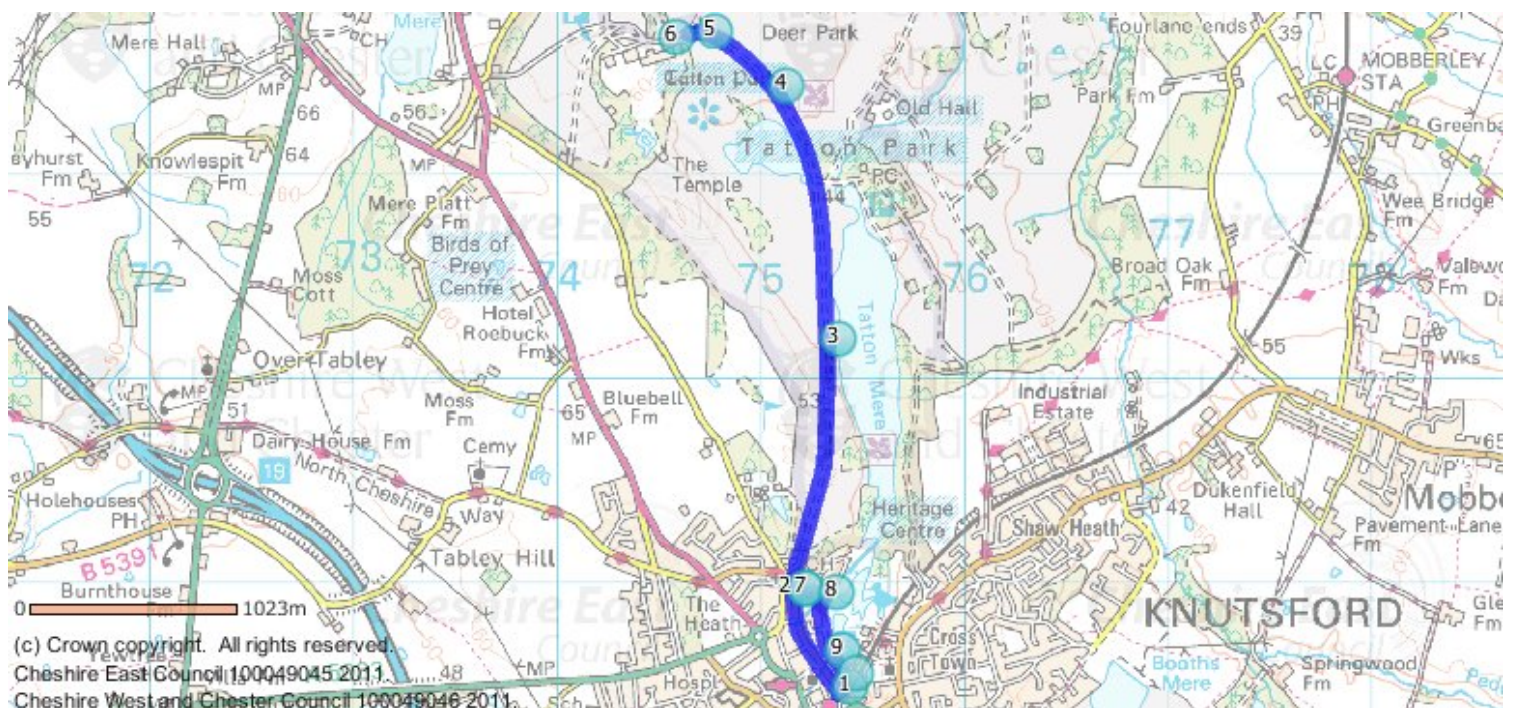


Knutsford Rail Trail Walk A circular walk exploring the beautiful and historic town of Knutsford and the grounds of Tatton Park

Grade	Easy
Distance	5 miles / 8 km
Time	3-4 hours
Start	Knutsford Railway Station
Map	OS Explorer 268
Terrain	Flat and accessible, though may be muddy in wet weather
Barriers	None
Toilets	Available at refreshment stops
Contact	www.tattonpark.org.uk Tel. 01625 374400



Route Details

This circular walk explores the beautiful and historic town of Knutsford as well as the grounds of Tatton Park. For more information about the Knutsford area, visit www.ivisitknutsford.co.uk.

Knutsford was recorded in William the Conqueror's Domesday Book of 1086 as Cunetesford ("Canute's ford"). King Canute (Knútr in Old Norse) was the king of England (1016–1035) and later king of Denmark, Norway and parts of Sweden as well. Knutsford was the model for Elizabeth Gaskell's novel Cranford. She lived in the town for some time and is buried in the Unitarian Chapel graveyard. Many of the places and people described in her books can be identified as being based on places and people in the town. In 2007 the BBC adapted the novel and produced the popular TV series, Cranford.

Tatton Park is one of the UK's most complete historic estates. The Mansion, Gardens, Farm, Old Hall, 1,000 acre deer park and speciality shops offer something for everyone. Tatton Park is one of the North West's most popular heritage attractions. It has a history dating back to Bronze Age farming and has been home to herds of deer since the 13th century. In the late Tudor period Tatton was acquired by the Egerton family who owned the estate until the last Lord Egerton died without heirs in 1958. Maurice Egerton bequeathed the estate to the National Trust and in 1960 a lease was drawn up with Cheshire County Council who managed and financed the property on behalf of the National Trust until April 2009, when responsibility transferred to Cheshire East Council.

The walk combines a leisurely exploration of Knutsford Town and clearly defined footpaths through the grounds of Tatton Park where a range of optional, additional short walks highlight the beauty and history of the park.

Terrain: The route is flat and can be accessed by wheelchairs and pushchairs, although patches of the parkland can be muddy. Good walking shoes are advisable.

Refreshments: There are many opportunities for refreshments both in Knutsford and Tatton Park, where toilet facilities are also available.

Directions

1. Coming from the Chester direction, leave the station at the ticket office and turn right, down through the carpark and turn left into King Street. Coming from the Manchester direction, leave the station on the level, through a small car park and turn left into Adams Hill and left again under the railway bridge into King Street. This delightful route passes numerous attractive shops, cafes and restaurants.
2. As you leave the town head towards the gate ahead, as this is the pedestrian entrance into Tatton Park.
3. There are several tracks through the park which head towards the Mansion and the one to the right of the main drive affords beautiful views of Tatton Mere. Keep parallel to the main drive as it bears left and you pass Melchett Mere on your left hand side.
4. Take the footpath on your left towards the Mansion which can be seen in the distance.
5. Proceed past the Mansion and enter the courtyard, where there are excellent café and toilet facilities, as well as a chance to buy tickets to visit the Mansion and gardens.
6. At this point, a number of optional extensions can be added to the walk and maps showing the routes can be picked up from the shop or Stables Restaurant or downloaded at www.tattonpark.org.uk. There is a nature trail which starts in the Stableyard and then follows numbered wooden posts (2–19) painted with an orange band, and if you chose this route you can leave the trail at point 17, where it joins your original route towards the Knutsford Gate.
7. Rejoin the route signed Knutsford Gate and exit the park. Turn left into Drury Lane and then bear right down the hill. You will pass the Ruskin Rooms. There is an inscription on the building which commemorates General Patton's use of the building during a stay in Cheshire, which reads 'Welcome Club' for officers of the Third Army opened by General George Patton on 25th April 1944 prior to participation in the Liberation of Europe.
8. Carry on past the attractive pastel cottages and admire the name plates which include 'Linen House' and 'Tower House'.
9. Bear right at the bottom of the hill and follow the road with a brook to your right and glimpses of the Mere on your left. The road opens out as it passes the Moor, a popular site for families with a large children's play area.
10. At the end of the road you will meet the junction with King Street and the Railway Station is in front of you.