

Plough Walks



WALK NO: 6

THE SEVEN POOLS OF WHITEGATE & MARTON.

- **START/FINISH: THE PLOUGH**
- **MAPS: OS EXPLORER 267**
- **DISTANCE: 14KM / 8.7MILES ALLOW: 3HRS**
- **MAINLY WOODLAND PATHS WITH A NUMBER OF ELEVATED PARTS. CAN BE WET/MUDDY IN WINTER.**

About the Walk.

The parish of Whitegate & Marton is blessed with some remarkable stretches of water, with seven major pools worthy of note. This walk takes you on a breathtaking & not to be missed tour of all of them. Sixes & Marton Holes were the result of mining subsidence, the latter appearing overnight over a century ago, much to the surprise of the local farmer at the time! Rookery Pool & its close neighbour New Pool however, were originally built & engineered by monks from the nearby Abbey & stocked with fish for the table. These pools are places of great beauty in their own right but nothing compared to the magnificence of Petty Pool, the largest stretch of water on the walk & noted for its variety of wildlife & great natural beauty & designated a site of "Scientific interest" by English Heritage. Crossing the busy Dalefords lane & next up are the equally impressive quarry pools of Newchurch Common (formerly Marton sands) These pools are the result sand quarries, excavated to build many of today's motorways linking the North West & beyond. As the walk comes to a close the last of the pools comes into view. As mentioned earlier the pool is a result of overnight subsidence & whilst it is a place of natural beauty in its own right, it is also a place of mystery & danger & due its high banks, walkers should be careful at all times, when approaching this particular beauty spot!



1. Sixes Hole

Turn left out of the Plough car, walk to the bottom of the lane and take the path to the left of Haresclough, descending Gooseberry Hollow. Cross the footbridge and turn left and as the track turns up to the right, go left & through the kissing gate. Pass through the woodland and through the gate & into the field. Cross the field to the left of the timber bungalow and over the stile. Walk along the narrow path alongside Sixes Pool (the first on our walk) and keep straight ahead to cross a footbridge.

2. Rookery Wood Pool.

After turning left at the end of the path (ignore the first path to the left) Turn right over the second footbridge and walk upwards to the right before reaching a gate. Go through the gate and turn left on to the road at Foxwist Green. Walk past Covert farm and then right over the stile before the dwelling called Swallow's Nest. (1.7km) Continue over a further two stiles and then bear right at the bottom of the field and go left through the gap in the hedge, by the 2nd telegraph pole. Descend to the bottom of the field and cross a footbridge to reach a road. (Grange Lane) Cross over the road, turn right up Mill Road and then left on to Sutton Field. Walk to the end of the street and then turn right up Vale Royal drive (2.72km) Go past the gate and along the track between the trees and after a short distance take the second path on your left when you reach a small gap in the trees. Walk thru to the right of the housing development and when you reach the road (St Mary's Drive) cross directly and thru the gap between the houses.

Go through the gate and along the path that meanders through the golf course. Bear left after the 13th tee and then take a right through the gap in the woods (Rookery wood) (3.7 km). Descend and cross the footbridge and take the path to the left. Continue along until you reach the fork in the path by a marker post. Bear left and after a short distance, take any paths down to the left to view Rookery Pool or alternatively for a better view, you can cross a track to an island in the pool.

3 & 4. New Pool & Petty Pool

Continue through the woods with the field boundary to the right & then walking on with the golf course to the left and boundary field still to the right (beware of golfers teeing off ahead). Take the narrow track on the right, past the 7th Tee and past the metal gate on the right next to the road. Continue up and around with the road to the right, past the kissing gate on the right and past the 6th and 4th Tees to the left, before emerging out onto the road.

Walk a short distance to the entrance to St Mary's Drive and cross over the road and turn right through the gap in the fence, into the car park. Continue along past the metal gate (not the kissing gate to the right) and through the small wooden gate ahead and follow a clear path to Reach New Pool. **(5.7 km)**

Continue on into the wood with a stream to the right and then cross a couple of footbridges and a series of duck boards to reach a farm access track. Go through the gate & turn right & then left over the stile. Then bear right passing around Keepers cottage via a narrow track alongside a fence. When you reach the barrier cross straight ahead to reach Petty Pool (The only natural pool of the six pools).

5 & 6 Marton Quarry Pools

Go over the stile and continue on through Petty Pool wood and turn right, about 400mts after the track turns left and begins to climb upwards, take a right by the Peak footpath sign post (Dalefords & Sandiway) Descend & cross over the stream and bear left up the steps and left again **(7.9 km)** Continue up and along through the wood until you reach a stile, then go across the private drive (Green Hollow) & through the kissing gate and into the field. Continue across to the end of the field, turn right and descend to the road (Dalefords lane)

Cross the road and go down the lane ahead and then bear left at the caravan sign. Continue on the track past the caravan park and through the farm yard (Dalefords Farm) Just past the dwelling on the right, take the small track to the left (just before the open fields)**(9.5km)**. To view this magnificent expanse of water, walk a short distance and take any gap in the hedge on the left.

Return back up the bank before turning left and continuing along the track to reach a metal barrier and turn left down an adjoining track. After a distance cross over the stile on the right and turn left, then immediately right and through a small gap to a small path, that takes you to pool no 6 the second of the two Marton quarry pools. **(10.35 km)**

7. Marton Hole

Continue along the edge of the pool until you reach the gap in the fence to the right and then turn left on to Whitegate way. After a short distance turn right thru the gate (there's a sign next to the path saying private land) directly opposite another gate, marked Newchurch Common. Continue to the end of the field and turn left down the track to Commons farm and on to the road **(Clay Lane)**

Cross directly and continue down the track and just before you reach the fork in the track & the house ahead, turn left by the sign post. Turn right over the stile and then walk up to the left hand side of the field. At the end of the field, cross the stile and the next field to reach a double stile in the corner. Cross the stile and then take a sharp left and through the gate and turn right and left through the kissing gate, Marton Hole the seventh and last pool, is on the right.

Return back to the kissing gate Turn right and walk diagonally across the field (or if crops are growing, go around the perimeter) to the kissing gate in the far left corner. Bear left & through the next kissing gate onto Whitegate way and down the bridle way opposite, to reach a road. Go right for 10m and then cross the road & travel up a field edge path to reach a farm access track. Go right over the stile and then left onto Beauty bank and walk a short distance to the Plough car park, the start and finish of this walk.

- **Why not finish your walk with a drink and a meal in our welcoming hostelry**

Hidden in a quiet corner of beautiful Cheshire countryside that is popular with walkers and steeped in history, the Plough Inn offers traditional beers, fine wines, and quality home cooked food served in a comfortable and friendly atmosphere.

We have one of the most varied menus in the area. Favourites such as steak pie and chips are served alongside starters, salads and a continually changing specials board. A wide variety of fish and seafood is also available. All our dishes are prepared on the premises using fresh sustainable produce from local meat and fish suppliers

We would appreciate any feedback regarding our walks, please forward them to Nigel Durose at the following email address. Nigedurose05@googlemail.com

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Further walks are available from the Plough or by the above website.