

The Morris Dancer Kelsall Trail, Cheshire



Challenging Terrain

3 miles
Circular
1.5 hours

110418



The Morris Dancer sits at the heart of the village, directly alongside the recreation ground, making it the perfect spot for refreshments before or after your walk.

A circular pub walk of just over 3 miles from The Morris Dancer in Kelsall, Cheshire. The walking route visits a pretty church, an old hill fort and a fruit farm along the way and enjoys long stretches of peaceful paths plus the area known as Little Switzerland with its stunning views.

Getting there

Kelsall is located around 8 miles east of Chester on the Mid-Cheshire Ridge. The walk starts and finishes at The Morris Dancer on Chester Road in the centre of the village. If you are coming by public transport, there are bus stops directly outside the pub. If you are coming by car, the pub has its own large car park which is shared with the recreation ground.

Approximate post code **CW6 0RZ**.

Walk Sections



Start to Bench Viewpoint



Leave the pub car park via the vehicle entrance, turn right along the pavement for a few paces and then swap to the left-hand pavement via the zebra crossing. Do NOT fork left along the side road called Old Coach Road, instead continue on the left-hand pavement of the main road. Stay with this as it climbs and swings left to pass St Philips Church on your left. The church dates from the 1860s and is constructed in sandstone with a roof of Welsh slates. The bell has uncertain origins. Although it is attributed to an English foundry, it is said that Colonel Tomkinson, the church founder, brought it back from the Crimea in 1854 as army loot. Old residents always referred to the bell as Balaclava!

Immediately after passing the end of the churchyard, you will see a footpath signed to the left. Do NOT take this, instead cross over the road (with care) to turn right

Access Notes



1. The walk has several climbs and descents throughout, including a couple of steep sections.
2. Some of the paths are narrow and uneven in part, they can be very muddy after periods of rain and some stretches have steep drops alongside, so good boots are a must and take care with children and dogs.
3. There are no stiles on route, but you will need to negotiate several kissing gates and flights of steps.
4. There is a one mile stretch of walking along a country lane, but this is usually quiet and does have good grass verges for most of the way.
5. For the outward leg, the paths are fenced (with electric fencing) away from livestock pastures, but you may be sharing the paths on the return leg with sheep or other livestock. If you prefer to avoid these pastures, it is possible to follow a residential road for the return leg instead.

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onto a narrow tarmac footpath, leading you downhill between hedgerows and fences. The path passes the village allotments on your right and emerges out to a T-junction with a residential road, Kelsborrow Way.

Cross over to the far pavement, turn left along this and then take the first right into Kingswood Walk. At the end of this short residential road, follow the footpath waymarker directing you up a handful of steps and continuing up a stone track to reach the next road junction. Cross over to go straight ahead into Elizabeth Close.

After just 60 metres (immediately after passing Oakbank and at the point where the road bends right), fork left onto the signed footpath. This tarmac path leads you uphill between properties. At the top of the slope, continue uphill via the flight of beautiful old stone steps. Locally these are known as The 39 Steps, although we counted around 50! At the top, pass through the kissing gate ahead and you will reach a bench on your left, the perfect spot to pause and enjoy the far-reaching views back across the valley.



continue to the end of the access lane, noting the beautiful old apple trees on your right (more about that in a moment). At the end of the access lane, you will come to a junction with a lane, with the entrance for Willington Fruit Farm on your right. Established in 1950, the farm grows a wide range of English apple varieties (including Egremont Russet and Cox's Orange Pippin) and produces award-winning apple juice and cider.

1 → 2 Bench Viewpoint to Kelsborrow Castle



Continue ahead along the wide grass track and pass through the next kissing gate to reach the grass verge alongside a bend in Waste Lane. Turn right here to follow the tarmac access drive, passing the row of Lower Fold Cottages on your right. Immediately after these cottages, do NOT continue on the tarmac driveway, instead fork right across the grass to join the path leading into the trees (marked with a fingerpost to Willington).

At the end of the short woodland stretch, pass through the next kissing gate and continue on the enclosed grass track between grass pastures (taking care of the electric fencing here). Up to your left you will be able to see the two radio masts which sit on top of the hill. You will come to a sandstone boulder ahead, explaining the history of Kelsborrow Castle, a prehistoric promontory Iron Age hillfort (one of only seven in Cheshire) which once sat within the pastures to your right.

2 → 3 Kelsborrow Castle to Willington Fruit Farm

From this sandstone boulder, turn left through the kissing gate. Follow the flight of wooden steps leading you down to reach the next bench on your left. This is another ideal spot to pause and enjoy the views. It is unsurprising that this area is known locally as Little Switzerland.

Continue ahead to join the old engineered ridge path, with sandstone walls up to your left and down to your right. The path heads steadily downhill via slopes and steps. Some stretches are quite narrow so take particular care with children and dogs.

At the end of this beautiful old path, keep ahead to follow the access lane. Ignore the path signed right to Boothsdale, instead

3 → 4 Willington Fruit Farm to Eddisbury Way



With the fruit farm entrance on your right, walk straight ahead to join Chapel Lane, taking care of any traffic. The lane leads you between a number of pretty properties, including the converted old Methodist Chapel on your right, which gives the road its name. You will emerge to the crossroads at the centre of Willington.

(If you prefer to avoid the livestock pastures of the return leg, you can turn right here and follow the pavement leading you directly back to Kelsall). For the main route, turn left and then immediately right into Willington Road (signed to Oscroft and Tarvin). Taking care of traffic, follow this road for nearly a mile. After the first bend, this is a dead straight road and you will pass the restored buildings of Manor Farm on your right.

Ignore a side road on the right (signed to Kelsall) and then ignore a side road on the left (Mill Lane). Just 60 metres later, look out for a kissing gate and fingerpost within the hedgerow on your right. This marks the point at which we join the long-distance path known as The Eddisbury Way.

4 → 5 Eddisbury Way to Stream Bridge

Turn right through the kissing gate to enter a grass pasture and walk straight ahead, staying directly alongside the left-hand hedgerow (you may have an electric fence running on your right). Follow the path all the way along the length of this left-hand hedgerow. You are now following a short stretch of The Eddisbury Way, a 17-mile path running from Frodsham to Higher Burwardsley.



When the left-hand hedgerow ends, go ahead across a sleeper bridge to reach a metal kissing gate. Pass through this to enter a smaller grass pasture and walk diagonally right (about 1 o'clock) on the obvious path. At the far side, pass through the next kissing gate (with a large brick property to your left). Walk straight ahead on the grass verge alongside a row of old oak trees and, as you reach the driveway, dog-leg right then left to enter the next grass pasture via a kissing gate.

Walk straight ahead, staying close to the tree and hedgeline on your left. Pass through the next kissing gate and continue along the left-hand edge of a second pasture. The next kissing gate leads you out to a junction with two driveways (for properties just to your left). Walk ahead to cross the two driveways and go through the kissing gate to enter the next pasture. Walk straight ahead, passing a barn across to your right, to reach a wide sleeper bridge over the stream called Salters Brook.

5 → 6 Stream Bridge to End



Cross the stream bridge and take the kissing gate at the far side to enter a large hillside pasture. Walk directly ahead, following the right-hand field boundary steadily uphill. At the top, exit via the kissing gate and walk directly ahead across the centre of this field (heading for the modern brick house, just to the left of the old grey barn).

At the far side of the field, pass through the kissing gate ahead and turn immediately right to follow the grass track between hedgerows. Pass through a final gate to reach a junction with the road, Flat Lane. Cross over to the far pavement with care, turn right for a few paces and then turn left onto the tarmac track marked with a footpath fingerpost.

Keep ahead on this tarmac path, passing new housing on your right with an ancient hedgerow running on your left. Towards the top of the slope, stay with the tarmac path as it swings left through the hedgerow and continues through the village playing fields. You will emerge directly back to The Morris Dancer for some well-earned hospitality.

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

