

Walk: W5

Lindow, Saltersley and Mobberley

Starting point: Car park in Racecourse Road, SJ833814

How to get there: off the A538 near the Boddington Arms. See Walk W3.

Map: OS Explorer 268 – Wilmslow, Macclesfield & Congleton

Length: 9 miles

Grade: Easy

Duration: Four hours

This is an ‘easy’ but lengthy walk. Although it goes along some familiar routes, some little-used footpaths are included, which I feel are important in our local path network – especially when you need to plan circular walks like this one. Note: many paths cross this area and a 1:25000 OS map will be useful – be warned!

Start at the car park in Racecourse Road, opposite the Boddington Arms (1). Use this only as a starting or meeting point; do not park your car here: the car park is a prime target for thieves and vandals. Side roads tend to be a better choice, or maybe you can negotiate to use the pub car park.

Follow Racecourse Road to Lindow Lane (2), or cross Lindow Common if you know the paths. Go down the lane for a short distance and turn left at a bridleway (signed, but sometimes obscured by branches) along the drive to the first house on the left (‘Bramford’). The path continues through a gate to the right of the house, then turns right and eventually joins another path at a T-junction (3). Cross a barrier and go straight ahead to meet a broad track. Turn left (4) past some makeshift stables. Go past a track that comes in from the left and turn right at the next T-junction (5). This path takes you past peat workings – in 2004 some peat recovery was still taking place, though there have been murmurings about a housing development or a nature reserve; we’ll see.

When you reach a cross roads (6), you are at the westerly end of Newgate. If you’ve had enough, or the weather turns foul, you can turn right here and head back up Newgate to Lindow Common; there is a new path on the left (just past the entrance to the old waste disposal site)

which leads around the back of the old landfill site – it’s much better than walking all along the road.

If continuing the walk, turn left and pass a bungalow on your right. A farm track goes towards a lake – actually the remains of a flooded sandpit. As the track bends left, you will see a stile. Although you *could* continue on the stony track, on this outward stretch of the walk, I’ll take you to the right of the lake.

That’s because the original right of way had been flooded and lost due to the new lake. Claiming this path took seven years of my life – doing battle with a laggardly Cheshire County Council and the local landowner to regain this right of way for you! So, cross the stile – having said “Thanks, Graham” – and follow the way-marked path.

Towards the end of the lake, walk past a stile on the right and continue to the top of a slope. Turn left towards an overgrown hedge, then left again. Keep close to the hedge and emerge at a stile and signpost, where you turn right along the track. For a short walk, you could simply go all the way around the lake and then head for home. Please try this sometime: it really is very pleasant!

Having regained the track, ignore the first stile on your left, but carry on past Saltersley Hall Farm, joining the main farm drive. Turn left at the next stile (7) about 100m after the farm, and go straight across the field to a stile by a gate.

Parts of the farm are said to be more than 500 years old and to have been built with the same type of stone as used for Mobberley church. The expense of a stone-built dwelling indicates that this must have been an important building in its time – almost certainly because it was on the salt route (hence its name) from Northwich to Yorkshire, and it may well have provided accommodation for the jiggers (see page 104).

From here, the path continues ahead with the hedge on your left for the first few metres. Still on the same bearing, but moving slightly away from the hedge, head to the large single oak tree, and then straight ahead to the middle of the wooded area.

Find the stile in the corner of the field, to the left of the wooden fence of ‘Hollingee’ – the large property beyond the fence. Cross the stile and follow the waymark to the right. After 100m, turn left, soon passing the second tee of Styal Golf Course. Keep the hedge on your right and continue to Coppock House Farm (8). The path goes around the farm to join the farm drive. About 50m past the end of the drive, there is a stile (9)



The author leading intrepid walkers along a wetter-than-usual path

which will take you back to the Plough and Flail if you wish to shorten the walk. Otherwise, carry on past a bridleway on your right that would take you to the Quaker graveyard (a very worthwhile diversion) and past a group of houses.

Pass Egerton's repair shop, and keep walking along the road to its junction with Paddock Hill Lane (10). Turn right here. After 250m, you'll see a stile on the left, opposite to stables. Ignore this and continue for 100m until you reach a tiny bungalow on the left, called 'Pluto Cottage'; the stile you need is just before the cottage and is hidden behind a hedge (11). Find it, cross it and continue with the hedge on your right. Follow the stiles and waymarks until you reach the main Alderley-Knutsford road.

Cross the road and go slightly left of Sunny Bank Farm and follow the waymark to walk through the left-hand part of a barn (12). Bizarre, I know, but the route of this right of way was disputed for years and this is the result. Continue from the barn and along a broad track to a stile.

Cross the stile, and continue to a pair of stiles, from where you can see the Frozen Mop pub across the fields. From the second stile, head to the top-right-hand corner of the field and over a footbridge to yet another stile. Cross this, and continue to the road (13). Turn left here, go over

Antrobus Bridge, then turn right up a drive. Just before a house with large iron gates, turn right through first one kissing gate and then a second. Follow the waymarked route between a fence and a hedge until, at the end of the hedge on your left, there is a stile. Cross this and continue in the same direction that you were walking, towards Coppock House, nestling in the woodland. To find the next stile, follow the fence to the corner of the field; turn left, then after 50m, you'll see a stile and a footbridge. Pass behind Coppock House (14) and walk through a parking area to a stile by a gate.

Continue straight ahead, until you reach a stile in a dip. From here, cross the next field by heading slightly to the right, towards a footpath sign. The stile is by the gate – cross this and carry on past Dam Head Farm (15) to the road, where you turn right from Damson Lane along Mill Lane

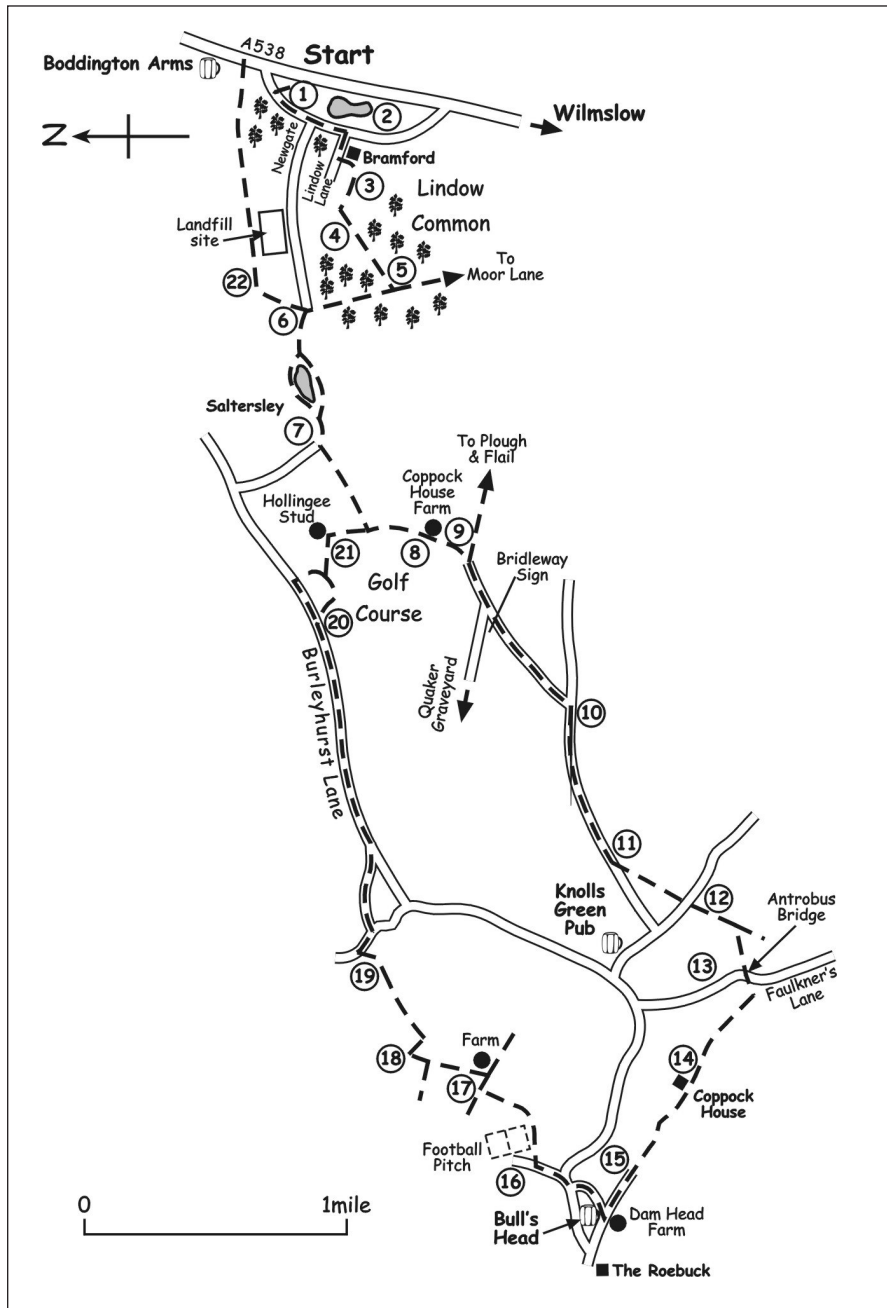
Dam Head Farm is appropriately named: there was a lake, and a dam, but no longer. But in Damson Lane, there are still damson trees! In Mill Lane, there's a choice of two pubs: The Bull's Head with its bowling green and the Roebuck, a little further back.

For an extra bonus on this walk, you can call at the Hillside Ornamental Fowl centre, the entrance to which is adjacent to the Roebuck. It has an amazing variety of birds – including penguins, flamingos, toucans and owls. Open from Easter to the end of October, 11.30am to 5pm every day except Thursday. Check by phoning 01565 873282.

Where Mill Lane joins the main road, cross over to the tarmac pavement and turn right. At the next road turn left along Church Lane. The footpath is now on the right, opposite to Gorse Brow (16). Clamber over the stile, then cross the field diagonally, to the gate in the top-right-hand corner. Cross the next field and make for the kissing gate near the far right-hand corner. From here, there is a maze of paths and, to make things worse, there are small discrepancies between the paths as shown on the map and as they exist on the ground – so you'll need to follow these directions very carefully:

Cross the next field, again diagonally, to a kissing gate set in the fence about 100m short of the far corner. Continue to a sign and gate to the left of a farm (17). There is a junction of paths here, where you go ahead and slightly left to the next stile.

Cross the stile, bear right across the field then cross the next stile and keep the hedge on your left for a short distance. After the stile, continue in the same direction with a fence on your right – note that this boundary



is not on OS maps. Continue in the same direction that you were previously walking, passing a single oak tree in the next field and then crossing a stile.

Turn right (18), keeping the hedge on your right and cross a stile by a gate. The right of way goes round the edge of the field to the top-right corner and across a stile (or through the gate if open). Almost immediately, go over another stile and across a drainage ditch. Cross the next field, with its regular ridged pattern; bear slightly right, cross a footbridge and walk across a small field to the road (19). Turn right here (opposite to Holt House) and walk along Davenport Lane and then Burleyhurst Lane.

Turn left at the main road and, after 100m, turn right at the footpath sign (20) by the first gate on the right that you come to. Bear left across the golf course, keeping left of a hedge and trees. At a pond and waymark, turn left and walk between two rows of trees. At a gravel track, turn left and then right across a footbridge to join the drive to Hollingee.

Just before the farm, there is a stile on your right (21). Cross this and walk alongside the fence. After the fence turns to the left, continue in the same direction and cross the stile that is facing you. From here, turn left to head back to Saltersley Hall Farm. Since you have been here before, you should remember all of this, and it is virtually a straight line, but here are some points to note:

The next stile is sometimes tricky to find – it is tucked away in the top-left-hand corner of the field. Cross this, then turn right and continue in the same direction that you were walking – do not be tempted by the gap in the hedge. Just keep the hedge on your right and, at the stile on the farm drive, turn right to Saltersley Hall Farm.

This time, continue along the main farm track, taking you to the right of the lake. Keep going until you reach Newgate, but rather than continuing on the tarmac turn immediately left (6) along a wide track to pass a tennis court. After about 250m, turn right along the right of way just before a gate with a ‘private’ sign (22). Soon, pass to the right of a plantation and ignore a waymark pointing left. The route continues behind the back of the disused landfill site – the noise you’ll probably hear is due to the venting of methane gas from the decomposing rubbish. Where a wide track comes in from the left, you do a quick right and left and continue on the widening track, past the allotments ... to the A538 and then turn right to return to the car park. (Before doing so, note that you are temptingly close to the Boddington Arms.)