SUGGESTED START: Docks Control Centre (pyramid-shaped building, Navigation Way, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston PR2 2YJ).

DISTANCE: 3.6 km / 2.2 miles
TIME: 1 hour (plus sight-seeing and wildlife watching)
TERRAIN: Mostly concrete paths, largely flat.
DIFFICULTY: Gentle

OS MAP REFERENCE: It is advisable to use OS Landranger Map 102 with this guide.

Available in various shops and restaurants, such as Morrisons, McDonald's, Ribble Pilot, Odeon Cinema and Baffito.

Preston Marina, Homebase, Morrisons, SCS, Early Learning Centre, Mothercare, DFS, Pets at Home, Argos, Preston Marina Boathouse Coffee Shop, Odeon Cinema and Baffito.

Car parks on Navigation Way, Mariners Way, Port Way, Maritime Way and Lockside Road.

Distance: 3.6 km / 2.2 miles

98, 75, 75A, 80

100 tonne crane, lifted from vessels by hydraulic cranes.

2. A 100 tonne crane, still visible today, was built to lift the 90 tonne lock gates.

3. The Bullnose is a fantastic vantage point. From here, you can see boats following the Ribble Link crossing the Ribble’s channel. The river had previously been dredged regularly and straightened to aid navigation for the 400ft-long vessels entering and leaving the dock.

4. Large shed warehouses stored china clay and wood pulp, lifted from vessels by hydraulic cranes.

5. Following a pair of common terns successfully nesting on the Preston Dock in 2009, Fylde Bird Club began installing shelters for the migratory visitors filled with gravel on the floating pontoon wave breakers. The breeding population has increased steadily since. Arctic terns have also recently taken an interest in the nesting site.

6. There are two buoys placed at the road junctions entering the docklands and further buoys on the side of the dock. These Nelson Buoys were once moored 8 miles off the coast of Lytham and were used to mark the safe approach into the dock.

WHAT TO EXPECT:
- Preston Riversway Docklands offers stunning views, gentle terrain and convenient parking and shopping facilities. From a starting point near the Dock Control Centre, the route leads for a short distance along the banks of the River Ribble before taking the walkway leading counter-clockwise around the dockside. From here, the route reaches the Bullnose, with stunning views out to the estuary. Indications of the dock’s industrial past run throughout the route.

- Preston Riversway Docklands is working to create a healthier river system by 2020 for people and wildlife. The project celebrates the heritage of the rivers, improving access and using the river to reduce demand and industry in the area.

- Keep an eye out for the Preston Docks with coots, swans and cormorants frequent visitors.

- Fish found in the waters of the River Ribble, neighbouring the dock, include eels and flounders, as well as a range of freshwater species, such as roach and chub. Sea trout and salmon

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- Taking the walkway leading counter-clockwise around the dockside. From here, the route reaches the Bullnose, with stunning views out to the estuary. Indications of the dock’s industrial past run throughout the route.

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WILDLIFE: The dock is home to many different bird species, with coots, swans and cormorants frequent visitors. In the last few years, a colony of terns has nested on the wave breakers. Fish found in the waters of the River Ribble, neighbouring the dock, include eels and flounders, as well as a range of freshwater species, such as roach and chub. Sea trout and salmon

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**ROUTE DIRECTIONS**

**A. To the Bullnose**
Take a moment from your starting point, to view the Preston Docks (1) and the 100 tonne crane (2). From the car park across the road from the pyramid-shaped Docks Control Centre, and positioning the Control Centre on your right-hand-side, follow the railings until you reach the dock-side. (Do not pass through the red gate to the swing bridge.) Follow the side of the dock entrance to the Bullnose (3). Enjoy fantastic views of the River Ribble and dock’s entrance from this point (as pictured on the cover).

**B. By the river**
Walk back along the other side of the Bullnose, by the River Ribble. When you meet the cycleway, continue on this tarmacked track, following the River Ribble upstream. Continue along the obvious path.

**C. To the dock**
When the cycleway bears slightly left away from the river’s side, take the path on your left, which curves down to the crossing point of the railway, defined by a pair of wooden gates.

Take care as you cross the tracks and Navigation Way.

Once across Navigation Way, follow Britannia Drive until it sweeps around to the right. At this point, take the track between the buildings towards the dock.

**D. Albert Edward Dock**
* A short detour from this point takes you to the 1905 warehouse shed no. 3 (4). To reach this, turn left along the dock-side path until you meet a building, on your left, with large, red pillars. Along here, you can also reach the wave breakers (5), where terns nest. Retrace your steps to the point where you reached the dock from Britannia Drive.

On reaching the dock-side path, turn right and follow this path anti-clockwise around the dock. Shortly after the path first bears left, you will pass a red-brick building.

**D. Albert Edward Dock (continued)**
Bear left again at the Ribble Pilot pub.

Just before you reach the boat moorings, you will pass more wave breakers (5) and a pair of the Nelson Buoys (6).

Continue past the Preston Marina shop and Boathouse café until you reach Navigation Way. To your left is the swing bridge (7).

**E. Navigation Way**
Turn right to follow the pedestrian pavement by Navigation Way. Shortly after the road bears right, the metal railings end. Cross over at this point and turn left to follow the footpath, with the railings now on your left.

Take care as you cross the train line and swing bridge.

If you are lucky, you may see the swing bridge open. Gates will lock before this.

Do not cross barriers when they are locked.

The pedestrian gates will close when the swing bridge is open. The swing bridge leads across to where the route began.