



WALK 6

Cheddleton to Consall

4½ Kms, Easy but often muddy in places,

Allow 1¼ hours

Start – Cheddleton Station



The towpath may be impassable near Consall if there has been a lot of rain and the river is very high. This walk is not suitable for pushchairs and appropriate walking footwear should be worn as it can be muddy in all areas along the towpath.

- 1 Leave Cheddleton Station and cross the railway line by the level crossing. Continue over the bridge over the River Churnet.

The River Churnet rises in the Peak National Park and flows into the River Dove at the hamlet of Combridge. It rarely floods around Cheddleton but does rise very quickly after rain, often reaching the arch of the bridge. It falls just as quickly once the rain has stopped.

- 2 After The Boat Inn car park, head left down to the Caldon Canal towpath and follow this away from the road.
- 3 In ¾ Km you will come to Wood's Lock on the canal. Pass through two gates to cross an access road staying on the same, footpath side of the canal.

Caldon Canal runs from Etruria in the Potteries to Froghall Wharf with a branch that runs into Leek town. It was built in 1779 to transport the huge quantities of limestone that were being quarried at Caldon Low.

- 4 Pass under a canal bridge and soon find a wooden lift bridge.

Lift bridges were often used where the expense of foundations for a permanent bridge could not be justified, perhaps because of infrequent use. This bridge is open to canal traffic by default and can be closed when access is required via the farm track across the canal.

- 5 Continue on the canal towpath until you reach the next lock. This is Ford or Oakmeadow Lock. Immediately after the lock cross a hump-backed footbridge to continue along the towpath on the opposite side. The Caldon Canal and the River Churnet merge here.

At this point a notice board advises canal users to check whether the river is in spate before proceeding.

- 6 The towpath curves generally to the left passing a footpath into Chase Wood and soon you will see the railway line on the opposite bank. The towpath then curves to the right and closer to the railway. Look out for two small lime kilns set back a little on the right.
- 7 A further kilometre of walking, often muddy, brings you to the old lime kilns on your right and the sight of bridge number 50 and the Black Lion pub. The River now parts company with the canal tumbling over a weir.

The grade II listed lime kilns were built at the beginning of the 19th century to reduce limestone (from Caldon Low quarry) to lime powder by roasting it in the kilns. Coal for the kilns was brought via a plateway – an old railway – from local collieries. The kilns fell out of use near the end of the 19th century.

- 8 Walk through the car park for the pub and continue for 200 metres along the lane until you see the entrance to Consall station on your left.

