

Walk the Solar System with 20th Oldham

We're going to walk a scaled version of the solar system. This is to show us just how big the solar system is (and in the grand scheme of things our solar system is still pretty small). Starting at Uppermill Methodist Church and finishing near Delph primary school (going via the canal and the Delph Donkey) the total distance of the walk is 4.4km. We have put as much as possible of this walk on traffic-free routes, but some of it is beside water, and there are some roads to cross - please be careful.

We start from Uppermill Methodist Church which represents the **Sun**.

Walk to the High Street, cross the road and turn left to outside Abaco (~56m from the Church), this is the location of **Mercury** the closest planet to the sun.

From here carry on to the Uppermill Co-op (~107m from the Church), we've arrived at **Venus**.

We now walk to the **Earth** which is where the bridge crosses the river (just before the traffic lights) (~148m from the Church). We've barely started our walk and we've already reached the Earth. From here take one medium sized step, this is where the **moon** is (38cm from the Earth)

Continue walking till you get to where Den Lane goes off to the right. We shall go up here in a second to get to the canal, but at the corner where we turn is where we find **Mars** (~225m from the Church). We've already ticked off four of the eight planets!

Walk up Den Lane and turn right onto the canal towpath. Walk past the stepping stones (this is where the **Asteroid Belt** is) and the path off to Kenworthy Gardens and stop at the first lock you come to. We have now reached **Jupiter** (~769m from the Church) the first of the gaseous planets.

Carry on along the canal and go to the second lock, under the viaduct. Turn left here (towards the garden centre) and go straight up the track till you hit the road (Den Lane). Go under the bridge and then take the right hand turn onto the Delph Donkey and walk about 400 steps (300m). We have now reached **Saturn** (we are now about 1.4km from the Church). From where you're stood Saturn's rings are between 7mm and 8cm away from your feet.

You can stop counting your paces now. Carry on along the Delph Donkey, all the way to the sign that tells you where the Measurements station used to be. We have now reached **Uranus** (we are about 2.8km from the Church).

Continue along the path, be careful crossing the rough ground with the old mill on your left, and then continue through the houses to the main road. Cross carefully and walk a little way up towards the Old Bell and then cross again to go into Saddleworth Business Park. Be careful here because you are walking on the road. Walk all the way through the business park and along the path that starts at the back of the business park. Keeping the stream on your left, continue right through the business park, until the road turns into a path, all the way to the footbridge in Delph.

Cross the bridge (you are at the carpark) and turn right to continue along the path (the stream is now on your right). When you get to the road at the bridge, cross carefully and continue along the footpath. This path crosses the stream (after the bridge to the houses) and you walk along with the allotments on your left. When you get to the bridge over to Swan Meadow playground stay on your side of the stream, your path goes round to the right, and when the path splits take the right-hand path which soon becomes a road (Clifton Holmes). Stay on this road up to Denshaw Road, the main road between Delph and Denshaw - Delph Primary School is down to your right. We have now walked a total of 4.4km and at last, we have reached **Neptune** the final official planet!

Extras.

If you want to include Pluto you now need to walk a further 1.4km. To do this, when you reach Denshaw Road turn left and start walking out of Delph. Continue walking along this road, after about 1km on your right you will see a row of terraced houses with nothing else around them. When you're in-line with the far end of this terrace you'll be at a bus-stop. This is **Pluto** (5.8km from Church).

The furthest human-made object from the Sun is the Voyager spacecraft which left our solar system in 1990 and has continued travelling further away since. To get to its 'current' location (it's still moving away from the sun) you would have to pop in the car all the way to Ripponden (on the other side of the M62) to get 22.4km from Church.

And to get to the next closest star (after the sun) you'd have to continue driving east, into Europe, across Asia, across the Pacific, across America and across the Atlantic until you finally arrived at Galway in Ireland, some 39617km from the Church.

The scale used is 1m represents 1.01 million km