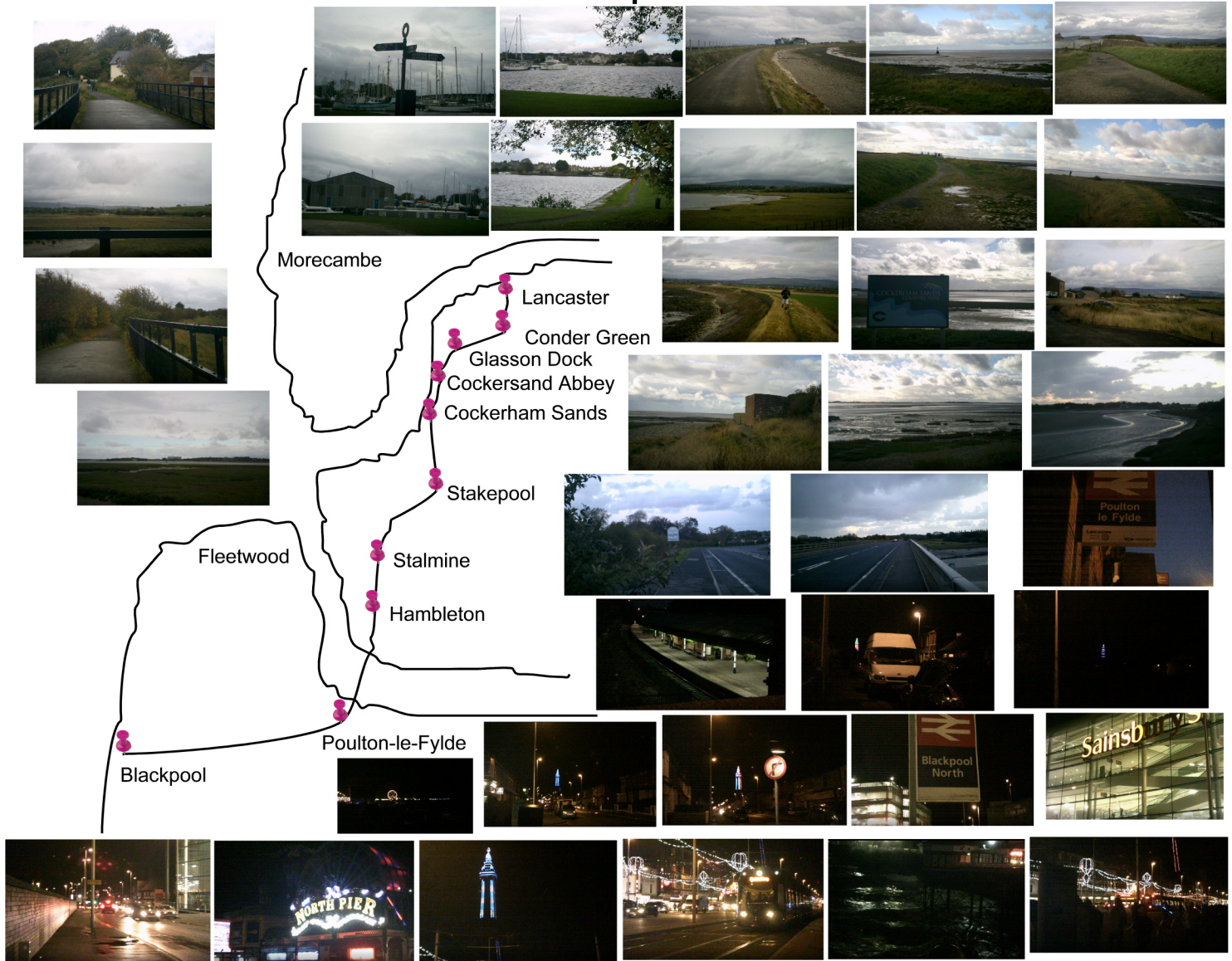


# Lancaster to Blackpool and Bolton to Atherton.



Having attempted to walk from Lancaster to Blackpool a few weeks earlier and failed, I tried again. This time I was hoping to avoid the A588 as best as I could and I wasn't going to fall for the temptation of walking to Morecambe first either. It was Saturday 24th October 2015, Having reached Lancaster at about 11.30 a.m. I set off from Lancaster railway station with my pedometer, a gps watch to make things more accurate and my mp3 player playing my new Jean Michel Jarre album "Electronica 1". This time I walked along the River Lune under the Carlisle Bridge until I reached the start of the cycle path which leads all the way to Conder Green. Instead of going onto the A588, I turned right and carried along the path towards the canal and Glasson Dock. I wanted to follow the Lancashire coast route, but it gets a little complicated going through Glasson Dock and beyond. I then reached a path which leads to the Lancashire coast way before ending up in a caravan park. I thought that the path ran through the caravan park, so I walked to the end of the caravan park, only to realize that there is no way through, so I had to walk back. I then found a long gate and saw the sign telling me to go through the gate into what appeared to be a farmers field. I felt sure it was ok, because I saw other walkers going through. It was quite a long field and you had to cross a small wooden bridge (It was just a plank of wood!). The water from the stream was flowing over the bridge as well. I then reached another metal gate, the other walkers had somehow got through, but I wasn't sure how. I had to negotiate a very large muddy patch of ground before reaching the gate. I couldn't for the life of me understand how the other walkers had got through the gate (and they had a small dog). I had to climb over the gate, which appeared to be locked by stepping on a water trough. After this things got better, I walked past this farm and then I was right along the coast. It was a nice path up until Cockerham Sands where I had to rejoin a quiet country lane and past the caravan park at Cockerham Sands. All along this stretch of the coast it is quite pretty and you can constantly see Heysham power station in the distance. After I walked along the path which runs along the outside of the caravan park at Cockerham Sands I came to a long lane which runs into the caravan park, but I was walking away from. I then reached a bridge way which has a sort of grassy ledge running along the side. I decided to walk along the ledge as it was a bit soggy along the proper bridge way at the bottom. All was well, it was sunny and quiet, apart from the sound of nature, then, out of nowhere, a huge roar, like the sound of an engine. I thought it was the farmer in the adjacent field starting up some machinery behind this hedge. The next minute, woosh!! Just inches above my head, an aeroplane, yes!!! an aeroplane. Apparently, it was a group of parachutists flying up high and jumping out to land before setting off again and again. I mean, I don't have much hair on my head to begin with, I can't afford to lose anymore. After leaving this bridge way, I came to the dreaded A588 again, so I took the next turning and followed a more quieter lane until I came to a farm which had another bridge way running through it. I walked along this very long and really nice bridge way until I came to another road. This road was no better than the A588, how they expect horses to walk along that bridge way to come to another unsafe road is beyond me. I had no choice but to follow the road until it came to the end, when it came to the end it came out at.... you guess it! The A588 (I found out since that I shouldn't have walked down the bridge way, but instead to the end of that lane - I know now!) I decided to stay on the A588 through Stakepool (and the Alpacas) until I reached Stalmine and all was well again with the world. I then carried on through Hambleton and over the bridge, which was a little lighter, since I was earlier this time and through Poulton-le-Fylde and into Blackpool, keeping Blackpool tower in view all the time until I reached the North Pier and Blackpool was bouncing with people as the illuminations were on. I reached Blackpool at around 8.00 pm. Then I got the train to Bolton, where I walked back to Atherton. My Pedometer said 40 miles and 75000 steps, but my gps watch proved to be useless because I forgot to stop it at Blackpool, while I was on the train coming back to Preston I looked at the watch and noticed to my horror that the kilometers were accumulating at an exponential rate because I was on a train and unlike a pedometer which calculates the actual steps you take, a gps watch calculates how far you have gone in relation to the satellite signal.

By Philip Catherall.