Little Manor and Bridgewater Canal, Warrington, Cheshire

Moderate Terrain

3.5 miles
Circular
1.5 hours

200114





Access Notes

1. *The route is almost entirely flat. The disused railway line is a wide, stone-surfaced track making for easy walking.*
2. *The return leg follows the grass/mud canal towpath which is much narrower and can be a bit soft in places, so if you have a pushchair with you, you may prefer to re-trace your steps back along the old railway instead.*
3. *The path which joins the railway and canal sections includes a short flight of steps, a kissing gate and a squeeze gap.*

The Little Manor was built in 1660 and still exudes lots of original character.

A 3.5 mile circular pub walk from the Little Manor in Thelwall, Cheshire. The walking route makes use of two adjacent long-distance trails. The outward leg follows a disused railway line which today is part of the Trans Pennine Trail, while the return leg follows the towpath alongside the Bridgewater Canal, part of the Cheshire Ring Canal Walk. The route is easy to follow and gives opportunity to enjoy the surrounding quiet rural countryside plus the bird and boat life along the canal.

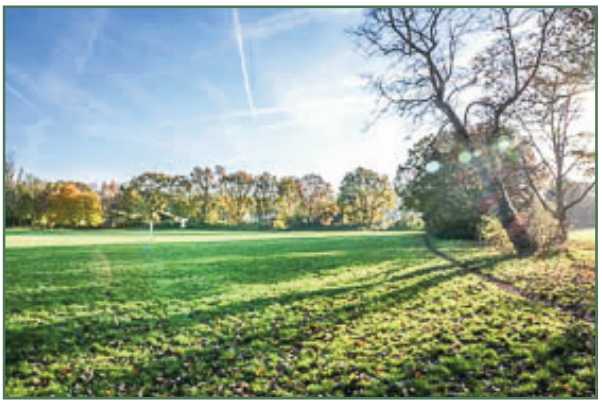
Getting there

Thelwall is a suburban village of Warrington, Cheshire and is located very close to the Lymm junction of the M6. The walk starts and finishes from the Little Manor on Bell Lane, which has its own large car park.

Approximate post code **WA4 2SX**.

Walk Sections

Go 1 Start to Trans Pennine Trail



Standing in the pub car park, facing the pub's front door, turn left and follow the car park lane round to the back of the pub. On the left you'll find a small black metal gate which leads you into the adjacent playing field. Turn right for just a few paces and then turn left onto the stone path with the football pitch to the left and a row of trees to the right.

A little way along the path snakes right then left to continue running to the right of the trees. Keep ahead on the wider tarmac path which passes between houses. At the fork (with an oak tree) keep right then cross over the small road to continue on the tarmac path opposite.

You will come to a T-junction with the main A56 road. Turn right along the pavement. When you draw level with the side road (All Saints Drive) on the right, cross over the main road with care to join the marked footpath opposite.

AllTrails

We have created this walk with the help of AllTrails. Download the app to follow the route on your phone for live updates of your position and distance walked amongst other things. You will find lots of walks across the country including walks from the rest of the Brunning and Price family of pubs.

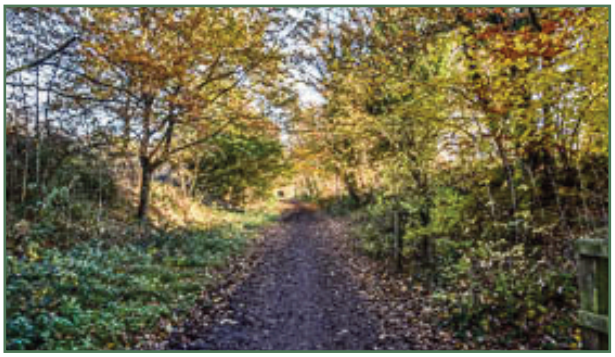
alltrails.com

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

Follow this stone lane over a bridge and immediately afterwards turn left down the fenced slope to reach the Trans Pennine Trail.

1 → 2 Trans Pennine Trail to Bridgewater Canal



At the bottom of the slope keep right to join the disused railway that forms part of the Trans Pennine Trail. Continue on this long straight path for some distance.

The track bed you are walking on was once part of the Warrington and Stockport Railway which was opened on 1st November 1853. Thelwall was served by a station here, which carried passengers to Warrington from where they could connect to Manchester. The line was closed to passengers in 1962, although it was still used for freight (including carrying coal to Fiddlers Ferry Power Station) until the early 1980s. Today the track bed forms part of the Trans Pennine Trail. The 207 mile long coast-to-coast foot and cycle trail runs from Southport on the west coast to Hornsea on the east coast.

Eventually you will pass under an old cast iron bridge and then the path climbs a little. You will hear the noise of the M6 motorway just ahead. Follow the path as it swings left and then right, passing under the M6. Continue on the trail as it descends once again and passes under the A56. Just after this bridge you'll notice a stepped concrete block on the left (you may have noticed an identical one just before the bridge too). These blocks are to help horse riders dismount and remount as, with a clearance of just 8 feet 9 inches, the bridge is too low to ride under.

Continue just until you reach the next bridge over the old railway. Turn left just before this bridge, up the flight of wooden steps. Go through the kissing gate and then turn sharp right, through the squeeze gap, to cross the bridge over the old railway. Follow the path as it swings left passing the front of some pretty terraced cottages, and then right down a wider tarmac lane. You will come to a T-junction with the Bridgewater Canal.

2 → 3 Bridgewater Canal to Thelwall Underbridge

Turn right along the towpath, with the canal to the left. After just a short distance keep left at the fork to pass under the A56 bridge. Continue on the towpath which now becomes a narrow stone/grass path. Follow the towpath for some distance, passing back under M6 along the way.

The Bridgewater Canal takes its name from the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater, Francis Egerton who commissioned it to serve his coal mines. The canal opened in 1761 from Worsley to Manchester and was later extended to run from Runcorn to Leigh. The Bridgewater is often considered to be the first true canal in Britain, as it relied upon existing watercourses only as sources of water rather than as navigable routes. The canal now forms an integral part of the Cheshire Rings network of canals. The 97 mile ring of canals takes about a week to navigate on a canal boat and so is very popular for narrowboat holidays. It passes through contrasting landscapes between Manchester city centre and rural Cheshire, with views of the Peak District and Cheshire Plain.



Much further along, you'll pass a set of steps of to the right which lead down to the old railway that you used for your outward leg. Do not take these, instead keep ahead on the towpath passing over Thelwall Underbridge.

3 → 4 Thelwall Underbridge to End



Continue on the canal towpath just as far as the next arched bridge overhead. Pass under this and then turn sharp right up the slope away from the canal. Bear left to join the stone track heading away from the bridge. The track leads you back over the old railway and you will come to a T-junction with the A56.

Note: From this point you will be re-tracing your steps back to the pub. Cross over the road with care and turn right along the pavement. Continue past the large white property on the right and, soon afterwards, fork left down the signed tarmac footpath. Cross over the side road and continue on the footpath opposite. At the junction of paths, with an oak tree, keep left and follow this path into the playing fields. Keep ahead and then follow the path as it snakes through the line of trees. Continue for just a short distance further to reach the Little Manor for some well-earned 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.

