**Lydgate, Grotton, Austerlands, Waterhead, Lees War Memorial circular**

**6 miles (approx 2 hrs 30 mins) – some styles and muddy paths**

**Starting and End Point: The White Hart Lydgate**

1. **Lydgate churchyard** – scattered here are the ashes of Sgt Thomas Steel veteran of WW1 who received Victoria Cross for his actions in February 1917 during Mesopotamian campaign in the Middle East.
2. Take public footpath at right hand side of church yard down fields (\*NB There is a tricky stile on this route. To avoid it walk down the main road instead of across the fields and rejoin the route at the Co-op in Grotton (no 4 below).
3. Turn right on Coverhill Road, Grotton. At junction turn left onto Oldham Road and almost immediately take public footpath on left and follow often muddy path along edge of gulley and down to Station Road, Grotton. This is the route of the former Greenfield to Oldham railway line and through the trees at the bottom of the gulley you may be able to see the stonework of the entrance to the former Lydgate tunnel and remains of the station platform. Turn right up Station Road.
4. At the co-op store cross the road and turn left towards Oldham. **Look out for the** **silent soldier silhouette near the old people’s home.** Turn right into Radcliffe Street passing Springhead Congregational church and forward onto the track that is Stonebreaks Road. Continue up the track and into the housing estate and up Heywood Lane to junction of A62 Huddersfield Road, Austerlands.
5. **Austerlands & District War Memorial** commemorates fallen of WW1 & WW2. Continue down A62 towards Oldham .
6. Shortly after Waterhead Academy at junction of A62 and Brideoak Street **Waterhead War Memorial** commemorates fallen of WW1 & WW2. Walk down Brideoak Street, cross Greenacres Road and take path between mill buildings. Follow main path & signage for Lees village.
7. At Lees village walk down Thomas Street to **Leesfield Cemetery Commonwealth War Graves Site**. Here there is a memorial and the graves of 143 casualties of WW1 & WW2.
8. Walk back into Lees village and turn right down Hartshead Street towards Oldham golf course. Just after Rhodes Avenue take the public footpath on left across a private garden and into woodland. Follow often muddy path along right hand side of stream to the weir and turn left across the bridge and follow steps/path emerging at bottom of Ashbrook Road, Springhead.
9. Half way up Ashbrook Road turn right in parkland and follow main path past playground and emerge back onto bottom of Station Road, Grotton. Cross the road and retrace your steps back up to Lydgate Church.