

Macclesfield-Outdoors Walking Route: Trentabank Reservoir, Higher Sutton

Start/Finish: Leather's Smithy pub, Langley. Distance: 3.8 miles (6.1 km). Difficulty: Easy to medium.

Time: 1½ to 2 hours

1. From the Leather's Smithy pub, cross directly over the road and follow the footpath which is adjacent to the dam at the end of the Ridgegate reservoir.
2. Bear left at the end of the reservoir and then immediately turn right along the footpath where a sign indicates "To Gritstone Trail".
3. This path descends via a series of stone steps, across a wooden foot bridge, and up to a lane.
4. Turn left along the lane. Now follow the Gritstone Trail signs (a footprint inscribed with a 'G' on a yellow arrow), which lead you to the right of the house at the end of the lane.
5. The Gritstone Trail is clearly marked, and crosses several fields, past farm houses, over stiles and through several 'kissing' gates. At one point it crosses a narrow lane. There is no need to describe all of the directions here, as the Gritstone Trail is clearly marked. Just keep following the yellow 'G' signs!
6. Eventually the Gritstone Trail leads you up a footpath through the middle of a field, across a stream, and up to a stone wall and onto a road. This is Meg Lane.
7. Turn left along Meg Lane, for a short distance. Just before some houses on the right, there is a footpath sign at a bridleway – ignore this.
8. About 30 yards further on, just after the houses on the right, there is a footpath sign to the right, follow this.
9. The footpath leads through two kissing gates, and up to the back garden of the Hanging Gate pub. There are outside toilets at the pub.
10. Leaving the pub, turn left along the road, where there are views across the Cheshire plain to the left.

11. Where the road bends sharply to the left, bear right instead, along a lane which eventually leads to Trentabank.
12. At the next road junction, ignore the even-narrower lane to the left and carry straight on.
13. At a right-hand bend in the road there is a footpath to the left. The walk can be made even shorter by following this footpath, which eventually meets the footpath adjacent to the dam at the end of the Ridgegate reservoir (the one followed at step 1). Follow this path back to the Leather's Smithy.
14. Otherwise, follow the road around the right hand bend, until you reach a clearing on the right, where a bridleway and a footpath leave the road.
15. The bridleway goes straight uphill away from the road, ignore this. The footpath, signed as the red walk (one of the signed walks around Macc Forest) and to Shutlingsloe and Trentabank, actually begins parallel to the road. Take the footpath.
16. Follow the red walk posts through the forest, down to a wide path. Cross straight over the wide path. Upon reaching the next wide path, turn right up hill. Upon reaching another wide path, turn left to follow the sign to Trentabank. Just before reaching the road, turn left to the Trentabank Visitors Centre.
17. Turn left out of the Visitors Centre car park, and follow the road down to and along the side of Ridgegate Reservoir, back to the Leather's Smithy.