



Walk 2: The Stockton Walk

Distance: **2.8 miles / 4.5km** • Duration: about **1¼ hours**

Start point: **Whitchurch Civic Centre**

An easy walk with some gentle slopes between points **4** and **6** with gates but no stiles.

Man, pram and dog

This route, opened in 2011, is named in memory of Les Stockton, a founder member of the local walking group – the Whitchurch Walkers. The section from Sherrymill Hill to Danson's Wood was the first path improved by the Whitchurch Walkers after its formation in 1976. Les did most of the work, carting his tools and materials across the fields in an old pram and always accompanied by his black dog.



St. Alkmund's Church

The church was completed in 1713 to replace a previous building which collapsed in 1711. It is open every day and well worth a visit. The tall tower has a clock made by illustrious local clockmakers JB Joyce, a peal of 8 bells and is a prominent landmark from all directions.

Roman Whitchurch and a 15th century garage

In Roman times Whitchurch was known as Mediolanum – Latin for 'middle of the plain'. It was a staging post midway between Wroxeter and Deva (Chester). Part of a Roman fort wall and other remains were found in the Yardington area. These are commemorated in the garden opposite the west end of the church.

More history is in evidence in the High Street Garage. Its upper floor has been dated to the 15th century.



Smells from the past

The Whitchurch arm of what is now the Llangollen Canal once came right into the town centre to a wharf at Mill Street. Waterside Close follows the line of the canal which passed under the road and through the valley opposite, which is now occupied

by the extended Jubilee Park. The town gas works were located on either side of Sherrymill Hill and coal was delivered to the works by canal boat.

New life for the Whitchurch Arm

The first stretch of the arm from the main canal was restored by the Whitchurch Waterway Trust. It was reopened in 1993 and provides both permanent and 48 hour moorings. The Whitchurch Waterway Trust is currently working on plans to take the canal through the next two bridges and build a basin for 8 boats next to the car park beyond the second bridge. This car park can be used as an alternative starting point for the walk.



Danson's Wood and Farm

Danson's Wood on part of the site of the former Danson's Farm is a 'Millennium Wood' and was planted in 2001 by the Woodland Trust with the help of a large band of local volunteers.

Greenfields Nature Reserve, Country Park and Staggs Brook

This important green wedge follows the line of Staggs Brook, which is inhabited by water voles and otters. The nature reserve features both meadow and woodland and is managed by volunteers from the Whitchurch Branch of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust.



Route Description

From the Civic Centre ① walk up the High Street towards St. Alkmund's Church ②. Turn left into Yardington and right at the mini-roundabout and down Sherrymill Hill to the next mini-roundabout ③.

Turn right into Waterside Close keeping to the footpath on the right hand side. Follow the path towards the canal, crossing the road at the bottom of the Firs.

Continue until you reach a signpost for Danson's Farm ④. Turn right here on the tarmac path between some houses, follow the path across a road and then go left through a kissing gate.

Walk diagonally to the right and through the kissing gate in the far right hand corner. Continue across the next field, again to the far right hand corner.

Go through the gate and turn left towards the next gate some 50 metres up from the bottom left hand corner of the field. Continue towards the far right hand corner and through another gate ⑤.

Walk diagonally to the right up the slope and through a gate left of the middle of the hedge. Turn left towards the gate in the centre of the field boundary facing you. On a clear day, excellent views of

the Welsh hills can be seen from here.

Cross the next small field, go through the gate and down the path to the Whitchurch bypass. **There is a good view either way but traffic can be busy so take care crossing.** Head slightly to your left and up the driveway towards an opening to the left of a gate.

You are now entering Danson's Wood ⑥. Follow the fence line for about 20 metres past the Woodland Trust's interpretation panel. Turn left straight down the slope towards the canal. *If you want to extend your walk through this small but pleasant wood, there are paths to the left and right, both of which loop round to rejoin the main path by the canal bridge.*

Go over Danson's Bridge (No 30) and through both gates taking you to the towpath of the Llangollen Canal. Turn right and under the bridge along the towpath following the Sandstone Trail and Shropshire Way towards Whitchurch. Continue along the canal until, after about 550 metres, you reach a black and white lift-up bridge ⑦.

Cross this bridge and walk along the towpath beside the Whitchurch arm of the canal.

Possible detour:

On the bend in the Whitchurch arm you can make an attractive detour by taking the gate to the left, down the track and across the valley to Greenfields Nature Reserve ⑧.

Once in the reserve, keep to the right up the steps, and you will eventually rejoin the walk at Greenfields Way, near point ⑨.

Cross the road diagonally and continue along the path. In about 250 metres you will rejoin your outward route at point ④.

