

WALK 2 - Stamford Mill, Littleton, Guilden Sutton (6½ miles)

1 Start by following Walk No.1 as far as Stamford Bridge.

2 Do not turn left along Lansdowne Road, but carry on to cross the A51 at the traffic lights. A few yards to the right, stone steps descend the embankment to a stile leading on to pasture land. Make a hard left to a nearby bridge over a brook and then right to a bridge over another brook to reach the bank of the Gowy. Follow the Gowy to reach Stamford Mill at the mill race. The wheel of the mill was removed in about 1900 and its main building is now the kitchen of the farm. There are said to be date stones of 1610 and 1700 under the cement rendering. Turn right through the gate and farmyard and follow the farm access road to Cotton Lane. Turn right and in 200 yards left along the lane and track leading to Stamford Lane. Turn right again and in another 200 yards take the signposted field path on the left beside a big oak tree. Follow the hedge on your right across the first field, go over the stile, turn left for a few yards then right following the hedge on your left. After crossing an old stone stile you enter a field with isolated oaks growing on it. Follow the hedge on the left hand side of the field until you reach a big stone stile beside an oak. Here the hedge turns left - follow it. Ahead you can see a sports hut and some of the Christleton School playing fields. Turn right at the next corner of the hedge and pass through two gateways to arrive at a white house. Pass to the right round the back of the house where there is a stile and footpath sign. Cross the stile and turn left into the lane which forms the approach road to the house and joins Little Heath Road beside Christleton pond, a pleasantly quiet spot for a rest or a picnic.

3 Go right along the road towards Littleton. To the left there is a remarkably open view of the Clwydian Hills and Moel Famau. On the right you will pass Littleton Old Hall, a seventeenth century farmhouse. Until 1978 this was the residence of Mr Philip Hunter, Master of the Cheshire Forest Hunt. Mr Hunter started the Littleton point-to-point meeting in the surrounding fields, held each year in early March. The meetings ceased in 1978 when Mr Hunter sold the Old Hall and left the district. At the crossroad beyond the Hall turn right and right again into Fir Tree Lane, a public footpath. Follow the lane. In the fields to the right some of the rails and jumps of the disused racecourse can be seen. About 200 yards past the line of houses on the left another track crosses the lane. Turn left along this, pass the white cottage and you will shortly see a disused sandpit on the right with a brick-field beyond. The sandpit was used up to the end of the last war (for sand-bagging). Some of the nearby houses were built from bricks fired on the site. You now reach the A51. Cross with care and go right for about 400 yards where, opposite the Little Chef (disused) there is a signposted path at right angles to the road. Follow this and the blue marker posts and cross the golf course to Guilden Sutton and the Bird in Hand. The waymark at the car park of this inn has a red spot at its centre. It marks the Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society's Longster Trail from Piper's Ash to Helsby Hill. Follow the arrows right up the lane beside the inn, alongside the houses with Georgian-style porches, across the road and down the path to cross the Oxen Bridge over the Gowy, following the right of way across the field. Turn right and follow the fence line to a footbridge and then on beside the hedges, as waymarked, to Greysfield, the school and the bus shelter.