

WALK 2 Willaston & Eastham

A pleasant walk exploring public footpaths and a section of the Wirral Way around Willaston. This is the longest walk in this series but there is ample opportunity to rest along the route.

Walking boots or wellies are recommended during and soon after wet weather or during the winter as some of the paths can get muddy.

Start: The entrance to 'Lowfields Woods', opposite Eastham Rake Railway Station.

Distance: About 6 miles. 2 - 5 hours.

Parking: Free parking on Brookhurst Avenue close to Eastham Rake Railway Station **or** in Lowfields Avenue opposite the woods adjacent to the A41 just off Junction 5 of the M53.

Buses and Trains: Buses also serve this location on a regular basis. This is ideal for those using the Eastham Rake Railway Station with direct links to Chester, Ellesmere Port, Birkenhead and Liverpool.

- ① From the entrance to 'Lowfields' wooded open space opposite the Eastham Rake Railway Station, walk along to Lowfields Avenue and turn right and walk parallel to the Dibbinsdale Brook on your right. Turn right onto the public footpath and through the underpass under the motorway.
- ② After the underpass, following the Wirral Circular Trail fork left across the field between the fenced areas of new woodland. Keep left of the gated field and climb the stile and walk along the edge of the small copse which should now be on your left. The path turns right and then left out onto Dale Hey.
- ③ Walk to the end of Dale Hey and turn right at the main road, past the Hooton pub and station.

- ④ Cross over this busy road on the bridge over the railway line, where the visibility is good in both directions and take the path signposted to the Wirral Circular Trail immediately after the bridge. The path runs along the old platform for a short stretch and then eventually on to the bed of the old railway line. *Trains ran along here between 1866 until 1962.*



Hadlow Station

- ⑤ Pass under the bridge by the picnic area and take the right hand footpath with the yellow waymarker, which runs parallel with the bridlepath.
- ⑥ Continue along to Hadlow Station which has been restored to how it may have looked in the 1950s. There is also a car park and various other amenities on offer.
- ⑦ Turn right at the old level crossing along Hadlow Road, passing the car dealer on the right.
- ⑧ At Smithy Lane, turn right. If however, you would like to rest at this point there is a pub opposite Smithy Lane, or continue up the road to view the lovely old buildings of Willaston Village.
- ⑧a Having rested or visited Willaston, return to Smithy Lane. Take the footpath that leads through to Old Vicarage Road.
- ⑨ Continue along Old Vicarage Road. Turn right into Moss Close, then immediately left across the grass, head to the footpath signpost ahead. Cross the field, keep to

- ⑩ the right hand edge of the field. Continue to a track (Change Lane), turn left.
- ⑪ Cross the main road and walk over to the stone steps to the left of the garage forecourt. Follow this path straight ahead. (NB Do not take either of the tracks leading off to the left or right).
- ⑫ When you reach a T-junction, turn left along the track. At the road turn right and follow the road round to the left.
- ⑫a Just before the old Willaston windmill turn right along the path signposted to Raby. After a short distance the route turns right at the footpath signpost. If you would like a 500m detour along the bridleway, continue along, round the left bend in the track to a bench seat on the left with views across the fields. *Buzzards can regularly be seen from here circling overhead looking for their next meal or being mocked by crows or other smaller birds.* From the footpath signpost, keep to the left edge of the field, over wooden planks again keeping to the left edge of the field.
- ⑬ After a single wooden board turn right, keep to the main path which becomes a small road (Street Hey Lane).
- ⑭ At the end of this road turn left. At the first bend in the road turn left again at the footpath signpost. Climb the stile and then two more to reach the road, cross over and turn left.
- ⑮ Take the next road on the right (Eastham Rake), a 10 minute walk will take you back to the start. Take extra care (particularly with children and dogs) along this section of road, try and keep on the grass verge and within the painted white lines.