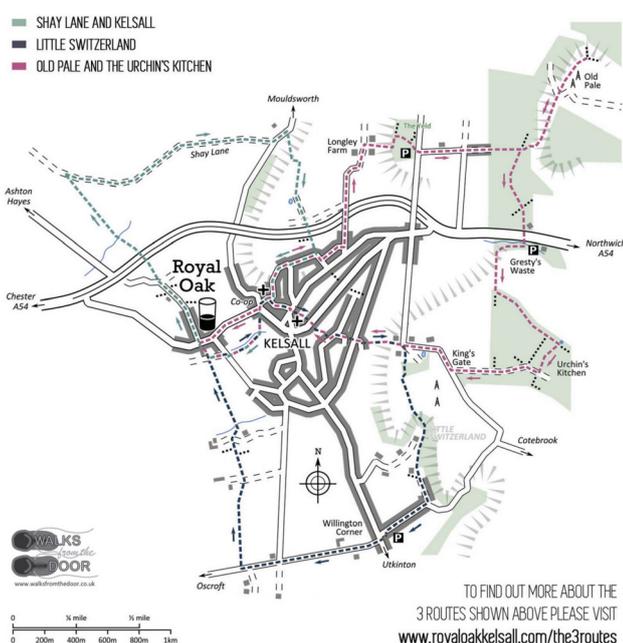


WHAT COULD BE BETTER WHEN YOU'VE ENDED YOUR ENERGISING WALK THAN SETTLING AT THE ROYAL OAK FOR A HEARTY, WELL-DESERVED DINNER, DRINK OR TWO AND A LUXURY STAY IN OUR BOUTIQUE HOTEL.

Note that the three walks below can be combined into a single energetic walk of 8¾ miles: follow steps 1–11 of the Shay Lane and Kelsall walk (turn left at Broom's Lane), then steps 6–22 of the Old Pale and the Urchin's Kitchen walk (turn left at Fold Cottage), and finally steps 12–22 of the Little Switzerland walk. Other combinations are also possible (see map).



SHAY LANE & KELSALL

A short farmland walk featuring a pretty green lane and extensive views to Liverpool and the Clwydian mountains, and an exploration of Kelsall village. 3 miles (allow 2 hours). Two busy road crossings, one short climb, and field paths may be muddy.

1. From the front door of the Royal Oak turn right and right again, into Dog Lane.

2. Follow this road for quarter of a mile until it bends left; at this point take the footpath straight ahead, to the left of the entrance to Northwood Caravan Park.

3. Cross a stile at the end of the path and climb a flight of steps to the A54 Kelsall Bypass. Cross the busy road quickly but carefully, via the gap in the central reservation.

4. Go over a stile opposite and follow the edge of the field ahead of you to a footbridge. Continue in similar vein for three more fields until you reach a stile into the hedged Shay Lane.

5. Turn right and follow Shay Lane for nearly a mile, until you emerge on Longley Lane.

6. Turn left past Warwick House then right onto a footpath through a kissing gate.

7. Climb half-right up the hill beyond to some stone steps and a kissing gate, looking back for views to Ashton Hayes and, more distantly, Liverpool.

8. Walk along the left-hand edge of the next field, then, at the first hedge you meet, turn right.

9. By a pond, turn half-left to follow an obvious track across the middle of a field to reach a kissing gate onto the A54.

10. Cross the road carefully again, then pass through a further kissing gate on the other side.

11. Head straight across the next field to a further kissing gate, beyond which a path leads through gardens to Broom's Lane.

12. Turn right. At the end of the road, turn right and follow Grub Lane, a narrow road cut through bedrock, downhill.

13. When you reach the Methodist Church and War Memorial, walk down the hill to the Cooperative store.
14. Cross the road at the entrance to the Lord Binning car park, and take the metalled path across the open space beyond, passing a children's playground and crossing a stream.
15. Follow this path round to the right, until it emerges into Flat Lane; turn right then immediately left into a green lane.
16. At a crossing path, turn right up a narrow hedged path that emerges into a driveway opposite the Oak.

LITTLE SWITZERLAND

A scenic walk featuring wide views over Kelsall and beyond, and a pretty wooded valley. 3½ miles (allow 2–2½ hours). One steep climb and a half-mile section of road walking.

1. From the front door of the Royal Oak head down the driveway opposite and take the footpath on the left.
2. When you meet a green lane, turn left.
3. At Flat Lane, turn right then immediately left along a metalled path.
4. Follow the path when it bends left over a stream and past a children's play area to emerge in the centre of Kelsall.
5. Cross the road by the Co-operative store and then turn right past the telephone kiosk and up Chapel Bank.
6. Turn right at the Methodist Church into Earle's Lane.
7. At the end of the road go down a driveway opposite, and take a narrow path on the right between hedges that then passes St Phillip's Church to reach the old main road.
8. Cross over and follow a metalled path opposite, which winds past a small allotment and between fences to emerge on Kelsborrow Way. Turn left, then right into Kingswood Walk.
9. When this road bends right, follow the footpath straight ahead up a driveway to Quarry Lane.
10. Cross Quarry Lane into Elizabeth Close, and when that bends right, take a metalled footpath between houses called Oakbank and Castle Steps that leads up the hill, with steps partway up.
11. At the top of the slope, go through a kissing gate and swing right to a road.
12. Turn right past Fold Cottage, beyond it following a footpath to the right, along the bottom of the wood.
13. At the end of the wood go through a kissing gate and swing left across undulating open fields.
14. Beyond a kissing gate the path goes down some steps and swings right around the head of the valley known as Little Switzerland, before descending to meet a driveway and then a road.
15. At the end of this road (Gooseberry Lane), turn right (downhill) past Willington Fruit Farm.

16. Cross the green at Willington Corner and take Willington Lane, opposite.
17. Follow this road for half a mile, ignoring a turning on the right to Kelsall.
18. Shortly after the entrance to Mill Lane on the left, take a footpath on the right.
19. Follow the path along the left-hand edge of a series of fields, then head to the right of a house. Cross the driveway and continue in the same direction as before.
20. After crossing another driveway, head half-right to cross a small stream, then climb the slope opposite.
21. Beyond a kissing gate follow walk across the next field (parallel to the left-hand edge) until you meet a green lane.
22. Go straight across into the narrow hedged path back to the Royal Oak.

OLD PALE AND THE URCHIN'S KITCHEN

An extended farmland and woodland walk along the Sandstone Trail, with fine views over seven counties! 5½ miles (4½ if omitting the there-and-back extension to Old Pale viewpoint). Allow 3–4 hours. Some moderate climbs and some muddy ground.

1. From the front door of the Royal Oak head down the driveway opposite and take the footpath on the left.
2. When you meet a green lane, turn left.
3. At Flat Lane, turn right then immediately left along a metalled path.
4. Follow the path when it bends left over a stream and past a children's play area to emerge in the centre of Kelsall.
5. Cross the road by the Co-operative store and then turn right past the telephone kiosk and up Chapel Bank and past the Methodist Church. Keep left up Grub Lane.
6. At the top, having emerged from the rock-cut lane, turn left into Broom's Lane. Follow the road round a right-hand bend, then turn left into Longley Avenue.
7. At a T-junction turn left and cross the A54 overbridge, continuing along the lane beyond until it becomes the entrance drive to Longley Farm.
8. Beyond the derelict farmhouse, turn right between barns to a gate and into a field.
9. Walk straight up the field, following the telegraph poles, to a concealed stile into the wood.
10. Walk along the bottom of the wood for a short distance, then turn right up some wooden steps. Cross an open area beyond, then follow a path that leads past a low quarry face (ignore a turning to the left) to emerge near The Yeld car park.
11. From the car park, cross Yeld Lane and walk down Forest Gate Lane opposite. Keep straight on at the junction with Morreys/Nortons Lane, and then keep straight on along the footpath into the woodland beyond the last of the houses.
12. When you meet the Sandstone Trail, you have the opportunity to visit Old Pale viewpoint near the masts at the top of the hill. If omitting this there-and-back extension, turn right and go straight to step 17.

- 13.** Otherwise, to visit the viewpoint, take the path opposite, signposted "Sandstone Trail Alternative Route". Follow it through a gap in the hedge and then up the bank, towards the masts on Old Pale Hill.
- 14.** Ignore a crossing track as you pass below the masts and covered reservoir, until you reach the viewpoint with a topograph and stones indicating the seven counties visible.
- 15.** Return to the Sandstone Trail by the same route, and turn left.
- 16.** Pass the two-headed boar marking the Sandstone Trail, to emerge on the A54 at Gresty's Waste car park.
- 17.** Cross over and continue on the Sandstone Trail down some steps to a footbridge, and up the other side.
- 18.** Walk alongside a field containing gallops, passing through a pair of gates.
- 19.** When you regain the woodland, swing left then, where the Sandstone Trail swings right and uphill, leave it to follow a narrow path straight ahead along the bottom of the wood, with the open fields to your left.
- 20.** After a mile you pass the bottom of a shallow valley with a small pond on your left; turn right here and walk up the small sandstone gorge known the Urchin's Kitchen.
- 21.** On reaching a wide drive beyond the gorge, turn right and follow it out to the road at King's Gate (keeping left when the Sandstone Trail heads off straight ahead).
- 22.** Turn right along the road and follow it as it bends left.
- 23.** When it bends right beyond a pond by Fold Cottage, take the footpath through the kissing gate straight ahead. Beyond a second kissing gate this path drops steeply down steps to emerge in Elizabeth Close.
- 24.** Cross Quarry Lane and take the driveway opposite. When it swings right into Croft Cottage, drop down straight on into Kingswood Close and continue to a T-junction (Kelsborrow Way).
- 25.** Turn left, then at the next lamp post turn right on a metalled, fenced footpath between the houses which winds past an allotment to emerge on the road by St Phillip's Church.
- 26.** Follow the footpath opposite, past the end of the churchyard, until you emerge in Old Coach Road; follow Earle's Road almost opposite.
- 27.** When you reach the Methodist Church again, turn left and walk down Chapel Bank to the Co-op.
- 28.** Turn right and walk down Chester Road back to the Royal Oak.