New edition 2017

Walks for All in Cheshire East

A selection of walks for all abilities, including those with pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility scooters

Featuring improved, easier access routes

Cheshire East Council
Walks for All in Cheshire East

Steps and stiles can be a problem for many of us, so why not take a walk where you won’t encounter any? Ten routes of varying lengths are suggested here to give you a flavour of the Cheshire East countryside. Explore, take healthy exercise and enjoy being outdoors!

The routes generally have a hard, compacted surface although you might find some paths with a loose surface which may be muddy in winter. The walks are described and shown on a map so that you can make your own decision as to where you go and how far you walk.

Don’t forget to wear clothing and footwear appropriate to the time of year and weather conditions.

RADAR keys are not available on site, so if you need access to a disabled toilet or gate, it’s best to obtain a key before you go, either from RADAR or from your local Disability Information Bureau.

No car? No problem!
The following routes in this leaflet can be reached without a car, though please check with transport providers before you travel:

• Astbury Mere Country Park
• Biddulph Valley Way
• Macclesfield Riverside Park
• Middlewood Way
• Nantwich Riverside
• Salt Line
• Wheelock Rail Trail

For details of accessible bus services and times, phone Traveline on 0871 200 22 33, open 7am-10pm every day except for Christmas Day (closed), Boxing Day (9am-5pm) and New Year’s Day (9am-5pm). Calls cost 12p per minute plus your phone company’s access charge. Alternatively, visit www.cheshireeast.gov.uk.

Photos in this leaflet may not always be of the highest quality, but are included as they show the path surfaces and furniture that you may find along the route. Information is provided with best intentions and is correct at time of print. Cheshire East Council accepts no responsibility for omissions or errors and no liability for information or services provided by third party providers. Maps based on © Crown Copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100049045.
Gap: a gap between posts that would generally enable a pushchair or wheelchair to fit through but prevent access to motorbikes. These barriers offer a gap of approximately 90cm (35”) at ground level, decreasing to a width of 75cm (29”) at 60cm (24”) above the ground, and a width of 45cm (18”) at a height of 120cm (47”) above the ground.

Other information on the maps is shown as follows:

- Suggested route
- Other paths
- Major roads
- Other roads
- Railway line
- Rivers & lakes
- Woodland
- Slope, steeper than 1:10
- Built up area
Astbury Mere Country Park

Less than a mile from Congleton town centre you can enjoy a stroll through wildflower meadows and admire the views across the mere towards Congleton Edge and Mow Cop. The mere is used for fishing and water sports as well as being a haven for waterfowl.
**Suggested Route**

**DISTANCE:** 2km (1 1/4 miles) circular route.

**ALLOW:** 30 minutes - 1 hour.

**SURFACE:** The path has a mainly even, compacted stone surface and offers a 2m (2yds) width throughout. There is a 10m (11yds) long slope of 10% (1:10) gradient at the northeast corner of the lake.

**PATH FURNITURE:** There is a chicane barrier at the start of the route giving a width of 1m (3’3”). At the southern side of the lake, there are two barriers offering gaps of 1.1m (3’7”). At a further barrier, there is a gap of 1.1m (3’7”) between posts, but the available flat area of ground between these posts is 70cm (2’4”). There are two locations where dropped kerbs creating 3cm (1”) steps are found. There is seating alongside the mere, with views over the water.

**VISITOR INFORMATION**

**LOCATION:** Astbury Mere is located in Congleton on Sandy Lane and is signposted off the A34 Newcastle Road.

**PARKING:** A free car park is available at the visitor centre and is accessible for minibuses. There are two designated disabled bays by the start of the trail. The car park is open 9am-5pm and longer in summer. Approximate postcode: CW12 4FP.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** A bus service operates along the Newcastle Road, with a bus stop at Sandy Lane.

**TOILETS:** Toilets are provided at the visitor centre, including an accessible toilet with a RADAR lock.

**REFRESHMENTS:** Refreshments are available at local outlets in town and usually at weekends and school holidays by the visitor centre.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** The visitor centre is open from 9am-5pm. The park is owned by Astbury Mere Trust and managed on their behalf by the Cheshire East Countryside Ranger Service:

**TEL:** 01260 297237

**EMAIL:** astbury@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Biddulph Valley Way

The Biddulph Valley Way follows the route of a disused railway which carried coal between the Potteries and Congleton for over 100 years. Today, this is a tranquil route that allows visitors to enjoy the delightful Cheshire East countryside. The route offers views of the impressive railway viaduct over Dane-in-Shaw Pasture and a chance to spot a kingfisher.

Suggested Route

**DISTANCE:** 3.5km (2¼ miles) one way to Whitemoor Nature Reserve, or 7km (4½ miles) return walk.

**ALLOW:** 2-3 hours.

**SURFACE:** The surface of the route is generally flat and made of compacted stone with loose material. Path widths are over 1m (3’3”) throughout.

**PATH FURNITURE:** There is a motorbike barrier at the Brook Street end of the path, where the route passes under the railway and at the county boundary to the south of Biddulph Road. These barriers would generally enable wheelchairs and pushchairs to access the Way. RADAR locks are also fitted to vehicle access barriers alongside these motorbike barriers to enable large mobility scooters to access the Way. There are 7 benches and a picnic table located along the length of the path.

**LOCATION:** The Biddulph Valley Way is best accessed off the A54 Brook Street in Congleton.

**PARKING:** There is a small lay-by on Brook Street by a telephone box, located between Tommy’s Lane and Brunswick Street. Alternatively, a small amount of parking is available along the track leading off Brook Street to the Way. Approximate postcode: CW12 1RG.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** The Way is close to Congleton railway station and can be reached via the canal towpath and a set of steps. Public bus services run along the A54 Brook Street and the A527 Biddulph Road.

**TOILETS:** No toilets are available on the route. Facilities are available in Congleton town.

**REFRESHMENTS:** No refreshments are available on the route. Facilities are available in Congleton town.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Contact the Countryside Ranger Service:

**TEL:** 01260 297237

**EMAIL:** rangers@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Brereton Heath Local Nature Reserve

Designated as a Local Nature Reserve, Brereton Heath lake is surrounded by wildlife habitats managed by the Countryside Ranger Service. These can be enjoyed by visitors via the lakeside route and woodland paths. Fishing day tickets are available at the bank side from Wheelock Angling Society.

Suggested Route

**DISTANCE:** 1.6km (1 mile) circular walk.

**ALLOW:** 30 minutes - 1 hour, plus time to enjoy the wildlife and scenery.

**SURFACE:** The paths, both in the woodland and around the lake, are hard-surfaced.

**PATH FURNITURE:** There are no gates on this route. There are benches located at intervals around the lake and a picnic area behind the visitor centre.

VISITOR INFORMATION

**LOCATION:** The Reserve is situated on Davenport Lane off the A54 between Holmes Chapel and Congleton.

**PARKING:** The Reserve is open from 8.45am-8.30pm in summer and from 8.45am-5pm in winter. There is a pay and display car park. Annual permits are available. Blue badge holders can park free of charge and there are 4 designated bays for disabled parking. Approximate postcode: CW12 4SU.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** A bus service operates along the A54 with a stop at Davenport Methodist Chapel.

**TOILETS:** Toilets are available on site, including an accessible toilet with a RADAR lock.

**REFRESHMENTS:** A refreshment van is sometimes available on site.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** There is a Rangers’ office and visitor centre on site:

**TEL:** 01477 534115

**EMAIL:** brereton@cheshireeast.gov.uk

**LIKE BRERETON HEATH ON FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/breretonheathLNR
Macclesfield Forest

Macclesfield Forest is the last remnant of the Royal Forest of Macclesfield and is now a working forest managed by United Utilities. Situated within the Peak District National Park, the forest is mainly pine with a native broad leaf tree planting programme. The forest is home to a herd of red deer and the Trentabank Reservoir is host to a number of wildfowl species and the largest heronry in the Peak District.

Suggested Route

**DISTANCE:** 300m (¼ mile) circular walk, signposted from the car park.

**ALLOW:** 15-30 minutes, plus time to enjoy the views over the reservoir.

**SURFACE:** The paths are unsurfaced routes of compacted stone of about 1m (3’3”) in width. In places the paths are uneven and may be muddy and have loose material on the surface. Gradients are largely flat, with a 2m (6’6”) steeper section of gradient 13% (1:8).

**PATH FURNITURE:** There are two gates on the path which open both ways and offer a width of 155cm (5’1”). The latches are at a height of 90cm (2’11”) from the ground. Benches and leaning posts are located by the reservoir and at intervals along the trail.

**DESCRIPTION:** This short walk takes you across the road from the Ranger Centre and into the Cheshire Wildlife Trust Reserve woodland. A path leads to the reservoir edge and then you can continue on, across the road and back to the Ranger Centre.
LOCATION: Macclesfield Forest is situated to the east of Macclesfield. The Trentabank car park is accessed from the A523 via Langley.

PARKING: A minibus-accessible pay and display car park is available. 3 designated bays are available for disabled parking and blue badge holders can park free of charge. Approximate postcode: SK11 0NS.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT: The nearest public transport is by bus to Langley 2.5km/1½ miles from the Ranger Centre.

TOILETS: Toilets are available including an accessible toilet with a RADAR lock.

REFRESHMENTS: Refreshments are available at weekends. There is a large, grassy picnic area which includes one table that has a space for wheelchair users.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Contact the Peak District National Park Authority Ranger Service which has a Ranger Centre on site:

TEL: 01260 252832
EMAIL: martin.winder@peakdistrict.gov.uk
WEB: www.peakdistrict.gov.uk
Macclesfield Riverside Park

Situated in the delightful Bollin Valley, the Macclesfield Riverside Park provides a recreational park close to the heart of the town. The park has a variety of habitats and is a great place to watch wildlife. You may see the herd of Longhorn cattle, a traditional and docile breed, which grazes the meadows to help preserve plant species diversity.
Suggested Route

**DISTANCE:** 3km (2 miles) one way, or 6km (4 miles) return walk.

**ALLOW:** 1-1½ hours one way, or 2-3 hours return.

**SURFACE:** The path leaving the Rangers’ office is made of compacted stone and has a width of between 1-2m (3’3” - 6’6”). There is a slope of gradient 10% (1:10) over a distance of 20m (22 yds). In the central section of the park, the route is unsurfaced and follows a grass track. At the northern, Prestbury end, the path is 1m (3’3”) wide and uneven with steep gradients up to 17% (1:6).

**PATH FURNITURE:** The route passes through a number of hand gates, kissing gates and bridges. The kissing gates are fitted with RADAR locks (at a height of 90cm (2’4”) from the ground) for 2-way opening to offer a width of 1.2m (3’11”). The minimum width on the bridges is 85cm (2’9”) and there are steps of 25cm (10”) onto one of the bridges. There are 4 benches along the route.

The least accessible part of the route is located at the Prestbury end, so you may wish to return to the Rangers’ office when you reach the bridge over the River Bollin.

VISITOR INFORMATION

**LOCATION:** The park is most easily accessed off the A538 Beech Lane in Macclesfield where there is a Rangers’ office.

**PARKING:** A free car park, accessible for minibuses, is available at the Rangers’ office on Beech Wood Mews, with 2 bays designated for disabled parking. Free car parking is also available in Prestbury off Shirleys Drive. Approximate postcode: SK10 2SL.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** Public bus services operate along Beech Lane and to Prestbury. Rail services run to Macclesfield 1.6km (1 mile) away from the Rangers’ office and to Prestbury 1.6km (1 mile) from the northern end of the path.

**TOILETS:** Toilets, including an accessible toilet (requiring a RADAR key), are located at the Rangers’ office.

**REFRESHMENTS:** No facilities are available on site. Refreshments can be found in Macclesfield and Prestbury.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** The park is owned by Cheshire East Council and managed by the Bollin Valley Partnership:

**TEL:** 01625 511086  
**EMAIL:** bollin@cheshireeast.gov.uk  
**WEB:** www.bollinvalley.org.uk
Middlewood Way

The Middlewood Way is a 16km/11 mile linear route following the former Macclesfield, Bollington and Marple Railway through picturesque Cheshire East countryside. It provides a relatively level route for all users along its wildlife corridor.

At Bollington the route passes high above the river on a viaduct offering views to the hills and mills of the area.
Suggested Route

ROUTE: From Jackson’s Brickworks to Nelson Pit and back.

DISTANCE: 4km (2½ miles) return walk.

ALLOW: 1-2 hours.

SURFACE: The suggested route has a compacted stone surface. Elsewhere the route is unsurfaced and can be uneven and muddy in winter. Widths are generally between 1-2m (3’3”-6’7”). There is a steep ramp of 13% (1:8) from the Way up to the Nelson Pit Visitor Centre. The southern section between the viaduct and Clough Bank car park off Grimshaw Lane in Bollington is surfaced.

PATH FURNITURE: There are 2 kissing gates at Jackson’s Brickworks with field gates adjacent which are fitted with RADAR locks. At Nelson Pit there is a kissing gate offering a width of 1.03m (3’9”). At Bollington, leading onto Grimshaw Lane there is a chicane barrier giving a width of approximately 1m (3’3”) and a field gate equipped with a RADAR lock.

The route contains several squeeze stiles (of minimum width 58cm (1’11”) with access beside them for pushchairs and wheelchairs (of width 82cm (2’8”) and height 128cm (4’2”). There are numerous benches and picnic benches.

VISITOR INFORMATION

LOCATION: The Middlewood Way is easily accessible near Poynton to the north or in Bollington to the south.

PARKING:

JACKSON’S BRICKWORKS: A free car park, accessible for minibuses, with 3 designated disabled parking bays, open 9am-6pm in summer and 9am-5pm in winter. Approximate postcode: SK12 1UT.

NELSON PIT VISITOR CENTRE: A car park with 5 designated disabled parking bays. Open at all times, charges may apply. There is a height barrier at the entrance to the car park though a layby can be used to set down and pick up passengers. Approximate postcode: SK12 1TH.

ADLINGTON ROAD: A free car park, accessible for minibuses, with 2 designated disabled bays, although access from the car park to the Middlewood Way is via a long set of steps. Approximate postcode: SK10 5JT.

CLOUGH BANK: A free car park, accessible for minibuses, off Grimshaw Lane in Bollington, though it is often full during the working week. Approximate postcode: SK10 5NZ.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT: Public buses serve Bollington, Nelson Pit Visitor Centre and the A6 Buxton Road. There are also rail services to Marple.

TOILETS: Public toilets (including one accessible with a RADAR key) are available at Adlington Road and Nelson Pit Visitor Centre.

REFRESHMENTS: Refreshments are available on Shrigley Road North near Nelson Pit Visitor Centre and in Poynton and Bollington.

FURTHER INFORMATION:
Contact the Countryside Ranger Service:
TEL: 01625 383700
EMAIL: rangers@cheshireeast.gov.uk
The riverside area of Nantwich offers a pleasant walk alongside the River Weaver and around Nantwich Lake within easy access of the historic town centre.

The riverside area is home to the saline spring which feeds the outdoor swimming pool and on which Nantwich’s prosperity has been largely founded.
Suggested Route

DISTANCE: 3km (2 miles).

ALLOW: 1 hour.

SURFACE: Paths are surfaced to the north of the Shrewbridge Road car park. South of here paths are of compacted stone and may become muddy. Widths are between 1-2m (3’3” - 6’7”). There is a wide bridge over a weir on the River Weaver with approach ramps of gradient 13% (1:8) over 5 metres (5½ yds).

PATH FURNITURE: There are no gates or stiles on the paths in the riverside park bar one 2-way swinging barrier without a latch offering a width of approximately 95cm (3’1”) at the lake car park. Benches are provided at intervals, most frequently around the lake. Where the path goes under the railway bridge, there is a wide chicane creating a width of 120cm (3’11”). At the southern end of the lake and between the lake and the railway there are bridges with gaps of 1cm (¼”) between decking boards. The latter bridge also involves a step of approximately 3cm (1”) on to the bridge.

DESCRIPTION: Parking at the lake car park, a figure of eight walk can be completed: one loop around the lake and another up through the Riverside Park.

VISITOR INFORMATION

LOCATION: Nantwich Riverside is located close to the town centre.

PARKING: Free car parking is available at the lake, approximate postcode: CW5 7AE, and off Shrewbridge Road, approximate postcode: CW5 7AA. The access path from this car park has a chicane limiting the width of the path to 120cm (3’11”) and an uneven gravel surface. Minibuses can access each of the car parks.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT: Nantwich is well connected by bus and rail services, and has a number of bus routes within the town itself.

TOILETS: There are no toilet facilities on the route; facilities exist in the town centre.

REFRESHMENTS: There are no refreshments on the route; facilities exist in the town centre. Picnic benches are located around the lake and in summer months an ice cream van sometimes parks at the lake car park.

FURTHER INFORMATION:
Contact the Public Rights of Way team:
TEL: 01270 686029
EMAIL: prow@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Salt Line

Running through farmland and woodlands from Hassall Green to Alsager, the Salt Line follows the route of a disused railway line. The line was used to transport coal and limestone to the chemical works which used brine in the manufacturing process, hence the name Salt Line. It now provides an important haven for a diverse range of plants and wildlife.

Suggested Route

**DISTANCE:** 2.5km (1 ¾ miles) one way, 5km (3 ½ miles) return.

**ALLOW:** 1½-2 hours.

**SURFACE:** The route is a 2m (6’7”) wide, even path with some loose material. The route is generally flat. Steep gradients of over 10% (1:10) are found where the path crosses a road; for this stretch the path is surfaced. At the far southern end of the route there is a steep gradient to Sandbach Road – a good point from which to retrace your steps.

**PATH FURNITURE:** At the beginning of the route and at the road crossing there are motorcycle barriers generally enabling access for wheelchairs and pushchairs. Vehicle gates alongside these are now fitted with 1.2m (3’11”) wide gates with RADAR locks fitted at the top to allow large mobility scooters to gain access. There are a number of benches and picnic tables along the route, including a picnic table with space for a wheelchair approximately half way along the route.

VISITOR INFORMATION

**LOCATION:** The Salt Line is best accessed off Hassall Road, between Alsager and Sandbach and is signposted off Betchton Road in Hassall Green.

**PARKING:** There is a free car park off Alsager Road that is accessible for minibuses, and has a gravel surface. There are no dedicated disabled parking bays. The car park closes at 8.30pm in summer and 5pm in winter. Approximate postcode: CW11 4YB.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** Public bus services operate to Hassall Green, Lawton Heath End and Alsager.

**TOILETS:** No facilities are available on site.

**REFRESHMENTS:** No facilities are available on site.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Contact the Countryside Ranger Service:

**TEL:** 01260 297237

**EMAIL:** rangers@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Discover Tegg’s Nose Country Park and experience Cheshire East’s wild hill country where rock dominates the landscape. From this walk you will be able to enjoy exhilarating views over the Cheshire plain and, on a clear day, you might even see the cathedrals of Liverpool or the Welsh hills on the horizon.
Suggested Route

**DISTANCE:** 2.75km (1 mile) circular walk.

**ALLOW:** 30 minutes - 1 hour, plus stops.

**SURFACE:** The paths are largely unsurfaced, compacted stone, some with steep gradients up to 17% (1:6) and uneven rock surfaces. Part of the route is on a grass field (in which cattle may be grazing between April and November). Path widths are between 1-2m (3’3”-6’7”).

**PATH FURNITURE:** The route passes through 3 kissing gates fitted with a RADAR lock for two-way opening (offering a width of 125cm (4’1”). The route also passes through 3 wicket gates that open both ways and are fitted with trombone style handles. The minimum width of these gates is 120cm (3’11”), and the latches are located at 110cm (3’7”) from the ground.

**DESCRIPTION:** Follow the track into Tegg’s Nose Country Park which climbs gently through the kissing gate/field gate. Continue to a two-way wicket gate from which the circular loop begins. Continue straight through to another two-way gate. Now the path enters the pasture field. Continue downhill alongside the drystone wall on your right to a kissing gate which leads onto a surfaced path climbing up to the left. Follow this up through another kissing gate and to a two-way opening wicket gate with adjacent field gate. Go through this gate and onto a flat track with benches from which you can admire the views. Continue along the path passing the quarry display. The path continues (avoiding the steps on the right) to join back with the track which will lead you back to the visitor centre.

**VISITOR INFORMATION**

**LOCATION:** The Country Park is located on the Buxton Old Road and is signposted off the Macclesfield to Buxton road, the A537, to the east of Macclesfield.

**PARKING:** A minibus-accessible pay and display car park is available on site. Permits are available. There are 3 designated disabled parking bays and blue badge holders can park free of charge. Approximate postcode: SK11 0AP.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** No public transport runs to the Country Park. Public bus services operate to Langley and along the A537 New Buxton Road.

**TOILETS:** Toilets are available on site, including an accessible one with RADAR lock access.

**REFRESHMENTS:** Tegg’s Nose Tea Room is open every day serving speciality teas, coffee, cakes and a bite to eat. Wheelchair and dog friendly. Picnic benches are located in the car parking area.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

The visitor centre is open daily from 9am-5pm:

**TEL:** 01625 374833

**EMAIL:** rangers@cheshireeast.gov.uk

**LIKE TEGG’S NOSE ON FACEBOOK:**

www.facebook.com/teggsnose

www.facebook.com/teggsnosetearoom
Wheelock Rail Trail

The Wheelock Rail Trail near Sandbach follows the route of a disused railway from Ettiley Heath to the canal near Malkins Bank village. Today the trail is a rich haven for wildlife and wild flowers and provides a pleasant level and wide route through the Cheshire East countryside.

Suggested Route

**DISTANCE:** 4.4km (2¾ miles) return walk, or 2.2km (1½ miles) one way. The Trail crosses the busy Wheelock bypass (A534) towards its south-eastern end, which must be crossed with care. For many, this marks a good point to retrace their steps back to Ettiley Heath.

**ALLOW:** 1-1½ hours.

**SURFACE:** Surfaces are firm and even, with some loose material. The path is between 2.5-3m (8'-10') wide throughout. One 50m (55yds) section of the Trail is made of decking and has surface breaks of up to 2cm (¾”) and a 3cm (1”) step. The route is generally flat; where the Trail crosses the A534 there are ramps of 13% (1:8) gradient and dropped kerbs.

**PATH FURNITURE:** The Trail has 1 motorcycle barrier at the Elworth end, with a RADAR lock on the adjacent vehicle gate. The barrier offers a gap of 90cm (2’11”) width at ground level, a width of 65cm (2’2”) at 60cm (2’) above the ground, and a width of 58cm (1’11”) at 90cm (2’11”) above the ground, generally accessible for a pushchair or wheelchair. Either side of the A534, there are also one-way hand gates giving a width of 90cm (2’11”) and being operated by autolatches at a height of 110cm (3’7”) from the ground. There are benches along the Trail with ample space to park a wheelchair next to them. One involves a short, narrow ramp of gradient 17% (1:6) to be rewarded by views over the tranquil countryside.

**VISITOR INFORMATION**

**PARKING:** The Wheelock Rail Trail can be accessed from several points. The easiest is at Elworth where you can park on Lodge Road. Approximate postcode: CW11 3HD.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** Buses run through Ettiley Heath close to the start of the Rail Trail and also through Wheelock.

**TOILETS:** There are no facilities on the route.

**REFRESHMENTS:** There is a coffee shop on Lodge Road, Ettiley Heath and a variety of choices in Wheelock and Sandbach.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Contact the Countryside Ranger Service:

**TEL:** 01260 297237

**EMAIL:** rangers@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Further suggestions and information on exploring the Cheshire East countryside can be found on the Discover Cheshire website at www.discovercheshire.co.uk.

Public Rights of Way
WEB: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/prow
EMAIL: prow@cheshireeast.gov.uk
TEL: 0300 123 5500

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