

Sandbach Footpath Group

DAISY BANK from Malkins Bank.

Approx 3.5 miles or 5.6 km. Allow 1½ to 2½ hours

As with all country walks, some paths are wet, muddy and uneven, so wear strong footwear and have clothing to suit the weather.

On narrow country lanes, take care to watch for traffic as you climb down the stile to the road, and when walking on the road make sure you can see oncoming traffic.

If you intend to stop for refreshments at Malkins Bank Club House, you could park in the adjacent car park, otherwise park nearby.

Leaving the car park, walk along the canal towpath, with the canal on your right and at lock 63, bridge 151 turn left down a track, going directly across the golf course downhill, over the brook. This is a right of way, but look out for golfers teeing-off on high ground to your left. Stay on the track with Jubilee Villas on your left, and at the road go straight across into the minor road. After about 250 metres, with Bank Farm on your right, go over a high stile [ST1] on your left into the field and head slightly right with Bank Farm behind you. The farmer usually cuts a clear path through the crop, so the route should be fairly obvious.

Continue in the same line, looking for a stile in the far right hand corner. As you approach you should see a pond. At the pond go over the stile [ST2], continuing forward with the hedge on your right. At the next farm gate and stile [ST3], proceed into the next field, but now with the hedge on your left. Continue diagonally across this field, gradually moving away from the hedge on your left, going over rising ground then drop down to a hidden stile [ST4] by a large holly tree in the hedge, about 80 metres from the left corner of the field.

Immediately over the stile [ST4] go downhill along a leafy path, with trees, through a metal kissing gate. Continue with the hedge on your left and soon passing a house on your left. At the end of the path you meet the road (Alsager Road), go over a stile [ST6] and turn left. Having turned left you should see the grey door of Lodley Smithy, which is decorated with a horseshoe. Go past the next house, which is Daisy Bank, hence the name of the walk. Here you have a choice of the main walk or a road walk, alternative A.

(Alternative route A, avoiding stiles (see map for route A). There are about 7 stiles coming up, so if you want to avoid them, and do not mind walking along country lanes, do not take the next stile on the left [ST6], but continue on the road and after about 300 metres, ignoring a road on the left, you reach Fingerpost Farm, where you turn right to rejoin the original route and go straight over the motorway bridge)

Continuing on the main walk.

Soon after Daisy Bank turn left over a stile [ST6] into a field and follow a hedge on your right. Rejoin the road over another stile [ST7].

Turn left and follow the road to Butchers Bank Farm, on the left. On a bend just past the farm entrance, next to the electricity pole turn right over a stile [ST8], cross the farm

track and go immediately over another stile [ST9] into a field and go forward, keeping the hedge on your right.

On a clear day, pause a moment to take in the fine views of Mow Cop straight ahead.

Continue straight ahead over 3 more stiles, [ST10, ST11, ST12], the last of which, with Fingerpost Farm yard on your right, meets the road.

All routes

From Fingerpost farm, cross over the road, to follow the road sign to "Day Green" and continue straight over the motorway bridge. Then, just after a terrace of houses on the left, turn left into a minor road (Roughwood Hollow) and immediately turn left again onto a track.

Keep the hedge on your right and at a house called "The Knoll" go downhill, on leafy a path, bounded by a hedge on the right and a wooden fence left, on ground springy underfoot with leaf litter.

Over a boardwalk the path opens out with a hedge on the right and a wire fence left. In a glade by a river in the valley go left over a footbridge and over the stile [ST13] at the end of the footbridge.

Now go half right across a field and over a stile [ST14] in the opposite boundary hedge.

Go up the steps onto a wide gravel path.

[This is the Salt Line, on the course of the old railway between Sandbach and the Potteries. It is now an adopted footpath between Hassall Green and Alsager.]

Turn left, then after a just a few metres take a path to the right going uphill, through a gate between the trees and, with a wire fence on your right, ignoring the field opening left, go over a stile [ST15] where the hedge joins the fence.

In the field keep the hedge on your left. Halfway along the field the path leads downhill to the field corner, where you pass under a large old oak tree leaning over the path. Go through the kissing gate on the left, onto a track then over a stile [ST16] which leads to the road.

A short way before the road, look out for a magnificent black poplar tree with deeply fissured bark.

The track emerges on the road adjacent to St Philip's church at Hassall Green.

The church is immediately recognisable, being constructed of pink painted corrugated iron. Reputedly, the church was formerly St Mary's Church in Alsager, but being prefabricated it was brought into its present position in 1883.

(On another occasion, from this point you could try the Alternative Route B to return on the canal towpath, see below.)

At the road turn left, going under the motorway and just after some cottages which are virtually under the motorway bridge turn right up a track, then over a stile [ST17] by Sun Cottage on the left, and continue on the track shortly coming up to the canal bridge, number 148. Go over the stile [ST18], over the bridge and then over another stile [ST19] to leave the bridge.

Turn left and follow a footpath with the canal on your left.

(This is not the towpath, but if you want to try the towpath, see the alternative walk B, below.)

Cross a stile [ST20] (unless the field gate is open) and then a second [ST21], just after a double lock in the canal, the second stile being about 600m from the bridge. Now cut slightly right across the field, passing well to your left, another double lock in the canal.

Midway in the wooden fence ahead go over a stile. Turn immediately right and go down a track, which leads to the road.

(This track seems to be a permissive path, but the right of way would be over another stile opposite the one in the wooden fence, then another sometimes made awkward with electric wire fences, but it ends up at the same point, at the end of the track.)

Turn left on to Betchton Road, then after about 100m, turn left, over the canal bridge, to return to Malkins Bank Golf Club where you might stop for refreshments before driving off.

Alternative route B, returning on the canal towpath. From St Philip's, the pink church, turn right and go uphill on the road and on reaching the canal bridge number 147 and lock 57, join the canal towpath, turning left with the canal on your right follow all the way back to Malkins Bank.

Just a few metres before you reach the road bridge over the canal to the Golf Club, go through a wooden pedestrian gate, leading directly from the towpath, to the car park and Golf Clubhouse, where you might stop for refreshments before driving off.

Sandbach Footpath Group, Daisy Bank Walk

