

The Old Hall Sandbach Town Trail, Cheshire



Easy Terrain

2 miles
Circular
1 to 1.5
hours

070114



Access Notes



1. The walk has just a few gentle slopes and follows a mixture of tarmac paths/pavements plus some grass/dirt paths and tracks.
2. The latter can be quite soft underfoot after rain so sensible shoes are a must.
3. There is one small flight of steps to negotiate plus a handful of kissing gates but these are oversized so it would be possible to get a rugged pushchair round if it isn't too muddy underfoot.

The Old Hall is a marvellous Grade I listed building which was the residence of the Lords of the Manor of Sandbach, now lovingly converted to an excellent pub.

A 2 mile circular pub walk from the Old Hall in Sandbach, Cheshire. The walking route explores the town of Sandbach with its many historic buildings, a beautiful park, the ancient market square and pretty old lanes.

Getting there

The walk starts and finishes from the Old Hall pub, on the High Street in Sandbach. Approximate post code CW11 1AL. The pub has its own small car park, but at busy times please use the free town car park alongside Waitrose on Brookhouse Road.

Walk Sections



Start to Library



The walk begins from the car park in front of the Old Hall pub. Spend a moment here to really admire the beauty of the building.

Old Hall was built in 1656 and is a Grade 1 listed building. It is probably on the site of the original Manor, but the present building was built for Sir John Radclyffe who secured Sandbach's market charter from Queen Elizabeth I in 1579. The building has been described as being a near perfect example of Elizabethan wattle and daub architecture, and is probably the last example ever built.

Come out of the car park through the vehicle entrance and you'll see St Mary's Church over to your left. The origins of this church can be traced back to about 1200AD. Various restorations and changes have been made over the centuries but a major restoration took place between 1847 and 1849 under the direction of Sir George Gilbert Scott (who was also the architect for the Albert Memorial in Hyde Park).

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Cross over the road to take the narrow footpath which runs immediately to the right of the church, down some steps. At the bottom of the steps glance to your right where you'll see the Town Spout, the site of an historic supply of water for the town. Keep ahead, with the tall walls to the church on the left, and at the T-junction with the road turn left.

At the next junction you'll see the Town Pump, the beautifully restored original cast iron water pump of the town which was in use until the late 19th century. Turn right down the road immediately before the pump, Well Bank. Continue up the hill and on the right you'll pass Old Tudor Cottage with a plaque proclaiming it to date from 1570 – this claim's to be Sandbach's oldest building.

Beyond the cottage keep straight ahead to join the cobbled right-hand pavement which leads you past the Masonic Hall and then on to the library.



You will reach a T-junction with a tarmac path. Turn left along this, passing between the back of properties each side. In the late 1800s a racecourse stood in this area which is now a housing estate. The path eventually swings right to reach a T-junction with Gawsworth Drive.

1 → 2 Library to Ravenscroft Close



Turn right immediately after the library and pass through the ornate iron entrance gates of Sandbach Town Park. Swing left and then right, passing the first bowling green on the right. Keep ahead passing to the right of the Diamond Jubilee stone planter and then passing between play grounds. You'll come to a T-junction in the path. Turn right passing a second bowling green on your right.

Keep ahead passing the courts and outdoor gym to the right. Follow this narrow tarmac path winding downhill. At the bottom of the slope you'll see Sandbach Park Pond opposite – take time to enjoy this should you wish. There is plenty of wildlife to enjoy here including dragonflies and damselflies, moorhens, chiffchaffs and butterflies.

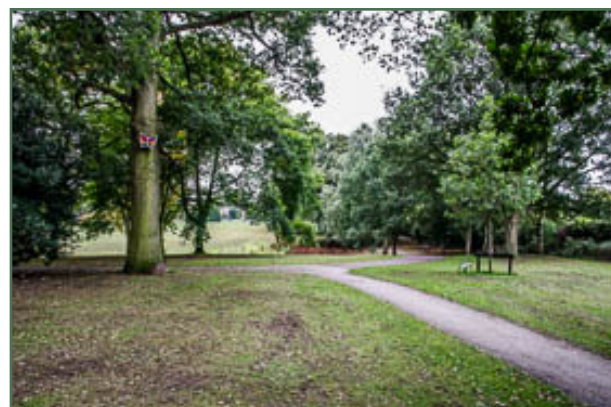
Turn right and then at the crossroads turn left along the grass and dirt fenced track (note: this is always fairly wet underfoot as there are natural springs rising below). Through the trees to the right you'll be able to see Dingle Lake (once the town's swimming pool and ice rink, this is now a private fishing lake stocked with carp). After just a few paces fork left, up the smaller woodland path which climbs steadily. Pass through the kissing gate and you'll emerge to a residential road – Ravenscroft Close.

2 → 3 Ravenscroft Close to Gawsworth Drive

Keep straight ahead along Ravenscroft Close. At the T-junction turn right and, after passing just a couple of properties, turn right again through a wooden kissing gate. After a short distance you'll reach a T-junction in the path with an open meadow (and derelict building) opposite – this is the site of the town's former waterworks.

Turn left along the path and keep right at the fork. Follow the path as it swings left and soon it opens out into a wide grass track between trees. You'll emerge to a large grass clearing. Turn left here for just a few yards and then, immediately before the tarmac path begins, turn left again down a wide grass track following the edge of the dense wooded area on your left.

3 → 4 Gawsworth Drive to Ancient Crosses



Turn left along Gawsworth Drive and at the T-junction cross straight over to pass through more black metal gates, back into Sandbach Town Park. Pass the brick sub-station and continue on the tarmac path into the park. At the fork you'll notice a young tree on the right, planted to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. To the left are older trees, planted for the Silver Jubilee of George V and the Coronation of George VI. At this fork keep right, following the path along the right-hand edge of the park.

You'll emerge back alongside the first bowling green and out through the park gates that you came through earlier in the walk. Keep ahead past the library on the left, cross over the road with care and turn right for a few paces to reach a small roundabout. Turn left, passing an open car park on the left.

Keep ahead and you'll reach the ornate red brick market hall on the left. At the end of Congleton Road, swing left passing in front of the market and town halls. Over the main entrance are two statues: one is of Bigot, the first Norman to hold the Manor of Sandbach (nephew of William the Conqueror), and the other is of Sir Randolph Crewe who was ancestor of the Right Honourable Hungerford, Lord Crewe, whose coat of arms also appears over the door. There is a ballroom on the upper floor with fine oak beams, and a gallery at one end of the building. The original building was constructed by local builder John Stringer in 1889/90 at a cost of £5000.

Keep ahead down the High Street and you'll come to the Market Square with the war memorial in front of you. Turn left into the Market Square where you'll find the Ancient Crosses. The Saxon crosses are two sandstone obelisks which stand in the cobbled Market Square. They are believed to date from the 8th or 9th Century and were a monument to the introduction of Christianity into the area. The larger of the two obelisks depicts scenes from the Bible showing John the Baptist in the Wilderness, the Birth of

Jesus, His trial and crucifixion, the Ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles. The smaller shaft shows events leading up to Prince Paeda of Mercia's conversion to Christianity and his eventual marriage to Alchfleda.



Ancient Crosses to End



When you've finished admiring the crosses, come back to the High Street alongside the war memorial. Turn left for just a few paces and then turn right down the path opposite the black and white timber framed florist. Follow George's Walk through a handful of small shops and you'll emerge with the Post Office on the right.

Keep left along the pavement with the large Waitrose across to the right. On the left you'll notice an abundance of buddleia bushes within the hedgerow which attract a large number of butterflies in the summer months.

Cross over the side road – Brook Court – and at the roundabout, continue on the pavement as it swings left. Take a moment here to look over the metal barrier to your left. Running below you'll see a small stream. This sandy brook is thought to be the source of Sandbach's original Saxon name, Sanbec, and is said to be the site of Prince Paeda's baptism in 653AD.

Follow the pavement along to the traffic lights. Turn left here onto the High Street, crossing Brook Bridge where you'll be able to see the sandy beck below once again. Keep ahead for just a short distance where you'll reach Old Hall for some well-deserved hospitality.

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

