

Saltscape Trail

Salt shaped the landscape



Saltscape Trail

Salt shaped the landscape

Saltscape Trail

Salt shaped the landscape

Saltscape

Saltscape is a unique landscape in an area of mid-Cheshire extending along the River Weaver from Frodsham to Northwich, Winsford and Middlewich. The area owes much of its distinctive character to the presence of salt and its exploitation over centuries.

The Saltscape Trail, devised by Friends of Anderton and Marbury (FoAM) in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Rangers, is part of the Saltscape Project.

This Trail leaflet is part of the Project's aim to improve access to this part of the Weaver Valley, while introducing visitors to the landscape and its heritage. There are interpretation panels at both ends of the Trail. These provide information about the history and transformation of the area from 'industrial wasteland to wildlife haven'.

More information about Northwich Woodlands and FoAM is available on the website:
www.foam.merseyforest.org.uk



The Saltscape Trail links Anderton Boat Lift and the Lion Saltworks through Northwich Woodlands.

Contact us Tel: 01606 77741

email: marbury@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk



The Saltscape Trail follows a way-marked 'figure of eight' route (about 6 miles or 10 km). It is two circular walks, each about 3 miles or 5 km.



The Dragonfly Walk ● starts from Anderton Boat Lift car park at point number 1.



The Orchid Walk ● starts near the Lion Salt Works at point number 14.

The car park for the Boat Lift and Anderton Nature Park covers the former site of Anderton Salt Works. Brunner Mond, later ICI and TATA, owned the factory across the Weaver Navigation, supplying soda ash to chemical industries from 1874.

For decades vast quantities of lime waste, cinders and ash were dumped around the area. The lime beds were retained by bund walls, terraced structures built of ash in four distinct layers.



1. Cross car park.
2. Go through Dragonfly Gates. Head left uphill.
3. Keep right and pass the sculptures depicting the industrial heritage.

Cowslips and meadow cranesbill are the predominant wildflowers that have colonised the area near the sculptures. Birch trees grew as the tipping ceased. Other species were planted as part of the 1991 regeneration work. The lime-rich soils of the glades support a range of plants including wild strawberry, creeping willow and common valerian. Bird's-foot trefoil is a vital food plant for caterpillars of the dingy skipper butterfly.

4. At crossroads, turn right downhill. Keep left through birch woodland. (About 800yds/m.)
5. Turn left to cross bridge over pipes.

Pipes carrying brine are a visible sign of the vast infrastructure for the present chemical industry.

6. Keep ahead. After about 400yds/m cross stream and keep Witton Brook on your right.
7. Passing the steps on your left you can see the bund wall construction. Continue to junction.



Marbury Lane, originally a cinder toll road, continues over the Trent and Mersey Canal into Marbury Country Park. The mature trees in the steep woodland alongside the lane shelter bluebells, wood anemones and wild garlic.

10. Immediately turn left up track. Before reaching the cottages, take gateway on right to canal path.

Cottages are all that remain of the Brine Pumping Station with a coal wharf on the canal.

11. Head right along the canal towpath towards Lion Salt Works. (About 1mile/1.5Km.) Or, if returning direct to Anderton, turn left along the towpath. (About 1mile/1.5Km.)

12. At this point, Forge Brook runs under the canal.

A catastrophic breach of the canal here in 1907 followed the 1903 collapse of Marston Hall Mine.

8. Turn right to join Marbury Lane.

9. Turn left. Follow Lane and go through wooden barrier. (About 400yds/m.)

Subsidence still occurs; in places the surrounding area lies below the level of the canal, which requires regular maintenance.

The parish church of Great Budworth is across the fields.

13. At the bridge, leave the canal on footpath up to the road. With Lion Salt Works across the road, turn on the Lane away from the canal.
14. At the bend in the road, turn right through the kissing gate. Follow path along boardwalk over pipelines.
15. Turn left and follow the path beside Neumann's Flash.
16. At the path junction, turn right, going through the gates.
17. Follow the path on the line of the original Warrington Road.



On either side of the path, Ashton's and Neumann's Flashes were caused by massive subsidence in 1880. Decades of filling the holes formed by the

collapse resulted in the present landscape. Over-wintering birds such as lapwing, snipe and gulls, flock to the Flashes. Orchids flower in early summer.

18. Go through gate; turn right onto Marbury Lane; continue over Butterfinch Bridge and past Finger Post 9. Follow lane and go through wooden barrier. (About 800yds/m.)
10. Immediately turn left up track. Take gateway on right to canal path.
11. Turn left and follow towpath back to Anderton. (About 1mile/1.5Km.) Or, if returning direct to the Lion Salt Works, turn right along towpath. (About 1mile/1.5Km.)



Saltscape Trail

Salt shaped the landscape

Follow the numbered way-marker posts.



Anderton Boat Lift



Four-spotted Chaser



In 1856, local artist, **Drinkwater**, painted this watercolour scene depicting the three main salt works at Anderton.



Sea-spurrey



Marshall's Wood

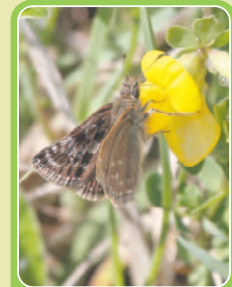


A pumping station to transfer brine to Runcorn stood next to the cottages, close to the canal bridge.



In the early 1900s, Brunner and Mond enclosed parts of Witton Flash with bunds to store lime waste, a by-product of the soda ash process. Marshall's Wood established naturally on top of the waste.

The Trent and Mersey Canal, an important transport route since the 1750s, was disrupted in 1907 by a major breach, caused by the collapse of the Marston Hall Salt Works.



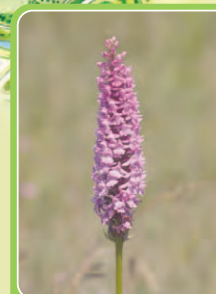
Dingy Skipper



Lion Salt Works



Lapwing



Fragrant Orchid



By the mid 1800s, craters such as the **Old Hole** appeared, where the ground collapsed into the salt workings below.