

Shak's Tracks

A Trip to Redesmere

If you enjoyed the Goyt Valley route then this outing might seem a bit tame. However, it starts near St. John's and makes its way across beautiful country giving great views of the hills without actually having to climb any. Summer's here, it's a bit humid, the potential for swallowing flies is massive. Take it easy and enjoy yourself.

We'll start across the field path by St. Johns and run in the direction of Astle farms, gaining extra exercise by keeping up a steady pace through the thigh-high potato tops. At the end of the field path, we'll drop down to the left onto the little road and go on for a short distance to where we can turn right on to the road to Astle Farm East.

Just past the farm buildings (on our left) we'll see a fingerpost and by it is a little wooden bridge. We'll cross this, go into the field and after a few strides turn sharp right to go through a couple of large fields of wheat (bear in mind that if you come back to this route, crop rotation always makes a mug of navigation). The enduring features are the two oak trees about half-way along. We'll stay just to the right of these and go through a field of oilseed rape (same comment applies!). At the end, there's a small metal bridge across the boggy bit then a wooden bridge across the little stream that flows eventually into Snape Brook. Across we go and left around the wood edge to the stile where we turn right (look out for the apple tree) and make our way around another wood to a further stile on the left. This leads to a field path to Mill Lane Farm.

On we go, past the farm and left onto Mill Lane. About 200m further on we'll turn left off Mill Lane to join the path which runs along the southern edge of the Capesthorne Hall lakes. Don't be fooled, the lakes are man-made. As is most of our landscape; there are several neolithic mounds around this area. We can be assured that our feet are landing in older footsteps and it would be great to think that our distant ancestors occasionally went out for a walk or run because they just felt like doing so.

Beyond the Capesthorne Lakes, we reach the A34 and will need to cross this with extreme care, going left (north) for a few strides to

reach the track that runs along the eastern side of Redesmere. The lake reputedly contains some massive fish; carp of up to 20kg and pike of around 15kg. No wonder the mallards look nervous. We'll go along the lake and through the gate into the little wood where we'll find a signed path on our left which takes us along by the lake to Redesmere Lane. We'll go right on Redesmere Lane until we reach the A34 again where the best route is to go north for about 200m, cross the road and then follow the bridleway to Siddington and Congleton Lane. Here we'll turn right along the road to fork right after a short distance and keep going.

Congleton Lane will get us back to Chelford. However, if you want to go home via Astle Farms again then look out for the field path on your right about a quarter of a mile beyond the end of Mill Lane. This goes by Brook House Farm, crosses Snape Brook and heads up past the marl pit pond to Astle Farm West. Alternatively, if you follow Congleton Lane all the way, you'll come out on the Holmes Chapel Road, just to the south of St. Johns.

This is a lovely rural run for a late summer's evening when the buzz of the traffic has lessened and you have time to ponder who planted that old apple tree by the stile a few miles back. At this time of year, there are loads of opportunities to race. Perhaps even Alf would ignore these and take the time to jog and enjoy the land on this track.

