

The area of the River Weaver in Nantwich has been modified over the centuries to serve a water mill, which was located at the western end of Mill Lane. The surviving remains of this mill probably occupy the site of a mill dating back to the 14th century. The mill was used for the production of cotton and, later, corn before being destroyed by fire in 1970. Nantwich Lake was created in the 1970s as a way of controlling the brine flowing from nearby springs and frequent flooding to the saline spring which feeds the outdoor brine swimming pool.

River Weaver and Nantwich Lake

Opened in 1835, the canal was originally known as the Birmingham & Liverpool Junction Canal after the cities that it was designed to connect. Only a few years later, mergers and an Act of Parliament created the Shropshire Union Railways & Canal Company. The word "Railways" indicates the way in which transport methods were changing. The company's engineer, W.A. Prouis, realised that if railways were built along existing canal beds the construction costs would be halved. Actually, few railways were built and the Shropshire Union Canal system remains largely intact.

Shropshire Union Canal

Stretch your legs on this pleasant walk from the town centre, taking in the Riverside Park, the Shropshire Union Canal and historic Welsh Row. Just follow the signs in either direction and get to know the countryside and its history within such easy reach.

Welsh Row was known as Frog Row in the medieval period. By the late 15th century the name of the street had changed to Welsh Row due to the presence of Welsh businessmen in town for the salt trade. Salt production has occurred in the area since Roman times and Nantwich continued to be significant in the trade until around the end of the 17th century. Artefacts from the salt trade are on display in the Nantwich Museum.

Welsh Row

At Marsh Lane Bridge note the stop-gates which are there to minimise loss of water in the event of a

As you pass under the bridges look out for the grooves in the iron work which protected the brickwork from abrasion due to grit on the horse-drawn boat ropes. You'll also pass a mile marker opposite the broad section of canal. This area is known as Marsh Lane Wide and is said to have been the source of sand and gravel used in the canal's construction.

Engineer Thomas Telford's original plan had been to take the canal straight across Dorfold Park and into Nantwich Basin which was the terminus of the Chester Canal. However, the owner of Dorfold Park was not persuaded and Telford was obliged to build a long embankment around the edge of the park and an aqueduct over the road. This was a difficult and costly business as the embankment repeatedly collapsed during construction.

breach in the embankment and aqueduct. The lengthman, who was employed to look after a stretch of canal, lived in the nearby cottage so that in the event of a crisis he could quickly close the gates.



Nantwich Riverside Loop Walk



A circular 5 km / 3 mile way-marked walk from Nantwich town centre exploring along the River Weaver and the Shropshire Union Canal

Further suggestions on exploring the Cheshire East countryside can be found on Discover Cheshire www.discovercheshire.co.uk or from the Public Rights of Way team email: pro@cheshireeast.gov.uk tel: 01270 686029 www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pro

VISITOR INFORMATION

- Location:** Nantwich Riverside Park is located close to the town centre.
- Parking:** Car parks can be found off Shrewbridge Road (CW5 7AF) and at Nantwich Lake (CW5 7AE).
- Public transport:** Nantwich is well connected by bus and rail services, and has a number of bus routes within the town itself.
- Refreshments and toilets:** There are facilities along Welsh Row and in the town centre.

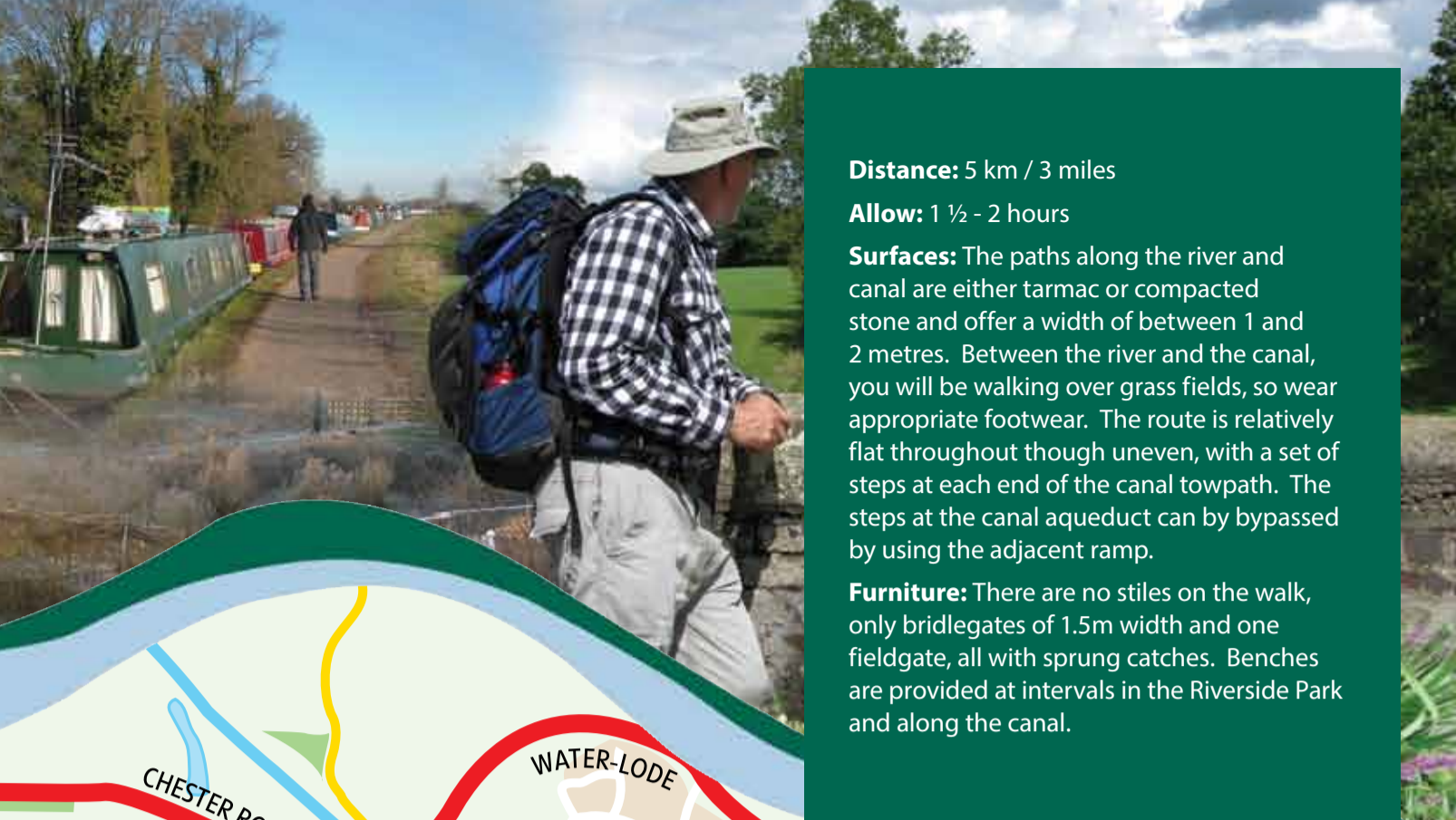


Canal & River Trust



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Distance: 5 km / 3 miles

Allow: 1 ½ - 2 hours

Surfaces: The paths along the river and canal are either tarmac or compacted stone and offer a width of between 1 and 2 metres. Between the river and the canal, you will be walking over grass fields, so wear appropriate footwear. The route is relatively flat throughout though uneven, with a set of steps at each end of the canal towpath. The steps at the canal aqueduct can be bypassed by using the adjacent ramp.

Furniture: There are no stiles on the walk, only bridlegates of 1.5m width and one fieldgate, all with sprung catches. Benches are provided at intervals in the Riverside Park and along the canal.



Key

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DIRECTIONS

- 1 Leave the car park off Shrewbridge Road via the path into the Riverside Park and turn left when you reach the river.
- 2 Continue along the path around the pond, continuing over the footbridge and along the path to Nantwich Lake.
- 3 Continue straight on along the path between the lake and the river.
- 4 Cross the footbridge which spans the outlet from the lake, and bear right at the waymark post through a snicket to the Shrewbridge Road.
- 5 Cross the road and turn right along the pavement for 110 metres to a bridgeway signpost and gate in the hedge on the other side of the road.
- 6 Cross the field to a bridge over a stream accessed by a bridlegate.
- 7 Leave the bridge through the second bridlegate and bear right to climb the rise to the edge of the field.
- 8 Turn left along the field boundary, passing a stile on your right hand side and continue on to a fieldgate and enclosure.
- 9 Go through the fieldgate and cross the enclosure bearing right to a bridlegate.
- 10 Having passed through the bridlegate, walk along the edge of the field keeping the boundary fence on your left hand side. Just before the railway crossing, go through two bridlegates.
- 11 Cross the railway line with care and follow the path through a further bridlegate, closing all gates behind you.
- 12 Continue along the path between fences, through a bridlegate and onto a causeway across a pond. Leave the causeway by means of the bridlegate and continue across the field, keeping the boundary on your left hand side.
- 13 Leave the field through the bridlegate onto Green Lane, taking a look back behind you across the Cheshire Plain to the distant hills of the Peak District.
- 14 Descend the steps at the side of the bridge down onto the towpath of the Shropshire Union Canal. Turn right under the bridge and walk along the towpath.
- 15 Continue along the towpath under Marsh Lane Bridge. Follow along the embankment on the approach to the aqueduct which carries the canal over the Chester Road.
- 16 Having crossed the cast-iron aqueduct, turn right down the brick steps or carry on to use the slope down to the road. Using the crossing, follow Welsh Row towards the town centre, keeping Malbank School on your left hand side.
- 17 Turn right down St Anne's Lane and follow the path to the bridge over the River Weaver onto Mill Island.
- 18 At the signpost, turn left along the path to the site of the old water mill. Turn right to follow the path with the mill chase on your left hand side, crossing the bridge over the weir.
- 19 At the next signpost turn left to follow the River Weaver on your left hand side, then turn left over the river.
- 20 Bear right to go under the railway bridge. Bear left to return to the car park off Shrewbridge Road, or follow the river back to Nantwich Lake.

The Countryside Code
Respect · Protect · Enjoy

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs

