The Knutsford Local Area Partnership and the Mid Cheshire Rail Users’ Association (MCRUA) welcome you to a collection of walks from local railway stations within the beautiful countryside of Cheshire East, which can be accessed by public transport without the need for a car. The circular walks start and finish at the stations of Plumley, Knutsford, Mobberley, Ashley and Chelford and are situated within the Partnership area boundary (opposite).

The walks vary in length, but some have options for short cuts or extensions. All offer options for rest and refreshments. There are no toilet facilities on these walks, but each route features at least one public house offering a range of snacks and meals as well as toilets.

All walks relate to either OS Explorer Map, sheets 267 or 268, scale 1:25,000.

Apart from the Knutsford walk, the 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. The Ashley and Chelford walks have no stiles, only gates.

For details of walks within Cheshire East suitable for all abilities, the ‘Walks for All’ leaflet can be downloaded from www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/prow

For the Plumley, Knutsford, Mobberley and Ashley walks, connecting train services run hourly Monday through to Saturday and two hourly on Sundays. Timetable 17 features all the train times for the Mid Cheshire Line, see www.midcheshirerail.org.uk

Train times for Chelford can be found in Timetable 18 available from www.crewe2manchesterrail.org.uk

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

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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 Knutsford Local Area Partnership

The Knutsford Local Area Partnership, one of the seven partnerships which make up the Borough of Cheshire East, brings together a wide range of partner organisations and individuals from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors and by working together, they focus on what really matters; delivering improved outcomes for local people and places.

The Partnership has a number of small groups working on local projects and volunteers are always welcome.

More information can be found at www.pacecheshireeast.org.uk

The Crewe-Manchester Community Rail Partnership

The Crewe-Manchester Community Rail Partnership aims to promote usage of the Crewe-Manchester via Stockport and Airport rail lines, and improve the services and facilities along them. The Partnership, which brings together transport providers, local authorities, major employers and the local community, was launched in May 2007 and continues to highlight the role of the services in a local and regional transport context.

For more information and updates on the progress of the Crewe to Manchester Community Rail Partnership in achieving improvements to the rail service, please visit the website at www.crewemanchesterrail.org.uk

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

MCRUA and the Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership hope that you enjoy these rail walks around the beautiful Cheshire East countryside.
Plumley Rail Trail Route

This circular walk explores the beautiful countryside around the village of Plumley, within the parish of Plumley with Toft and Bexton.

The landscape is dominated by fields (for arable and dairy farming), hedges and large numbers of deciduous hedgerow trees with a scattering of small woods. There are two lakes, numerous field ponds and the delightful Peover Eye trout stream within the parish.

The walk takes you through some magnificent scenery, from streams and farmland to woodland and leafy lanes.

Situated within the Parish is Holford Hall, a magnificent large moated timber house built in 1620 for Mary Cholmondeley, the last heiress and survivor of the Holford family, on the death of her husband Hugh. It suffered from neglect and fell into disrepair in the nineteenth century. Owned by ICI for much of the last century, it is now restored and in private ownership.

DISTANCE: approximately 7 ½ miles / 12 kilometres (with an option for a short cut to halve the walk).

Allow 4 hours for the full walk.

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

GROUND CONDITIONS:
The route is mostly flat but has numerous stiles. There are some wet and boggy areas and walking boots are a necessity.

STILES: Twelve (on full walk).

KISSING GATES: One.

REFRESHMENTS: Available from the Golden Pheasant public house in Plumley at either the start or end of the walk.

1. Leave the railway station and turn left onto Plumley Moor Road, towards the Golden Pheasant public house.

2. Turn right, over the stile and walk in a straight line towards Trouthall Lane.

3. On reaching Trouthall Lane, turn right and then almost immediately left onto a road (signposted Lach Dennis).

4. Cross over the Peover Eye stream and after 300 yards / 275 metres, take the stile on your left. Keeping the hedge on your right hand side, you will cross a wooden bridge.

5. Keep walking in the same direction and head for a gate behind the solitary large tree ahead of you in the field.

6. Turn left on the road and cross the bridge over the Peover Eye again and continue on to the crossroads, ignoring the lane off to the right.
7. With care, cross straight over into Pinfold Lane and carry on ahead until you reach the black and white Holly Hedge Cottage on your left where the road turns right (approximately ¼ mile /¼ kilometer).

8. Turn left here down a dirt track and in 50 yards /45 metres climb a high stile on your right and proceed with the hedge on your right through the first field. Follow the same direction through the second field to the railway embankment. Climb the embankment via the stile and steps and cross the tracks with great care – look and listen for trains – before descending the steps directly opposite and over a stile into the field.

9. Bear right to gain a brook on your right and follow it to the stile on to Sudlow Lane.

10. Turn left on the road, past Parkside Cottage and over a stile on your left into a field. The path heads towards a large oak tree and then skirts Royd Wood for approximately ¼ mile /1¼ kilometres. Bear left and keep the hedge on your right before crossing Benstall Brook to reach White House Farm.

11. Pass through the farmyard and in 300 yards/ 275 metres along the lane go over a stile to your left.

12. Keep the hedge to your right and turn right to cross a bridge over a deep ditch.

13. Carry on to reach Plumley Moor Road via a stile.

(At this point you can shorten the walk by about a half, by turning left along the road, passing the village shop to return to the station).

14. Continue the longer walk by crossing the road and climbing a stile ahead, passing between two electricity poles, through fields in the same direction and crossing three further stiles to reach the busy A556.

15. Turn left, staying on the same side of the main road, past Holford Farm and then immediately turn down a narrow tarmac lane on your left (once the main road between Plumley and Pickmere).

16. Cross the Peover Eye once again and turn right through a gate (the original footpath has been diverted here and the new path is clearly signed).

17. Continue on the new path through woodland, with wire fences on either side. Holford Hall is visible to your left.

18. Continue on the path through a kissing gate and turn left onto a track. Stay on this track with Holford Hall visible on your left. Where the track swings right, there is a short, dead-end length of footpath directly ahead over a low stile, leading to an information board about Holford Hall and a view over the moat. Retrace your steps back to the track, and continue along the track to leave the woodland.

19. Proceed through a gate or adjacent stile into the next field.

20. Carry on along a well defined track past a series of small ponds on your left. At the end of the large field bear left down a track between hedges.

21. Carry on down the hill to a stile to the left of a gate and after a few yards turn left over a bridge to cross the Peover Eye. At the top of the incline turn right by a thatched cottage and proceed along Trouthall Lane (no road sign).

22. Continue under the railway bridge until you see a footpath marked on the left (approximately ¾ mile /1¾ kilometres from the thatched cottage) opposite Trouthall Farm and make your way back through the fields until you reach Plumley Moor Road at Beech House Farm.

23. Turn left to reach the station.

VISITOR INFORMATION

REFRESHMENTS
THE GOLDEN PHEASANT
Tel: 01565 722261

Opening Times
Monday - Saturday
11:30am – 11:00pm
Sunday 11:30am – 10:30pm

Food Serving Times
Monday - Saturday
12 noon – 9:30pm
Sunday 12 noon – 8:00pm
Knutsford Rail Trail Route

This circular walk explores the beautiful and historic town of Knutsford as well as the grounds of Tatton Park. For more information about the Knutsford area, visit www.visitknutsford.co.uk.

Knutsford was recorded in William the Conqueror’s Doomsday Book of 1086 as Cunetesford (“Canute’s ford”). King Canute (Knútr in Old Norse) was the King of England (1016–1035) and later King of Denmark, Norway and parts of Sweden as well.

DISTANCE:
5 miles / 8 kilometres.
(3-4 hours plus stops) with an optional extension.

MAP: OS Explorer Map, sheet 268, scale 1: 25,000.

GROUND CONDITIONS AND STILES/KISSING GATES:
The route is flat and without stiles or kissing gates and can be accessed by wheelchairs and pushchairs, although patches of the parkland can be muddy. Good walking shoes are advisable.

Knutsford was the model for Elizabeth Gaskell’s novel Cranford. She lived in the town for some time and is buried in the Unitarian Chapel graveyard. Many of the places and people described in her books can be identified as being based on places and people in the town. In 2007 the BBC adapted the novel and produced the popular TV series, Cranford.

Tatton Park is one of the UK’s most complete historic estates. The Mansion, Gardens, Farm, Old Hall, 1,000 acre deer park and speciality shops offer something for everyone. Tatton Park is one of the North West’s most popular heritage attractions.

It has a history dating back to Bronze Age farming and has been home to herds of deer since the 13th century. In the late Tudor period Tatton was acquired by the Egerton family who owned the estate until the last Lord Egerton died without heirs in 1958. Maurice Egerton bequeathed the estate to the National Trust and in 1960 a lease was drawn up with Cheshire County Council who managed and financed the property on behalf of the National Trust until April 2009, when responsibility transferred to Cheshire East Council.

The walk combines a leisurely exploration of Knutsford Town and clearly defined footpaths through the grounds of Tatton Park where a range of optional, additional short walks highlight the beauty and history of the park.
The route

1. Coming from the Chester direction, leave the station at the ticket office and turn right, down through the car park and turn left into King Street. Coming from the Manchester direction, leave the station on the level, through a small car park and turn left into Adams Hill and left again under the railway bridge into King Street.

This delightful route passes numerous attractive shops, cafes and restaurants.

2. As you leave the town head towards the gate ahead, as this is the pedestrian entrance into Tatton Park.

3. There are several tracks through the park which head towards the Mansion and the one to the right of the main drive affords beautiful views of Tatton Mere. Keep parallel to the main drive as it bears left and you pass Melchett Mere on your left hand side.

4. Take the footpath on your left towards the Mansion which can be seen in the distance.

5. Proceed past the Mansion and enter the courtyard, where there are excellent café and toilet facilities, as well as a chance to buy tickets to visit the Mansion and gardens.

6. At this point, a number of optional extensions can be added to the walk and maps showing the routes can be picked up from the shop or Stables Restaurant or downloaded at www.tattonpark.org.uk. There is a nature trail which starts in the Stableyard and then follows numbered wooden posts (2–19) painted with an orange band, and if you chose this route you can leave the trail at point 17, where it joins your original route towards the Knutsford Gate.

7. Rejoin the route signed Knutsford Gate and exit the park. Turn left into Drury Lane and then bear right down the hill. You will pass the Ruskin Rooms. There is an inscription on the building which commemorates General Patton’s use of the building during a stay in Cheshire, which reads ‘Welcome Club’ for officers of the Third Army opened by General George Patton on 25th April 1944 prior to participation in the Liberation of Europe.

8. Carry on past the attractive pastel cottages and admire the name plates which include ‘Linen House’ and ‘Tower House’.

9. Bear right at the bottom of the hill and follow the road with a brook to your right and glimpses of the Mere on your left. The road opens out as it passes the Moor, a popular site for families with a large children’s play area.

10. At the end of the road you will meet the junction with King Street and the Railway Station is in front of you.

VISITOR INFORMATION

TATTON PARK
General Enquiries and opening times
Tel: 01625 374400 www.tattonpark.org.uk (Please note the park is closed on Mondays in low season.)

There are many opportunities for refreshments both in Knutsford and Tatton Park, where toilet facilities are also available.
Mobberley Rail Trail Route

This circular walk explores the beautiful countryside in the Parish of Mobberley, one of the oldest parishes in England. The area is rich in history and the route passes the church of St Wilfrid and St Mary which dates back to 1245 and is certainly worthy of a visit.

The railway station was built in 1862, followed by the establishment of the Railway Inn which was no doubt much appreciated by weary travellers! With another public house on the route, the Church Inn, excellent food and toilet facilities are readily available.

The walk combines a range of footpaths through pasture and arable fields, as well as country lanes and an impressive stretch which crosses the approach to the runway of Manchester Airport. Here is where the incoming planes loom at what feels like just a few feet overhead!

**DISTANCE:** approximately 4 miles / 6 kilometres. Allow at least 2 hours.

**MAP:** OS Explorer Map, sheet 268, scale 1: 25,000.

**GROUND CONDITIONS:** The route is mostly flat but has numerous stiles. There are some wet and boggy areas and walking boots are a necessity.

**STILES:** Eighteen.

**KISSING GATES:** Seven.

The route

1. Leave the railway station by the platform for the Chester train and walk uphill a few metres to a gate and footpath sign on the left through a field.

2. Enter the field and follow the footpath along the left hand field margin until you come to a hedge at a right angle in front of you in approximately 218 yards / 200 metres.

3. Proceed ahead to the corner of the field where the path leads through a small copse down to a stream.

4. Cross the stream by the bridge and proceed across the field and over the stile on to a lane.

Turn right and follow the hedge until its end. Then head diagonally left across the middle of the field to the far corner.
11. Turn right along the lane and take the first turning on the left (Davenport Lane). Immediately after Willow House, take the footpath to the right, through a kissing gate.

12. Proceed through 3 fields via 4 kissing gates keeping to the boundary on your left. Mobberley Church can now be seen in the distance.

13. At the end of the 3rd field, turn right towards a double kissing gate at the field boundaries. Go through the gates and continue along the footpath towards the church, passing Mobberley Primary School playing field on your right.

14. Exit the field at the kissing gate into the car park of the Church Inn.

15. Turn right onto the road, taking time to visit the beautiful Church of St Wilfrid and St Mary.

16. Carry on a short distance along the road to a right hand bend, and then take a footpath on the left hand side of the road between a dairy farm and a bungalow.

17. Climb 2 stiles in quick succession onto a well marked track across a field and over a further stile into the next field.

5. Turn right along the lane.

6. At a road sign on the left indicating a sharp bend just past Owen House Farm, take the footpath to the left over a stile and bear slightly right across the field. A narrow gap in the fence indicates the route, which proceeds into a second field. Cross this field towards a stile and footpath sign on the far side.

7. Cross the stile and a stream between two ponds and carry on across the next field to another stile and footpath sign to the left of the pylon.

8. Enter the next field and, skirting the right hand side of the pond, head across the field to a stile (to the left of the gate).

To your right you will see the lights of the airport runway and may like to spend some time watching the succession of planes as they roar overhead! Please take note that the runway is only in use at busy times of the day, (i.e. breakfast and tea time) so you may not always see the departure and arrival of the planes.

9. Cross the stile and then immediately cross a second stile to then cross a tarmac track to yet another stile. Crossing this stile leads to a path bordered by high hedges of dog rose, hawthorn, blackthorn and willow.

10. Climb the next stile and keep following the path, with farm buildings to your right to a further stile to join Lady Lane.
18. At the bottom of this field, climb a stile (to the left of a gate) and continue until almost the end of the next field. Climb a stile on the left and walk along the field boundary towards a factory complex. At the end of the field, on the right, climb another stile into the next field.

19. Proceed to the farmyard fence, then turn right in that same field to the end of the fence. Turn left and keeping the farmyard on your left, carry straight on (you will pass a footpath leading off first right and then left).

20. Proceed to the other side of the field, taking care as the ground is boggy in parts. Pass through a gap in the fence and skirt the boundary of a private garden, crossing a stream with a pond to your right.

21. Proceed to a small gate in the wall of the property. Turn left and walk along the drive-cum-road.

22. Turn right onto a road with a river to your left and walk slightly uphill to a main road.

23. Turn left at the main road (signposted Ashley).

24. Take the first turning on the left along Station Road (signposted Mobberley Station) and return to your starting point, close to the Railway Inn.
Ashley Rail Trail Route

The village of Ashley lies very close to both the M56 motorway and Manchester Ringway Airport, but retains a rural charm whilst serving a strong farming community.

**DISTANCE:** 3¾ miles / 6 kilometres. Allow 1 ¾ to 2 hours.

**MAP:** OS Explorer Map, sheet 268, scale 1: 25,000.

**GROUND CONDITIONS:** The walk is almost flat and is on surfaced tracks except between Ryecroft Farm and Birkin Farm, which are just clearly marked footpaths.

**STILES:** None.

**KISSING GATES:** Three.
The route

1. Proceed from the station up to the road at the top and turn right into Ashley Road. After approximately 100 yards/92 metres, passing the church on your right, turn right on a sharp bend, through a gate onto a surfaced farm track heading north.

2. After a short distance, the track crosses the M56 via a bridge. Continue along this track, passing Ashley Hall Farm on your left. Shortly after the farm, the track becomes tarmac and eventually meets Ashley Road. Continue straight on along Ashley Road before taking the first turn left into Ashley Mill Lane.

3. In approximately 150 yards/137 metres there is a fork where you take the lane on the left, signposted for Ryecroft Farm. Follow this road for nearly a mile/1.5 kilometres until Ryecroft Farm is almost reached. There is a lone oak tree about half way with a conveniently placed picnic table beneath it which makes for an excellent refreshment stop!

4. Turn left through a kissing gate, just before the farm buildings, to follow the hedge line towards the M56, then after a short distance turn left again through another kissing gate. The path then heads parallel to the motorway with woodland to your right, until it turns right and the motorway is crossed by an over bridge.

5. After crossing the bridge immediately turn left onto the Bollin Valley Way footpath, which follows the motorway for about 350 yards/320 metres and then turns right following a field boundary. Follow the path beside the hedge which will eventually curve round to the left. Keep following this until a surfaced road is reached via a kissing gate and carry on straight ahead to pass Birkin Farm on your right. Follow this road which winds its way until the station entrance is found on your left.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Greyhound (Dog friendly)
Tel: 0161 871 7765
Opening Hours
Monday - Thursday 12.00 noon – 11pm
Friday - Saturday 12.00 noon – 12am
Sunday 12.00 noon – 10.30pm

Food serving times
Monday - Tuesday 12.00 noon – 3.00pm
Wednesday - Saturday 12.00 noon – 9.00pm
Sunday 12.00 noon – 6.00pm

Ashley Village Stores
A local convenience stores selling newspapers, cards, drinks, sandwiches and confectionery.

The public house is found by continuing along the road at the end of the walk, rather than turning into the station, and is on the corner after about 200 yards/183 metres.

Opening Times
Mon to Fri 9.30am – 7.00pm
Sat 9.30am – 6.00pm
Sun 9.30am – 2.00pm (Summer)
Sun 9.30am – 1.00pm (Winter)
Chelford Village Walk

Chelford is mentioned in the Doomsday Book as Celeford. At that time it was a very small village of only 80 acres. Chelford village today is surrounded by rural farmland and is situated six miles / ten kilometres southeast of Knutsford, close to the Capesthorne Estate. The local church, St John’s, was consecrated in 1776 with the tower and spire added later in 1840. Chelford is also served by a post office and the Egerton Arms public house.

**DISTANCE:**
4 miles / 6.3 kilometres.
Allow 2.5 - 3 hours.

**MAP:** OS Explorer Map, sheet 268, scale 1: 25,000.

**GROUND CONDITIONS:**
The walk is fairly flat and includes well marked tracks and footpaths as well as country lanes. There may be muddy patches and walking boots are recommended.

**STILES:** None.

**KISSING GATES:** Ten.

**WICKET GATES:** Two.

The route

1. Start from Chelford Station, facing away from the station building. Walk down Station Road (a short detour to The Paper Shop will get you some sweetsies for the walk), turning right on to Dixon Drive. Go past the Marshall’s Market (on your right) and past the end of Elmstead Road (on your left) with the Medical Centre and Chelford School at the end. After about 54 yards / 50 metres turn right on to a footpath which goes beneath the railway line through the cattle arch and follow the footpath in an easterly direction through the next two fields to join Alderley Road by the old Chelford School. Turn left along Alderley Road (A535) and cross safely to go through the kissing gate into the field.
2. Look straight ahead for the oak tree in the field at the top of a small rise and go past this to the next kissing gate. The path now goes straight across the sand pit between two fences.

3. Climb over the little wooden footbridge at the end of the pathway and cross a quarry road. After about 32 yards/30 metres the path turns sharp right, follow this with the sand pit lake on your left to cross a further quarry road through two gates. Keep on the path, with George’s Wood (and its beautiful bluebells in spring) on your right, to pass through a kissing gate and turn right on to Stubby Lane, following this up the slight rise to Macclesfield Road.

4. At the junction of Stubby Lane and Macclesfield Road (A537) turn right and continue for about 54 yards/50 metres before crossing the road with care to the Astle Farm track.

5. Carry on down the track, crossing Bag Brook then turn right into a small lane and after about 54 yards/50 metres, go through the kissing gate on your left and take the field path, running westerly towards St. John’s church. Look out for the magnificent oak tree, close to the path. Don’t forget to look back to the east for a lovely view of the hills.

6. Eventually, you will enter the church car park through the last kissing gate and follow the path by St John’s built in 1776 and the picturesque Church Cottages to turn right on to the A535.

7. Once refreshed, turn down Peover Lane and after about 218 yards/200 metres, turn right on to the footpath (Gypsy Lane) which runs roughly north-westerly towards Chelford Village Hall.

8. At the junction with the A535 Knutsford Road, cross carefully over to the Village Hall and walk up the slight rise to cross the railway bridge to return to Chelford Station.

9. If you still have any energy, walk west towards Knutsford, on the footway by the A537 for another \( \frac{1}{2} \) mile/\( \frac{3}{4} \) kilometre for a well-earned pint or cup of tea at the Egerton Arms.

**VISITOR INFORMATION**

**THE CORNER SHOPPE & POST OFFICE**
Tel: 01625 861301
Monday to Friday 8.30am – 7.00pm
Saturday 8.30am – 6.00pm

**THE EGERTON ARMS**
Tel: 01625 861366
Monday to Saturday
12.00 Noon – 11.00pm
Food until 10.00pm
Sunday 12.00 Noon – 10.30pm
Food until 10.00pm

Follow the footway and after about 109 yards/100 metres, cross the road with care on the bridge over Bag Brook and follow the footway to Chelford Corner Shoppe & Post Office.

The Shoppe opened in 1705 and became a Post Office around 1854. Here you’ll be able to get all manner of lovely things including ice cream and on weekday mornings, fantastic, freshly made bacon butties. Plonk yourself down on the bench opposite and have a rest.
For further suggestions and information on exploring the Cheshire East countryside visit:
www.discovercheshire.co.uk

or contact the Public Rights of Way team at Cheshire East Council:
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/prow
Email: prow@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Tel: 0300 123 55 00

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