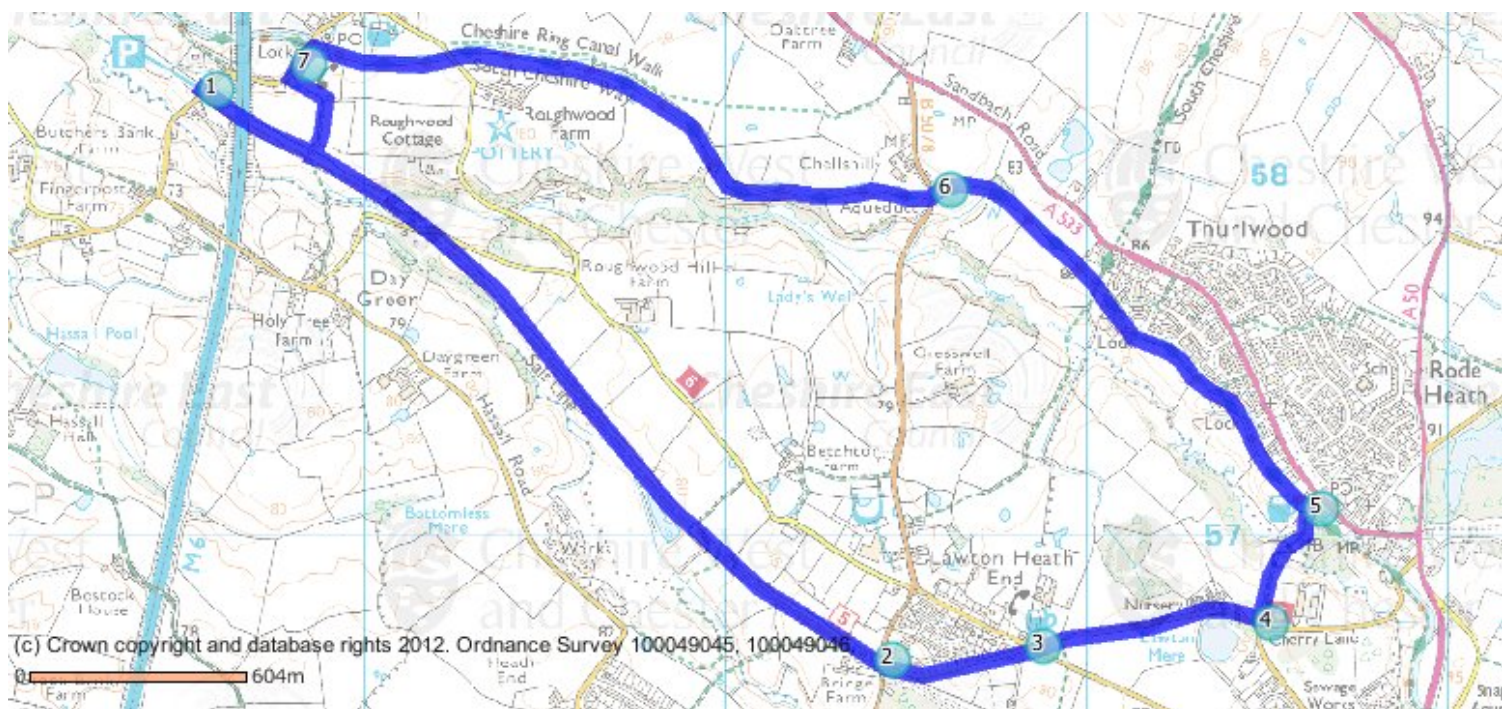


Rode Heath Ramble

Explore the countryside with canal and rail transport heritage

Grade	Easy
Distance	8 km / 5 miles
Time	2 ½ hours
Start	Salt Line car park, Rode Heath, Lawton Heath End or Hassall Green
Map	OS Explorer 268
Terrain	Level towpath and old railway line
Barriers	No stiles
Toilets	None on site
Contact	Public rights of way tel. 01270 686029 email: pro@cheshireeast.gov.uk



Route Details

From industrial transport to wildlife haven

This area once contained thriving industries due to large underground salt deposits. Large works were constructed and brine shafts sunk to extract the salt. The brine was pan dried into salt crystals which had many uses including the productions of soda, glass, soap and detergents.

Today, it is hard to imagine the salt works at Rode Heath Rise with steam billowing from the salt pans and boats being loaded with their cargoes. The canal formed a crucial link for the local industry. Salt was take from here whilst coat and pottery were brought up from Stoke. If you look closely at the towpath you can still find pottery in the path, as broken cargo was often thrown off the boats.

The countryside around Hassall Green is gentle, rolling farmland with pretty wooded valleys and flower rich hedgerows. Both the Salt Line and the canal, built to serve local industry, provide pleasant walks at any time of year. In spring listen out for blackcaps and willow warblers singing in the trees, whilst skylarks can often be heard high above.

Wildflowers mark the passing of the seasons. In late winter, bright yellow coltsfoot is common along the trails. In early spring, lesser celandine and wood anemone carpet the woods and primroses can be seen in the old railway cuttings. Bluebells, red campion and wild garlic provide colourful displays before the trees come into full leaf. Foxglove, oxeye daisy and St John's wort thrive in the strong midsummer sun. Knapweed, toadflax and scabious flower in later summer.

Flocks of redwings and fieldfares herald the onset of winter and if you are lucky you may hear a 'twittering' flock of long-tailed tits moving through the trees above your head.

Visitor Information

Location: The Salt Line is best accessed off Hassall Road, between Alsager and Sandbach and is signposted off Betchton Road in Hassall Green. Postcode for satnav: CW11 4XT.

Alternatively, start the walk at Hassall Green, Rode Heath or Lawton Heath End.

Parking: There is a free car park off Alsager Road that is accessible for minibuses. There are no dedicated disabled parking bays. The car park closes at 8.30pm in summer and 5pm in winter.

Public transport: Public bus services operate to Hassall Green, Lawton Heath End and Alsager.

Toilets: No facilities are available on site, though facilities will be available to patrons of refreshment stops.

Refreshments: No facilities are available on site; there are public houses in Hassall Green, Rode Heath and Alsager.

Further information: Contact the public rights of way team

Tel: 01270 686029

Email: prow@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Directions

- 1 Cross the road and walk along the full length of the Salt Line to Alsager.
2. At Sandbach Road North in Alsager, cross the main road and walk up Cherry Lane which is almost opposite the Salt Line entrance.
3. Follow Cherry Lane to the crossroads by the pub and cross over again.
4. Just after the right hand bend, turn left down a track which is signed with a footpath fingerpost. This leads to Rode Heath Rise and the canal.
5. At the canal turn left along the towpath.
6. Follow the towpath until you reach the post office at Hassall Green. Turn left off the canal here and walk downhill towards the motorway.
7. Just before the pink church turn left down a footpath which leads back to the Salt Line. At the salt Line, turn right back to the car park.