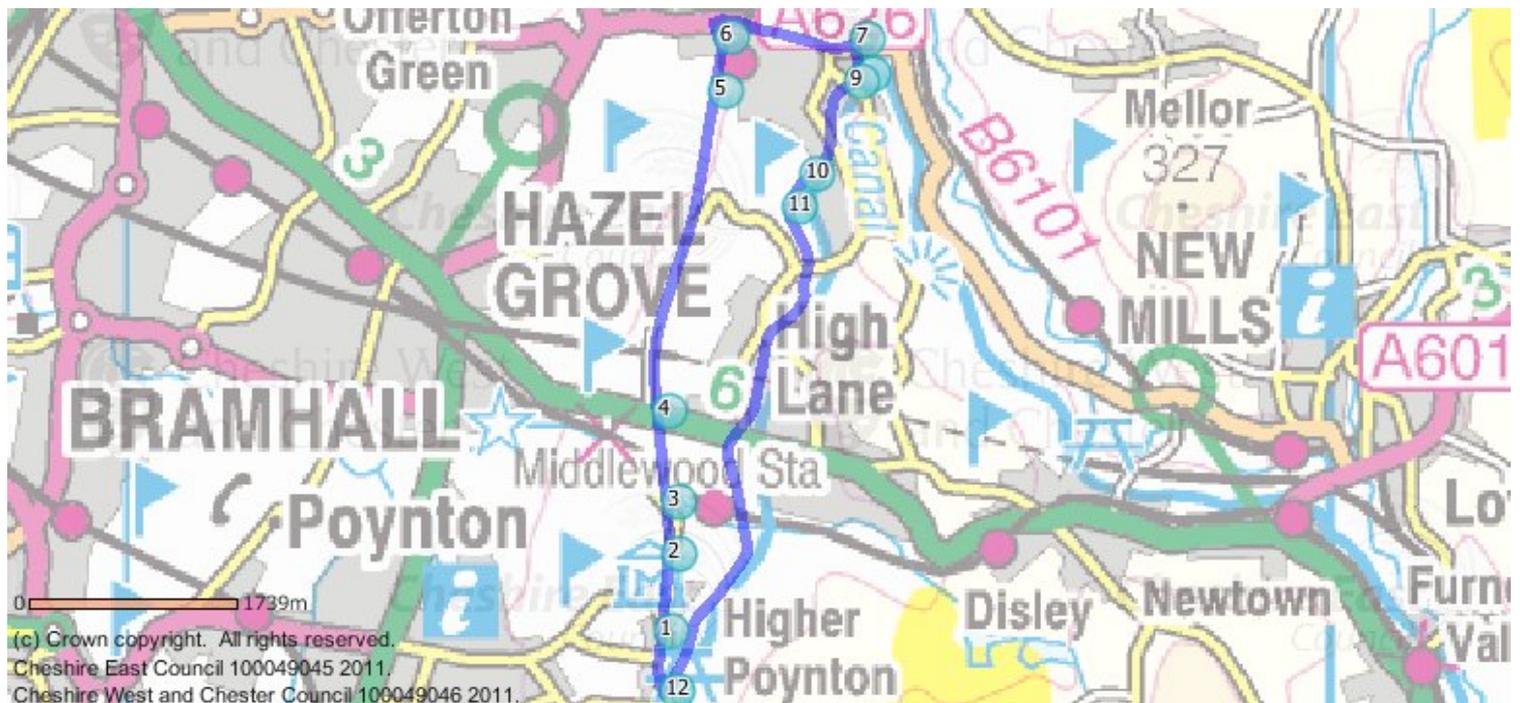


Nelson Pit Walk 9

The first part of two walks making the Middlewood Challenge, a 20-mile walk. The second section is Walk 10.

Grade	Moderate
Distance	12.8 km/8 miles
Time	About 3½ hours
Start	Nelson Pit Visitor Centre
Map	OS Explorer 268
Terrain	Easy – muddy 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 first part of two walks making the Middlewood Challenge, a 20-mile walk in the figure of eight. The second section of the Challenge is Walk 10 which is about 12 miles long and takes around 5 hours to walk. Total walking time for both parts is around 8½ hours.

The route soon joins the Middlewood Way which is nearly 11 miles long and was originally the Macclesfield-Bollington-Marple railway line. It opened in 1869 and closed 101 years later in 1970.

It then passes Jackson's Brickworks which opened in 1924. By 1974 the factory was producing 180,000 bricks per week. After closure in 1979 the site remained derelict until 1996 when the local council developed the brickworks into a conservation area. The site is noted for greater crested newts and its unimproved grassland habitat.

You will follow the Macclesfield canal which dates from 1831 and cost £320,000 to construct. The famous, self-taught architect Thomas Telford surveyed the route. It runs from Marple to Hall Green, a distance of 26¼ miles and is level at 518' above sea level for 16 miles. The Macclesfield canal forms part of the 97 mile Cheshire Ring reaching Kidsgrove in the south to Preston Brook near Warrington in the west and Manchester city centre in the north. The whole Ring has a towpath and is open to walkers.

Other points of interest include the location of the old Middlewood Upper station. This closed in 1970 and the Lower station is on the Manchester to Buxton line. Neither the Upper nor Lower station has road access. The area was popular in the 1950s when there were teahouses in the local woods.

[Download leaflet here](#)

Directions

From Nelson Pit exit the car park with the modern sculpture on your right. Cross the road bridge and then cross over the road to the kissing gate. Walk down the cobbled ramp and then turn left at the bottom and go under the bridge.

1. Join the main path walk under bridge 16 and continue ahead.
2. Pass the entrance to Jackson's Brickworks.
3. Cross over the railway line and Middlewood station.
4. Walk through the oval shaped tunnel and continue ahead. The tunnel can be very muddy!
5. Continue along the sandy path crossing a tar macadam road. At the end of the Middlewood Way reach a T-junction, with a waste disposal site on the left.
6. Turn right and walk to the main road. Turn right. You are now on Stockport Road. Pass the Railway pub and Rose Hill station. At the traffic lights go straight ahead signed for New Mills. Walk through Marple.
7. About 25 yards beyond the Navigation pub turn right onto Lockside and join the Peak Forest canal. Pass several locks on the left. Immediately after lock 16 walk up a slight incline; cross the bridge and turn right down the cobbled path. Caution: this path could be slippery when wet!
8. You are now on the towpath of the Macclesfield canal. The canal is on your right.
9. Continue along the canal. Bridge numbers 1 and 2 are turnover bridges.
10. Just beyond bridge 4 there is a seat. Ideal for a break!
11. Continue along the towpath until bridge 15. On the way note the World War 2 Home Guard concrete bunker adjacent to bridge 13. Bridge 14 was designed as an 'adjustable bridge'; the parapet could be taken off and stone raised in the event of subsidence which was a common problem in the Poynton coal mining area.
12. Just before bridge 15 walk over the bridge adjacent to the Trading Post and turn immediately right through the gate facing Mount Vernon cottages. Turn right again and walk back to the Visitor Centre.