

## Walk No. 7 Forest View Walk

### A Longer Ramble To Norley And Back

An undulating walk through the Cheshire countryside passing a number of places of local interest. There are good views over Delamere Forest and northwards towards the River Weaver and Mersey Estuary.

**7 miles, say 3 to 3½ hours.**

Start at Norley Road Playing Fields car park, grid ref. SJ 602715.

**Leave the car park through the entrance near the scout hut, then cross Norley Road and go down Trickett Lane opposite.**

Trickett Lane, was named after the Trickett family who lived for almost two centuries at Ashbank, opposite to Sandiway CP School. The Tricketts, major landowners, were great benefactors to the village. The Ashbank estate was sold in 1948 and was developed as the three major housing estates.

**Turn left into Moss Lane, follow the road round to the left and climb to the top of the hill. Where the road turns left (as Poplar Close), take the paved footway right to Nixon Road. On reaching the road, immediately take the paved footway on the left that leads through to Grange Road.**

The council houses on Nixon Road were the first to be built in the village, circa 1930. The road is part of an old green lane and was named after a local businessman, Hughie Nixon who was also the district surveyor.

**On reaching Grange Road, turn right and follow it round to the left to the T-junction with Manor Road. Here turn right again and follow the road round to the left to the T-junction with Ash Road. Turn right to reach the main A49 (Forest Road).**

**Cross with care to a kissing gate opposite that is the start of the “Granny’s Hump” path to Ravensclough; enjoy the view as you go down the hill. At the bottom the path crosses a stream and skirts – sometimes very muddy – the garden of Ravensclough Manor, soon climbing up to come out onto the Delamere Loop bridleway.**

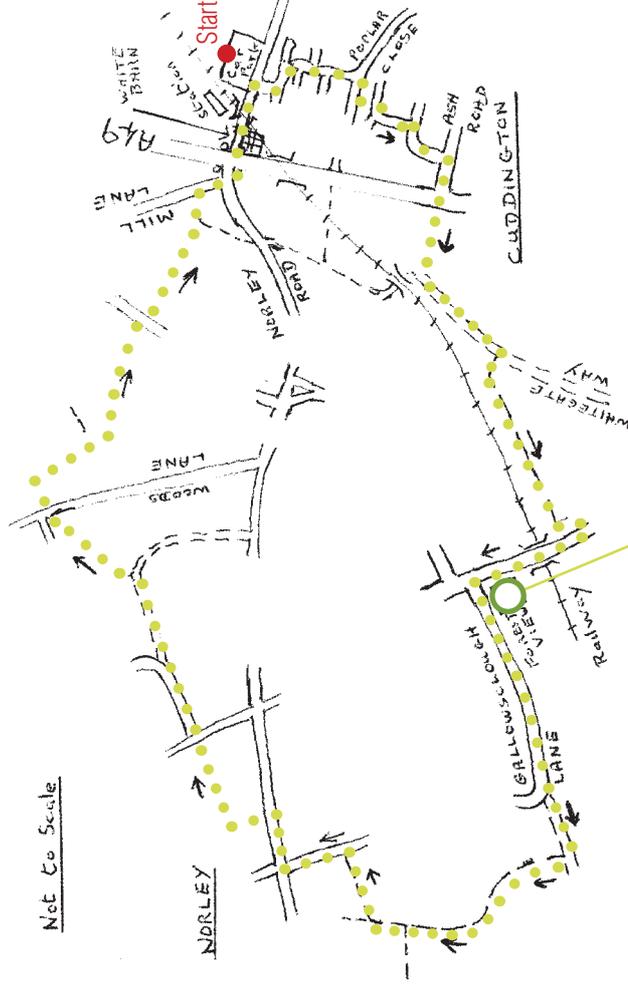
Granny’s Hump: The old name was “Brunt Brows” but it became “Granny’s Hump” after old Granny Birtwistle who lived in the Waste Cottage, now replaced by Ravensclough Manor.

**Turn left and follow the path up to join the disused railway track (now the Whitegate Way). Opposite the picnic table and information board, go right on the signed route to “Delamere Forest”, descending broad steps down the former embankment.**

The Whitegate Way is the track bed of the former Winsford & Over branch railway. The junction off the main Chester-Manchester line was controlled by a signal box at Ravensclough Waste.

**Follow the wooded path between the Forestry Commission’s Lobslack tree Nursery on your left and the Chester to Cuddington railway on your right.**

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## Forest View Inn & Caravan Park

Popular country pub serving home cooked food.

**Tel: 01606 882860**

**In just over half a mile you reach the road at Stoneycroft Lane. Turn right and then pause on the railway bridge from where you can just catch a glimpse of Delamere Manor through the trees.**

Delamere Manor was built just before the 2nd World War when the incumbent member of the Wilbraham family vacated Delamere Park which had to be demolished. In recent times it has been owned by Gary Barlow, of "Take That" fame.

**Passing Cuddington Pool, in the grounds of Delamere Manor on your right, climb the hill ahead. Keep in single file close to the right-hand verge, as traffic comes very fast down this narrow hill. As you near the top of the hill, cross the road and turn left into Gallowscloough Lane – with the "Forest View Pub" on your left.**

Gallowscloough: Supposedly a grisly reminder of the old forest gallows when a man could be strung up for taking a few rabbits.

**Leaving the pub, follow Gallowscloough Lane for a mile until it turns sharply right. Leave the lane here to carry straight on for 150 yards, passing Claim Farm, and then go through the gate on the right onto a bridle path on the right, joining the Delamere Way. (The bridleway ahead leads into the Delamere Forest).**

Around the Forest one may be able to see grey wagtail, redpoll and reed bunting.

The Delamere Way is a medium distance path making a 21-mile loop from Frodsham to Stockton Heath passing through the Delamere Forest and over the Weaver at Dutton Locks.

**Follow the well defined path through gates and stiles along a track and then across an open field before turning to follow a left-hand hedge side to enter another track, descending to Small**

Bullfinches may be seen along the whole of this walk with numerous chaffinches and several yellowhammers particularly around this area. Other finches can include linnet, goldfinch and siskin.

**Turn left and immediately turn right over a stile aiming for the stream crossing opposite. Then bear right up the slope (which can be very muddy). Go over a stile with Home Farm now on your right.**

Home Farm served Delamere House. Nearby are the Gardener's Cottage, Hunts Wood and Keepers Cottage, all relics of the Wilbrahams of Delamere Park.

**Continue uphill with the fence on your right to a large oak tree on your left at the top of the hill where the Delamere Way branches off left down into the Weaver Valley. We leave the Delamere Way here and instead continue along the path along the side of the field with the gardens of the backs of the houses of Delamere Park on your right.**

The houses of Delamere Park were built from the mid-1970s onwards on the Park of the old parkland of Delamere House, developed by the Wilbraham family from 1784. During the 2nd World War, the Park was a military camp and then housed displaced persons, many from Poland, prior to the building of new council estates in Cuddington and surrounding villages.

**At the end of the field cross a stile with steps leading down a wooded slope, then take another stile ahead to continue following the field edge around the back of Delamere Park until reaching an unmade track that leads you to Cuddington Lane.**

Enjoy the views along this stretch. The conspicuous concrete tower of Daresbury Physics Laboratory is due north from here).

Three species of pigeon were noted on the fields behind Delamere Park, viz. collared doves, wood pigeons and a sizeable flock of stock doves. A flock of about 30 meadow pipits, as well as a couple of skylarks and several pied wagtails.

**Turn left, and almost immediately turn right onto a concrete track leading to a footpath. Before descending the hill, stop and lean on the iron gate to admire the view over Cuddington. At the bottom of the hill you will cross Cuddington Brook where can be seen the remains of sluices can be seen. These once controlled the water supply to the mill downstream. Follow the path keeping Merlewood Pool on your right. Where the path forks at the end of the fence, continue straight ahead through a kissing gate, and over a footbridge to join Mill Lane.**

Merlewood House was built in the late 19th century by a member of the Thompson salt family, of Northwich, hence the old local name for the pool, Thompson's Pool.

On Merlewood Pool a pair of swans, several coot, moorhen, mallard, tufted duck and heron may be seen.

**Turn right up Mill Lane to Norley Road, where you turn left towards the traffic lights with the "White Barn" pub ahead of you. Cross over the busy A49 at the light-controlled crossing on the left, and then follow Norley Road ahead for a short distance over the railway bridge, passing Cuddington station below, and back to your starting point.**

The White Barn has been a hostelry since at least the 18th century and may previously have been known as the Bull's Head. The large granite boulder outside is an erratic boulder deposited during the melting of the last ice age, and dates from the time when the sand from which Sandiway gets its name was deposited.