

KEEP SAFE

- ❖ Please keep your dog on a lead at all times.
- ❖ Please walk in single file along the road.
- ❖ Children should be carefully supervised.
- ❖ Take care when climbing stiles and crossing bridges.
- ❖ Be aware the path may be slippery, particularly after rain.
- ❖ Cross fields containing livestock with care.
- ❖ We are not responsible for any loss, damage or injury, howsoever caused, to you or your possessions on this footpath.



Leaflet prepared by Findern Footpaths Group.

We are a small, self-funded conservation group, who work to preserve the countryside and to help others to enjoy it!

A donation of 50p for this leaflet will help us with our work.

*WALK 'ROUND
... FINDERN*

RAILS AND ALES

A historical railway walk



Distance: Approx. 4 miles/2 hours

Terrain: Gentle, mostly flat, this route involves some walking beside the railway line, and along the road.

Stiles: several

Bridges: 2 bridges, 4 flights of steps.

Bus: Villager V3 stops at Findern Green

RAILS AND ALES

START: LOWER GREEN, FINDERN

Grid Ref. 309305.

From Findern Green proceed towards the Church. Turn right and you will find the car park in Lower Green.

From Lower Green, walk over Footpath 10, called Rushymeadow Way (which starts beside Chestnut Cottage opposite the car parking), by turning right after the stile in the direction of the road bridge. Turn left, and after crossing the main A50 road bridge, turn immediately left again along the footpath which leads into Heath Lane. Continue along Heath Lane to the Greyhound Public House.

Cross the canal by the old road bridge and turn right along the towpath running alongside the Trent and Mersey Canal. On your left, you will see the two lines which takes trains between Derby and Birmingham. This line was originally built in 1836 for the Birmingham and Derby Junction Railway.

Continue along under the canal bridge, passing in front of Potlocks Farm. Behind the hedge in the garden at the side of the cottage are still visible the Transshipment basins that would have been used to take goods off the barges on the canal before they were loaded on the trains. The first one has been made into a delightful pond, the second one is dry.

Turn left immediately after the ponds, approx 100 yds after the footbridge, (down a well defined but unmarked path) and cross the bridge that spans the railway. This bridge was built by Lanarkshire Welding and erected on site. The bridge was assembled on site in 8 weeks, and opened to the public in February 2003, at a cost of £750,000. The ever-increasing speeds of trains, from 90mph to 125mph, made replacing level crossings essential.



Old Willington and Repton Station

Notice at this point, that there are now four railway lines, the furthestmost two taking passengers to Crewe. A fifth line, now removed would have taken freight trains.

Cross the stile ahead of you and follow the footpath for about ½ mile alongside the railway.

Notice that on the right, the new trackbeds are higher than the old unused ones. The modern, faster trains need more ballast under the tracks.

Turn left and walk across the playing field. At the end turn right and walk along the pavement towards Willington village centre. Walk underneath the railway bridge, and notice the new metal span which replaced the original curved one. Willington Picnic area is on the right here. (This is the start of the return route to Findern.)

Willington possesses a selection of pubs, which all provide a welcome place to take a rest!

Take a moment to look at the new Willington Station which was reopened in 1996. This replaced the previous one which was closed in the 1960s.

Return through the picnic area, turning right on to the towpath at Willington wharf. In ¼ mile, notice a row of cottages on the left at the bend in the canal. These were built to accommodate railway workers of the North Staffs Railway in 1904.

Cross over the canal at the White Footbridge and after walking over Potlocks Path, crossing the 2 stiles, turn right along the road and retrace the beginning of the walk over the A50 to Lower Green or walk back through the village.

Please note: Rushymeadow Way will often contain cattle and may be very muddy after wet weather. This part of the walk can be avoided by starting along the road through the village, past The Wheel pub and along Heath Lane to the bridge over the A50 trunk road.