

here turn left to pass under the railway. Pass over the canal bridge, turn left then left again back under the bridge to follow the towpath.

World-famous author of the Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings, JRR Tolkien, spent an important period in his early life on Cannock Chase when he was posted to one of the two huge Army training camps during the Great War. In 1916 he lived in Great Haywood for a short time after serving in France at The Battle of the Somme.

5. Follow the canal towpath to the junction of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and here turn left, under Haywood Bridge N° 109. (Large fingerpost here pointing towards Wolverhampton). Follow the canal to pass over the aqueduct and on until reaching the 'Broad Water/Tixall Wide' where there are views of Tixall Gatehouse to the north-west.

This expanse of water was probably created during the construction of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal in 1771 at the insistence of Thomas Clifford, then owner of Tixall Hall so that it gave an impression of a lake when viewed from the house. The imposing Tixall Gatehouse is all that remains of the Hall built in 1575. Tixall was used as a prison for Mary, Queen of Scots for two weeks in 1586. The Hall was demolished in 1927.

6. Continue past Old Hill Bridge N° 107 and Tixall Lock to reach the road at Tixall Bridge N° 106. Join the road here and walk initially downhill towards the road and railway bridges in the distance. Continue to follow the road until reaching the A513 once again. Turn left to follow the footpath beside a low wall and where the wall ends turn sharp left and climb the path veering right towards the underground reservoirs at the top of the hill.
7. On reaching these turn right opposite small gates in an iron fence, cross a track and begin a gradual descent along a wide path and upon reaching a wider track turn right downhill. Where several paths meet turn left then immediately right looking for a permissive path marker. On reaching this turn right and follow the path to the main road and the entrance to the Punch Bowl car park opposite. Re-cross the main A513 road into the car park.



www.cannock-chase.co.uk

a national landscape

Cannock Chase has been protected since 1958 as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) for the beauty of its heaths, forests and historic parklands, its abundant wildlife and rich cultural heritage.

At just 26 square miles (69 square kilometres), it is located in Staffordshire and is mainland England's smallest National Landscape.

In November 2023 all AONBs in England and Wales became National Landscapes.

about these walks

- This is one of a series of walks exploring Cannock Chase.
- The Chase is a working landscape and routes are undertaken at walker's own risk.
- Plan ahead and be prepared. Wear suitable footwear and clothing and carry food and drink.
- Whilst every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of route directions, neither the Ramblers nor National Landscape can accept responsibility for errors or omissions, or for changes in the details given.

protect • respect • enjoy



Don't approach or feed deer



Don't approach or feed farm animals



Take litter and dog waste home



No naked flames, fires or barbecues



Park only in car parks



Use sustainable transport



Only use permitted cycle tracks



Use bridleways when horse-riding



Protect wildlife by keeping to paths



Keep your dog under control



Beware - people and animals on roads



Think! Stay safe. Keep out.

Be a Chase Champion - Follow the Cannock Chase Code

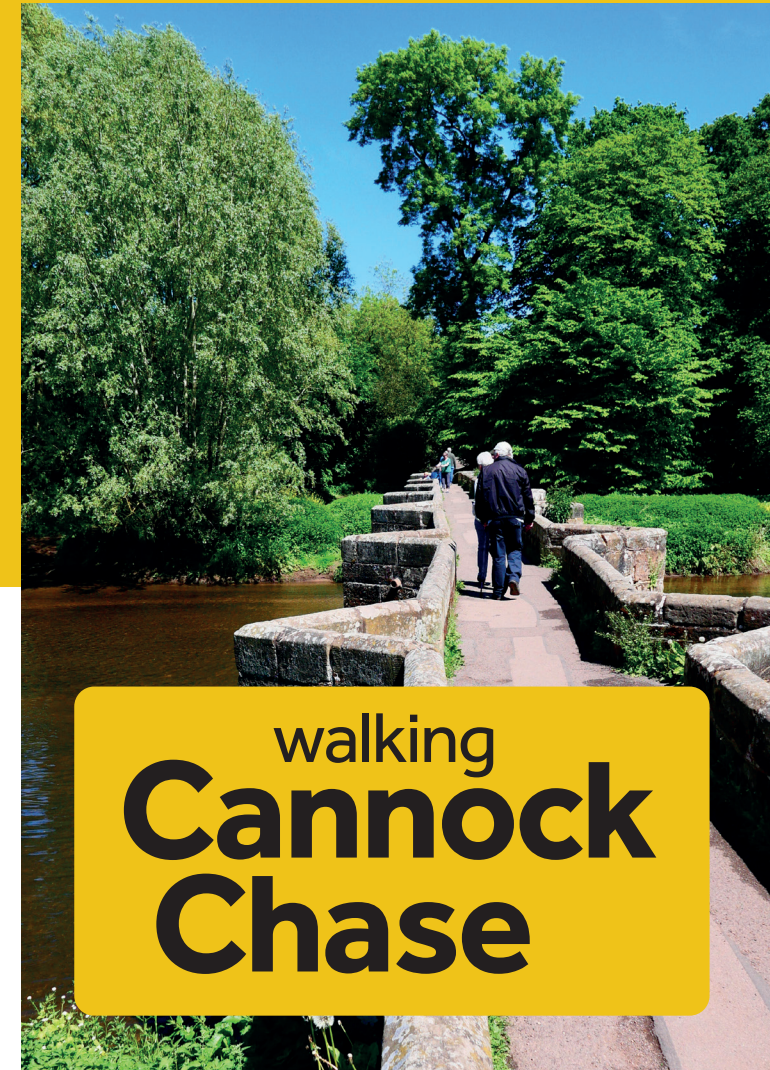
Front cover image: Essex Bridge, Shugborough

Date of issue: February 2025

3. Tixall and Shugborough

Self-guided walk 5 ½ miles / 2 hours
(option 7 ½ miles / 2 ¾ hours)

Explore the heritage in the north of the area

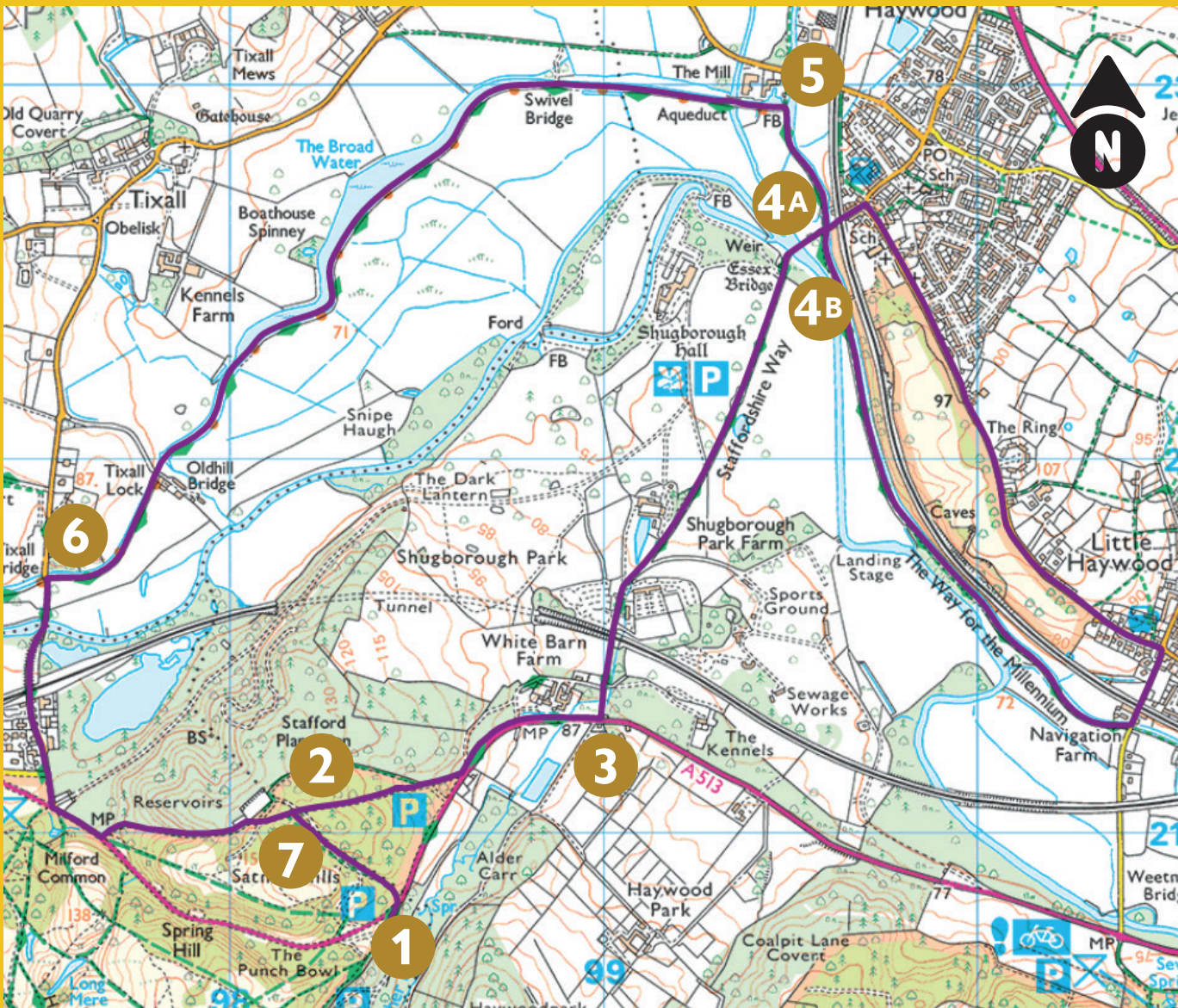


walking
Cannock Chase



Cannock Chase National Landscape

www.cannock-chase.co.uk



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Difficulty: Easy

Route Terrain: Towpaths, Tracks, Lanes

Start/finish: The Punch Bowl car park

Grid ref: SJ 983 207

Postcode for SatNav: ST17 0UP

OS map: OS Explorer 244 Cannock Chase & Chasewater

the walk

1. Walk back towards the main entrance to the Punch Bowl car park where it leaves the A513. Across the road and slightly right is a footpath, (permissive), that leads up into the woods. Cross the A513 with care and

follow the path to its intersection with a wider path and here turn right to climb into the birch tree forest.

2. On meeting a further cross path, turn right to descend towards a gate in a fence and then go past this to pass through a vehicle barrier and on to the main road. Turn left here and continue to follow the verge of the main road again to pass the exit to the Shugborough Estate car park and continue on past a bus stop towards a half-white house on the opposite side of the road behind trees.

The Shugborough Estate is the family seat of the Earls of Lichfield. In the care of the National Trust, the park and garden is registered Grade I by Historic England. The pleasure grounds and landscaped park date to the mid to late 18th century when Thomas Anson used his family fortune to building, planting and collecting, eventually making Shugborough one of the finest landscapes in the country.

3. Opposite the house turn left through a pedestrian gate to enter the Shugborough Estate and join the Staffordshire Way. Continue along this path as it crosses the railway and then through metal gates to pass the Shugborough Estate visitor entrance, before veering slightly right (bridleway only sign), in the same general direction along the metalled roadway. At the next gate keep right and pass between grey railings on the left and wire fence on right. This path gives good views of Shugborough Hall on the left and eventually finishes at the medieval Essex Bridge, which crosses the confluence of the Rivers Trent and Sow.

There has been a bridge crossing the River Trent at Great Haywood since the 16th century. The parapets were built low to avoid packhorse loads rubbing the stonework. The bays allowed pedestrians to stand to one side when a horse was passing. In the 18th century the bridge had 40 arches, today only 14 remain. The Essex Bridge is both a Scheduled Monument and Grade I Listed Building.

- 4A Option: After crossing the bridge continue forward to reach the Trent and Mersey Canal and here turn left to follow the towpath.

- 4B Option: Turn right to follow the canal towpath, pass under the footbridge to leave at the next bridge (N° 72), and climb up to the road. On facing the road turn right and after passing under the railway bridge proceed to the next road junction and turn left up Main Road towards Great Haywood. Continue along the road eventually encountering and following a substantial estate wall on the left. This ends at St. Stephen's Church, but continue to follow the road to the junction at the Clifford Arms Public House and