

## Barthomley Ramble

This country walk starts and finishes in the village of beautiful half timbered village of Barthomley near Crewe.

Grade	Easy
Distance	5miles/8kms
Time	3 hours
Start	St Bertolines Church, Barthomley GR767524
Map	Outdoor Leisure Sheet 257 Crewe and Nantwich
Terrain	Fields, fairly level, some small slopes
Barriers	Stile 10 approx
Toilets	No public toilets (toilets at White Lion for patrons only)
Contact	01606 271830



## Route Details

The walk starts and finishes in the village of Barthomley.

The beautiful red sandstone church of St Bertoline sits above the picturesque White Lion pub and other typical Cheshire black and white half timbered cottages.

St Bertoline was said to have been an eighth century saint who performed a miracle in the spot where the church is built. The church is actually built on an ancient barrow mound, which could suggest that religious ceremonies have been carried out on this site for hundreds if not thousands of year.

Barthomley was described as "Berthemlev" in the Domesday Book and in the eleventh century was a small village, with a Lord of the Manor and a priest. The village had some farmland but back then woodlands and mosses dominated the landscape. Barthomley became part of the land owned by the Crewe family in 1608. The country estate was sold on to the Duchy of Lancaster in 1937, and has remained part of the Queen's estate ever since.

The surrounding countryside changed greatly during the period of the enclosures when rough land was brought into agriculture. By the nineteenth century a rich farming community had developed around the village, many of the farms are still working farms today.

The White Lion pub is named after the white lion on the Crewe family coat of arms. Although the building dates back to 1614 it was not used as an inn until the nineteenth century.

The little brook behind the pub which is crossed twice during the walk is called the Wulvarn Brook, so called because of the story that the last wolf in England was killed in Barthomley Wood.

Many of the small ponds also known as pits, that are passed on the walk were once marl pits. Marl is a lime rich clay that was dug out and spread over fields with sandy soils, to improve the quality of soil. Cheshire is particularly rich in marl pits.

The deep valley called Mill Dale also forms the county boundary with Staffordshire. Its depth provides shelter for wildlife and in spring the valley is carpeted with blue bells.

## Directions

1. From St Bertoline's church take the road to Alsager, passing the White Lion on your right. Note the little well set into the bank on the left just after the pub. Take the first track on the left, then after about 50m take the footpath to the right that runs along the side of a barn. Follow the footpath across several fields in the direction of the A500(T) and then turn left to walk along the road boundary fence until you reach the stile.
2. Cross the A500(T) with care. Turn left at the top of the steps and follow the footpath along a green lane passing a duck pond before reaching Mill Lane.
3. Turn left and walk past the entrance to Daisy Bank Farm, following the single track lane to the road junction.
4. Turn left at the road junction to follow the lane across the A500 (T) after the bends cross a little stone and brick bridge and continue ahead.
5. Turn right, just past the first footpath on the left, to follow a track between hedges used by horse riders. If you reach the next road junction you have gone too far. Follow the track to the end and turn right to follow the lane leading to Englesea Brook.
6. After walking along the road for approximately 300m take the footpath on the left, which follows along a hedge before entering the adjacent field. The path skirts around a pond, then veers left a little, away from the field edge making a bee line for the stile to the right of a small copse.
7. At Dean's Lane turn right and then after 200m take the second footpath on the left just after the entrance to Limes Farm. Follow this footpath along the field edges with the valley of Dean Rough on your right.
8. After crossing a small bridge in a tiny side valley continue ahead across the field but look for the stile in a thicket ahead, which marks the junction of several paths. Cross the stile, descend the bank and turn left on the bottom to follow a pleasant footpath in the valley bottom, past a pond and along the edge of pretty woodland slopes. Eventually join a track and follow this along to Audley Road.
9. At the road turn left to walk back to Barthomley.