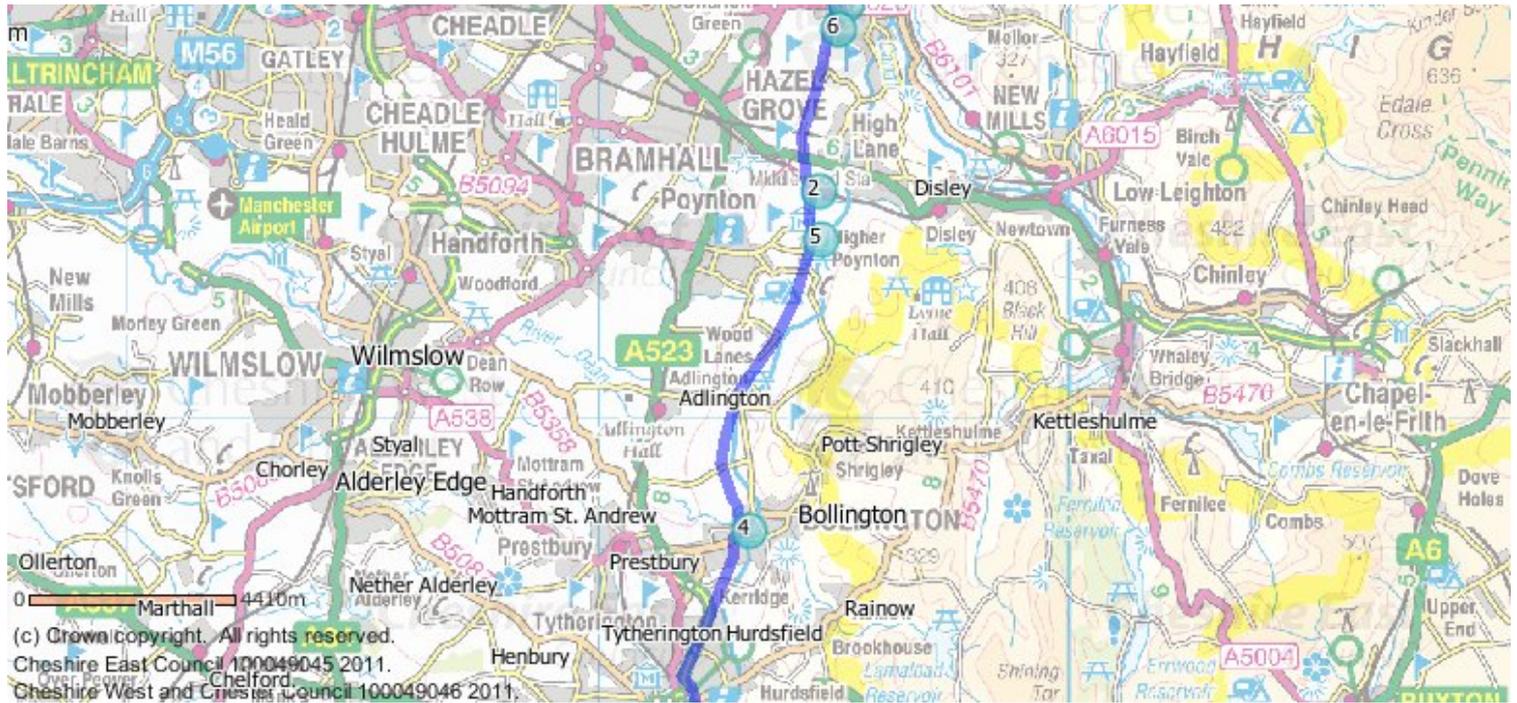


Middlewood Way_riding

The Way offers a 16km/10mile traffic-free route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. It follows the line of the former Macclesfield, Bollington and Marple Railway.

Grade	Easy
Distance	11km/7miles
Time	3-4 hours
Start	Either from south, at horse access point by Bollington viaduct, or from north, at Rose Hill, Marple. Horsebox parking recommended at Jackson's brickworks, Higher Poynton and Rose Hill, Marple
Map	OS Explorer 268
Terrain	Level and flat with compacted surface; horse riders share a parallel route with cyclists.
Barriers	The length available to horse riders is barrier-free; at car parks and crossings, wheelchair-friendly kissing gates are installed.
Toilets	Adlington Road, Bollington viaduct, Nelson Pit Visitor Centre, Marple
Contact	Cheshire East Council Rangers Tel: 01625 383700 Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council 0161 4744 512



Route Details

The Middlewood Way offers a 10-mile (16-km) traffic-free route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. It follows the line of the former Macclesfield, Bollington and Marple Railway through picturesque Cheshire countryside and between historic mill towns. For much of its length, the Middlewood Way runs close to the Macclesfield Canal.

In 1863, the town of Marple, Bollington and Macclesfield were facing economic depression. Local dignitaries, in particular the cotton mill owners of Bollington, hoped that a new railway would improve their fortunes, and presented a scheme to Parliament. The Macclesfield, Bollington and Marple Railway opened in 1869.

The line carried cotton, silk, coal and passengers, but always struggled to make a profit. It was closed in 1970 and redeveloped for recreation as the Middlewood Way in 1985. The Macclesfield Canal was completed in 1831, very late for a canal – so late that it was almost a railway!

Coal from Poynton, stone from Kerridge and hats from Stockport were some of the cargoes carried. The canal was threatened with closure in the 1950s. A campaign by pleasure boaters saved it and today the canal is a popular leisure destination.

Directions

The Middlewood Way runs between the borough of Macclesfield and Stockport. From Macclesfield (1) to Middlewood Station (2), the Way is owned and managed by Macclesfield Borough Council, from Middlewood (2) to Marple (3) by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. The Macclesfield Canal is managed by British Waterways.

Horse riders can use the Middlewood Way from the Bollington viaduct (4) (Adlington Road) all the way to Rose Hill in Marple (3), a 7 mile ride. Recommended horsebox parking is at Jackson's Brickworks in Higher Poynton (5) and Rose Hill (6) in Marple. Riders can expect to meet pedestrians and cyclists; please do not bring your horse if it is easily startled and do not ride faster than a trot.