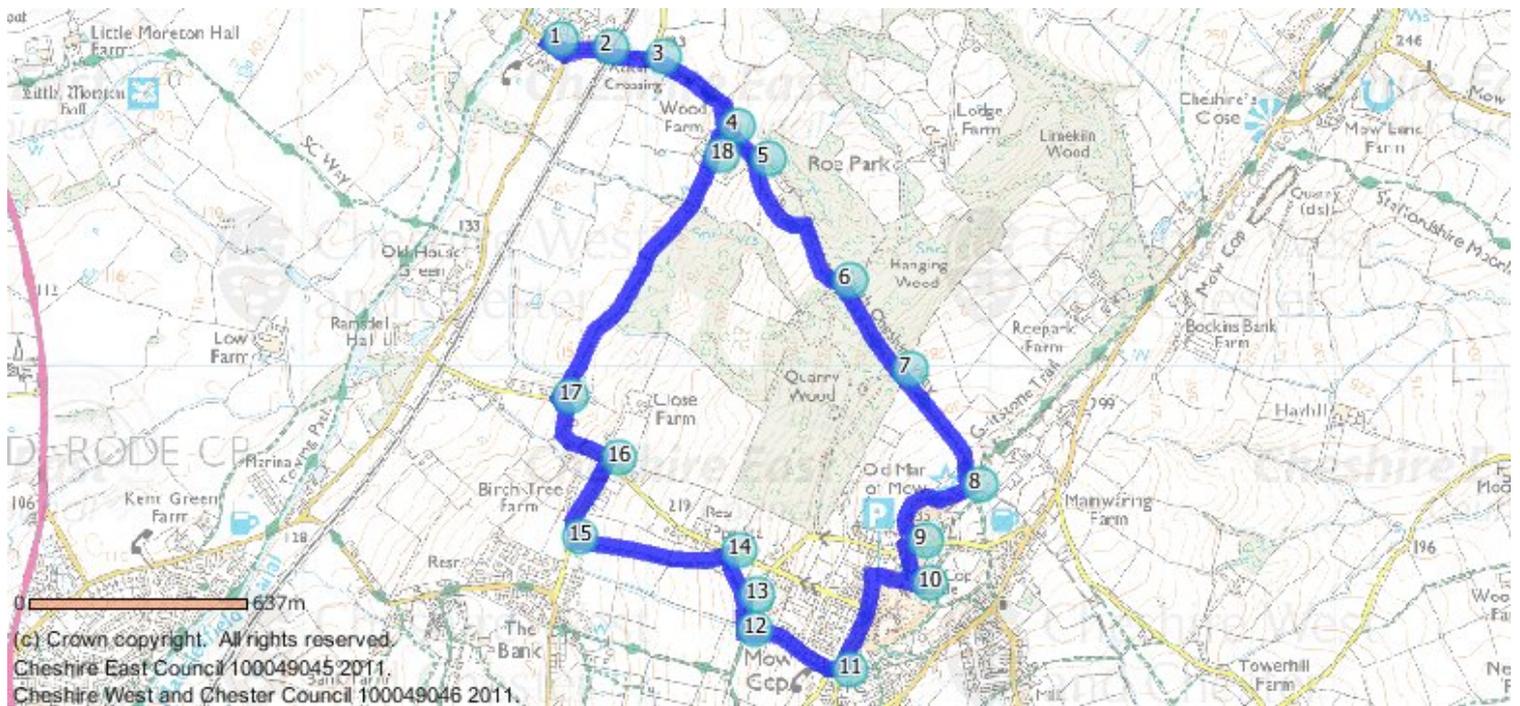


Mow Cop Loop

An energetic short loop, climbing onto the ridge leading to Mow Cop.

Grade	Moderate
Distance	6kms/ 3.75 miles
Time	2 hours
Start	Ackers Crossing GR SJ847589
Map	Explorer 258
Terrain	Field paths, tracks and stony paths. Muddy patches in winter. Some steep gradients.
Barriers	12 stiles, steep slopes
Toilets	None
Contact	01270 686029



Route Details

An energetic short loop climbing onto the ridge leading to Mow Cop. The path leads through beautiful woodlands and there are fabulous views from the ridge. Interesting industrial history – coal mining and Primitive Methodism.

The route leads through Roe Park Woods which are a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The woodlands consist of three separate woods called Hanging, Limekiln and Grotto Woods.

The circular walk passes between Hanging and Limekiln woods on the north-west facing slope of Mow Cop ridge. This woodland is Cheshire's most extensive area of semi-natural ancient woodland and contains woodland community types rare to the county. The soils, which are derived from the underlying Millstone Grit, are predominantly acidic and free draining, but are influenced by the Carboniferous Limestone strata just below the surface. The woods consist mainly of oak, both sessile and pedunculate. Many of the mature trees were felled during the Second World War but a significant number remain. Downy birch, rowan and holly can also be seen in these woodlands.

Near to the path you may see wavy hair-grass, bilberry and heather in the dryer open areas. Flowers include the opposite-leaved golden-saxifrage, wild angelica, common valerian and marsh hawk's-beard, an uncommon species in Cheshire.

The folly of Mow Cop was built as a summerhouse in 1754 for Randle Wilbraham I of Rode Hall. It is believed that he built it to enhance the view of the newly constructed Rode Hall, about 3 miles away on the edge of the Cheshire plain.

Mow Cop is often referred to as the home of primitive Methodism. The two founders of the movement were Hugh Bourne 1772-1852, and William Clowes 1780-1851. The first open air prayer meeting took place on 31st May 1807 and attracted over 2,000 people. In 1862 a Memorial church was built on the site of this open air meeting.

On leaving Mow Cop the route follows a footpath downhill past the Methodist chapel. Across the fields to the left, the Brake can be identified - this was once part of an old tramway which carried coal from the collieries east of Mow Cop down to the Macclesfield Canal at Hardings Wood. At one time a tunnel ran through the hill to join the collieries on the east side to the tramway on the west side.

Directions

1. Park at New Road Ackers crossing and walk towards the railway line, turning left on the corner into Yew Tree Lane.
2. Take the footpath on the right which leads under the railway and through a kissing gate. Then turn right following the South Cheshire Way (SCW).
3. After 50 m bear right up a track signed Mow Cop 1 mile and a quarter.
4. At next fork go left and ignore stile.
5. Bear right off sunken track following the SCW way marks into a field.
Follow the footpath across the field in front of a stone cottage and follow path along the left field edge steeply up hill.
6. Enter the woodland and follow footpath through.
7. Cross a stile into a field and walk ahead along field edge towards a radio mast.
8. At the ridge top join the GST and turn right walking past the Old Man of Mow.
9. On reaching the metalled road turn right and soon left onto Mow Cop land owned by the National Trust. Follow the track leading to the rear of Mow Cop folly itself.
10. After discovering the millstone, walk down into the car park and turn left at the road still following the GST.
11. Take the first right turning just past Coronation Mill and follow the GST ahead to the left of Mow Cop Methodist church.
12. At the bottom of the footpath turn right onto a track.
13. Turn left onto a bridleway.
14. Before reaching the road turn back on yourself left onto a footpath and walk down through fields to the road.
15. Turn right and left at the Junction into Drumber Lane.
16. Take care walking down hill around the bends.

17. Take the next footpath on the right, look out for finger post on the left side of the road. Follow footpath through a parking area and along a track leaving it at a bend to follow a footpath ahead along a field edge and into a wood.

18. Follow path around the back of a corrugated black shed and cross one more stile and arrive back on the track the walk started on. Turn left down the track and return to the kissing gate and path leading underneath the railway line back to the parking.