

Walk 1a - A Good Introduction to Northwich Woodlands.

FROM ANDERTON CAR PARK

DISTANCE: 9.35KM / 5.8 miles; TIME: 2 HOURS 30 MINUTES

1. Cross car park from ticket machine and pass through Dragonfly Gates.
2. Bear right and follow downhill track past Dragonfly Pond on the left to the river.
3. Take the path to the right of the wooden steps. Walk over a small arched bridge to follow river to black and white Carden Ferry Bridge.
4. Cross the bridge and enter Carey Park, signposted 'Carey Park' and 'Northwich Town Centre'
5. At top of slope, bear left and cross the park by upper route. About a mile in length.
6. Pass to the left of Recycling Centre and drop down to leave Carey Park by Butterfly Gates down to Marbury Lane. Turn left, walk over the bridge towards the car park.
7. Opposite the entrance to the car park. Take the short flight of wooden steps on the right hand side of the road, signposted to Ashton's Flash. Turn right at the top.
8. Follow path and walk round both Ashton's and Neumann's Flashes. Passing a bird hide on your left, turn right before a kissing gate and cross a small stream.
9. This path leads onto Dairy House Meadows and at junction bear right and go through gates to follow track to black and white canal footbridge, signposted to 'Marbury Country Park'.
10. Cross the bridge and turn right to enter Big Wood. Follow path through the wood. After about a third of a mile, take a path on the right between a Beech and an Oak tree down to a stream (Forge Brook); the walk along the stream to the right is worth finding, full of wildflowers in the spring. Follow the path until you regain the main path opposite the Ice Pond. Turn right.
11. Just past the Ice Pond on the left and the Ice house on the right go right down the slope to Budworth Mere and then walk along the shore of the Mere.
12. Just before the boathouse, take left hand turn up to Rangers' Offices, Marbury Lodge and public toilets (such as they are!). A refreshments van serves drinks and home-made snacks at weekends and Bank Holidays.
13. Keep to main roadway following the line of the Lime Avenue, turn right at end of tarmac and continue to reach Marbury Lane. Cross the lane to a path opposite, signposted 'Hopyards Wood' and walk down the woodland path.
14. Follow path through wood along the stream (Marbury Brook) to cross the arched footbridge over the stream.
15. Follow the path uphill and turn left at junction to walk through the young tree plantation to Anderton Marina.
16. Walk to the road, turn left. Turn immediately left into the road sign posted 'Anderton Boat Lift'. To your immediate left is Anderton Marina and a restaurant, 'The Moorings', (01606-79789) which provides home made food (closed on Tuesdays).
17. Over the canal bridge take the path on the right back to the car park. Across the footbridge beyond the entrance to the Anderton Boat Lift is 'The Stanley Arms' (01606-75059), a pub which also has home-made food and a large beer garden, overlooking the canal.