

Sutton Hall and Macclesfield Canal, Macclesfield, Cheshire



Moderate Terrain

4 miles
Circular
1.5 to 2
hours

200114



Access Notes



- 1. The walk has a few gentle gradients throughout plus one short steeper slope.*
- 2. The outward leg crosses farm pastures which can be very muddy so good boots are a must. The pastures are likely to be holding cattle (and maybe sheep) so take care with dogs.*
- 3. There are 2 stiles, several gates and some flights of steps to negotiate along the route (the stiles do have wire fence surrounds, although there was a gap big enough for our standard poodle to squeeze through).*
- 4. The canal towpath can be narrow in places so take care to keep children away from the water's edge.*

Sutton Hall is a 480 year old manor house now converted into a proper pub with a friendly and unpretentious atmosphere and a warren of dining areas.

A 4 mile circular pub walk from Sutton Hall in Sutton, near Macclesfield in Cheshire. The walking route heads out across farmland to reach the nearby Sutton Reservoir before returning along the towpath of the Macclesfield Canal. You'll be able to enjoy the peace of the rural landscape and the laid back feel of the canal, all with the stunning back drop of the nearby Peak District hills.

Getting there

There is more than one place named Sutton in Cheshire, so be sure to make your way to the right one. The Sutton you need is the one about a mile south of Macclesfield. The walk starts and finishes from Sutton Hall which is off Bullocks Lane in Sutton. The pub is marked with a brown sign and has its own large car park.

Approximate post code **SK11 0HE**.

Walk Sections



Start to Hall Lane



From the pub car park, walk back along the access drive to reach the main road. Cross over with care and turn left along the pavement for just a few paces. Cross back over the road to turn left down the tarmac residential lane, passing the property Coney Greave on the right. Continue along this lane, passing the large white Sutton Seate on the right. Just beyond this, turn right over a stile into a field (which is likely to be holding cattle).

Cross the field diagonally (at about 2 o'clock), heading for a large tree stump in the middle of the pasture. When you reach the tree stump, with a marker post alongside,

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bear slightly left and follow the footpath as it then runs alongside the fenced playing field to the right. In the field corner cross the stile, go down the short slope and bear right along the footpath, with a pretty stream running down to the left. You will emerge out to a T-junction with Hall Lane.

1 → 2 Hall Lane to Leek Old Road



Cross over with care and turn right along the pavement. Keep ahead on the main village road, crossing over the side roads Church Lane and Brookside Avenue. Just after the lane swings left, turn right along Symondley Road. At the end of the road, pass through the small wooden gate into the field (again likely to be holding cattle) and keep straight ahead following the fence line on the right.

At the far side of the field, pass through the metal kissing gate into the next field and continue along the right-hand boundary. In the field corner, turn right through the kissing gate and keep ahead along the small embankment with a stream running down to the left. When you reach a pretty stone bridge across the stream, cross over this and then turn right to continue on the footpath with the stream now to the right.

Pass through the kissing gate and continue on the path through a section of woodland. Cross over a footbridge at a junction of several streams, and continue a little distance further to reach a T-junction with Leek Old Road.

2 → 3 Leek Old Road to Macclesfield Canal



Cross over the road with care to take the gate opposite (at about 11 o'clock) and keep straight ahead on the path with a stream to the left and the open water of Sutton Reservoir to the right. Take time to enjoy the water birds that make the reservoir their home.

At the end of the reservoir, bear right through the wooden gate. Do NOT go ahead along the obvious embankment path, instead bear left to head down the side of the embankment to reach a footbridge at the bottom. Cross the footbridge, keep ahead on the path and then pass through the kissing gate to reach a T-junction with the main London Road.

Cross over the road with care. Turn left along the pavement for just a few paces then turn right and cross the bridge (Number 48A) over the canal. At the far side of the bridge go down the steps to reach the towpath of the Macclesfield Canal.

3 → 4 Macclesfield Canal to Gaw End Lane Bridge



Turn left along the towpath, passing under the bridge, with the canal running on the right. Follow the towpath for some distance.

Unusually, Macclesfield Canal was commissioned and built when the threat of the competition from the railways was already in sight. The formal opening took place on 9th November 1831, with ceremonial processions of boats from Congleton and Marple proceeding towards Macclesfield. The procession was meticulously timed such that boats would arrive at Macclesfield from both directions at the same time, when a salute was fired. With mission accomplished, the proprietors and dignitaries retired to the Town Hall for dinner.

You will pass by a swing bridge (Number 47) where a footpath crosses the towpath. On the left here is Danes Moss Nature Reserve which is managed by Cheshire Wildlife Trust. The reserve was still work in progress when we walked (Nov 2013) but the site, once complete, will include boardwalks and interpretation boards. The site is a rare lowland raised bog with peat up to five metres deep. The reserve is home to seven species of sphagnum moss and many insects including dragonflies and damselflies.

Take time to explore the nature reserve should you wish then continue along the towpath. Further along you will pass under Gaw End Lane Bridge (Number 46).

4 → 5 Gaw End Lane Bridge to End



Keep ahead on the towpath and from this point you will have great views of the hills on the edge of the Peak District ahead of you. Ignore the footpath forking off left, simply keep ahead on the canal towpath.

Continue under the stone arch bridge (Number 45) which carries London Road overhead. Follow the towpath, still enjoying the views of the Peak District ahead. Pass under the final bridge (Number 44) and just afterwards, turn sharp left up the shallow steps to leave the canal. Turn left along the road edge (taking care of any traffic). Follow the narrow pavement over the canal bridge and immediately afterwards turn left down the entrance drive of Sutton 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.

