



WALKS IN LONGDON PARISH

8. WINDMILL BANK COTTAGE

At Windmill Bank Cottage cross School Lane (with care) and go through the small gateway onto the Chestall Estate. Follow the path towards the right hand end of the reservoir on the horizon. Leave this field through a small wooden gateway onto a tarmac drive.



9. GENTLESHAW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Turn left and follow this driveway to the road with the reservoir on the right. At the road turn right and follow School Lane past Gentleshaw Primary School and Christ Church returning to the starting point. Take care on this road as the traffic can be rather fast.

The Windmill Inn may provide a welcome refreshment stop.



NOTES

Gentleshaw Common is located in the southern part of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is the sixth largest area of lowland heath (a fast disappearing and endangered habitat) in Staffordshire covering 86 hectares.

Lowland heath land is rare across the world with the UK having about 20% of the global total making it even more endangered and scarce than rainforests and therefore a priority habitat for nature conservation.

Heaths such as this were created at wildly differing times from as early as Neolithic time (3000BC). Trees were cleared and the open land maintained by grazing, burning and timber cutting producing characteristically poor soil supporting a specialized range of plants and associated animals. Gentleshaw Common was once a training ground for cavalry and infantry soldiers. Their emplacements can still be seen. During the time of the general strike in the 1920s many of the trees were felled for fuel by the local miners. The Common was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by English Nature in 1981 and it is also a grade 1 Site of Biological Importance (SBI). SSSIs are the country's very best wildlife and geological sites.

Christ Church, which was built to serve as a Chapel-of-ease to Longdon, was officially opened on 28th August 1837 by the then Bishop of Lichfield.



REMEMBER THE COUNTRYSIDE CODE

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow signs
- Consider other people
- Leave gates and property as before
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control

Leaflet 10 pence - when purchased

FUNDED BY:



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**NUMBER 6
GENTLESHAW
WAY**



LONGDON PARISH WALKS

NUMBER 6

GENTLESHAW WAY

Christ Church • Common Side • Cold Well • Windmill Bank

WALK DISTANCE:
2.5 miles (4 km) • Time 1 ½ hours

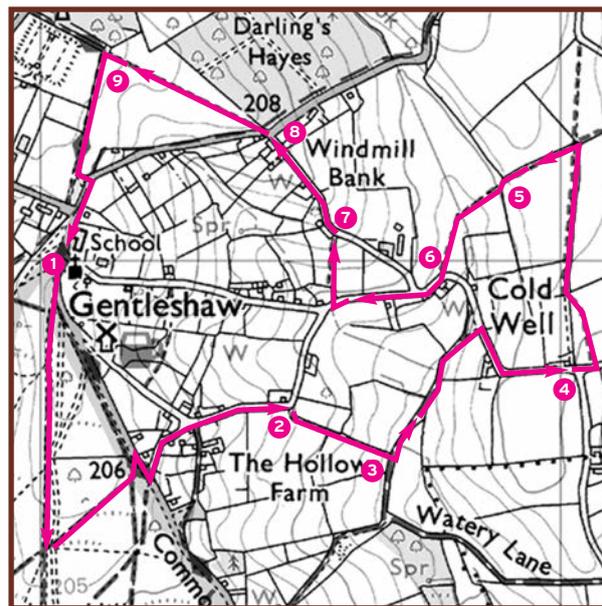
This walk takes a circular route to the south and east of the village of Gentleshaw, using a mixture of minor metalled roads and footpaths across undulating farmland and woodland, via a number of horse paddocks.

Parts of this walk can be muddy at times especially in winter and after rain.



1. START AT GENTLESHAW CHURCH

From the small car park opposite Gentleshaw Church and with the Church behind you take the bridle path to the left noting the information board about Gentleshaw Common. The path runs roughly parallel to the road known as Common Side along the top of Gentleshaw Common. Enjoy the extensive views to the west over the Common and beyond. Continue about 50 yards after leaving the coppice, turn left at the marker post heading towards the remains of the windmill, briefly following the route of The Two Saint's Way. (A long distance revived pilgrimage route between Chester and Lichfield Cathedrals.) Just before reaching the road, opposite Ye Olde Windmill Inn, turn right along the path again parallel to the road. Just past Fair View cottage turn left, cross the road (with care) and walk down Shaw Lane, past the junction with Windmill Lane and then note the house named Wongabena (meaning 'Our Home' in Aboriginal Australian).



2. OLD WELL COTTAGE

Opposite Old Well Cottage (as Shaw Lane bends left) climb stile and follow the descending path keeping the hedge to your left, over a further two stiles and into woodland crossing the stream on a sleeper bridge.

3. GREEN LANE

Turn left and cross a further small bridge This old track way is known as Green Lane. Continue ascending gently along this lane until exiting onto the road at Cold Well. Turn right past Watery Lane farm up the hill.



4. COLD WELL

Just past the Tee junction and beyond Laurel Cottage on the left, find a hole in the hedge. Climb the stile and proceed straight ahead between horse paddocks and climbing further stiles continue in a northerly direction. In the corner of the field by a semi-mature oak tree there is a stile in the hedge Do not climb the stile but turn left past the oak tree and follow the field edge keeping the hedge to the right.



5. MAPLE BROOK

At the corner of the field look for the stile hidden in the hedge. Climb this stile and descend the few steps into the field. Proceed across the field to an old metal gateway just to the right of some conifers. Go through the gateway having crossed the little stream (Maple Brook). Turn left towards a stile and following the direction of the way marker to the far corner of the field by the cottage. Locate the stile and exit onto the road opposite Coldwell Cottage.

6. BRIERTEY HILL LANE

Turn right and walk up this lane. Carry on past Windmill Bank Lane and after a short distance at the Gentleshaw village sign turn right over the stile. Follow the field boundary keeping the hedge on the left. After a short distance a stile can be found in the hedge. Climb this stile and continue up the hill on the grassy path towards the white house noting the fine landscaped garden.



7. STILE COTTAGE

At the top by Stile Cottage exit onto the road, Windmill Bank, and turn left up the lane. At a gateway just past Barn Croft Cottage there are fine views on a clear day to the north east towards Longdon, Armitage and beyond across the vale of the River Trent and Burton upon Trent.