

Footpaths in Ashton Hayes and Horton-cum-Peel

A=Ashton, AH=Ashton Hayes M=Mouldsworth, H=Horton-cum Peel, K=Kelsall, B=Barrow

These are an important amenity which is fundamental to the local environment and the well-being and leisure activities of locals and visitors.

They are well used by walkers, parents with children and by people exercising their dogs.

It is important that any future developments do not affect access to these paths, that they do not significantly increase the volume of traffic on the roads especially heavy traffic, and do not interfere with natural drainage.

There are two popular paths in Ashton which are accessible by permission of the landowner and are not official footpaths

Delamere Forest is within 2 miles of the centre of the parish and is a valued resource enjoyed by all ages for a wide range of activities.

Within the parish are Andrew's Wood - an 11 acre site containing 6000 trees and Brines Brow, an area of common land with a car park, duck pond and picnic area

The footpaths in the area link into several long trails:

Baker Way which runs from Chester station to Delamere station - 13 miles

Eddisbury Way which runs from Frodsham to Bickerton - 17 miles

Sandstone Trail which runs from Frodsham to Whitchurch - 34 miles

Longster Trail which runs from Helsby Hill to Pipers Ash - 9 miles

In addition paths link to the neighbouring parishes of Norley, Delamere, Tarvin, Barrow, Mouldsworth and Kelsall

A tarmac footpath leads from the A54 on the B5393 through the village and ends in Mouldsworth next to the station

Local roads

The area is very popular with cyclists (again both local and visitors) and it is important that the roads are in a safe condition for their enjoyment.

More signage on the narrow lanes could help.

There are a number of horse riders who exercise their horses on the roads and sometimes illegally on the pavements leaving deposits of horse manure

The roads are also used by local farmers many of whom work land in different areas, which means that their equipment has to travel along the roads. The increasing size of tractors causes problems, mainly because of mud on the road and damage to the grass verges. Although it is illegal to leave mud on the roads this is commonly ignored, no attempt is made to clear it up and there are no warning signs as required by the law. The main problem area is the bottom of Old Lane, which when it is wet is a potential skid hazard at the junction. Litter is also a problem in all areas - the main culprits are walkers, passing cars and cyclists

Shay Lane

This is classified as a road but is unsuitable for normal traffic. It starts in Ashton by Willow Hayes and ends on Holland's Lane. From it there are views of the spire of Ashton church and at the top there is a view of Moel Famau in the distant. The lane is bordered by hedges and attracts a variety of wildlife. From the top it links into Eddisbury Way - either going up to the top of Kelsall or turning left and linking up with the path going to Brines Brow. At the top of the lane the sign states 'Single track road' and at the bottom 'No through road' It is an important access to the adjacent fields but the tractors cause damage in middle part of the lane making it very muddy at times. The surface is good at either end but rutted and uneven in the centre. Part way up a lane another footpath to the lower part of Kelsall goes off to the right across field. ([A FP 1](#) and links to [K FP 8](#) and [9](#)) The start of this is across a cultivated field and it ends in a crossing of the Kelsall by-pass. There is a ditch alongside the track which ends in a guarded culvert and is the start of a stream that runs under the road to the lower part of the village (*has it got a name?*). This is important for the drainage of water from nearby fields and the Kelsall by-pass. There is a lot of litter in this area - a meeting place for young people! Ideally this lane should be for the use of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and farmers and should be kept in good condition. It is an important asset for the community and needs to be protected.

I am going to get more information about this area from Stuart Scott from Ashton Hall farm, who has offered to walk around the area with me- there is a problem with water draining from the Kelsall by-pass which affects Ashton.

Eddisbury Way

Within the parish boundary this starts at the top of Shay Lane, goes left along the road for about 300 yards and enters a field on the left through a gap in the wall. ([AH FP 11](#)) This entry is overgrown and poorly signed posted. The part along the side of the fruit farm is well signposted but spoilt by tall leylandi hedges and rubbish. However when it enters the next field it is not clear where to go. This field is a mess but there is no obstruction to the way. It exits onto the road, turns left and follows the road past the crossroads and enters a field by the railway bridge. ([A FP 12](#)) The first part follows the line of the railway but then goes across a cultivated field with no guide to the route, passes through a hedge and down to the border with Ashton Brook. There was a broken sign in the field. Alternatively the way crosses the road at the top of Shay Lane and goes up to the upper part of Kelsall ([K FP 1](#))

Baker Way

This crosses the boundary from Tarvin over Salters Brook ([H FP 7](#)), crosses the drive to Horton Hall and crosses fields ([A FP 4](#) and [FP 5](#)). One sign in a gateway is obscured and broken. It joins the path from the end of Whitegate, goes over Badgers bridge and joins a path to the left to Hollowmoor Heath to join the Longster trail ([B FP 17](#)) - the second part of which is unclear and blocked. Turning right it then follows a stream ([A FP 6](#)), where there are signs of badger activity and some dumped rubbish, turns left along the drive to the Peel Hall barn development ([H FP 1](#)). At the top the path has been diverted to the right along fields to the entrance to Peel Hall ([H FP 2](#)). However the original path through the farmyard is still being used and the signage there is confusing ([H FP 3](#)). Off this path there is another way to Swinfordmill farm which joins the Longster Trail ([H 4](#) and [B FP 14](#)) Crossing Gongars Lane it goes through field behind the church finishing on the B5393 opposite the entrance to

Ashton Hayes ([M FP 3](#) and [A FP 9](#)). It is not clearly signposted from this road. Below the church there is a short path which ends in the churchyard - the sign here is loose and needs re-fixing. The church needs to ensure that their part is kept clear from spoil dumped by the gravediggers. Crossing the B5393 the way follows Grange Road joining Old Lane. There is a rookery in the trees on the left. This is an attractive quiet road with a poor road surface in parts and can be very muddy. Opposite the Grange a short path crosses a field, through an old quarry joining the B5393 next to Ashton Brook ([A FP 10](#)). This is spoiled by rubbish dumped in the quarry. Towards the top of Old Lane opposite Woodside Farm a path cuts across through a wooded area and crosses the road into Brines Brow. This is blocked by a fallen tree. From the car park at the bottom of the picnic area the path follows Ashton Road towards the forest and goes over the boundary at Ashton Bridge. There is an uneven grass verge on the right but it is not suitable for walkers. This is a busy road well used by cyclists. The next part of the Baker Way in Norley links into the Sandstone Trail and all the various paths in the forest.

Path from Horton Hall drive to Ashton ([A FP 13](#))

From the Baker Way turn down the drive entering the lay-by ([H FP 6](#) and [A FP 15](#)), turn left past the cafe and look for a gap in the hedge on the right. This is overgrown but passable, the path cuts across the field past the fish ponds to a large oak tree, goes behind Farrell's yard, and ends by the B5393 next to the greenhouses joining the footpath leading to the village. ([A FP 13](#)) This entry is also overgrown and needs attention

Roadside tarmac footpath from the A54 to Mouldsworth station

This is in good condition and the addition of the new path next to the entry to Ashton Hayes has made it safer to use and encouraged people to walk to the railway station. Part of it is an important route by foot to the primary school from Ashton and Mouldsworth.

Path around the Recreation field

The path around the field is used by people wanting short walks and by mothers with buggies and links into the Baker Way by Whitegate ([A FP 3](#)) and from there over Badgers bridge and along to the bottom of Peel Hall Lane.

Path to Stable Lane, Mouldsworth

A short path opposite the bottom of Old Lane links to Mouldsworth, passes a pump house and crosses the boundary at Ashton brook. An possible alternative route for those wishing to go towards Mouldsworth down Old Lane from the Baker Way.

Path from West End to Peel Crescent ([A FP 7](#))

A short path much used by the villagers. There are 'no cycling signs' at either end but nothing to indicate that it is a designated footpath

Path from the B5393 to Kelsall Road. ([A FP 2](#))

From next to the Methodist Chapel to behind Four Lanes Farmhouse

This is entered over a stile and goes along a narrow path which is muddy and full of nettles. After the stile in the middle the path is wider with a firm surface and lined by beech hedges. The exit is open to the road but is poorly signed.

Permitted paths Used by permission of the land owner

A short fenced off path goes from the B5393 behind Ashton House nursery to the end of Dunns Lane - very popular with locals. Although not signposted the way is clear.

Another track starting opposite the school leads to Andrew's Wood and then turns left through the trees ending on the road by the new footpath. Alternatively a turn right ends at the end of Dunns Lane. At times this track is muddy and rutted as it is the field access for farm machinery. There are several welcoming signs for this area.

Brines Brow

This is an area of common land managed by the Countryside Ranger. The picnic area and car park at the bottom are popular. The adjacent duck pond needs attention. The access for cars at the top has been blocked because of problems in the past and there are broken picnic tables etc in this area. However it is a space that is enjoyed by families and dog owners. It is a convenient place to stop for a break.

Andrews Wood

An attractive restful space with a variety of trees and wildflowers. This was managed by the Forestry Commission for the first five years and is now in need of some attention. It provides a pleasant short circular walk within the village.

Action needed

Repair of signs and improvement of signage

Baker Way: Sign in gateway between H 7 and A FP 4

Signage from B5393 to a FP 9

Loose sign at junction of A FP 9 and M FP 3

Clearer signs in farmyard behind Peel Hall

Clear fallen tree from the path from top of Old lane to Brines Brow

Eddisbury Way; Improve sign, cut back growth at entry through the wall to AH FP 11

Clear signs across field near Woodside farm AH FP 11, clear signs across A FP 12

A FP 13 : Cut back growth at both entry points and make signs visible

A FP 2: Improve state of first part and improve signs

Shay Lane: Talk to the council about maintenance and possible restrictions on use

Mud on roads - needs to be regulated ?Police ? Highways dept.

Brines Brow - Liaise with countryside ranger -improve duck pond and review safety of old picnic tables etc at the top

Working parties

Clear rubbish in brook towards Badgers bridge, near culvert in Shay lane and in quarry by A FP 10 and any other areas

Clear rubbish etc in Andrew's Wood with agreement from Jean Dobson

Summary of paths and roads

Scored from 1 - 5

Area	Condition	Frequency of use	Amenity value	Comments
Baker Way	4	3	5	Most parts well signed and passable Parts of Grange Rd. can be muddy
Eddisbury Way	2 - 3	3	5	Poor on A FP 12 Part AH FP 11 path not clearly posted
Shay Lane	3	3	5	A valuable asset Needs attention Surface variable
A FP 7	4	5	5	Important short cut
A FP 2	1 and 4	2	3	1st part in poor condition
A FP 13	3	3	5	Needs entries clearer
A FP 3, 4, 5 and 9 + M FP 3	4	5	5	Important dog walking paths
Tarmac path from A54 to Mouldsworth	4	5	5	Important for walkers to and from the village, school and station
A FP 10	3	5	5	Used by dog walkers
Path around recreation field	5	5	5	Popular short walk Links to part of the Baker Way and Peel Hall Lane
Permitted paths	4	5	5	Popular with dog walkers, for short cuts and access to Andrew's Wood
Old Lane and Grange Road	3	5	5	Much used by dog walkers