

Walk from Ellesmere Park to RHS Bridgewater, Worsley

Total distance 6.08 miles Time 2 hours

A gentle, traffic free, walk from Ellesmere Park to the southern boundary of the Royal Horticultural Society's new national garden in Worsley. There are good views of the ever changing scene. Once open in 2021 you can use this route to gain entry to the garden rather than driving up Leigh Road!

Most of the route is along the canal towpath but for best views of the garden during its construction use the path alongside the RHS fence; this can be muddy in wet weather.



Sharing the best in Gardening

Horticultural Concept



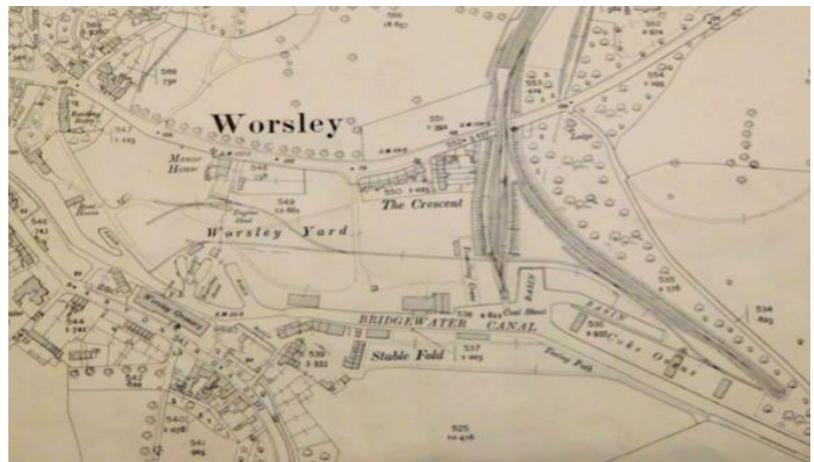
Description of the Route

Head down Ellesmere Road to Quaker Bridge and then go across to Monton Green via Park Road. Use Parrin Lane to cross the Bridgewater Canal and immediately drop down to join the towpath. This is the world's first canal. It was built in 1761 to resolve the flooding which was plaguing the Duke of Ellesmere's coal mines and coincidentally enabled the direct loading of the coal from seam to barge. Conveniently, it also facilitated the removal of spoil - to be dumped on Chat Moss.



After a long straight stretch a bend takes you into what is now leafy Worsley. Imagine the scene at this first corner when it was the site of coal wagons being emptied into waiting barges.

Pass the sculpted ducks and the much photographed Packet House and go under Barton Road. Take the next left and go up the slope to reach the road; turn left to cross over the canal and then left again dropping down into a small car park. Cross this and, passing through a small copse, join the north bank of the canal. This short section is currently a narrow path, soon to be upgraded.

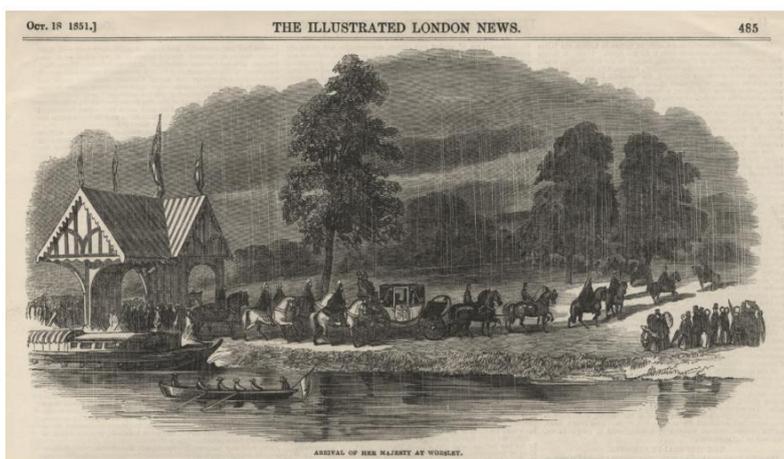


The boundary of RHS Garden Bridgewater (the grounds of the now demolished Worsley New Hall) extends from the last motorway bridge almost up to Boothstown Basin. Covering 154 acres, the site will include two lakes linked by a stream-side Chinese Garden, restored woodlands and meadows. Entry will be through the "Welcome Building" with its studios for lectures, events and school visits - as well as a shop and cafe. The 11 acre Walled

Garden, almost completely renovated and stocked in 2020, includes an orchard, paradise garden and kitchen garden. There will be a strong emphasis on engagement with the local community and the healing potential of gardens and gardening.

To get a closer look at the site whilst it is being developed leave the towpath to go down a grassy bank just opposite the outflow from the reed beds. This is about 100m past the last motorway bridge. The reed beds were developed in the early part of this century to act as a natural filter for the removal of the iron pigments which leach out of the old coal workings at Worsley Delph. The outflow of water from the beds into the canal is intermittent but the site of the escape is clear to see on the southern bank.

Queen Victoria's Visit to Worsley in 1851



Incidentally, this is about the place where Queen Victoria disembarked on her first visit to Worsley New Hall. She had arrived by horse drawn barge from Patricroft station.

'Arrival of Her Majesty at Worsley', Illustrated London News, 18 October 1851

Queen Victoria arrived by barge from Patricroft Station. The Earl of Ellesmere had the barge specially made and built a landing stage on the banks of the Bridgewater Canal.

Having dropped down the bank, turn left along the boundary fence and follow it for about 600m until reaching another slope to take you back up to the towpath.



Retrace your steps to the car park, go up to Barton Road and turn right, taking the first traffic light controlled crossing heading for the hump back bridge. Cross this to reach Worsley Green another area of bucolic charm once the scene of heavy polluting industry.

Walk beside the lower edge of the green and a short distance along Worsley Road, turning right just after the thatched cottage onto a traffic free track. Go straight ahead eventually entering Duke's Drive country park. Keep to the left, avoiding the steps, and curl round the park to reach the car park and Parrin Lane.