



Welcome

The scenic 10 mile / 16 km long Middlewood Way provides lots of opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding. The Middlewood Way was constructed on top of a disused railway line, and officially opened in 1985.

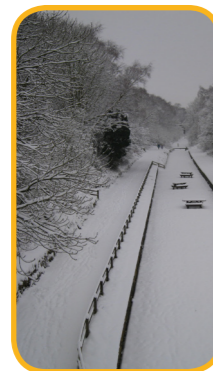
Managing the Middlewood Way

The Countryside Ranger Service ensures that the Middlewood Way is maintained to a high standard. The Rangers work with volunteers throughout the year to look after the Middlewood Way. Work includes repairing paths and creating wildlife habitats.



Walking

Local circular walks can be created using the footpath network and the adjacent canal towpath. Footpaths reach into the Peak District foothills to the east and the Cheshire Plain to the west. From Higher Poynton footpaths lead to Lyme Park and Lyme Hall. Circular walks starting from Bollington and Nelson Pit Visitor Centre are available to download as leaflets from: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/rangers The Ordnance Survey Explorer map 268 is recommended for route planning and navigation.



Cycling

The Middlewood Way offers easy and scenic cycling and is a popular destination for leisure cycling all year round. It forms part of the National Cycle Network and is a section of Route 55. Visit www.sustrans.org for more information.

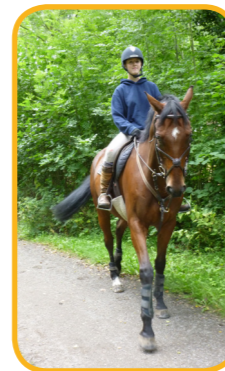
Cyclists please be aware that walkers may not hear you approach so please use your bell or shout a cheery hello.

Where the Way is split into two sections please use the wider path which is shared with horse riders. Please give way to horse riders and wait for them to pass you before cycling on.



Horse Riding

Horse riders can use the Middlewood Way from the Bollington viaduct at Adlington Road all the way to Rosehill in Marple; a 7 mile ride. Recommended horsebox parking is at Jackson's Brickworks in Higher Poynton and Rosehill in Marple. Riders can expect to meet walkers and cyclists, so do not bring a horse that is easily startled. Also, please do not ride any faster than a slow trot.



Accessibility

The Middlewood Way is mostly level and wheelchair accessible. Use the map overleaf to plan your visit as this shows easy access points as well as sections that might be difficult for wheelchair users. If you need more information, contact the Ranger Service - details are on the back cover of this leaflet.

Local History

In 1863, the towns of Marple, Bollington and Macclesfield were facing economic depression. Local dignitaries and especially the cotton mill owners of Bollington, hoped a new railway would improve their fortunes. A railway scheme was presented to parliament, and in 1869 the Macclesfield, Bollington and Marple Railway opened.



Train approaching Middlewood Station at Higher Poynton

The railway carried cotton, silk, coal and passengers, however it always struggled to make a profit. The line later became part of British Rail but was eventually closed as part of the Beeching cuts in 1970. In 1985 the disused railway was redeveloped for recreation as the Middlewood Way.

At Higher Poynton, coal from the local mines was transported to the canal and railway line by tramways also known as inclines. Lady's incline and Prince's incline are two of the former tramways in Higher Poynton which are now footpaths that lead downhill into Poynton. The Anson Engine Museum is sited on the old Anson colliery.



Anson Pit Museum scale model showing the Anson colliery and Nelson Pit in about 1900

Things to do and see

Wildlife enthusiasts will find plenty of interest throughout the year. The ditches provide habitat for dragonflies and damselflies, frogs and newts. Flocks of long tailed tits flit through the trees looking for insects whilst warblers sing from hidden perches on bankside bushes. Kingfishers visit the ponds and can also be seen flying along the Macclesfield Canal.



Kingfisher
Andrew Sproule/Shutterstock.com

The bridges provide good roosting sites for bats, and various species can be seen at dusk including pipistrelles and noctules along the Middlewood Way and Daubenton's along the canal.

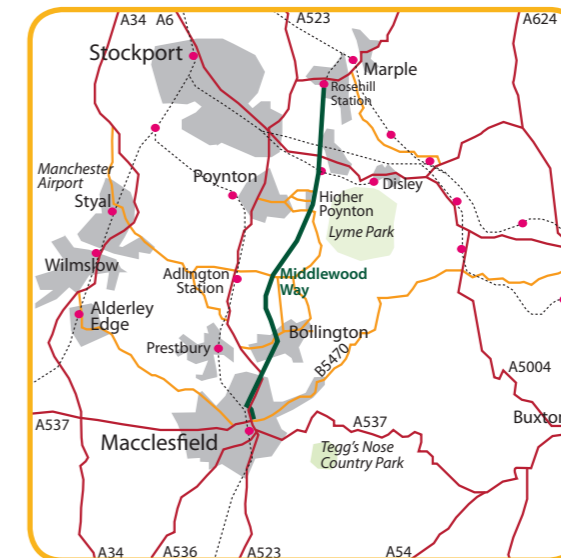
Take a walk in Poynton Coppice where wildlife benefits from traditional coppice management techniques. Each year a small area is coppiced and the cut timber used for fencing, hurdle making and pea sticks for local allotment groups. Poynton Coppice is delightful in spring when the woodland floor is carpeted with sweet smelling bluebells.

Why not call in at the Nelson Pit Visitor Centre for more information. This building is located on the site of Nelson Pit which was one of the deepest pits in the area.

The flower rich meadows at Jackson's Brickworks are well worth exploring. Common spotted, heath spotted and marsh orchids can be seen in impressive numbers during June and July. The ponds provide breeding habitats for newts, frogs, toads and dragonflies.



Emperor Dragonfly



Middlewood Way

Macclesfield to Middlewood Station
Cheshire East Council Countryside Ranger Service
Phone **01625 383700**
email rangers@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Middlewood Way: Middlewood Station to Marple

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
phone **0161 217 6111**
www.stockport.gov.uk

Macclesfield Canal

The Canal and River Trust : phone **0303 0404040**
email enquiries.manchesterpennine@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Tourist Information

Macclesfield 01625 378123
For bus and train travel information contact
Traveline phone **0871 2002233** or visit www.traveline.info

Car parking is available at various locations along the Middlewood Way - please refer to the map inside this leaflet.


















Production date Nov 2013




The Middlewood Way - your ticket to the countryside

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Key

-  Middlewood Way
-  Macclesfield Canal
-  Farm bridge (no access)
-  Selected public footpaths
-  Railway line
-  Parking
-  Toilets, including RADAR-accessible toilet
-  Information point
-  Marina
-  Pub
-  Cafe
-  Horse access
-  Picnic area
-  No entry to Middlewood Way from road
-  Bridge numbers

Accessibility Information

-  Easy access point
-  Wheelchair accessible with assistance
-  Difficult gradient or surface

