

Rail Walks in Cheshire West



Cheshire West
and Chester

The Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership and the Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Association (MCRUA) welcome you to a collection of walks within the beautiful countryside of Cheshire West, which can be accessed by train. The circular walks start and finish at the stations of Mouldsworth, Delamere, Cuddington, Greenbank, Northwich and Lostock Gralam.

The walks vary in length and landscape from rural to semi-urban walks. All offer options for rest and refreshments. There are no toilet facilities on these walks, but each route features at least one public house or café offering a range of snacks and meals as well as toilets.

All walks relate to OS Explorer Map, sheet 267, scale 1:25,000.

These routes are not accessible for those with pushchairs, wheelchairs or mobility scooters as they feature several stiles and kissing gates as well as uneven ground in places.

For details of walks within Cheshire West suitable for all abilities, the 'Walks for All' leaflet is available from Cheshire West & Chester Council.

Train services on the Mid Cheshire Line run hourly Monday through to Saturday and two hourly on Sundays. Northern Timetable 17 features all the train times for the Mid Cheshire Line and can be downloaded from www.midcheshirerail.org.uk

For bus services phone Traveline on **0871 200 22 33** or go to www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

You can also contact Cheshire West Council on **0300 123 8 123** or go to www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership can be contacted at www.midcheshirerail.org or email raiofficer@midcheshirerail.org.uk or phone **01244 976788** or **0773 652 3863**.



Information on the maps is shown as follows:

Major roads		Railway line		Suggested route	
Other roads		Railway station			

Whilst every effort has been made to make the walk details as comprehensive as possible, no responsibility can be taken for any changes to the routes or facilities which occur after the publication of this booklet. (August 2012)

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Walking in the countryside

Use a map and follow walk directions and path markers. Do not cross fields of crops unless following the designated footpath.

Litter and leftover food doesn't just spoil the beauty of the countryside, it can be dangerous to wildlife and farm animals and can spread disease - so take your litter home with you. Dropping litter and dumping rubbish are criminal offences.

Leave gates as you find them or follow instructions on signs. If walking in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates.

Wild animals and farm animals can behave unpredictably if you get too close, especially if they're with their young - so give them plenty of space and do not attempt to approach them or stroke them.

Keep dogs under close control but, if a farm animal chases you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead - don't risk getting hurt by trying to protect it.

Keep out of the way when farm animals are being gathered or moved and follow directions from the farmer.

Support the rural economy - for example, buy your supplies from local shops.

Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Association (MCRUA)

The Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Association with over 650 members is the rail user group for the Mid Cheshire Line. MCRUA is active in representing the interests of passengers on the Mid Cheshire Line from Chester to Manchester and those travelling between Crewe and Liverpool on the West Coast Main Line. They work to improve the service and its usage, and provide information on timetable changes and news on future developments.

MCRUA is also well known for the popular excursion trains, including steam specials that it has run over the years.

For more information on MCRUA activities or joining the group, please look at www.mcrua.org.uk. If you can't find what you are looking for then email enquiries@mcrua.org.uk for more information.

The Mid Cheshire Line

The line links the cities of Manchester and Chester running through the scenic Mid Cheshire countryside. There are 16 stations along the line including Delamere, Northwich, Plumley, Knutsford, Mobberley, Ashley, Altrincham and Stockport.

The line has a Community Rail Partnership founded in 2003 to promote increased usage and to develop and improve facilities along the route. Enthusiastic volunteers are always welcome to get involved at stations and events along the line.

To find out more about the Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership and the opportunities for travelling on the Mid Cheshire Line, go to www.midcheshirerail.org.uk.

Mouldsworth Rail Trail Route

This walk takes you through the green pastures of Mouldsworth and past Mouldsworth Motor Museum. The museum is housed in the former water softening plant of the West Cheshire Water Board, built in 1937 but eventually rendered unnecessary by the alternative source of Welsh water from Lake Vyrnwy. It is now home to a fine collection of classic, historic and celebrated motor vehicles.

DISTANCE: 3.5km, allow 1 to 1 1/2 hours

MAP: OS Explorer Map, sheet 267, scale 1: 25 000

GROUND CONDITIONS: The walk is across gently undulating Cheshire pastures with some surfaced lanes and a hill to climb at the end.

STILES: Three

KISSING GATES: One

ACCESS: This particular route is not accessible by wheelchair.

REFRESHMENTS: The Goshawk pub opposite the station offers food and drink.

The route

1. Starting from:

Mouldsworth Station alighting from trains from Delamere or stations towards Manchester:

Leave the platform and walk into the car park and take the steps that lead up from the corner next to the Old Station House onto Station Road opposite the Goshawk Public House.

Or:

Mouldsworth Station alighting from trains from Chester:

Leave the platform and follow the path up to Station Road.

Then:

2. Turn right up the hill on Station Road. After passing the three detached houses on the left ending with 'Fir Bank', turn left onto the signposted Public Footpath that crosses the paddock and fields.



4



3. After a short while the path joins the track that passes in front of 'Rose Bank Farm'. Walk down the track away from Rose Bank and continue down the track until you meet Smithy Lane. Turn left here on to Smithy Lane.



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4. Eventually Smithy Lane crosses a bridge over the route of the now disused Mouldsworth to Manley and Helsby Junction line of the Cheshire Lines Committee. The lane now moves out into more open country and eventually slopes gently down past the entrance to Mouldsworth Hall. Soon the entrance to Mouldsworth Motor Museum will be passed on the left.



Having passed the museum, Smithy Lane continues down the hill and curving to the left at the junction with Norton's Lane becomes Gongar Lane. Gongar Lane then turns to pass back under the Mid Cheshire Line which crosses by a tall stone and brick arch bridge with black iron reinforcing plates.



5. Continue along Gongar Lane past 'Brook House' until at the bottom of the hill, just after crossing a small stream called "Ashton Brook", turn left over the stile onto the signposted public footpath which forms part of the Baker Way, the 13 mile path that runs between the railway stations of Chester and Delamere.
6. Cross another stile and keep the hedge on your left. Up and to the right can be seen the spire of the grade II listed St. John the Evangelist Church, Ashton Hayes.



7. Carry on through the kissing gate (*another path** diverges to the right but this route carries straight on through the fields). The path eventually bears right to follow the line of the hedge and then across to the stile which leads over onto Church Road. *An *alternative way* to get to Church Road is to take the right hand path at the kissing gate with a footpath sign which leads into the churchyard of St John The Evangelist Church. Follow the path to the road and turn left into Church Road.

8. Turn left on to Church Road. Opposite the stile can be glimpsed the newly planted wood that is being created on the side of the slope. Following Church Road and where Grange Road diverges to the right, there is a handy spot for a rest at the bench placed here in memory of the sadly missed Councillor John Burke.



9. As Church Road begins to climb gradually back towards Mouldsworth Station another diverging footpath leads off to the right before the three pools of Lloyds Meadow Coarse Fishery, which is apparently well stocked with Carp, Barbel, Bream, Roach, Rudd and Tench.

10. Continue up the hill, on the left the small but distinctive shape of Saint Cuthbert's by the Forest Catholic Church opened in 1957 can be seen.
11. Soon after in the distance can be seen the sign for Mouldsworth railway station, the end of the walk, but for those with an appetite or thirst then The Goshawk provides an ideal wayside halt.



Opposite the pub is the station car park with the Station House now being the home to Whistles Hair and Beauty salon.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Goshawk
Tel: 01928 740900

Food is served every day from midday to 9:30pm (9pm on Sundays).
Dogs welcome in the pub garden.

Whistles Hair and Beauty Station
Old-Ticket Office, Mouldsworth Station
Tel: 01928 740747

Open Tuesday to Saturday

Delamere Rail Trail Walk Route

This walk skirts the edge of Delamere Forest and takes walkers up “Old Pale” – a steep hill with fine views across the Cheshire plain. The route takes in woodlands, fields, hills and steep lanes back down to the forest edge – it is manageable with a cross country pushchair. There are three recommended refreshment stops on this walk!

DISTANCE: Approximately 6kms.
Allow two hours

MAP: OS Explorer Map, sheet 267,
scale 1: 25 000

GROUND CONDITIONS: Steep ascents and descents, muddy and icy in Winter, some tarmac lanes

STILES: None

KISSING GATES: None

ACCESS: This particular route is suitable for families using a robust pushchair but is very hilly both up and down. Footpaths and tracks are loosely surfaced.

REFRESHMENTS: The café on Delamere Station offers a range of snacks and meals. There are also refreshments and meals on offer at Linnere Visitor Centre and Eddisbury Fruit Farm tea rooms - open Wednesday to Sunday – the apple juice and cider are very refreshing.

The route

1. From the car park by Delamere Station Café follow the track in front of the café (opposite the steps) that leads in to a car park eventually passing a toilet block on your left. At the end of the car park join the footpath on the right of exit that leads in to a small area of trees alongside the railway line.
2. Where the path ends by the railway bridge carry straight on along the tarmac road towards Linnere Lodge Visitor Centre car park. At Linnere Lodge Centre carry on along pedestrian path to right of lane past timber outbuildings.
3. Having passed the entrance and exit to the grassed car park area on the left look out for “Old Pale Woodland” wooden marker and cross the track to take the path that bears left to go up the hill.



4. The path starts to wind its way up the hill following Delamere Loop Bridleway markers towards the masts on top of Old Pale hill. Part way up the hill when entering conifers the path forks, the left hand path is a more direct but steeper route, the right hand path is more winding but a gentler slope. Either route can be taken as they converge a little further up the hill.

5. Continue along the path with views across the Cheshire plain towards Fiddlers Ferry power station and Daresbury as it zigzags up towards Old Pale summit.



6. At the top rest awhile at the summit marker with its plaque detailing the history of the site and the standing stones indicating the numerous counties that can be seen on a clear day. From the top take the path by the "Denbighshire" stone heading towards the furthest two masts. Keep right to follow the path as it starts to descend towards the woods. Beware of electric fences on the hill.
7. At path cross roads carry straight on towards and through a break in the hedge.

Keep following the path as it winds its way off the hill towards the woodland.



8. At next footpath crossroads carry straight on through woodland following signs for "Yeld Lane".



Eventually the path joins a lane (Forest Gate Lane), follow this lane past houses, straight on at lane crossroads and up a gentle slope to a T junction where the lane meets Yeld Lane.

9. Near the bottom of the hill on the right is Eddisbury Fruit Farm, a good point to stop and sample the local apple juice.



10. Just after the Fruit Farm where the lane turns sharp left, turn right on to the track with orchards and then the forest on the left.



11. Continue along the track past the entrance to Eddisbury Lodge following the sign posts for Linmere Visitor Centre and the station.



12. Keep following the track past the Visitor Centre back towards the station. By the railway bridge on your left take the footpath through the woodland which eventually leads back across the car park to the station and Station Café.



VISITOR INFORMATION

Delamere Station Café

Tel: 01606 889825

Open daily 9.30am-5pm for locally-made ice cream, snacks, meals and refreshments. Dogs welcome outside.

Linmere Visitor Centre

The Visitor Centre has an information centre, shop, cycle hire facility, covered picnic area, café and toilets (including disabled). Delamere Café is open 9am-5pm (summer), 9am - 4pm (winter), closed Dec 25th. Also open until dusk Thursday & Friday evenings throughout summer. Snacks, meals and refreshments served.

Eddisbury Fruit Farm Tea Rooms

Tel: 0845 094 1023 or 07581 135413

Open Wednesday to Sunday, 10-4pm for locally-made apple juice, cider, snacks, meals and refreshments

Cuddington Rail Trail Route

The twin villages of Cuddington and Sandiway were united as one parish in 1935 and are a major residential centre, served by good rail and road links. Cuddington is also at one end of Whitegate Way Country Park, accessible from Waste Lane.

The Whitegate Way is slightly over 6 miles in length and follows the course of the railway branch line from Cuddington to Winsford which was closed in the 1960s. It has an excellent wide path, established woodland and varied views over the Cheshire countryside. However, only the start of Whitegate Way is seen from this walk.

DISTANCE: 4.5km

MAP: OS Explorer Map, sheet 267
scale 1: 25,000

GROUND CONDITIONS: This route is not accessible by wheelchair. As much of the walk is along narrow paths and minor roads without footpaths or verges requiring single file walking, this walk is not recommended for large groups.

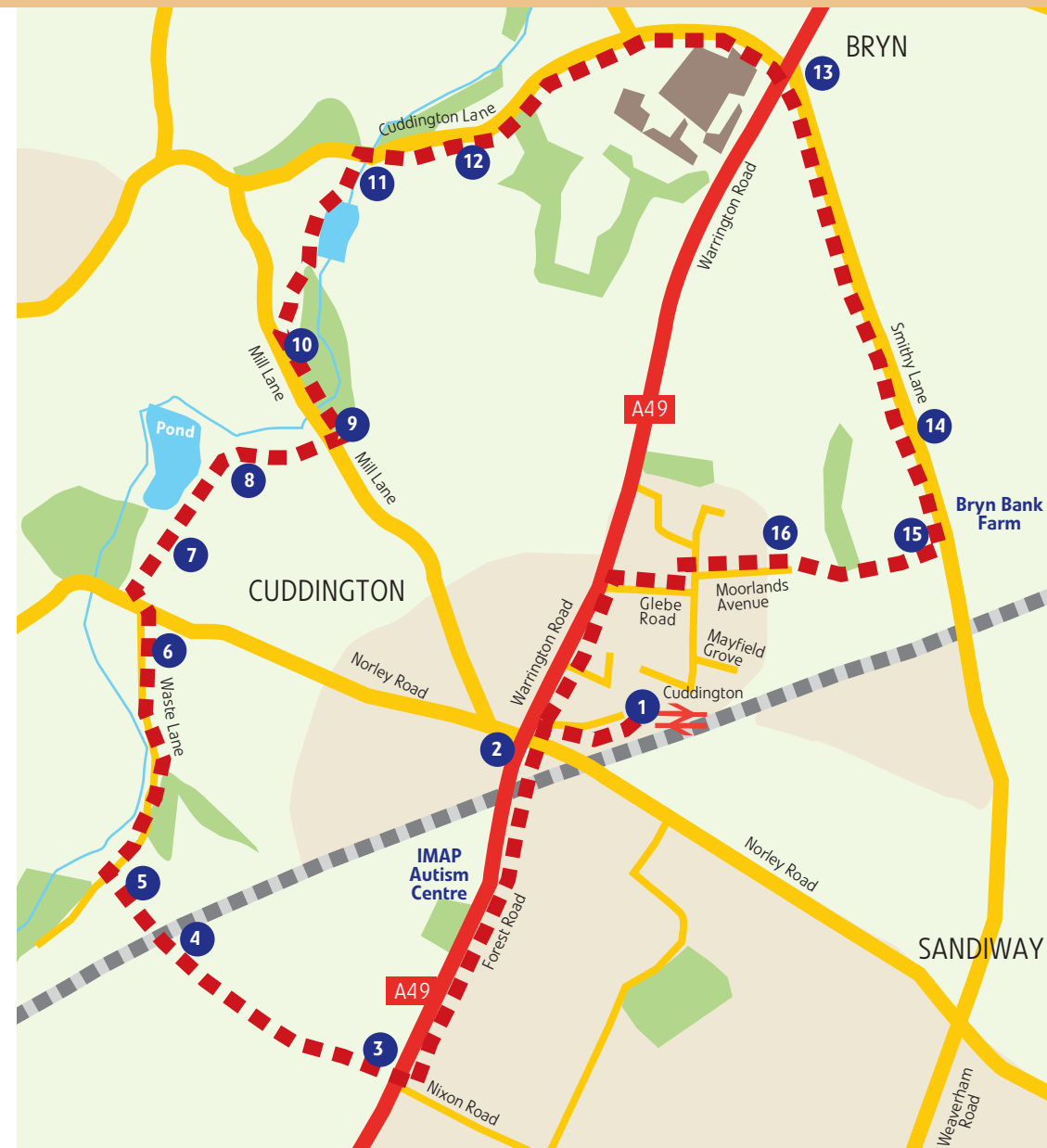
STILES: Three

KISSING GATES: Four

REFRESHMENTS: 'The White Barn' public house, a 'Hungry Horse', is very close to the station entrance.

The route

1. From Cuddington Station (Manchester platform), walk up the station approach, turn left, crossing the traffic lights onto Forest Road (A49). Keep on the left hand side of the road and use the bridge to cross the railway line.
2. Walk on the pavement passing the IMAP Autism Centre which is on the right. Go a further 100 yards before carefully crossing to a marked footpath which will be seen on the opposite side of the road.



VISITOR INFORMATION

Station Gallery

In part of the railway buildings at Cuddington Station.

Selling marine art, paintings, prints and other works of art as well as offering a framing service. Open 10am-5pm except Mondays and Wednesdays.

The White Barn

Forest Road, Cuddington. Tel: 01606 883140

This Hungry Horse pub is open daily from noon for drinks & food. Dogs are welcomed in the bar and in the pub gardens.

3. Go through a kissing gate onto a narrow fenced path which is likely to be muddy. Then, after about half a mile, go over a metal stile, up a short steep climb to the railway line.
4. Cross the railway line carefully and walk down steps with a stout metal rail and across another metal stile.



5. Shortly you reach Waste Lane. Turn right. There is attractive woodland on the right and a stream on the left.
6. At the end of Waste Lane, cross the busy Norley Road. There is a very short path (unmarked) immediately opposite, just to the left of the telegraph pole. Keep left after passing through this gap and soon turn right onto the established footpath through a kissing gate.

7. Soon you will reach on the left and below the path a large pond and high on the right a huge mansion. Here there is a wooden bench seat inviting you to rest awhile and enjoy the pleasant scene.



8. At the end of the fence, turn right through a kissing gate and across a stream.

9. Proceed to the T junction and turn left going downhill into what is Mill Lane.



10. After about 200 yards, now walking uphill, there is a green footpath sign on the right. Go through the gate, down the steps and into a field. The path takes you to the left. There are reed beds on the right of the field.
11. At the bottom of the field, cross a stile and turn right up Cuddington Lane. Milcot Lower Mill is on the right.

12. There is now no path or verge. You probably need to use both sides of the road at various points to be visible to traffic.
13. Turn right at the T junction and, passing the sign for Bryn Smithy on the left, walk up to the A49, the busy road which links Warrington with Whitchurch. Cross with care and walk into Smithy Lane opposite.
14. The lane is slightly uphill and maybe muddy; you pass two metal gates across the road which ensure it is an 'access only' road. Go through the footpath gate on the right of these metal gates.
15. Immediately opposite Bryn Bank Farm on the left of the road, turn right on to a marked footpath beside a field. Soon, where the boundary path goes left, go straight ahead crossing the field down at first, and then up to the estate ahead.
16. Go through a kissing gate at the end of the path. You are now in Moorlands Avenue. Follow the road left and take the first right into Glebe Road. Shortly, turn left onto A49. The station is about 100 yards away on the left.

Greenbank Rail Trail Route

This walk takes you on a circular clockwise route around the outside of Hartford Campus into Clough Wood, following the banks of the River Weaver to the Boat Yard and then on through Marshall's Arm Nature Reserve, following a footpath that includes a series of constructed wooden steps and bridges then returning past Hartford Parish Church and Mid-Cheshire College.

DISTANCE: 4 km

MAP: OS Explorer Map, sheet 267 scale 1: 25,000

GROUND CONDITIONS: The walk begins and ends with surfaced footpaths, but the main part of the walk is through a wooded copse on a footpath that is quite uneven and requires steps to be climbed. Walking boots or wellingtons are recommended as the path can be a bit muddy in places!

STILES: None

KISSING GATES: None

ACCESS: This route is not accessible by wheelchair.

REFRESHMENTS: Relish Café Bar, School Lane, Hartford www.relishhartford.co.uk

Christ Church at Greenbank Station Wednesdays 1pm-3pm www.christchurchgreenbank.org

The route

1. Starting from:

Greenbank Station from the Manchester bound platform

Leave the platform through the station building gate into the car park. The station building has been converted for use as 'Christ Church Greenbank', daughter church to St John's Church at Hartford. Take the steps up to Chester Road and turn left so that you walk back across the railway bridge.



Or Greenbank Station from the Chester bound platform

Leave the platform and walk up the ramp towards the housing estate.



2. Take the first turning left into Greenbank Lane and after a very short walk turn left into Marshall Lane (the turning is directly opposite the shops). Continue down Marshall Lane past the houses keeping to the left for some way. When you get to the green (where the road starts to bend to the right) you go left towards the blue sign at the end.



3. Follow the sign for "Cycle Route 5" and this will take you past Saxons Lane Play Area - keeping the football playing field on your right. At the junction (where you see houses on the left) turn right and head down the tarmac path into Clough Wood.



4. Continue walking with Clough Wood on the right until you see the blue Boat Yard gates and then take the signposted footpath to "Marshall's Arm" through the black entrance gates. This takes you into the popular Marshall's Arm Nature Reserve.



5. Continue along this path for some way, following the sign in the direction of Hartford Blue Bridge. The Kingsmead Estate can be seen on the left, beyond the caravan graveyard!

6. The path then meets the banks of the River Weaver (the steps on the right lead up to the High School). A little further on there is a boat mooring platform and a bench; this is a nice place to stop and rest for a picnic or do a spot of birdwatching.



7. Walking on a little further you will pass a Notice Board with information for "Marshall's Arm Local Nature Reserve" and the planned programme of events.

8. Continue until you come to the next signpost and then go right taking the path to Hartford Campus where you will see a flight of steps. Count 12 steps (not all of them) and then



take the left hand path, keeping the stream on your left. Continue, walking under the pipeline and then up a further set of 24 steps after which the path becomes a little more irregular.

9. At the top, go across the small wooden bridge and continue along the path and down 18 steps and over a further bridge across a small ravine, then wind onwards through the copse, crossing several more small gulleys.
10. You will pass Hartford Manor Primary School on the right and housing on the left starts to come into view as you near the end of the trail. This is marked by a decorative entrance/exit iron gateway which was designed by students of Hartford High School.
11. The path ends at the junction with Stones Manor Lane, so turn left here and start walking up towards the houses and the play area just within sight.
12. At the end of Stones Manor Lane turn right into School Lane. Where the road forks, turn right (this is a one way road with traffic coming towards you). Very soon you will see on your right

the very welcome sight of the "Relish" coffee shop which has some tables and chairs outside too if you prefer to stay outdoors. It is open 7 days a week and has an excellent menu.

13. Continuing along School Lane you will pass the new Hartford Parish Church Hall completed in 2010 which is of interesting architectural design. In the background is the contrasting more traditional design of the Victorian Parish Church called St John's Church, Hartford.
14. School Lane then joins with Chester Road, turn right here and continue to walk for some distance along the footpath, past the Vets Surgery and the Mid-Cheshire College entrances until you reach Greenbank Station which will be on your right. If you've timed it perfectly, the train will be just pulling into the station for you to board for your return journey! (Alternatively, on Wednesdays from 1pm to 3pm, Christ Church at Greenbank Station welcomes visitors for coffee, cakes and a chat - they say they would love to meet some walkers!).

VISITOR INFORMATION

Relish Café Bar
www.relishhartford.co.uk
Tel: 01606 871140

Winter Opening Times
Monday to Wednesday
9am - 6pm
Thursday to Saturday
9am - 10pm
Sunday 10am - 4pm
(open longer during Summer months)

Christ Church
at Greenbank Station
Wednesdays 1pm - 3pm
www.christchurchgreenbank.org
/whatson/midweek

Northwich Rail Trail Route

This is a short urban walk through parts of Northwich, whose history is dominated by the salt and chemical industries. The town has many distinctive black and white buildings. The Rivers Weaver and Dane converge in the town, the Weaver having been a busy commercial waterway. Within a short distance are the iconic Anderton Boat Lift and the Northwich Woodlands: more than 20 miles of paths serve a wide variety of habitats, including ancient woodland as well as park land, making it a suitable venue for families.

Visit www.gonorthwich.co.uk for Your Complete Guide to Northwich.

DISTANCE: 3 km

MAP: OS Explorer Map, sheet 267 scale 1: 25,000

GROUND CONDITIONS: This walk is all on footpaths and there are no stiles or other obstructions. Also the terrain is basically flat, with only a very minor climb over the railway bridge.

STILES: None

KISSING GATES: None

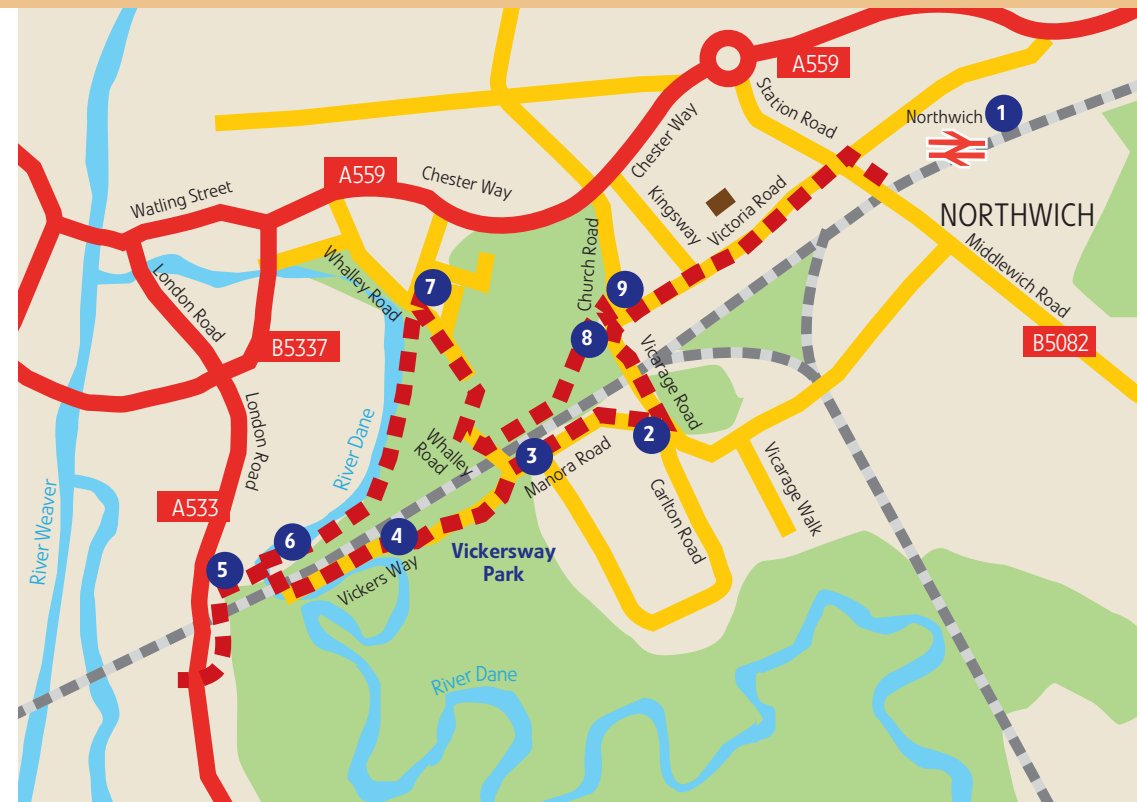
ACCESS: This route is suitable for all members of the family and also wheelchair use. The shorter version of the walk is about 1 ¾ miles (3 km) and the longer one adds about a further 1/3 mile (½ km). Allow ¾ hour for the basic walk without any stops at the points of interest and a further ¼ hour for the extension.

REFRESHMENTS: Available from The Bean café on Northwich Station, in the Costa Coffee café in Tesco next to the station and between April and October in Vickersway Park (also known as Roker Park).

The route

1. Leave Northwich Station from the Manchester platform. Keep left of the petrol station and leave the car park through the black bollards. On your left is a set of traffic lights.

At these lights cross Middlewich Road and enter Victoria Road (the road sign can only be seen after you enter the road). Walk along Victoria Road until the end (approx ¼ mile).



You will pass Victoria Road Primary and Nursery School on the right, built in 1906.



2. At the end of the road, turn left and cross the railway bridge using the pavement on the right hand side. Turn into the first road on the right, Manora Road. The railway line is on your right hand side.

3. At the junction with Carlton Road on the left, walk straight ahead until Vickersway Park is seen also on the left. Enter by the first gate and the route keeps to the right, running parallel to the railway.

There are various attractions in the park including an aviary and these may be visited with a very small deviation.

It has a good range of facilities including a children's play area, crazy golf, putting green, bowls, tennis courts, skatepark, a new aviary and an outdoor gym.

Various objects of historical interest are on display including part of a

pillar from the local Vale Royal Abbey. The Abbey was founded in 1270 and closed in 1538 by Henry VIII, as part of the dissolution of the monasteries.



4. At the end of the park leave by the gate and continue in the same direction, with a skate park on your left and railway arches on your right, until you meet the River Dane. The distance from the start of Manora Road to this bridge is approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ mile. At this point you have the option of taking a small extension to visit the Weaver Hall Museum.
5. To do the extension cross the footbridge in front for you and turn left under the viaduct into London Road and the museum is on your right in an imposing Victorian workhouse building.



Its displays reflect the history of Mid Cheshire and the salt industry. The museum is daily except Monday and offers light refreshments. When you have finished at the museum retrace the route until you have re-crossed the River Dane.

6. To continue the walk follow the river using the footpath on your left so you are between the river and the railway arches.

Follow this path until you pass three metal figures behind a bench. These represent a salt worker, Paula Radcliffe and Gary Barlow (approx $\frac{1}{2}$ mile).



7. Shortly after these figures, take the right fork that leads away from the river until you meet Whalley Road.

Turn right and follow this until the road ends. Continue in the same direction with a school playground on your left. Continue along the path, when it turns sharp left and shortly before the tunnel under the railway, turn left through the gate into the cemetery of St Helens, Witton, also known as Northwich Parish Church (approx $\frac{1}{2}$ mile).



This is the most historical building in the town, founded in the 14th century. A Grade 1 listed building, it is included in Clifton-Taylor's list of best English parish churches. Among its outstanding features are a Tudor roof and splendid Victorian stained glass windows.

8. Follow the tarmac path and exit onto Church Road, where there is a large war memorial on your left. On the opposite side of Church Road are two Victorian buildings. The left one opened in 1869 and was the third building to house Witton Grammar School for boys.



The building to its right was the large master's house built in 1878.

The original school was founded in 1557 by Sir John Deane and the first and second buildings to house the school were in the churchyard near the gate you have just come through. Sir John Deane's College is now on a nearby site off London Road, having recently benefitted from a £28 million redevelopment programme.

9. Cross over the road and into Victoria Road and follow this back to Middlewich Road and Northwich Station (approx $\frac{1}{3}$ mile).

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Bean Café

Northwich Station
- sells refreshments,
snacks and cakes.

Open 7am-5pm.
Tel: 0758 3072024.
Situated in the Zone at
Northwich Station.

Weaver Hall Museum and Workhouse

The Museum has a well-
stocked shop and a coffee
shop with a selection of
hot and cold drinks,
biscuits and flapjacks.

There is a pub next door
for those looking for hot
food. Open daily apart
from Mondays. Summer
and Winter opening times
are different.

www.weaverhallmuseum.org.uk

Lostock Gralam Rail Trail Route

This is a fairly easy route which skirts around and then through the Northwich suburb of Lostock Gralam. Walkers may like to know that there is a passenger shelter on both platforms.

The route includes fields, factories and a stroll along the Trent and Mersey Canal, with a dramatic industrial scene acting as backdrop to the tranquil Cheshire countryside.

A walk along this route on a frosty day in January was rewarded with sightings of a great-spotted woodpecker and a small flock of noisy curlew. New-born lambs were a lovely sight, too.



DISTANCE: 2.5 km

MAP: OS Explorer Map, sheet 267 scale 1: 25,000

GROUND CONDITIONS: Stout footwear is recommended. The route includes several stiles and a walk across uneven and sometimes muddy fields. There are some gentle slopes and a steep flight of 29 steps along the way. Because the area is used for sheep farming, the stiles are sheep-proof and therefore, to a large extent, dog-proof too – to complete this walk with a dog, you would have to lift it over the stiles and keep it on short lead.

STILES: Four

ACCESS: This particular route is not accessible by wheelchair

REFRESHMENTS: The Slow and Easy public house and a Chinese take-away/chip shop on the main road, shortly before you return to the station offer welcome refreshments.



The route

1. From the Chester-bound platform, walk up the ramp; from the Manchester-bound platform, walk up the ramp and a short flight of steps.

Turn right onto a narrow lane, passing an entrance to the Holford Brinefields. The lane soon becomes a tree-lined dell; take care in autumn



and winter as leaves and mud can make the pavement slippery.

2. As you emerge from the trees, ignore the footpath sign to your right; continue over the sandstone bridge which crosses the meandering Wade Brook.
3. Pass a house on the right, then turn immediately right over a stile.



In a few yards, cross a second stile to enter a field. Here you enter a rich landscape of views over the brook as it passes through a shallow valley, coupled with the industrial backdrop which is a complex network of pipes and structures. The area is remarkably tranquil.



4. Continue straight ahead, following a line of windswept hawthorn trees. To your left you see the bund or embankment surrounding one of several lime beds in the area; the lime deposited here was a by-product of the manufacture of soda ash.
5. Continue ahead along another line of hawthorn trees, crossing if necessary a concrete stile, until you reach a stile by a deceptively fast and busy road.
6. Cross the road with extreme care, paying special attention to the blind bend on your left.
7. Climb the flight of concrete steps in front of you to arrive on a bridge over the Trent and Mersey Canal. Pause to admire the complexity and strange splendour of the works, and to view the skyline.



This spot is a paradise for photographers on a sunny morning, with the sun reflecting on the black pipes and lighting the crazy, man-made scene. The Trent and Mersey Canal was built in the eighteenth century by James Brindley. To the north, it joins the Bridgewater Canal

at Preston Brook near Runcorn; to the south, it passes through the Staffordshire Potteries and on into Derbyshire.



8. Go down the steps and continue straight ahead onto the canal bank. Proceed up and down the ramp, under the pipes and under the railway bridge. Continue past the boatyard scene of Wincham Wharf with its Boat Brokers Yard and narrow boats.

9. Leave the canal towpath at the next bridge, just before the canal passes under the Manchester Road; this Roman road formed part of Watling Street, which linked Manchester to Chester via Northwich. Turn right to cross over the canal and continue straight ahead.
10. Cross the busy Griffiths Road junction with care.
11. Continue ahead to the traffic lights by the Slow and Easy public house. The land to the side has been home to one of Cheshire's oldest football clubs, Lostock Gralam FC, since 1892.
12. Turn right into Station Road. As you pass School Lane, notice the Lostock Gralam C of E Primary School, whose main building dates back to 1852, and the Church of St John the Evangelist. Continue past St John's Church graveyard and church hall as you return to the station.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Slow and Easy Hotel
Tel: 01606 215586

Open from 4pm Monday to Thursday
Open from 2pm on Fridays and from noon on Saturday and Sundays.
Dogs welcome in pub and gardens

Ho King
Tel: 01606 43579

Chinese & English food to take away.



Further suggestions and information on exploring Cheshire on cycle, horseback and on foot can be found on the Discover Cheshire website at www.discovercheshire.co.uk or from the Greenspace team.

If you have enjoyed any similar walks in Cheshire West and Chester please feel free to contact the team who can add them to the Discover Cheshire website.

Greenspace

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Wyvern House, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 1AH.

TEL: 0300 123 8 123

EMAIL:

greenspace@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Further information on exploring Mid Cheshire by train and visiting local attractions or walking and dining can be found at

www.midcheshirerail.org.uk

Please contact us if you would like to receive this leaflet in an alternative format such as large print.