Rugeley to Colton Circular Walk

Starting in Rugeley, this enjoyable walk passes several attractive ponds and an ancient oak tree. There are excellent views from the high ground, and the path takes the walker through woodland and along an old trackway to join the Staffordshire Way at Stockwell Heath. The return journey takes you through Colton village then onto the Trent and Mersey Canal, crossing one of Brindley's aqueducts. A shortened route is also described, reducing the distance but not the enjoyment of walking in this pleasant area.

Distance:
Long walk 9.6km (6 miles) / short walk 6.4km (4 miles)
Duration:
Long walk 3 hours/ short walk 2 hours
Terrain:
Easy walking on towpaths, lanes and fields
Parking:
Rugeley Trent Valley railway station OS049191
Refreshments:
Pubs on the walk include The Yorkshireman by Rugeley Trent Valley station and The Greyhound in Colton, both of which serve food. All other facilities can be found in Rugeley town centre
Map:
OS Explorer 244 “Cannock Chase and Chasewater”
Bus Route:
Nearest bus stop is Rugeley Bus Station (10 minute walk), which is served by routes from Stafford, Cannock and Lichfield



Trent and Mersey Canal

1. Turn left out of the station access road and cross over to a drive signposted Parchfields Farm next to The Yorkshireman pub. Follow the drive past a house and then on for another 150 metres to a stile on the right next to Parchfield Farm. Cross the stile and walk straight across a small field to a footbridge next to a small concrete wall.

2. Over the bridge, bear left to a stile in the field corner and then walk forwards through two fields following the field boundary until you reach a track. Turn left and follow the track past the driveway to New Barn Farm on the left to a stile on the right, which brings you to some attractive ponds. (Jump to section 16 to follow the short walk).


Duck pond at Stockwell Heath

3. Turn right and walk round the side of the ponds until you reach a footbridge on the right next to the furthest one. Cross the footbridge and bear left across the corner of a field to a stile in the hedge. Over the stile walk gently uphill, keeping farm buildings on the right, to a stile by a gate.

4. Over the stile bear slightly to the left to a second stile 10 metres away then walk up to a stile next to large horse chestnut tree. Cross the stile and turn left, initially following the edge of an old pit, to a stile in the hedge opposite. Looking over your shoulder you will have a fine view across the Trent valley towards the northern slopes of Cannock Chase.

5. Cross straight over the next field, aiming slightly to the left of the house, then walk down the edge of the lawn to arrive in front of a small pond. Bear to the right of the pond to a metal gate then follow the fence on the right to a stile. Cross the stile and bear left to emerge onto Blithbury Road.

6. Turning left, immediately cross Hollow Lane (the road to Colton) to a stile by the driveway to Hurstwood Farm. Pass through the first field to a stile by an oak tree, then cross straight over the next field to a metal gate at the right hand corner of Hurst Wood.

7. Pass through the gate into the wood, walking gently down through the trees to a metal bridle gate at the far end. Through the gate, follow the hedge on the right past a small pool to a second gate leading into a grassy trackway known as Longley Lane.


Longley Lane

8. Follow Longley Lane for 300 metres until it emerges onto Newlands Lane, then turn left and follow this for half a mile passing an ancient oak tree and ultimately arriving at the picturesque duck pond at Stockwell Heath.

9. Turn left in front of the duck pond along Moor Lane, joining the course of the Staffordshire Way. After passing Rose Cottage on the right, cross over a stile on the left by a wooden gate (waymarked Staffordshire Way). Cross a second stile after 10 metres and drop down the bank to a small footbridge.

10. Bear right after the footbridge and cross a stile in the field corner. From here the Staffordshire Way is easy to follow as it passes straight across seven fields emerging after half a mile behind the village hall in Colton; continue past the village hall to the road.

11. Turn right along the pavement and follow the road past Colton House on the left, a mansion dating from about 1730, to arrive at a hump-backed bridge over the Moreton Brook.

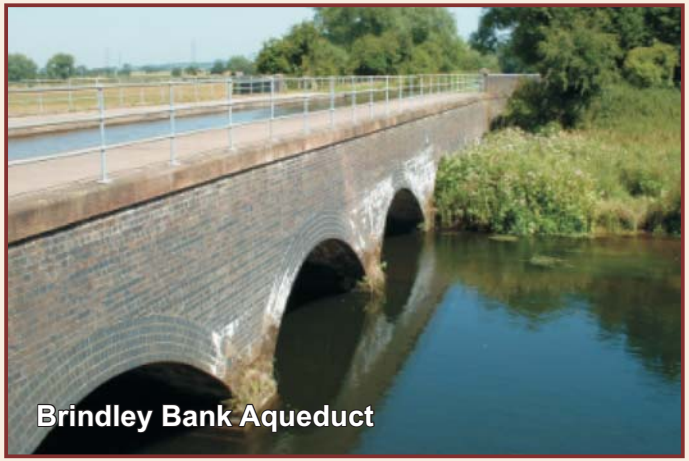
12. Immediately over the bridge, turn left into a field at a gateway and bear right across it past a large ash tree to emerge on the B5013. Cross carefully over the road and turn left along the pavement to a track on the right shortly after Rugeley Lodge.

13. Follow the track up and over the West Coast Main Line railway and then round to the right alongside it until you reach a canal bridge. Immediately before the canal bridge turn left and join the towpath (we now leave the Staffordshire Way).


Oak Tree


Duck pond at Stockwell Heath

14 Follow the towpath for a mile, crossing the River Trent at Brindley Bank Aqueduct. On the opposite bank of the canal immediately after the aqueduct there were once wharves where coal was unloaded for the nearby waterworks. Next to the old wharves a secluded footpath known locally as The Bloody Steps leads uphill to the Stafford road. In 1839 Christina Collins was murdered here by three men; they were eventually caught, the first was hanged, the second sent to prison and the third transported to Australia. Beyond the sharp bend in the canal the houses on the far bank have interesting gardens leading down to the waters edge.


Brindley Bank Aqueduct

15 Shortly after passing a "Welcome to Rugeley" signpost, leave the towpath at a road bridge and turn left, passing the roundabout at the junction of Power Station Road. Re-cross the River Trent (note the old gas-lamp brackets on the parapets), pass under the railway bridge and turn left to return to the railway station.

16 Short walk continued… After visiting the lakes, cross back over the stile to the track and turn right to emerge into a large field. Follow a grassy track up the side of this and the following field, following the hedge on the right, until you reach a gateway and emerge on to Hollow Lane.


Trent and Mersey Canal

17 Turn left and walk down the road to a mini roundabout. Cross straight over and continue past the village war memorial, The Greyhound Inn and Colton House, a mansion dating to about 1730, to arrive at a hump-backed bridge over the Moreton Brook. Now go to section 12.

Rugeley to Colton Circular Walk



Duck Pond
Rose Cottage
Moor Lane
F.B.
9
10
Stockwell Heath
Newlands Lane
Ancient Oak tree
Longley Lane
8
Hurst Wood
7
Moreton Brook
Colton
11
17
Hollow Lane
Hurst Wood Farm
12
Colton House
Village Hall
Short walk route
Rugeley Lodge
13
6
5
4
B5013
14
16
New Barn Farm
F.B.
Old Wood Farm No.2
3
Patchfields Farm
Trent Valley Railway Station
2
F.B.
River Trent
Trent and Mersey Canal
Blithbury Road
1
Start
Rugeley
15

- Public House
- Car Park
- Woodland
- Circular Walk
- Staffordshire Way

0 500m 1km



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LICENCE NUMBER 100019422