

Swarkestone Circular Walk 3

Start and finish: Chellaston Community Centre on Barley Croft.

Grid reference of start and finish:
SK37961 30212

Distance: 6.4 kilometres, four miles.

Time: Allow two hours.

Terrain: Farmland, market gardens, villages and waterways using footpaths, towpaths and roads. On the most difficult parts of the route in dry weather you will encounter rough surfaces and gentle slopes. There will be easier sections. There are stiles and footbridges on this walk.

Nearby bus routes: 60 and 61 along Swarkestone Road go near the start of the walk. Ring traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or visit www.traveline.org.uk for details of these services.

Parking: Free car park at Chellaston Community Centre on Barley Croft.

The walk

1 From the community centre car park walk out on to Swarkestone Road, opposite the Rose and Crown Public House. Turn left, crossing Swarkestone Road at the pedestrian lights. Continue on, taking the footpath to Swarkestone on your right, just after the bus shelter. You will pass two stiles along here, before reaching a former railway line.

This is part of the Derby to Ashby branch line of the Midland Railway Company which opened between 1868 and 1874. In 1923, it became part of the Midland Division of the London, Midland and Scottish Railway. In 1930, the line became freight only. It was taken out of use in 1973.

Continue on to a tarmac path. Bear right, along Holmleigh Way.



Cyclists and pedestrians can use this section of pavement. Just before the island, cross the road and turn right. Go part way around the island and then follow the path across the field on your left towards a footbridge, next to the A50. After the footbridge, follow the track alongside the A50. Go through the small gate on your right and turn left on to a tarmac path. Go under the A50. Cyclists, horseriders and walkers can use this path. It joins the towpath of the former Derby Canal, now part of the Derby to Melbourne and Leicester path.

The Derby Canal opened in 1796. Benjamin Outram, 1764-1805, an Alfreton born canal engineer, constructed the canal. It was abandoned and drained in 1964.

2 Cross bridge 14 over the Trent and Mersey Canal. If there is a barge approaching the lock, it is well worth waiting to see the lock gate in operation. You should find an information panel about the path on your left. Turn right along the towpath. The building on your left is the former lockhouse. You now have a pleasant 1.6 kilometre, one mile walk alongside the canal. Danger - deep water.

The Trent and Mersey Canal links the Trent at Shardlow with the Mersey at Preston Brook, 149 kilometres, or 93 miles away. It allowed goods to be carried directly from the Midlands to either the Humber ports on the North Sea or the Mersey ports on the Irish Sea. The famous pioneer canal engineer, James Brindley, from Wormhill near Buxton, designed the canal. The section between Weston on Trent and Shugborough in Staffordshire was in use by 1770. Brindley died in 1772, but his brother-in-law Hugh Henshall completed the work in 1777.

Along the towpath you will see an old crane used for loading and unloading barges. Further along, just past the gate, you will see a cast-iron milepost of 1819 by R&D Stone which shows 6 miles to Shardlow and 86 miles to Preston Brook. Bridge 15, which you pass under, carries Lowes Lane over the canal.

3 Take the steps to the left of bridge 16 on to Sinfin Lane. This bridge is known as Barrow Bridge and is one of the few original humpback brick bridges to have survived.

Turn left. Just before Swarkestone Road, A5132 turn left again along the pavement towards the bus shelter. Cross the road here. Danger - busy road.

Turn left along the pavement. Just before the second road sign turn right. After the stream, head towards the gate. Turn left along the track. This part of the walk takes in the eastern end of Barrow upon Trent. Cross straight over the access road. At Trent House follow the footpath. This leads to a grassed area with a paved path. Follow the path and go through the gate. This brings you out next to the River Trent.

4 Turn left and follow the footpath along the river bank. Danger - deep water. As you approach Swarkestone village, you will see Swarkestone Bridge and Causeway.

Swarkestone Bridge and Causeway is 1.2 kilometres, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, in length. The present bridge was built in the 1790s to replace one damaged in floods. However, the Causeway, though much patched up, dates mainly from the 13th and 14th centuries. It is an ancient monument.

After the stile follow the path, bearing left to a gate. Beyond is Woodshop Lane.

5 Turn right. Cross over the A514 next to the Crewe and Harpur Arms. Danger - busy road. Continue straight on, taking the footpath to the left. Shortly, you will see Swarkestone Church.

Swarkestone Church was virtually rebuilt, 1874-76, by FJ Robinson. He was also the architect for St Luke's Church in Derby. However, the 15th century tower and Harpur Chapel are from an earlier building. The font and fragments in the east aisle wall are Norman.

Follow the path through the church grounds, bearing left. After the gate in the corner, go over the stile on your right. Carry straight on towards the brick building in the distance, next to the main road, Cuttle Bridge Cottage. To your right is the 'Summerhouse'.

Sometimes called 'The Grandstand', it is probably the building referred to as 'Bowling Alley House' in a document of 1631-1632. It is thought John Smythson, from the Bolsover family of masons and architects, built it for the Harpur family. It served mainly as a combined grandstand and pavilion for the bowling green in the rectangular enclosure known as 'The Cuttle'. Swarkestone Hall, the residence of the Harpur family, has long been demolished.

6 On Swarkestone Road, A514 turn right towards Cuttle Bridge. Danger - busy road. Just before the bridge go down the path on your right. Turn left along the towpath, signed for Derby, under bridge 13. Cyclists and walkers can use this section of towpath. At the former lockhouse, retrace your steps back to the start of the walk.

Location of walk



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Distance: 6.4 kilometres, four miles.

Time: Allow two hours.

Timings based approximately on 1.6 kilometres, one mile every 30 minutes.

Further information

Rights of Way Officer
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Swarkestone Circular Walk



Derby City Partnership