

Notes of: RAWTENSTALL NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Venue: Horse and Bamboo Theatre, Bacup Road, Waterfoot

Date of Meeting: 7th October 2008

PRESENT: Councillor Swain (in the Chair)
Councillors A Barnes, Crawforth, Forshaw, Gledhill,
Graham, May, Nuttall, J Pilling and Robertson

ALSO PRESENT: Inspector Dave Hodson, Lancashire Constabulary
Jerry Smith, District Partnership Officer – Lancashire
County Council
Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive
David Whiteman, Area Manager
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Officer
Emy Aceret, Committee Officer

14 members of the public and 1 representative of the press
attended the meeting.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed members of the public and asked the Elected Members to introduce themselves to the meeting.

The Chair informed the meeting that there would be a 'State of the Borough Debate' to be held on 26th November 2008 at 6.30pm at St Mary's Chambers, Rawtenstall.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Farrington, Gill and also from County Councillor Hazel Harding, Lancashire County Council (LCC).

3. NOTES OF LAST MEETING

a) The notes of the meeting held on 3rd July 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

b) Action sheet:

The Chair gave an update on the actions completed from the previous meeting and agreed that the following outstanding actions be taken forward for update at the January meeting:

- The Police would investigate parking on the pavement near the tile shop and carpet shop in Rawtenstall.
- Problems with potholes and drainage issues at the top of Goodshawfold Road. The District Partnership Officer to would follow this up.
- The gulley behind Pickering and Molloy on Bank Street remained blocked as a car had been parked over the cover each time the Gulley Crew visited. Car details would be passed to the police and the site re-visited.
- The Chair had written to Irwell Housing Association, but had yet to receive a response. An update would be provided when available.

A member of the public raised a query from the previous meeting regarding charges for replacement bins. In response to the member of public's query, it was requested that specific details be given to their Ward Councillor to investigate.

4. POLICE UPDATE

Inspector Hodson updated the Forum on policing matters and crime statistics for the Rawtenstall area. He informed the Forum of the National 'Not in My Neighbourhood' Day initiative starting 13th October 2008. He explained that they would be working closely with the Communities Area Team, Councils and the Fire Service to identify possible sites of damage, and anti-social behaviour. As part of this initiative there would be extra patrols during the week.

The Police were using various media including the press to keep people informed of PACT meetings and details of Police Community Safety Officers, and they were in the process of purchasing newspaper space to advertise information as well as having details on the web site.

Operations in relation to travelling criminals would continue such as the Automatic Number Plate Recognition in conjunction with Vehicle Licensing Unit in Colne. In addition, promotional work and multi-agency work was underway for operation Bright Sparks in the lead up to Bonfire Night.

Inspector Hodson informed the meeting that it was likely that the new operating centre in Waterfoot would be functional before Christmas.

Inspector Hodson informed the meeting that most crimes in the Rawtenstall area had reduced when compared with the same period last year as follows:

	All Crime	Vehicle Crime	Damage	Violent Crime	Hate Crime	Anti-Social Behaviour
29/06/08-29/09/08	315	49	72	35	4	336

Detected	97	6	13	14	0	n/a
29/06/07- 29/09/07	445	59	93	155	8	450
Detected	209	9	21	140	0	n/a
Reduced By:	130	10	21	120	4	114

The following crimes had increased:

	Burglary in/around Dwellings	Stealing from Shops and Stalls (Shoplifting)	Burglary other than in a Dwelling
29/06/08- 29/09/08	14	27	25
Detected	6	15	7
29/06/07- 29/09/07	10	17	19
Detected	6	14	6
Increased By:	4	10	6

Inspector Hodson reported that Rossendale had some of the best performing crime figures in Lancashire, this was partly owing to members of the public being proactive in reporting crimes, and he expressed his thanks to members of the public for their assistance.

The Police were working closely with businesses and were looking at introducing a new product called 'Smart Water' which released a mist if premises were broken into. However, there would be cost implications for business owners and the Police.

Members of the public and Elected Members discussed the following issues:

- Theft of stone
- No insurance detection and Automatic Number Plate Recognition
- Request for the circulation of crimes statistics prior to the meeting
- Vehicles marked 'For Sale' parked on the roadside

In response to questions from members of the public and Elected Members it was agreed that:

- The Police would give an update on how many vehicles had been detected without insurance via the Automatic Number Plate Recognition initiative.
- The Council and the Police be required to provide clarification on what action could be taken on traders putting vehicles for sale on the side of the road.
- Crimes figures to be circulated prior to the meeting if possible.

5. AREA MANAGER COMMUNITIES UPDATE

The Area Manager introduced himself and explained that the Communities Team had been re-organised and there would be more community and multi-agency working, for example in schools. The team was involved in the Bright Sparks initiative with the Police and visual audits had been undertaken and issues reported. The Area Manager informed the Forum that Alec Tattersall would be leaving the team.

The Area Manager introduced the Christmas Lights Report and explained that the budget remained the same as the previous year. A time would need to be agreed for the switch on of the lights in Rawtenstall, and the Mayor would attend if available. Members were requested to consider the Christmas Lights Report and were asked to put forward suggestions for next year.

Members of the public and Elected Members discussed the following issues:

- The Christmas Lights Working Group.
- Funding and location of Christmas lights.
- If there were plans to regenerate an area, could an update be provided at the Forum?
- Grass cutting.
- Trees at the bottom of Haslingden Road near the central reservation affecting visibility when crossing the road.

In response to questions from members of the public and Elected Members it was agreed that:

- A list showing who was responsible for cutting grass in each area of Rossendale would be requested.
- An update from the Regeneration Team on the plans for Waterfoot be requested.

Elected Members expressed their thanks the Assistant Operations Manager for giving up her Sunday morning to help clear up Loveclough Park and also to Alec Tattersall for all the hard work he had done during his time as an Area Officer.

6. PRIDE IN ROSSENDALE

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that part of her role in the 'Pride in Rossendale' project was to raise awareness and to seek support and views from the people of Rossendale. The project was about making long term sustainable changes that could not be achieved by the Council alone. Partnership working would be required and input from community groups. Within the project, a standardised approach would be taken which could not be delivered overnight. The Deputy Chief Executive informed the Forum that there was a page on the Council's website about 'Pride in Rossendale' which

would be populated with ideas received and she encouraged members of the public to participate.

Members of the public and Elected Members discussed the following issues:

- Street furniture.
- Ward Walks and feedback.
- Participation of Highways Officer at future Ward Walks.
- Concerns about the cobbled area on Bury Road outside New Hall Hey being tarmacked without consultation.
- Concerns about a yellow bin at the end of Zorba takeaway in Waterfoot.
- Outlined Plan and budget to support the 'Pride in Rossendale' project.
- Concerns about coping stones being knocked off the wall at the back of Ormerod Street, who owns the land?
- Tarmac over half of Lord Street, why was all of it not done?
- Collapsed bridge at the entrance to the Glen in Waterfoot, who was responsible for the land and what was being done about?

In response to questions from members of the public and Elected Members it was agreed that:

- The actions taken as a result of the Ward Walks would be fed back to the Ward Councillors.
- An Officer from Highways would be invited to undertake future Ward Walks to follow up Highways issues.
- A response would be sought concerning why was the cobbled area on Bury Road got tarmacked without consultation.
- The ownership of the land at the end of Zorba takeaway in Waterfoot be identified.
- To identify who owns the land at Ormerod Street and the back part of Lord Street.
- To identify who owns the bridge at the entrance to the Glen in Waterfoot.

8. DETERMINING OF GRANT ALLOCATIONS & FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS

The Chair invited previous applicants to feed back on how they had spent their grants.

The Chair reported that the Working Group had met to consider the applications for Neighbourhood Forum funding. The Working Group recommended the approval of the following:

Organisation Name	Funding Granted
Royal British Legion – Helmshore Branch	£350.00

Positive Start	£750.00
Total funds granted	£1100.00

Starting balance for 2008/2009	£7260.00
Current balance as at October	£6510.00
Funds allocated at this meeting	£1100.00
Remaining in budget	£5410.00

The Chair informed that the award to the British Legion – Helmshore Branch was a one off grant for this year only.

The Chair requested that Ward Councillors chase up applicants they had supported who had not yet provided evidence of receipts. Details would be sent to the relevant Ward Councillors by the Democratic Services Team.

The Chair encouraged people to apply for funding. Forms were available at the meeting and were also available from the Democratic Services Team on 01706 252424 or by emailing democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk. The deadline for the next round of grants would be 22nd December 2008 and the next meeting would be on 26th January 2009.

8. OPEN FORUM

Members of the public raised the following issues:

- Marl Pits Development – when will the consultation process begin?
- Selling of land at Dark Lane and planning proposals
- Complaints about water leaking outside 37 Hargreaves Road and 64 Howarth Avenue.
- Valley Centre development.
- Back-up plans if the Valley Centre developers are unable to deliver.
- One Stop Shop and re-location.
- Ownership of the Town Hall and its site.
- Complaints about a gulley cleaning machine and a missing drain cover on Haslingden Old Road.
- Zebra crossing near Rawtenstall Market.

It was agreed that:

- The Chair would get information from Rossendale Leisure Trust regarding the Marl Pits consultations and inform those requesting details, in addition to providing an update at the next meeting.
- The District Partnership Officer would take forward water leak repair issues outside 37 Hargreaves Road and on 64 Howarth Avenue with LCC and United Utilities.

- The District Partnership Officer to follow up issues relating to the gulley cleaning machine and missing drain cover near the ski slope.
- The Chair would seek clarification on the start date of the Valley Centre development..
- An Officer from Highways be invited to future meetings.

The Chair thanked the public for their attendance.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and closed at 9.10 pm

Signed:-----
(Chair)

Date: -----

**Report to Individual Cabinet Member for
Highways and Transportation**
3 September 2002

Part I – Item No.

Electoral Division affected:-
All

Urgent Repairs To Private Bridges Of Unknown Ownership
(Appendix attached)

Report Submitted By: Environment Director

Contact for further information: **Dr E R L Cole 01772 264625**
Directorate: **Environment**

Executive Summary

The current situation regarding the execution of urgent repairs to private bridges of unknown ownership under Section 230 of the Highways Act 1980.

Recommendation

That the report be noted and the Environment Director's proposed action with regard to the specific bridges mentioned in the report be endorsed.

Background

Throughout Lancashire there are many private bridges carrying roads or streets which are not maintainable at public expense. Most of these are of considerable age and were originally constructed by the landowner. As land ownership has changed only the adjoining land has been sold on and it often proves impossible to discover who owns the bridge (and sometimes the approach roads) and therefore who is responsible for the maintenance. Therefore the majority of these bridges are in a poor condition unless the users of the bridge are prepared to carry out maintenance work at their own expense. Often the users do nothing and hope that the bridge will continue to carry them safely over the obstacle (normally a watercourse). Some approach the County Council as Highway Authority and argue that it should repair the bridge to prevent their community being cut off. A list of bridges where this is a major issue is given in the appendix and another report refers to one such situation in Irwell Vale and Lumb in Rossendale. However it should be noted that this is merely the tip of the iceberg and this list is gradually increasing over the years.

Under Section 230 of the Highways Act 1980 the County Council as 'Street Works Authority may execute such repairs as are in their opinion urgently required to prevent or remove danger to persons or vehicles in the street'. Therefore the County Council has powers to carry out repairs to the above bridges but does not have a statutory responsibility to carry out the repairs.

In view of the shortfall for bridge maintenance it has been necessary in most cases to decline to exercise the above powers if the repairs are to be at the County Council's expense and as a consequence nothing has been done to address the inevitable deterioration in these bridges. However this cannot go on forever and whilst there have been local collapses on some bridges none has yet completely collapsed cutting off a community. This issue has recently been highlighted by two developments:-

1. A letter was received from the Chief Fire Officer raising concerns about their ability to safely access premises in Rossendale with their vehicles because of the condition of 5 private bridges. Unfortunately the Environment Director could only concur with his views. Three of these bridges are in Irwell Vale and Lumb and are referred to in another report. It has not proved possible to find a way to repair the other two bridges (Holme Lane Bridge and Dog Pits Lane Bridge), unless the repairs are funded by the County Council.
2. Rossendale Borough Council resolved 'that the County Council be advised that this Council is unable to take action to secure the reconstruction of the bridge at Glen Terrace and would recommend that the County Council consider action under the Private Street Works Code contained in the Highways Act 1980'. Despite enquiries and discussions with the residents of Glen Terrace, it has not proved possible to find a way to completely repair the bridge, which has already collapsed in two spots, unless the repairs are funded by the County Council.

It is considered by the Environment Director that in the light of the above it would not be appropriate at this stage for the County Council to exercise its discretionary powers to carry out repairs to the above-mentioned bridges at the County Council's expense. Furthermore it is unlikely that funds will become available in the near future to alleviate the problem although of course each case will continue to be considered on its merits and with regard to the financial resources available. It should be noted that if such bridges carry public rights of way the Environment Director already has delegated powers to contribute to the cost of repairs and would be prepared to carry out the repairs provided the remaining cost is funded from elsewhere.

The Environment Director intends to continue the practice of seeking to assist the community to find a way of repairing the bridge, including providing expert advice and attending public meetings called to address the issue.

Consultations

None

Advice

None

Alternative Options to be Considered

The County Council carry out repairs solely at its own expense in all cases – the financial implications are large (of the order of several million pounds) and therefore this option is not recommended.

Implications: e.g. Financial, Legal, Personnel, Human Rights, Crime and Disorder or Other

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

The proposed policy has no financial implications but the alternative option given above has large financial implications for which there is no current provision.

Any representations made to the Cabinet Member prior to the issue being considered in accordance with the Public Notice of Forward Plans

Name: Organisation: Comments:

Nil

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
Relevant documents on the Bridge Files listed in the Appendix		Dr E R L Cole/Environment/4625

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Appendix

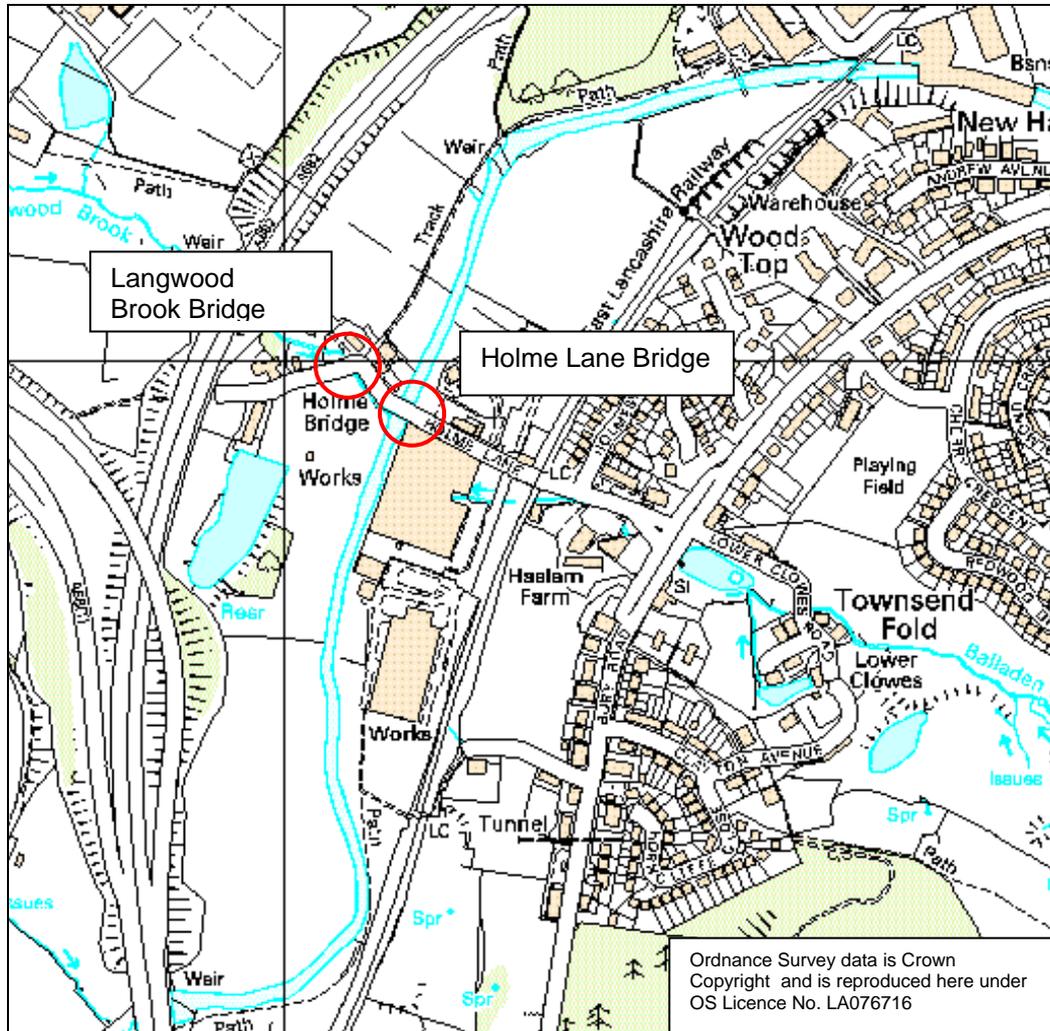
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Dog Pits Lane Bridge, Broad Clough	3
Glen Terrace Bridge, Waterfoot	4

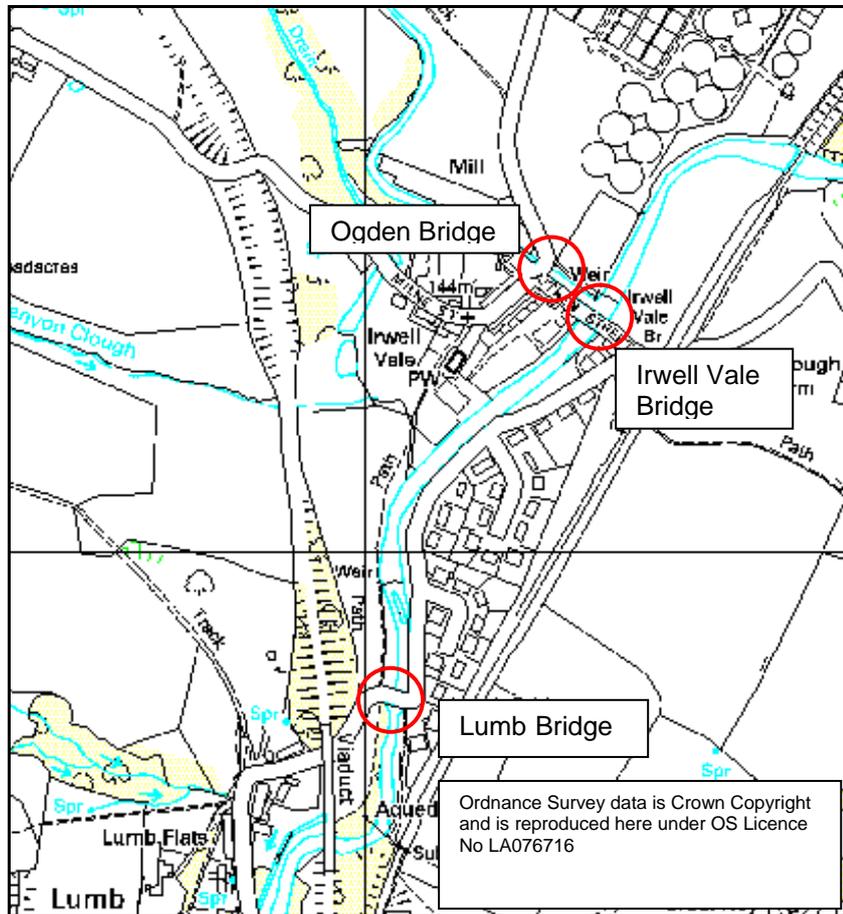
List of private bridges of unknown ownership requiring urgent repairs and carrying roads or streets which are not maintained at public expense:

1. The Croft Bridge No 6202, The Croft, Caton, Lancaster
2. Hurstead Street Bridge No 9412, Hurstead Street, Baxenden, Hyndburn
3. Bottomley Street Bridge No 5985, Bottomley Street, Nelson, Pendle
4. Holme Lane Bridge No 4950, Holme Lane, Townsend Fold, Rossendale
5. Langwood Brook Bridge No 6440, Holme Lane, Townsend Fold, Rossendale
6. Ogden Bridge No 4773, Irwell Vale Road, Irwell Vale, Rossendale
7. Irwell Vale Bridge No 4774, Aitken Street, Irwell Vale, Rossendale
8. Lumb Bridge No 4775, Unnamed Road from Aitken Street to Lumb Cottages, Lumb, Rossendale
9. Dog Pits Lane Bridge No 4804, Dog Pits Lane, Broad Clough, Rossendale
10. Glen Terrace Bridge No 6344. Glen Terrace, Waterfoot, Rossendale

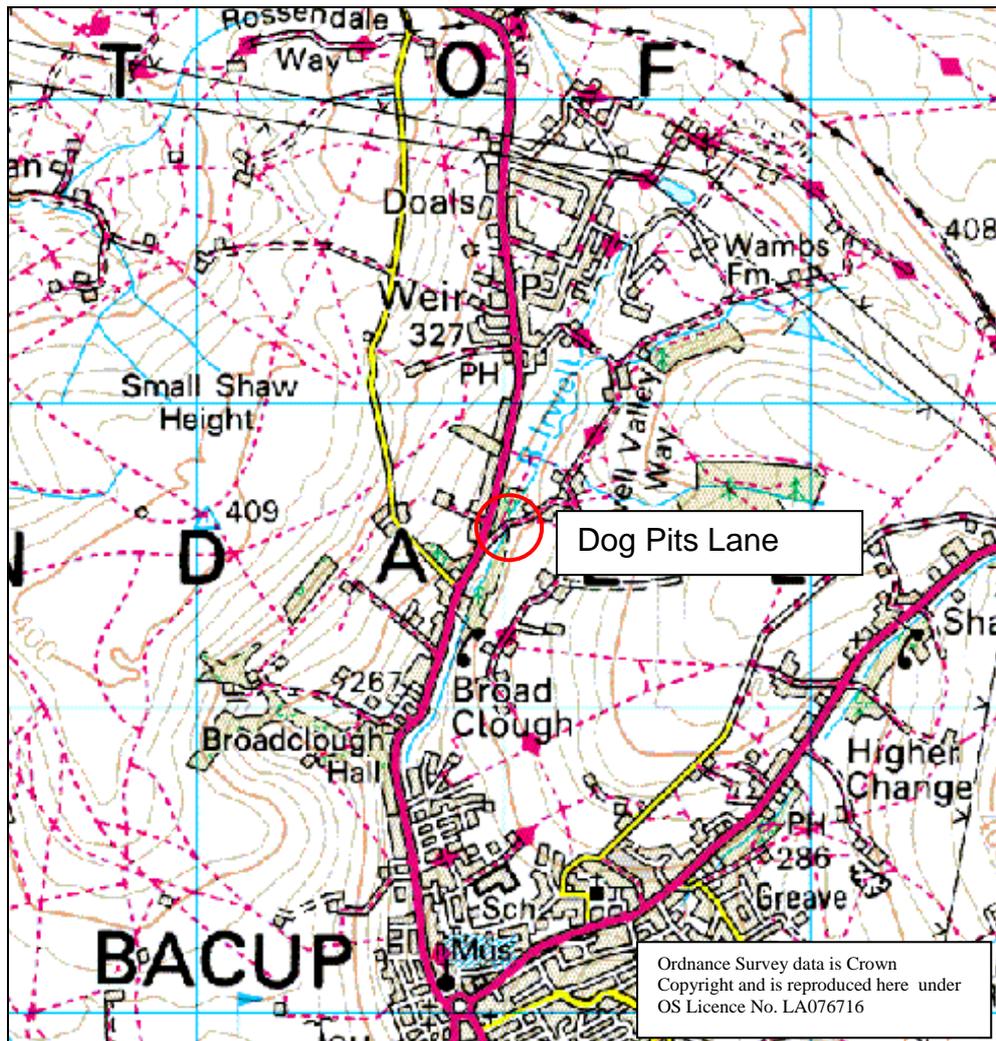
Holme Lane Bridge No.4950 and Langwood Brook Bridge No. 6440, Townsend Fold, Rossendale



Ogden Bridge No. 4773, Irwell Vale Bridge No.4774, Irwell Vale and Lumb Bridge No. 4775, Lumb, Rossendale



Dog Pits Lane Bridge No. 4804, Broad Clough, Rossendale



Glen Terrace Bridge No. 6344, Waterfoot, Rossendale

