

Mid Cheshire Bridleway Association



Mid Cheshire
Bridleway Association

For further details please contact
the Chairman, Ray Hall on Tel: 01829 760348
www.midcheshirebridleways.co.uk

If you encounter any problems these should be reported to
Cheshire West and Chester Council Rights of Way on 01606 301485



Aston Ring Bridleway

An attractive off-road 7 mile loop
partly following the River Weaver and
based on existing bridleways



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About the Mid Cheshire Bridleway Association

Mid Cheshire Bridleways was formed in 1991 to promote safe riding in pleasant surroundings.

We are affiliated to the British Horse Society and the Bridleways and Byways Trust.

We cover the area from the Wirral to Chester to Nantwich to the M6.

We currently have around 50 members. Membership costs £5 per year (£7 for families) and entitles you to receive our newsletters with up to date information on Cheshire's equestrian routes and to attend social gatherings and rides with like minded people.

For further information please see our website:

www.midcheshirebridleways.co.uk



Aston Ring Bridleway

This attractive route provides an off-road, circular route of approximately seven miles, much of which follows the Weaver Navigation.

Parking

Parking is available at the Leigh Arms adjacent to the A49 swing bridge (CW8 4QT), but please telephone first (01606 853327) and park away from the pub. Limited parking is available at Davenports Farm Shop just off the A49 nearby (CW8 4QU), but please phone first to arrange on 01606 853241.

The Route

- 1 Follow the road to the rear of the Marco Marco Italian restaurant and cross the A49 to a lane, taking extreme care. After 300 yards turn left after the caravan park and follow a track past Bartington Hall to the canal bridge. (Davenports Farm Shop is adjacent to this track). Go through a gate and cross a field diagonally towards a bungalow called Heron's Court. If there are ponies in this field some riders find it easier to follow the track around the edge.

The route continues on page 6...

Points of Interest

Wildlife

Buzzards can frequently be seen overhead and falcons are said to nest on the railway viaduct. Reed warblers, swans and mallards nest in the reed beds along the river banks.

Acton Swing Bridge

This was constructed in the 1930s when the A49 was realigned to replace an old stone bridge that can still be seen just upstream and a former swing bridge.



Aston Ring Bridleway



The Route cont.

- ② Turn left through a gate, follow a fenced track with a woodland planting on the left to another gate and pass through Bluebell Wood. Follow the field edge and bear left at the first hedge line uphill following the headland where there are lovely views across the Weaver Valley.
- ③ Turn left through the next gate, head downhill to re-cross the canal through a further gate and follow the fenced track down to a gate next to the river.
- ④ Turn right and follow the road and cross the Upper Horse Bridge. The former swing bridge was replaced in 2010 with an arched structure which allows access for boats to the sluices



which you can see to the right. The new bridge is wider with a non slip surface and is more inviting for horses. If you prefer to lead your horse over, there is a mounting block either side. Continue past Dutton Locks and the former lock cottages. You may see canal boats passing through and there is also a picnic area here. Follow the riverbank which has been surfaced in gravel and cross the Lower Horse Bridge over the old course of the Weaver to a gate. Again mounting blocks have been provided either side as some horses find this wooden bridge spooky.

- ⑤ Continue along the riverbank through several gates through Woodland Trust Land where there may be cattle. Pass under Dutton Viaduct to a gate at Pickering's Cut Cottages. Take care along this section as there are rabbit holes. Please walk past the cottages to the next gate. Keep to the riverbank until you reach another gate.

Points of Interest

Dutton Viaduct

This was built in the 1830s and the stone piers are built on timber piles and is listed for its historic importance. The main west coast line crosses this and it is said to sway when a train passes!

Pickering's Cut

The first house used to be a pair of lock keepers cottages as there used to be a pair of locks here. The former swing bridge was removed after the war and you can see the abutments.

- ⑥ In the next field you bear right and cross diagonally towards a gate at the wood at the base of the escarpment. Take care across here as there may be mole hills and cattle in this field.
- ⑦ The route follows a steep track up the valley side alongside the wood. Turn left along the track towards, then past Aston Grange Farm.
- ⑧ The road bears left towards Aston, but take the right turn past Weaver View Cottages with a copse on the left. This section has been surfaced as part of the National Cycle Route. Follow the track through a gate where there are good views across the valley. Continue downhill under the railway arch and through two more gates with woodland planting on either side.

The route then passes through Dutton Lodge Farm through a further gateway.



Follow the Countryside Code

It is recommended that you carry a mobile phone and wear high visibility clothing as this route is quite isolated and it is better to avoid riding it alone.

- ⑨ At the road, turn right and at the fork bear right and then turn immediately left at a bridleway sign. Go through a gate and cross a field to another gate. The bridleway is then surfaced and follows the base of Park Brow, a wooded escarpment. (Past the wood an alternative route can be taken to the right of the fishing pond and under the railway viaduct to link back to the route already described along the river. Take care near the viaduct as the ground can be boggy).
- ⑩ The main route carries straight on through a gate and back to the Lower Horse Bridge. Re-cross the bridge, go past the locks and back over the Upper Horse Bridge. Follow the road alongside the river back to Acton Swing Bridge. Dismount and lead your horse under the bridge, taking care as the visibility is restricted and the traffic makes a noise above. Re-mount using the mounting block sponsored by Mid Cheshire Bridleways and return to your vehicle through a gate, taking care next to the road. These directions can of course be reversed for a change.