bridge – these and other names used in The Quays were chosen to reflect the docks' strong trading links with North America. The main body of water in front of you is named Erie Basin. Formerly No 9 Dock, this was the largest and newest dock, built on the site of the Manchester Racecourse and officially opened by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra on 13 July 1905.

The Victoria houses offices, whose air conditioning unit uses water from the dock, which is filtered and then returned. An internal and external water feature is incorporated into the reception area fronting the dock.

As the Metrolink crosses the road (you can see the Broadway roundabout in front of you) turn right onto Anorage Quay.

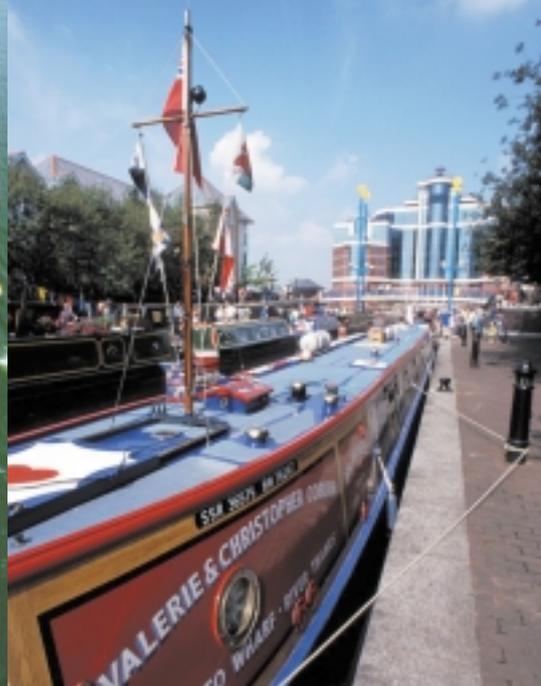
Keep the water on the right and walk to the end of The Victoria, turn left here and, leaving the water, turn left to cross the car park to the road. The Harbour City Metrolink stop is now in front of you. Turn right and follow the road.

Weekdays: follow the footpath, keeping the Anorage building on your right, turn right through the glass doors marked Anorage 2 –here you can stop for a coffee (opens at 7.00am Monday to Friday) or pick up a paper or drink at the newsagents?

Weekends: turn right down the side of the Anorage building, keeping it on your left.

Today over 2000 people work in the 248,000 sq. ft Anorage commercial development. Where once thousands of people were employed in the area working in the shipping industry,

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the vast majority who work here now do so in administration and call centre environments. Work in the past was often fiercely fought over with the dockers gathering each morning at the Dock Office to see which ships had entered the canal. The information would be written on a slate in a ground floor window to let the men know what work was available. There was no guarantee they would be chosen for the jobs available though; the foremen ruled when it came to deciding who should get the work that day and rumour has it that they were heavily influenced by donations to their beer money. Hopefully the workers at Anchorage are more secure in their job prospects!

Cross in front of the Anchorage building, along the end of Erie Basin, keeping the water on the right and either go down the steps towards the right and follow the path around to the opposite side of the water or alternatively continue to the end of the Anchorage, turn right and follow the higher path until you are on the tree-lined walkway, facing The Victoria building.

Walk alongside the basin, with the water on your right. At the junction with Mariners Canal, at the first blue bridge, turn left and follow the canal. Wheelchair users and those with pushchairs should use the ramp directly after the blue bridge to descend to the lower walkway.

The Mariners Canal was officially opened by the Duke of York on 27 July 1989, having been built to connect the former No.9 and 8 Docks (now Erie and Ontario Basins). Note the blue footbridge in the centre of the canal, marked 'Grain Wharf'. This references the old function of No.9 Dock, where Canadian and American ships would unload their grain cargoes.

If you wish to cut the walk short here cross the bridge towards the Watersports Centre and pick up the walk at point X.

Continuing on the longer route, turn left along the waterfront (Ontario Basin), in front of The Quayhouse pub, towards the large blue cranes at the end of the dock. (Those walking will be on the upper walkway, those in wheelchairs or with pushchairs will be on the lower walkway).

Where the lower and upper walkways meet, stands the Four Corners sculpture. The sculptor, Noah Rose, designed the curved fins echoing the shapes of propellers, hulls and sails whilst the weather vane represents Salford and Pomona Docks plus the Dry Docks. The etched panels, designed with the help of former dockworkers, reflect their memories and stand as a tribute to all those whose lives were part of a thriving port.



At the end of the canal, continue under the bridge. The Quayhouse pub is on the left and Salford Watersports Centre on the right (on the opposite bank of the canal).

Continue walking alongside Ontario Basin, with the water on your right.



Ontario Basin is used by Salford Watersports Centre for a range of activities, so you may be lucky to see sailing, windsurfing or canoeing lessons taking place as you walk.

Along the side of Ontario Basin, railway lines ran directly in front of storage sheds, a design allowing light cargoes to be unloaded direct to the upper floors, especially cotton. There were more than 200 cranes – steam, hydraulic and electric – in regular use on the docks. There was also a huge floating crane, which could lift up to 250 tons. The bollards and boat hooks along the side of the basin remain as evidence of the docks' former activity. Although the main cargoes were cotton, grain and timber, a wide variety of commodities were brought from all over the world including tea, fruit, live and frozen cattle, lard, oil, petroleum and sulphur. Exports included textiles, machinery, cars and locomotives, thanks to Manchester's huge industrial base.

Continue on to the end of the water and turn right. Walk until you reach the two large blue cranes at the head of Ontario Basin.

These three ton electric cranes were formerly sited on the old No 6 Dock where they were operational from 1966 to the early 1980s when they became redundant. In 1988 they were dismantled and re-erected on the present site as a landmark and a reminder of the working docks. Looking away from the water here, across the road, you can make out the cream and green Art Deco style building that was the Dock Office. Opened in 1927 it replaced the old wooden huts that served as the docks' headquarters until that time.

Carry on past the cranes towards Salford Quays Metrolink station. Follow the tram lines until you reach Merchants Quay. Turn right at the large, blue, circular signs.

Walk between the houses and turn right at the set of white garages on the right hand side towards the water, then left alongside St Francis Basin.

The residential area in front of you is Merchants Landing, consisting of 100 town houses and apartments. As the road curves, the large house on your left is Merchants House, topped by a decorative weather vane and a clock. Chandler's Canal on the right links the former No.7 and 8 Docks and is one of several sites favoured by anglers at The Quays.



At the end of the canal, continue under the bridge. The Quayhouse pub is on the left and Salford Watersports Centre on the right (on the opposite bank of the canal).

The names of the basins around Merchant's Quay are another reminder of Manchester Docks' strong trading links with Canada. St Francis and St Louis are named after Canadian lakes, while St Peters is both a canal and the name of a town that sent and received regular cargoes from the docks.

St Louis Basin



St Peters Basin



At the junction with the road take a right. You can see the Imperial War Museum North in the distance on the left hand side. Continue along the road, heading towards the Holiday Inn Express.

Cross the road in front of the hotel and follow the pedestrian signs to the Watersports Centre and The Lowry down the ramp on the left of the hotel. Cross over the bridge towards the Watersports Centre.

Salford Watersports Centre is a state of the art venue offering courses in canoeing, kayaking, sailing and windsurfing at a range of levels from beginners to advanced for all ages. Opposite the Watersports Centre, at the back of the hotel, is the only working Operations Tower in England and the only pair of operational locks on the Quays. The lock is managed from the operations tower, which also provides water and essential facilities for the registered boaters who still use the water.



Turn left in front of the Watersports Centre and continue straight ahead along the tree-lined walkway towards the plaza. (X - pick up short walk here)

Just to the left of the Watersports Centre is a large granite memorial plaque set into the wall. This commemorates the brave merchant seamen who gave their lives in the two world wars. Over 30,000 civilian servicemen died running daring voyages from Salford and other docks to keep Britain's wartime effort afloat.



Note the stainless steel discs set between the lighting columns along the promenade – this is the Centenary Walkway, opened on 20 May 1994 by Princess Anne to commemorate the opening of the canal by Queen Victoria on 21 May 1894. The discs are engraved with words, composed by poet Su Andi and local people, which reflect the maritime history of this area and its subsequent redevelopment.

Continue along the walkway, passing the Lowry Outlet Mall. You will end up back at The Lowry to complete your walk. There are plenty of bars, coffee shops and restaurants around The Plaza where you can enjoy a well-earned break.

Timeline for Salford Quays

- 1894 Manchester Docks officially opened by Queen Victoria
- 1970s Rapid decline in docks due to shift in trading patterns away from North America and advances in containerisation
- 1982 Manchester Docks closed
- 1984 Land purchased by Salford City Council
- 1985 Salford Quays Development Plan published
- 1987 Multiplex cinema, Copthorne Hotel and first phases of offices and housing opened
- 1989 Mariner's Canal opened by HRH The Duke of York
- 1993 Water achieves bathing quality.
- 1994 Salford Wharf opened by HRH Princess Anne at the centenary of the Manchester Ship Canal
- 1997 Building work for The Lowry commences
- 1998 National Canal Festival held for over 300 boats
- 1999 Metrolink tram system comes to The Quays
- 2000 The Lowry is officially opened by HRH Queen Elizabeth II.
- 2001 Salford Tourist Information Centre opened
- 2002 Lowry Outlet Mall, cinema and Watersports Centre opened
- 2003 Imperial War Museum North opened. Commonwealth Games triathlon and walk events held at The Quays. First ITU World Cup Triathlon held.
- 2005 20 years since the Salford Quays Development Plan

