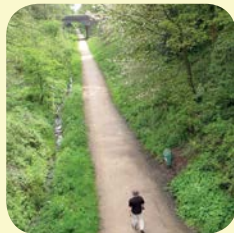


Salt Line, Borrow Pit Meadows & Wheelock Rail Trail



The Salt Line

- A 2.5 km / 1 ½ mile long multi-user trail for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- Formerly a branch line of the North Staffordshire Railway.
- A mainly wooded trail running through farmland and other woodlands.
- Suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs with RADAR locks fitted to existing gates installed at main access points.
- Ideal for short family bike rides.
- Includes the Solar System Trail which provides a fun way of learning about the huge distances between planets as well as taking a nice walk in the countryside.



The Borrow Pit Meadows

- Borrow Pit Meadows is a reclaimed landfill area, now managed for wildlife conservation. The area is particularly good for bird watching.
- Comprises meadows, wooded areas and a large pool.
- A reclaimed landfill area now managed for conservation and informal countryside recreation.

Note: Farm animals graze parts of the site at certain times of the year. Keep dogs under close control.



Red cup fungus



Local history

Cheshire is famous for its salt. In this area there were numerous salt works where brine was pumped from underground, then heated in large pans until the water evaporated leaving white salt crystals. The salt works at Rode Heath were located next to the canal from where salt was transported around the country by narrow boat.

There was also a salt works at Malkin's Bank which was served by the railway and canal. It's hard to imagine there was a large goods yard and sidings where the Malkin's Bank golf course is now situated. The branch line opened in 1852, to carry coal and limestone to the salt works. In later years a passenger service ran daily until the line was closed during the Beeching cuts.



Rode Heath salt works

Walking, cycling and horse riding

By exploring the local footpath network around the Salt Line and the Wheelock Rail Trail you can have a great day out. Why not try the Hassall Green Explorer route?

The Hassall Green Explorer leaflet is available online at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/rangers. You can walk a large figure of eight loop of 17.6 km / 11 miles, or split this into two shorter half day walks. Local pubs and cafes provide a friendly welcome to walkers, so why not plan your route to call in for refreshments on the way?



For cyclists and horse riders there are quiet lanes and bridleways near to the Salt Line enabling a longer ride to be organised.

For those who want to explore the local area further, Ordnance Survey map sheets covering the area are: Explorer sheets 257 (Crewe & Nantwich), 268 (Wilmslow, Macclesfield & Congleton) and 267 (Northwich & Delamere Forest).



Each season brings wonderful natural delights to see and hear. Spring flowers including bluebells, lesser celandine and wood anemone brighten the banks of the Salt Line. Listen for the melodious tunes of chiffchaffs and willow warblers.



Summer is a good time to look for butterflies including speckled wood, comma, orange tip and gatekeeper. If you walk around the Borrow Pit Meadows on a warm day you may be lucky enough to see a grass snake basking in the sun. These snakes are totally harmless and won't hurt you or your dog.

In autumn, migrating birds such as fieldfares and redwings arrive and feed on hedgerow berries. Look out too for kestrels hovering and hunting and for buzzards circling high in the sky.

Volunteering with the Ranger Service

Volunteer help is greatly valued on countryside sites and some great results are achieved. Rangers carefully manage projects to ensure they are suitable and enjoyable for those involved. Anyone can get involved and projects range from heavier work such as path building and scrub clearing through to help with wildlife and botanical surveys. From individual volunteers who work closely with Rangers to large weekend groups, there is usually something of interest for everyone.

If you would like to help please get in touch using our contact details on the back of this leaflet or email rangers@cheshireeast.gov.uk.



Installing a new gate



Repairing path surfaces



Lesser celandine



Native black poplar



Dryad's saddle fungus

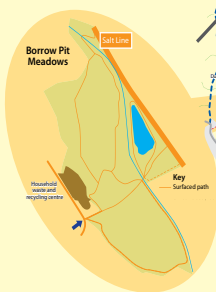
Salt Line, Borrow Pit Meadows and Wheelock Rail Trail area explorer map



Ramsoms or wild garlic

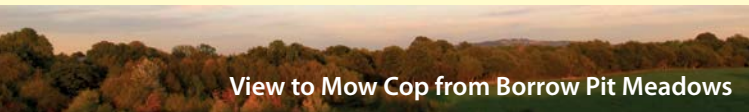


Borrow Pit Meadows



| Key | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Public house | PH |
| Post office | PO |
| Public footpath | - - - - - |
| Bridleway | - - - - - |
| Main access point | ➔ |
| Scale | 1 km |
| | 1/2 mile |

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View to Mow Cop from Borrow Pit Meadows

The Wheelock Rail Trail



- A 1 ½ mile / 2 km long trail for walking and cycling.

- Part of Route 5 of the National Cycle Network.

- Once a railway line, important for local industry which was based on salt.

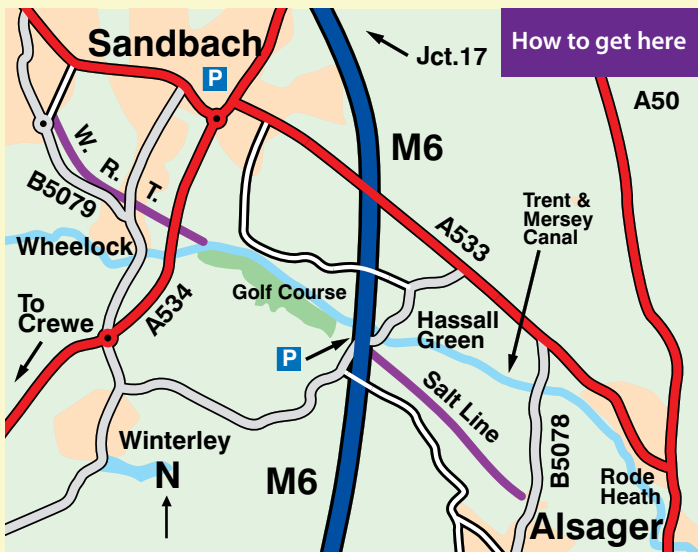
- An excellent link to local footpaths, bridleways and canal towpaths.

- Great for bird watching and wildlife watching.



Kestrel

The Salt Line, Borrow Pit Meadows and the Wheelock Rail Trail are managed by the Countryside Ranger Service.



The Salt Line near Hassall Green is approximately 1 mile / 1.6 km off the A533, between Sandbach and Alsager. The car park post code for sat nav is CW11 4YB. Grid reference: SJ775 582

There are various access points to the Wheelock Rail Trail. The north end post code for sat nav is CW11 3NQ. Grid reference: SJ741 604

There are train and bus services to Sandbach and Alsager, with a bus service through Hassall Green. Contact: The Countryside Ranger Service, Cheshire East Council, Astbury Mere Country Park, Sandy Lane, Off Newcastle Road, Congleton CW12 4FR. Telephone: 01260 297237 / email: rangers@cheshireeast.gov.uk

