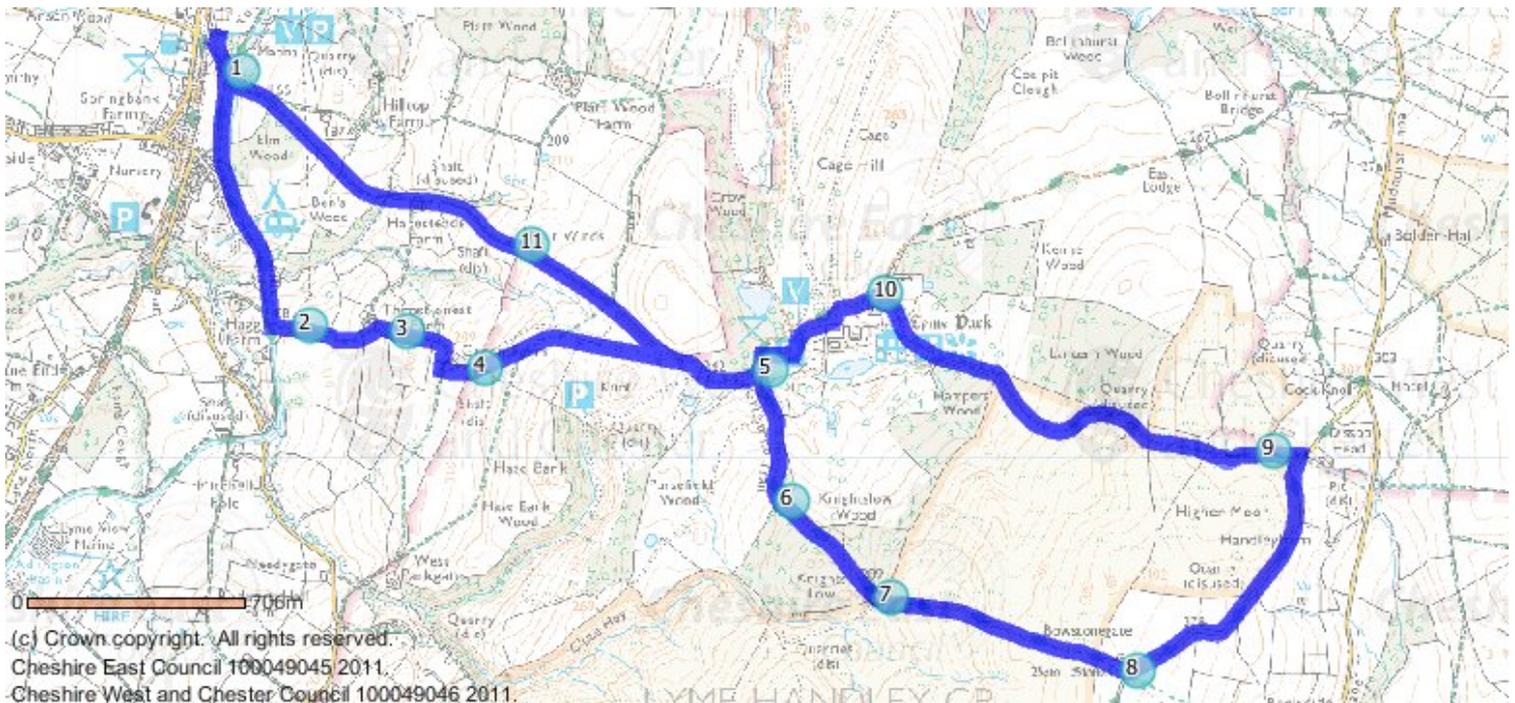


Nelson Pit Walk 7

One of a series of circular walks from the Nelson Pit Visitor Centre.

Grade	Challenging
Distance	9.6 km/6 miles
Time	3 hours
Start	Nelson Pit Visitor Centre
Map	OS Explorer 268
Terrain	Strenuous in parts
Barriers	N/A
Toilets	Available 364 days a year between 10.00am and 4.00pm at the Start and End of the route.
Contact	Countryside Rangers Tel: 01625 383700



Route Details

The route climbs over 1300 feet from Nelson Pit to Bowstones, and is partly strenuous. However, the views from the highest points on a good day are spectacular. This walk should be avoided on a misty day.

The route sets out along the Macclesfield canal. Its nickname is the 'Macc' and was surveyed by Thomas Telford - it cost £320,000 to build and opened on 19 November 1831. Tolls at one and two old pence were charged by the ton per mile. Coal and stone were the cheapest and finished goods the most expensive. The toll collectors were agents employed by the canal company, relatively well paid and usually armed.

The canal was used commercially until the 1950's. Self-employed bargees, called Number One's, charged for their services by the ton per mile and were the last vestige of the commercial traffic. Efforts by the British Waterways Board in the late 50's to stem the decline by building a series of narrow boats for commercial use were a failure.

The route joins The Gritstone Trail which is 18½ miles long and runs from village of Disley to the Staffordshire border. It traverses rugged upland country, pasture land and wooded river valleys. The whole area covered by the Trail used to be known as 'The Lyme', meaning 'border country'. The Gritstone Trail, including the former Mow Cop Trail, has been extended to make it more accessible by public transport. The route is split into three sections, which can each be walked in a day.

The Bowstones are thought to be remains of Anglo Saxon crosses that marked the edge of an ancient kingdom as well as objects of devotion.

Owned and managed by the National Trust, Lyme Park was transformed by the Venetian architect Leoni into an Italianate palace. Some of the Elizabethan interiors survive. The estate covers 1,400 acres of moorland, woodland and parkland. Lyme appeared in the BBC's *Pride & Prejudice* and Granada's production of *The Forsyte Saga*.

[Download leaflet here](#)

Directions

From Nelson Pit Visitor Centre, exit the car park, turn left along the road to join the Macclesfield Canal at Mount Vernon Wharf, just before the bridge.

1. Turn right under bridge 15 and continue along the canal until the next bridge, number 16, (Hagg Bridge). Turn right, then immediately left over the bridge. At the bottom of the steps turn slightly right across the field and through a metal kissing gate.
2. Turn left following the sight of the house on the horizon. Through another kissing gate at the top left side of the field. Follow the track round the edge of the field, turn left through a metal kissing gate. Continue along the track between the hedge and fence; turn right through a wooden gate.
3. Follow the tarmac road uphill, turn right in front of the farmhouse, (Green Farm), still following the road. Where the road forks, turn sharp left and through the waymarked gate, adjacent to the stone farm barns. Pass in front of the large metal barn and turn right.
4. Walk uphill, through a wooden gate and then left over a tall ladder stile. You are now in Lyme Park. Walk uphill, at an angle of about 45 degrees, at the ridge the track runs parallel to a drystone wall. Continue ahead and walk downhill towards the car park.
5. Reaching the T-junction at a cattle grid, with the house ahead, turn right and after a few yards walk through the high gate. You are now on the Gritstone Trail.
6. Up the path adjacent to the drystone wall, through a high gate, and follow the wide track ahead through the trees. This is Knightslow Wood. Through another high gate, walk uphill ahead.
7. Follow the wide track on the left, ignoring the narrow track on the right. At the brow of the hill cross a ladder stile over a drystone wall, straight ahead passing a house with large radio beacons. Cross a stile, turn left onto the road in front of Bowstones Farm, and within a few yards reach the fenced area of Bowstones.
8. Exit the Bowstones, turn left down the tarmac road. At the bottom of the hill as the road turns sharp right, cross a stile on the left. Head uphill following the track. Cross three stiles and continue uphill heading for a row of trees on the horizon.
9. At the top of the hill cross a high stone stile into Lyme Park. Walk downhill, with a view of Lyme Hall ahead, passing a disused quarry. Beyond the quarry look right for a view of the Cage. At the bottom of the hill cross a ladder stile, (Hampers Wood is on your left), walk down a stony path, ignoring a track to the left, and through a wooden gate.
10. At the T-junction turn left, walk in front of Lyme Hall, down the steps, across the car park and join the road walking uphill. Where it forks take the right track and continue uphill adjacent to the drystone wall.
11. Through a kissing gate, (exiting the park), then downhill passing Haresteads Farm on the left. Continue, now slightly uphill, passing woods on the left. Through a kissing gate, follow the track over the Macclesfield canal past Mount Vernon Wharf and back down to Nelson Pit.