Leeds Waterfront

Walking the walk, you arrive at Armley Mills, the home to Leeds Industrial Museum. 1, Jocks from Wakefield place. Leeds Industrial Museum contains exhibits from the 18th century in the present day and offers a history of manufacturing in Leeds, including weaving, clothing, mining and engineering. The galleries and collections tell the story of the industries that have shaped the city. The interior includes interactive galleries through the waterways.

Mondays: Closed
Open Bank Holiday Mondays, 10:00 - 17:00
Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 - 17:00
Last admission 16:30
Leeds 15:30 - 17:00
Call 0113 246 7926
www.leeds.gov.uk

Leeds is the home to Leeds Industrial Museum and is part of the Museum of Britain of a water-powered mill. Learn how its workers lived self-sufficiently on the island or visit the engineer’s workshop to see the equipment that required the wheel and how they put it together. Throwing Museums guided tours will give visitors a fantastic tour of the mill and the islands. Opening hours: Mondays, closed except for bank holidays.

Walk it

Leeds Waterfront

15 minute walk
The earliest settlement at Leeds developed near a crossing point on the River Aire, and without the river it is likely that there would have been no settlement, and no city of Leeds. The river and its associated waterways have been crucial to the growth of the city as a centre of industry and commerce.

The waterfront, where the city and the waterways meet, was for many years one of the most important areas of Leeds. The river was also important in providing water for the textile industry.

During the medieval period the most important part of water-powered milling, the fulling process became mechanised with the invention of the water-powered fulling mill. The soft water of the River Aire was ideal for this and a fulling mill was built in 1322, on the west side of Leeds Bridge. A second mill was built in 1536 on the east side of the bridge, and by 1600, there were fulling mills along the northern bank of the river. They were powered by water wheels, like the one at Thwaite Mills.

Leeds Bridge crossing the river at the bottom of Briggate, was built at some time during the 13th century. It is said that it was built with stones from the old Leeds castle. The cloth market was held on the bridge every Tuesday and Saturday morning until 1666, when it was moved to Briggate. The bridge was widened in 1730, 1750, and again in 1796, and was demolished in 1871 when the present bridge was built.

Leeds was in the forefront of steam navigation, and in 1811–1812, a vessel was built in Topcliffe Mills that was the first steam-powered ship in the world.

Louis Aimé Augustin Le Prince was a French artist and the inventor of an early moving picture camera. On 13th February 1888, Le Prince filmed the first ever moving images on Leeds Bridge. Take a look at the Leeds website to see the moving picture sequence.