

Haslington Conservation Walk

A pleasant and interesting waymarked circular walk from Haslington village

Grade	Easy
Distance	4 ½ km / 2 ¾ miles
Time	1 hour - 1 ½ hours
Start	Waterloo Road Car Park, Haslington SJ 738 558
Map	OS Explorer 257
Terrain	Relatively flat footpaths and tracks across farmland and a golf course
Barriers	7 stiles, 10 kissing gates, 1 field gate/gap
Toilets	None on the route; facilities are available at pubs in the village for patrons
Contact	Public rights of way: pro@cheshireeast.gov.uk 01270 686029. Haslington Conservation Volunteers: 01270 582642



Route Details

This route uses parts of two local walks developed by Haslington Conservation Volunteers. The village of Haslington, 2 miles from Crewe, provides easy access to attractive countryside. The route is signed with waymarkers, at first green, and then later brown.

Location: This walk starts from Waterloo Road Car Park in Haslington village. Map OS Explorer 257, grid reference SJ 738 558, post code for sat navs: CW1 5TF.

Public transport: Bus numbers 20, 37, 38 & D1 run through Haslington from Crewe, Sandbach and further afield with a bus stop on Crewe Road near to its junction with Waterloo Road. For details contact Traveline on 0871 200 22 33.

Terrain: Relatively flat footpaths and tracks across farmland and a golf course.

Barriers: 7 stiles, 10 kissing gates, 1 field gate/gap.

Toilets: None on the route; facilities are available at pubs in the village for patrons.

Refreshments: There a number of refreshment options in Haslington.

For further information contact:

Public Rights of Way:, Cheshire East Council, 2nd Floor, Old Building, Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 2BJ, prow@cheshireeast.gov.uk 01270 686029

Haslington Conservation Volunteers: 01270 582642 or see the noticeboard at Waterloo Road car park.

Some interesting history, wildlife and habitats which you will pass on this walk

The word Haslington possibly originates from 'Haeslen Tun' meaning 'a farm among the hazels'.

The original Haslington Hall was situated between Waterloo Road and Crewe Road and could still be seen in the village until the early 1880s. In fact early motor cars used to stop at its moat to fill their radiators during the journey between Crewe and Sandbach. The moat became known as the mere and occasionally flooded.

During the war prisoners of war held captive in Crewe Hall were marched along these roads for exercise. Until mid 1989, a Second World War air raid shelter stood at the junction of Cross Road and South Avenue. During the war it was fitted out with carpets and easy chairs.

As you walk over these fields try and picture a local skirmish which took place in 1643 during the Civil War This was the time of the 'Barthomley Massacre' and when Crewe and Haslington were pillaged by the Royalists. Slaughter Hill was the site of a small battle which according to local legend made the brook run red with blood. A sword was actually found embedded in a bank of the brook in the 1940s. However, Slaughter Hill may be a corruption of 'Slow Tree Hill' as slow trees (blackthorn) have grown here for many years.

On this walk you will cross land owned by the Duchy of Lancaster. You will pass a house call Amicia Tenement. It is much more elaborate than an average estate cottage because it was built by Lord Crewe as a retreat from Crewe Hall. Amicia was the name of a daughter of Lord Crewe. Her grave can be found in Crewe Green Church graveyard. The Crewe Estate was sold to the Duchy of Lancaster in 1936.

Crewe Golf Club opened for play on 13th May 1911. The land for the original nine hole course was rented from a local farmer at a cost of \$4 per annum. The greens were fenced and bunkers only allowed if they did not interfere with cattle grazing. There were 15 registered caddies who were paid 3d per round plus an extra 1d for cleaning the clubs after the game. The original timber club house with a wooden veranda was burnt down one evening in 1969.

Most of the land from the golf course round the route as far as Haslington Hall was owned by Lord Crewe in the Middle Ages, sold to the Delves Broughton estate of Doddington in 1776 and sold by them to Cheshire County Council in 1911 to become valuable County Council smallholdings.

Somewhere in the area of Hall o' the Heath Farm were Haslington Heath and the gallows, although the Heath in the farm name refers to the name of the family who farmed here for many years in the 1700s. The footpath follows an old track which in the 1700s was the main link between Haslington and Oakhanger.

Ponds are rich wildlife habitats and the ones on this route are no exception. The rough edge where the footpath runs is important for wildlife, providing a sheltered environment for amphibians, insects and small mammals.

Park Road, as its name suggests, used to cross the open parkland associated with Haslington Hall. The fields that you see today show no evidence of parkland landscape. An Ancient burial mound was also located in this area but again there is no trace of it on the ground. In fact Park Road used to be called 'Barrow Ditch'.

You will pass through the oldest part of Haslington with several 16th century buildings still standing. The Hawk Inn was used in olden times for stabling horses. The inn also had a mortuary and its own ghost 'The Lady in Grey'. Other notable buildings include the Old Manor House. Originally a three story building, it formerly contained the Red Lion.

In School Lane the school was originally an all female establishment. Records from 1860 indicate that it was a National School taking up to 100 pupils. However, because weekly fees were payable and attendance optional,

numbers averaged only 40. Earliest records of a church on the present site of St Matthew's Church date back to 1648 when the building was a black and white timbered construction. The current church was built in 1810 and paid for by Reverence Sir Thomas Broughton of the Delves Broughton family of Doddington, who owned much of the land locally. Until the ground was consecrated in 1811 the mother church at Barthomley was used for burials.

At the junction of Waterloo Road with the main road there was for many years a working blacksmith. First built in the 1500s to serve the original Haslington Hall, the Brereton family were the blacksmiths for several generations. The last horse was shod at the old smithy in 1974.

Directions

1. Turn left out of the car park and walk along Waterloo Road, then turn right into Cross Road.
2. Turn right out of Cross Road and take the first left down South Avenue.
3. Cross the stile and follow the waymarked path down towards the valley of the River Waldron (better known locally as the Valley Brook). You have now crossed into the parish of Crewe Green. Continue over a further stile and a kissing gate straight ahead. For this first part of the route, follow the green waymarkers.
4. Turn left over a stile at the bottom of the second field. Continue from that field over a stile and onto a path running alongside Amicia Tenement. Cross a further stile into a field and continue with the fence on your left hand side. At the other side of the field you will find a stile leading onto the golf club car park.
5. On reaching the golf club car park carry on along the gravel track with the club house on your left.
6. Pass through the maintenance depot and take the path between the two high hedges. Cross the fairway with care and keep to the left of the pond.
7. Leave the golf course through the kissing gate, returning to the parish of Haslington, and follow the path to Hall o' the Heath Farm. From here, now follow the brown waymarkers, taking care as there are five footpaths through the farm!
8. Through the next kissing gate follow the route of the concessionary path and Conservation Walk to the left, not the public footpath and Circular Walk to the right. The first area on the left is a wildlife garden, developed in 2007/8. A variety of trees, shrubs and plants that are beneficial to wildlife have been planted here. A number of wildlife habitats have also been created here.
9. After the next kissing gate pass the pond and wild flower area to your left. This area has been fenced off to allow management of the area to maintain the wild flowers and grasses, of which 40+ species of flowers and 13 species of grasses have been recorded around this pond. You are walking through a wild flower meadow planted in spring 2007.
10. After the pond go left through the next kissing gate. On your left notice the small copse planted during 2001/2 with a total of 17 different species including Alder, Goat Willow and Silver Birch. It is an excellent wildlife habitat for birds, small mammals and butterflies, as well as Great Crested Newts.

Carry on through another three kissing gates (all stiles along this section of the route have been replaced with kissing gates by Haslington Conservation Volunteers).

11. At the fourth gate turn right on to a gravel track. After forty metres turn left through a field gate so that the hedge is on your right. Follow this hedge to the bottom of the field. Several oak trees have been planted and protected in this hedge and more bird nest boxes provided. The boxes are used by Tree Sparrows (this is a food area for this now scarce species), Blue Tits and Great Tits. In this area you may also see Buzzard or Kestrel and hear Yellowhammer and Skylark.

12. At the kissing gate at the bottom of the field go left at an angle across the field heading for the house.

13. At the stile you have entered Park Road. Follow this left up to the main road.

14. Turn left, passing the church, turn left after the village green and you are back at the start of your walk.