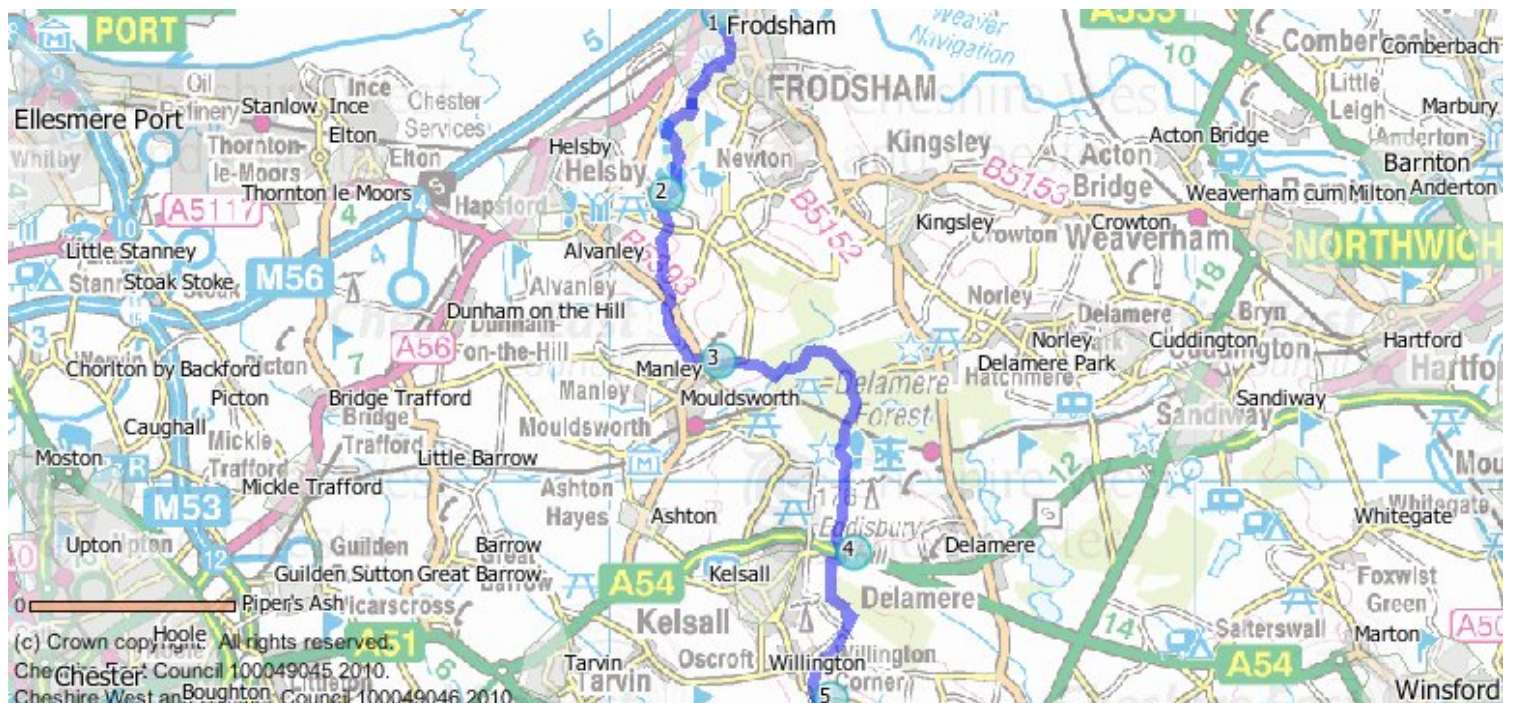


Sandstone Trail North

The northern section of the Sandstone Trail takes you along dramatic outcrops of sandstone, through wooded glades, across the famous Delamere Forest Park, to the gently rolling countryside around Willington.

Grade	Long distance
Distance	18km/11 ¼ miles
Time	5-6 hours
Start	Frodsham Town Centre
Map	OS Explorer 267
Terrain	Varies from metalled paths/footways to cross-field/field-edge paths and steep outcrops of sandstone. There are some steps to negotiate. Parts of some paths will be less than 90cm wide.
Barriers	Steps
Toilets	N/A
Contact	Cheshire West and Chester Council Tel: 01606 271736



Route Details

Sandstone Trail Walkers Guide – Northern Section

Frodsham to Willington: 18km/11 ¼ miles

A steep climb from Frodsham town centre up to the War Memorial is rewarded with impressive views over the Mersey estuary to the distinctive Liverpool Skyline beyond.

From here the Trail skirts a series of sandstone outcrops. Birch and oak woodland clothe the steep slopes, carpeted with ferns and bluebells in the spring. Once the path dropped into Dunsdale Hollow down Jacob's Ladder, a steep staircase carved into the rock, but today there is an easier route.

Look out for the remains of Woodhouse Hill Fort. Several Iron Age families would have lived in huts within the fort, built to take advantage of the commanding views.

Snidley Moor Wood is now managed by The Woodland Trust for nature conservation. Volunteers have cleared some of the rhododendron and replanted the banks with oak and other native trees.

The Trail follows the edge of the woodland along Alvanley Cliff. Particularly fine sandstone was quarried locally and used to rebuild Chester Castle and Eaton Hall. Potatoes were traditionally grown in the small fields in this area which was handy for local markets.

New Pale at Manley Common was enclosed from the forest by a paling fence in the seventeenth century. Delamere Forest Park is just a small remnant of the ancient hunting forest of Mara & Mondrum, used for hunting by Earls of Chester and later the King. In autumn damp, misty hollows give a feeling of what the wildwood would have been like when wild boar roamed the forest.

Kings Chair, the quarry to the east of Nettleford Wood, is thought to have been the source of stone for Vale Royal Abbey, built between 1277 & 1300. Just before the A54 the Trail crosses the line of Watling Street, the Roman road from Chester to Manchester. The A54 itself follows the old turnpike road. Travellers would have stopped at the cottage at Gresty's Waste to pay their tolls.

Much of Primrosehill Wood has been cleared in recent years, leading to an impressive flush of foxgloves in the summer. Weird and wonderful fungi follow in the autumn, including strange stinkhorns with their distinctive aroma.

Directions

Sandstone Trail Walkers Guide – Northern Section

1. Start in the centre of Frodsham. Walk up Church Street opposite the Bear's Paw. After 400m turn right up a signed public footpath to Howey Lane. Cross into Bellemonte Road opposite, then take Middle Walk on the right into the woods. Bear left and zigzag uphill to reach the War Memorial. Follow the waymarks along the edge of the hill and down Baker's Dozen steps into Dunsdales Hollow.

From Beacon Hill car park turn right onto the road. Turn left after 100m down the track and then go straight across the golf course. Turn left and follow the Trail into Dunsdale Hollow.

Go up the steps cut into the rock and continue along several woodland paths and track below Snidley Moor to the Ridgeway.

2. Turn left, the right up the steps into Ridgeway Wood. Cross the brook then follow field edges to Commonsides. Go over the stile opposite and through the fields below Alvanley cliff to the road at Yarangall Green. Cross over and go through two small fields to Manley Road. Turn right, then left along the pavement of the main road (B5393). After 1km turn left through a kissing gate. Follow field edges to New Pale Road.

3. Turn left and follow the lane to the corner. Take the open track straight ahead into Delamere Forest Park. Continue on forest tracks and paths to Ashton Road. Cross and go up the track next to Barnsbridge Gates car park. Follow the track over the railway, past Eddisbury Lodge and up the Nettleford Wood. Follow the path down to the A54.

4. Cross with care. Gresty's Waste car park is just to the left. Go down the steps and cross the brook. Follow the tracks through Primrosehill Wood and cross two fields to Summertrees Teashop at Tirley Lane. Turn left along the lane and follow the track opposite down to Willington Road.