

Cannock Chase Circular Walk

This walk covers a large area of the smallest mainland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the United Kingdom. The walk begins at local landmark - The Glacial Boulder and continues across the heathland to the pine woodlands in Brindley Heath. The route takes you past the Visitor Centres at both Marquis Drive and Birches Valley before crossing over the quarry to its termination in the Sherbrook Valley.

Distance:

Approx. 12.8km (8 miles)

Duration:

3 - 4 hours

Terrain:

Gentle paths with some steep sections. Wear strong soled shoes for some uneven ground

Parking:

The Glacial Boulder car park. Enter Brocton village before following the Chase Road out of the village. The Glacial Boulder car park is along this road

Refreshments/facilities:

Café at Marquis Drive Visitor Centre and Birches Valley Forest Centre

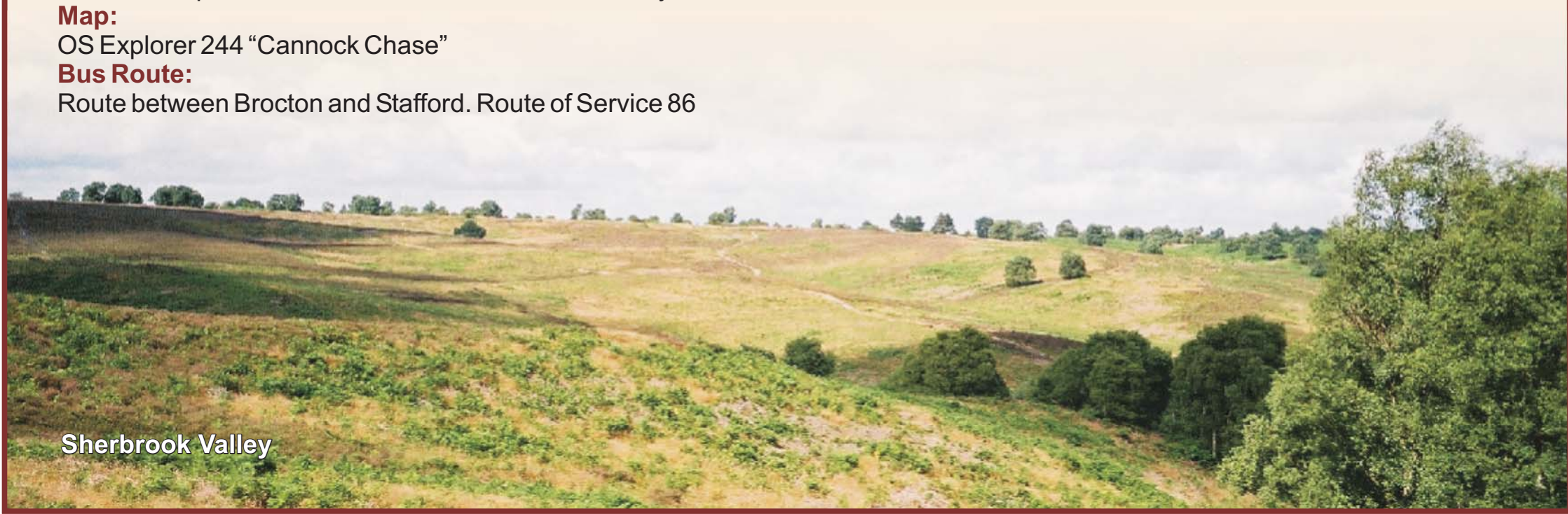
Map:

OS Explorer 244 "Cannock Chase"

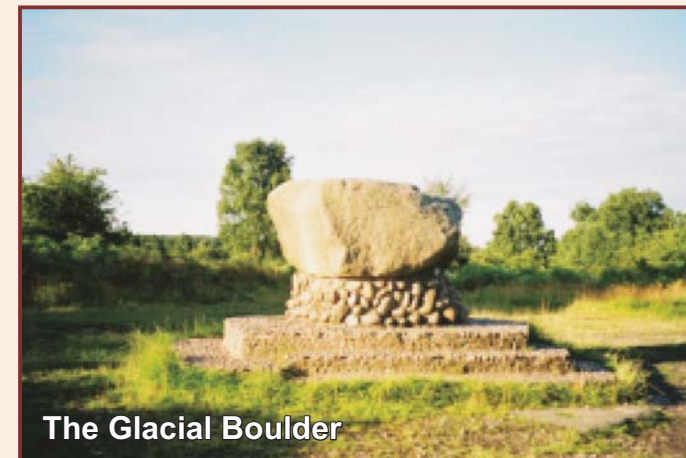
Bus Route:

Route between Brocton and Stafford. Route of Service 86

Sherbrook Valley



- 1 Park at the Glacial Boulder, then cross the road to the boulder itself. Walk past the boulder and down to the main path. Turn right along the track before branching half left on to the Heart of England Way (green waymarker number 4).
- 2 Follow this path before taking the next left following green waymarker number 5. Follow this main path down the hill, ignoring all other paths, until you reach a fingerpost at the bottom of the slope.
- 3 Go straight across at the crossroads and take the stepping stones over Sher Brook. Walk up the bank and follow the left-hand path around the edge of the pine plantation.
- 4 Where the path goes left just after the bend, you walk straight on up the hill, keeping the pine plantation on your right. At the top of the hill you pass a white trig. point, 30 metres after this, walk down the wide track on your right.
- 5 Follow this track for just over 800 metres, passing the Army Cadet HQ on your left. Where the track terminates at a T-junction, turn left and walk through the car park.
- 6 After leaving the car park, turn right and follow the wide track away from the army buildings. When you meet the main road, cross it and take the signposted public bridleway opposite.
- 7 Walk down the path until you meet the forest road. Turn right and take the first track on the right so that the caravan site is on your left-hand side. 100 metres before the barrier at the bottom, take the path marked Heart of England Way on the left.
- 8 Follow this path until you meet the road at Flints Corner. Cross here and follow the path down the road before turning left after 200 metres towards Cannock Chase Visitor Centre.
- 9 Walk straight on down the drive, and where it bends right towards the Visitor Centre, you carry straight on through a metal gate. Continue along the drive until you meet a metal pole barrier. Go through the pole barrier and take the first left passing the 'Forest Centre - 2 Miles' fingerpost.



The Glacial Boulder



Pine woodland

10 Descend the path until you meet a crossroads with a pond on your left. Turn right and enter the Forestry Commission Nature Reserve. Walk along the path passing the picturesque Fairoaks Pools on your right.

11 Continue along the path until it splits in a number of directions. Turn left and follow the path up the hill keeping the pine plantation on your left.

12 Follow this path, ignoring all other adjoining paths, until you arrive at the main road on the left of the Birches Valley Forest Centre. Turn right along the road passing in front of the centre until you meet another main road.

13 Turn left, passing Shooting Butts Centre and a row of houses on your right, before turning right up Stafford Brook Road after approximately 300 metres. Follow this road for just over ½ mile and as the road bends right at the top take the bridlepath on the left, which goes through the Rugeley Quarry.

14 After leaving the quarry, follow the path through the woodland until you meet another path going off to the right after 400 metres. Ignore this path and continue directly ahead until you meet a wide forest road.

15 Cross this and take the path opposite. When you reach another crossroads, take the path directly ahead that goes into a dip. At the other side of the dip you meet another wide forest track. Again, cross this and take the path opposite that curves left through the young pine plantation.

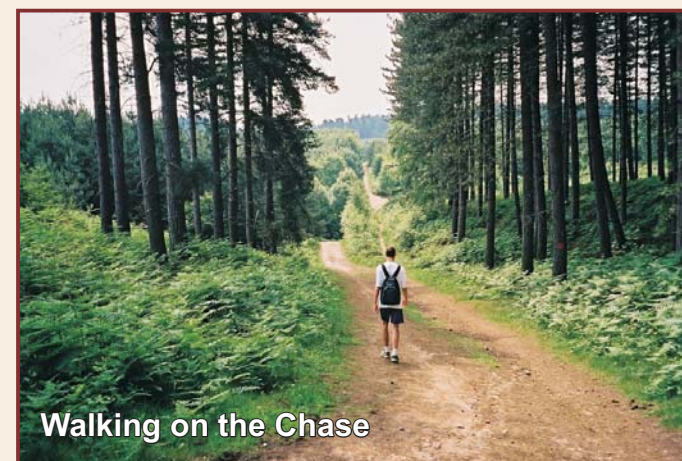
16 Cross the next wide forest track at the top of the climb. Continue along the path until you reach another crossroads with a wide area of deforestation to your left. Walk down the path straight ahead, passing the pine plantation on your right.

17 Stay on this path as it veers to the left away from the plantation and aim towards a row of silver birch trees directly ahead. Walk through the row of trees and across a clearing and take a path opposite that goes between two hill mounds.

18 Descend the hill and where the path splits three ways, take the middle section. Cross the footbridge over Sher Brook at the bottom and turn right down the path. Take the first left and ascend the hill following signs for the Staffordshire Way.



Fairoaks Pools



Walking on the Chase

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