



Walk: Woolston Park to Latchford Locks on the Manchester Ship Canal passing through Woolston Eyes (Linear)

Points of interest

Woolston Park has 54 acres of open meadow, woodland, hidden gardens, children's play parks and a linear pathway following Spittle Brook. It is maintained by the Friends of Woolston Park.

New Cut Heritage Trail is an ongoing project to enhance a valuable group of local open spaces. It follows the once tow path of the New Cut Canal completed in 1821 to bypass a large bend in the River Mersey. The creation of the Manchester Ship Canal in 1894 meant decline and eventual dereliction for the New Cut.

Woolston Lock was lovingly restored in 2019 with support from the Environment Agency and the New Cut Group. The Lock is at the eastern end of the "New Cut". There is a viewing platform over the River Mersey and the opportunity to immerse yourself in the heritage of the area.

Woolston Weir was built circa 1755 and served two purposes, it maintained the level of water in Woolston Old Cut and provided a head of water to power the Gun Powder Mill on the Thelwall side of the river. The current guard weir was built in 1940 as an extra control to the water flow.

Woolston Eyes The four beds at Woolston Deposit Grounds SSSI are managed as a nature reserve by the Woolston Eyes Conservation Group in agreement with the Manchester Ship Canal Company. In all, 232 species have been recorded on the Reserve, including thirteen species of raptor, more than thirty species of wader, all five grebes, the three woodpeckers, and five species of owl.

Latchford Locks The views up and down the Ship Canal are spectacular. The locks comprise a larger lock for ocean-going vessels and a smaller lock for coasters, tugs and barges. A ship mooring area is provided on the canal's south bank enabling two large vessels to pass each other at this point.

↔ 11km / 7 miles including return

🕒 Allow up to **3 hours**

👟 Pathways are in good order with the exception of a steep hill just after Woolston Weir and around edge of the deposit grounds of Woolston Eyes. Boots or strong footwear are recommended.

🚲 Not suitable for cycling past Woolston Lock

🐕 Keep dogs on lead at all times

🦟 Insect repellent recommended in Summer

A pleasant walk through the Woolston Eyes deposit grounds, an internationally important Nature Reserve for wetland birds especially the black necked grebe.

Start & finish: Woolston Park, off Somerset Way WA1 4LN. Parking next to the green hut.

Food & drink: On route there are picnic tables at Woolston Park South near Manchester Road SJ 63770 89041. Close to Woolston Park, there is www.cafe-ocho.com (64 Dam Lane, WA1 4EP).

Dog walking: Responsible dog walking is welcome but it is important to keep dogs on a lead at all times.

OS Explorer™: 276

Local transport:

Bus Service: Stop points for Holes Lane.

- Intercity bus service 100 from Go North West between Warrington Interchange and Manchester Shudehill Interchange.
- Local bus services 3 and 4 between Warrington Interchange and Woolston.

For more information

carbonlandscape.org.uk/explore
woolston-pc.gov.uk
newcuttrail.com
woolstoneyes.com

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Route

From the green cabin in **Woolston Park** SJ 64063 89902 head in a westerly direction for 150m towards the main pond / children's play park.

At Spittle Brook **do not** cross the bridge, take a left in a southerly direction for 400m and then cross **Green Lane**.

Continue in a southerly direction following Spittle Brook for 500m then cross the **A57 Manchester Road** at the traffic lights.

In front of you should see a Red Route Sign and a mown area with picnic benches in the left hand corner. This is **Woolston Park South** SJ 63770 89041. Turn left on the **New Cut Heritage Trail**.

Head in an easterly direction for 1.6km / 1 mile until you reach the newly restored **Woolston Locks** SJ 65423 88779.

Take a right and head over **Woolston Weir** SJ 65387 88664. After the Weir head up the hill in front of you and walk for nearly 900m in a southerly direction until you reach **Thelwall Lane**.

Once on Thelwall Lane turn right and head in a westerly direction for 1.6km / 1 mile until you reach your destination point of **Latchford Locks** SJ 63710 87299 on the **Manchester Ship Canal**.

From Latchford Locks retrace your footsteps taking particular care to find the picnic benches at Woolston Park South (off the New Cut Trail as your landmark). Turn right and north back towards Woolston Park.



Please note that this walk bypasses Woolston Eyes Nature Reserve Bed 3, as access is only allowed with a permit. Thelwall Lane, which takes you on to the Latchford Locks, follows alongside The Manchester Ship Canal, a magnificent feat of Victorian engineering. From here both the Latchford and Warburton Bridges are visible.