

Places to visit

Anson Museum

Tel: 01625 874426

www.ansonmuseum.org.uk

Visit

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/rangers

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The Ranger Service protects, enhances, encourages and promotes the proper use of the Council's outdoor recreational facilities.

For further information telephone 01625 504528 or go to:
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/rangers

Follow The Countryside Code

Helping everyone to respect, protect & enjoy our countryside.

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people



www.nhs.uk/change4life

Walks from Nelson Pit Visitor Centre

6

Facts

Distance

5.6 km (3½ miles)

Time

About 2 hours

Start

Nelson Pit Visitor Centre

Terrain

Moderate

Map

Ordnance Survey Explorer 268

Refreshments

The Coffee Tavern and Boars Head Pub situated near to Nelson Pit, and the Trading Post on the canal towpath by Mount Vernon Wharf.

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Nelson Pit ► Macclesfield Canal ► Lyme Park

Introduction

One of a series of circular walks from the Nelson Pit Visitor Centre. The route follows the Macclesfield Canal north and then along wide country tracks before an uphill stretch into Lyme Park. The views from the highest point near Lyme Park on a good day are spectacular.

Route

From Nelson Pit Visitor Centre, exit the car park, turn left along the road to join the Macclesfield Canal at Mount Vernon Wharf, just before the bridge.

- i** Coal mining in the Poynton area lasted nearly 450 years. There was a coalpit in Worth, (just about half a mile from the Visitor Centre), by 1589, and deeds of 1612 refer to newly sunk mines there. The last mine to close was Lawrence Pit in August 1935, when 250 men were laid off. At the peak of production in 1870 Poynton mines employed 550 men underground, 160 above ground and made a profit for the owner, Lord Vernon, of £17,000.
- 1 Turn left over the small bridge and past the Trading Post. Follow the canal towpath under bridge 14.

- i** Bridge no 14 was designed as an 'adjustable bridge', the parapet can be taken off and the stone raised in the event of subsidence. About 300 yards beyond bridge 14 look left and see the remains of Canal Pit. Here a steam engine, nicknamed, 'Redlegs', pumped water out of the pit as well as winding men up and down.

- 2 Continue along the towpath until reaching bridge 13. Walk under, turn left through the kissing gate and over the bridge.

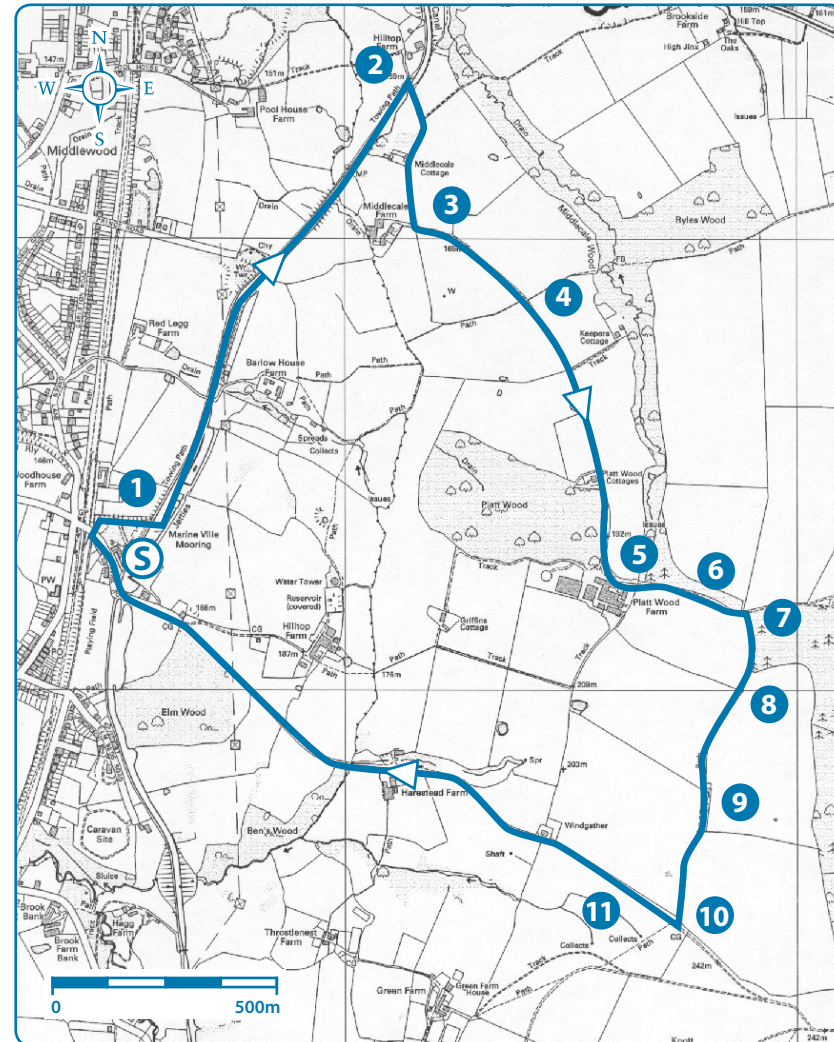
- i** Opened in 1831, the Macclesfield Canal was surveyed by Thomas Telford. He was the engineer to the Exchequer Loan Commission, a government body that gave loans for building canals. One of the last 'narrow' canals it was almost too late because the Liverpool and Manchester Railway was already running. The canal could accommodate horse drawn barges with a maximum size of 70' long by 7' wide, and a total capacity of 30 tons per barge.
The Macclesfield Canal made a very modest return for its investors of 1½% per year. In its heyday the canal carried coals from the Poynton collieries; raw cotton to Bollington; silk from Macclesfield and gritstone from Kerridge. A toll was fixed of between one and two old pennies per mile. But it suffered the disadvantage of stoppages due to freezing. For three weeks in 1835 it was totally frozen over despite the efforts of ice breaking boats. The canal was sold in 1847 to the railway company.

- 3 Follow the wide track until reaching a T-junction. Turn left and follow the track. On the horizon you will see The Cage in Lyme Park. Continue through a farm gate, ignoring a footpath which crosses the track.

- i** The Cage was built in the 1520s as a hunting tower to observe the movements of the deer. It was later used to "imprison" poachers overnight before being taken next day to the forest court at Macclesfield. During the Second World War the Home Guard used the Cage as a lookout point. On a good day it is possible to see the Welsh coast from the Cage.

- 4 Climbing slightly uphill, cross another stile with a yellow marker indicating straight ahead.
- 5 Pass in front of Platt Wood Farm, a fine farmhouse dated 1866.
- 6 Walking slightly downhill, cross a stile and onto a tarmac track.
- 7 Reaching a dry stone wall after 200 yards, turn right and walk uphill adjacent to the wall.
- 8 Following the line of the wall, cross a stone stile in the left-hand corner of the field.
- 9 Cross another stile adjacent to an old stone barn.
- 10 Continue along the wall and cross the ladder stile into Lyme Park.

i The history of Lyme Park stretches back to 1346 when Edward III's son, the Black Prince was knocked off his horse and in danger of being captured or killed at the Battle of Crecy in Normandy. Sir Thomas Danyers rescued the Black Prince and the Royal Standard. As a result Sir Thomas was rewarded an annuity of £40 a year from the king which was exchanged by his granddaughter 50 years later for the Lyme Estate. The land was mainly moorland, probably envisaged as a hunting area, and covered 1400 acres. Sir Thomas was made Sheriff of Cheshire, but in 1353 he was charged with bribery and theft. Amongst the charges against him were running a protection racket and stealing fish from his neighbour's ponds!



- 11 Turn right walking down the sandy track. Through a kissing gate, then downhill passing Haresteads Farm on the left. Continue, briefly uphill, then gently downhill, passing woods on the left. Follow the track over the canal and back to Nelson Pit.

The Anson Museum

Located a short distance from the Visitor Centre down Anson Road towards Poynton. The Museum was built on the site of Anson Pit which closed in 1926. The land and many of the exhibits were donated by the late Les Cawley. The Museum houses probably the largest display of Internal Combustion Engines in Europe. It has a predominantly working display of early engines with particular emphasis on oil and gas machines made in Manchester. There is an admission charge.



The Temperance Tavern



Boars Head pub around 1900

In the early 1870's, Lord Vernon, the owner of the Poynton Pits, became concerned that his miners were spending too much of their wages getting drunk in the local taverns. In particular the old Boars Head pub, which was located at the end of Anson Road, just opposite Nelson Pit and a short distance from Anson Pit, was the cause of most concern.



Coffee Tavern 1876

He decided to build a 'temperance tavern' serving coffee instead of alcohol. And so the Coffee Tavern was erected in 1876, and run by a Mrs. Mossihead. The Tavern had a function room for funerals, weddings and 21st Birthday celebrations, plus a

Sunday School. In the cellar, cured bacon was stored, produced from the pigs kept in the garden. The Coffee Tavern is still operating, from the same shop, opposite the Visitor Centre. It obtained a licence to sell alcohol in 1998, some 122 years after opening!

The old Boars Head pub was demolished in 1906 and replaced with a larger pub, still called the Boars Head and was built adjacent to the Coffee Tavern.

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