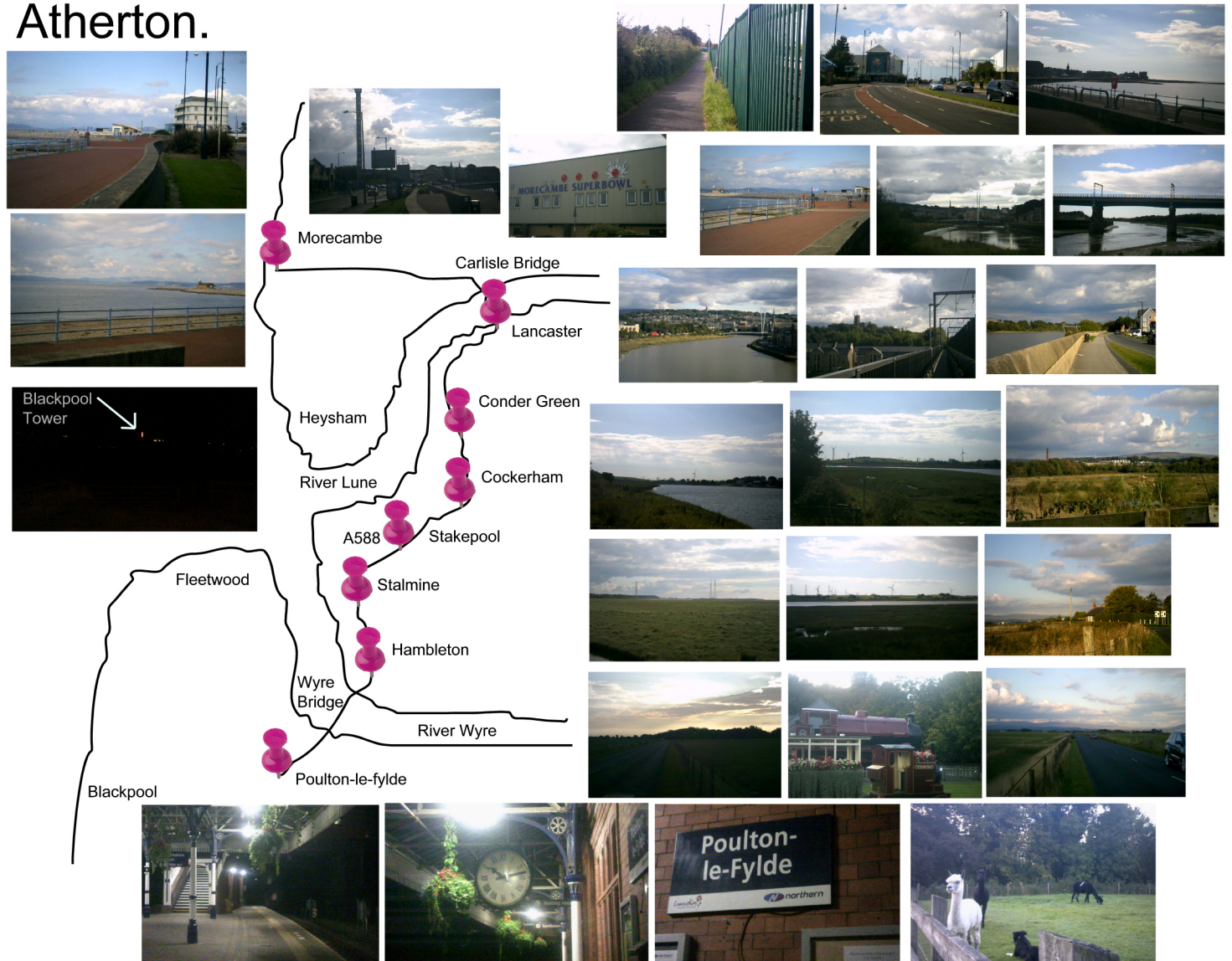


Lancaster to Morecambe and back, then Lancaster to Poulton-le-fylde and Bolton to Atherton.



I set out on this walk intending to walk from Lancaster to Blackpool via Fleetwood, but as you can see from the title, I did nothing of the sort. I got the train to Lancaster and walked immediately to the River Lune which runs through the city of Lancaster. While I was taking a few pictures along the banks of the river, I noticed a sign pointing towards a cycle path which leads to Morecambe. I couldn't resist the temptation of walking to Morecambe along this cycle path and I wasn't disappointed. There is a level crossing which you have to cross over about two thirds of the way along the path, but apart from this, it is a straightforward path that leads you to Morecambe train station which is a short distance to the shops and to Morecambe bay itself. All in all it is about four miles from Lancaster, which is not too taxing at all. After I took a few pictures of Morecambe bay, I walked back along the cycle path and back to Lancaster. After reaching Lancaster I walked over the main railway bridge (Carlisle Bridge) and over the River Lune and then along the other side of the river. I walked along the very edge of the banks of the river until I came to an opening which leads to another cycle path. I didn't know that you can get on this path from Lancaster itself, but even from where I joined it it was still some distance to Conder Green. From Conder Green I ended up on the A588 and from this point I walked the entire length of the road to Poulton-le-fylde via Cockerham, Stakepool, Stalmine, Hambleton and over the Wyre Bridge. From Stalmine to Poulton-le-fylde the road is fine for walking along and it's the first time you see Blackpool Tower (it was dark so the tower was lit up), but from Conder Green to Stalmine the road is far from perfect, in fact there are parts where you are literally standing in a hedge to avoid the traffic. I would advise avoiding the A588, there are other quieter lanes and paths you can follow. Having reached the Wyre Bridge, the first thing you notice is that the road leading to the bridge and the bridge itself are unlit. I didn't have time to reach Blackpool and especially via Fleetwood so I walked to the train station at Poulton-le-fylde. I got the train to Bolton via Preston instead of getting the train back to Atherton so I walked back to Atherton from Bolton (as if I hadn't walked enough already). I sometimes like a warm down after a long walk especially because you are not under pressure to reach a train station, you can take your time just walking the last five or ten miles at the end back home from Wigan or Bolton. It's always nice to know that if you do miss the last train that will get you back to Atherton, you can always get a train back to Wigan or Bolton and walk it back from there. My pedometer recorded a total of 43.78 miles and 81516 steps.

By Philip Catherall.