

Trent & Mersey Canal Middlewich



This level canal-side towpath walk offers a great insight into the waterway's corridor as it flows through the town of Middlewich. In contrast to the busy roads, slow down to the pace of life of the canals.

VISITOR INFORMATION

LOCATION: Right in the heart of Middlewich town.

PARKING: Free car park off Sea Bank, approximate postcode: CW10 0JF, with 1 disabled bay, and a 2.1m (6¾') height barrier.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

Bus routes: Arriva bus No. 37, 37A, 37E Northwich - Middlewich - Crewe / Sandbach • D&G Bus No. 42 Crewe - Leighton Hospital - Middlewich - Holmes Chapel - Congleton.

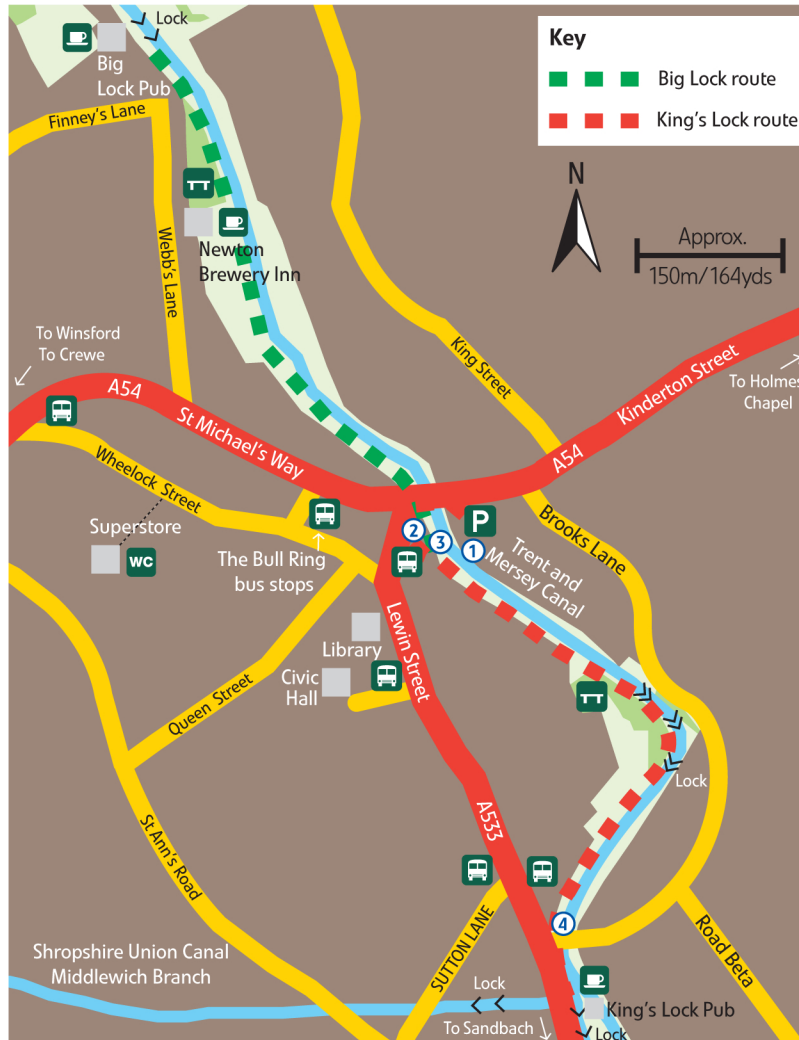
Bus stop: Lewin Street / Kinderton Street.

Distance to start of walk: You're at point 2!

TOILETS AND REFRESHMENTS:

Facilities are available for patrons of the refreshment stops along the way. There are public toilets off Southway in the town centre, open 8am-5pm in summer and 8am-4pm between November and March. Here an accessible toilet is available for RADAR key holders, though the approach involves steps or a ramp.

FURTHER INFORMATION: The towpath is managed by the Canal & River Trust. Web: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk Tel. 0303 040 4040.



Suggested Route

DISTANCE: Both routes are approximately 1.6km (1mile) return.

TIME: About 45 minutes one way or 1½ hours there and back.

SURFACE: Good, level surface of compacted gravel throughout, of at least 1.2m (4') width. May be muddy after rain and watch out for mooring rings at the side of the canal. The short lane to the canal has an uneven, broken surface.

GRADIENTS: Access to the canal towpath at point 2 is via a short path with a 8.3% (1:12) gradient. The Big Lock route is level. The King's Lock route involves slopes by the locks, of up to 15% (1:6) over 25m (27yds).

GATES, STEPS, BENCHES AND BARRIERS:

No gates or steps on the route, bar a 5cm (2") difference in levels between the pavement on Lewin Street and the lane to the canal. The route passes between vertical posts, offering gaps of 1.5m (5ft) at point 2, and 98cm (38") at point 4.

On the King's Lock route there are 5 benches with backrests adjacent to the route at about 45cm (1½') height. Note that 4 of these benches are on a narrower and muddier path that runs parallel to the towpath and is, at 15% (1:6) of a gentler gradient than the lockside ramp. On the Big Lock route there is one bench by the children's play area towards the turn-back-point of the walk, offering seating at 45cm (1½') height, with a backrest but no armrest.

DESCRIPTION:

King's Lock route:

1. The route starts at Sea Bank carpark from where you can walk over the canal along the pavement of Town Bridge, and bear left down Lewin Street.
2. Immediately on your left is a lane. Turn down this lane, then continue through a gap in the black railings to cross the gravel to the canal.
3. Once on the towpath, follow the canal to your right. You'll pass 3 locks as the canal climbs up.
4. After the canopy of Middlewich Narrowboats, you'll pass under an arched bridge (watch your head!) before seeing the King's Lock pub ahead. Here, the Middlewich Branch of the Shropshire Union Canal joins the Trent and Mersey. It's here that you'll probably want to turn around and retrace your steps.

Big Lock route:

1. Reach the canal by following the above steps to point 3. Once on the towpath, follow the canal to your left, passing under Town Bridge. Continue along the towpath as the canal heads northwards. You'll reach Big Lock where there's a pub and a 'Welcome to Middlewich' sign, greeting narrowboaters to the town. Rest a while and watch the boat traffic, and then turn to retrace your steps.



Canal & River Trust