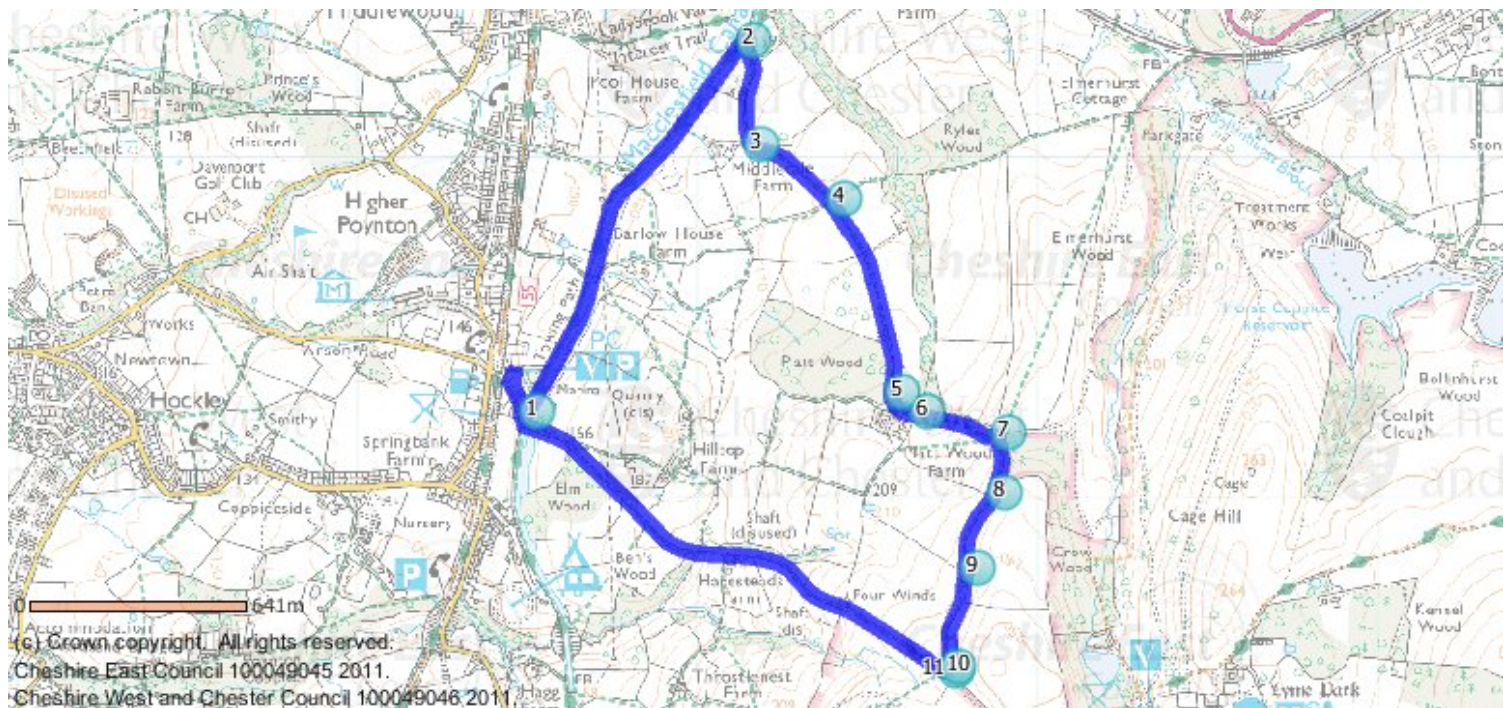


Nelson Pit Walk 6 One of a series of circular walks from the Nelson Pit Visitor Centre.

Grade	Moderate
Distance	5.6 km/3.5 miles
Time	About 2 hours
Start	Nelson Pit Visitor Centre
Map	OS Explorer 268
Terrain	Moderate
Barriers	N/A
Toilets	Available 364 days a year between 10.00am and 4.00pm at the Start and End of the route.
Contact	01625 383700



Route Details

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.

The route begins at Nelson Pit. Coal mining in the Poynton area lasted nearly 450 years. There was a coal pit 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.

The route takes you along the Macclesfield Canal. Opened in 1831, the 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.

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!

[Download leaflet here](#)

Directions

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.

1. Turn left over the small bridge and past the Trading Post. Follow the canal towpath under bridge 14.
2. Continue along the towpath until reaching bridge 13. Walk under, turn left through the kissing gate and over the bridge.
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.
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 tarmacadam 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.
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.