

Tiny Treks – Alderley Edge

Start: Alderley Edge, National Trust Car Park, B5087 Macclesfield Road
Alderley Edge. SK10 4UB.

Facilities: WC, Parking (Pay and Display), Visitors centre, Café

Walk: Approx 2miles (1:5hrs).

WARNING: There are steep drops and unprotected cliff edges. Children need to be carefully supervised.

Walk instructions

1. Leave the car park facing the National Trust information room and turn right along a wide lane signposted  to Harehill. Walk past a small wooded area on the right called **"Thieves Hole"** (Q1), with the Cheshire Works yard, the Engine Vein and **Seven Firs** (Q2) on the left.
2. The path turns to the left and then sweeps in a large arc to the right. Pass a double farm and single gate on the left just before the **"Golden Stone"** (Q3). **Return to the gates and go through.**
3. Here there are 3 paths. Take the left path that goes slightly upwards towards "Old Alderley Quarry". You will see the quarry on the left as the path starts to descend.
4. From **Old Alderley Quarry** follow the path that descends to the right. On reaching the main path turn left, then right along the fence towards the Edge (**care needed**) towards **Pillar and Doc Mines** that you will see below. Do not descend to the mines, but take the path to the left. You will see a small cave immediately on the left, locally known as **"Wizards Cave"**.
5. Walk towards the rocky outcrop ahead, this is **"Stormy Point"** (Q4). There is a brick Memorial on the far side.
6. To the rear and top of Stormy Point there is a long crevice in the rock called **"Devils Grave"**. Have a look at this.
7. Take a path that runs across front of the brick memorial. This path descends to **Saddlebole** (Q5). **A clearing that is saddle shaped.** "The Iron gates" in the legend were believed to appear in this area to the left (look at the rocks as you go back up towards Stormy Point Q6).
8. **Reaching this clearing you need to make your way back up to "Stormy Point"**
9. On reaching Stormy Point again, stand with your back to the edge and view and take the second path on your left. It is wide and descends.
10. Follow this wide path until you reach **"The Beacon"** ahead.
11. As you stand next to the **Beacon** you will see a wall below. Walk to the wall and follow the path to the right downhill.
12. Continue descending past the corner of the wall, until you reach the lower path and turn left.
13. Along this path you will go underneath Castle Rock.
14. Follow this path until you find a well in the rock on the left **"Wizards Well"** (Q7). *This is identified by an inscription in the rock above to the right.*

15. Stop here and retrace your steps along a path until you reach steps on the right going up to **Castle Rock (Q8)** or use the short scramble up the rocks to the top. **Castle Rock** has extensive views across the Cheshire plain.
16. Keep on this upper path along the Edge. This path has a field to the right and the Edge to the left. You will eventually reach a wall and pass a small **iron gate**.
17. At the corner turn right and continue following the wall returning to the **Beacon (Q9)**
18. From the **Beacon** take the wide path to the right (Not the one next the wall). This path will return you to the car park, passing the **"Engine Vein"**.
19. If you have time look at **Church Quarry** at the rear of the Wizard Restaurant (Q10).



Activity Sheet / Walk Diary

We went on our walk on (date).....,

with.....

The weather was.....

Read the legend before you go on the walk:

The Wizard Legend

A long time ago a farmer was travelling from Mobberley to sell his horse at Macclesfield market. It was a fine white healthy mare. He was proud to own this strong beast, but he needed the money for his family so he had to sell her. He was sure that the horse would fetch a good price at Macclesfield market. He rode along thinking of the journey he had to make and what his family could do with the money he was going to get for his horse. As he got to **Thieves' Hole (Q1)** the horse stopped and wouldn't move. He tried to encourage the horse to move forward on the path but it refused and stood still. Then all of a sudden, from nowhere a man appeared in front of them. He was an old man with a dark flowing gown, long grey hair, with a beard to match. There was something about the man that was strange. His sudden appearance and the way that he looked made the farmer feel uncomfortable and uneasy. The old man spoke and told the farmer that he would like to buy his horse, he would give him a good price for it and save him making the journey to Macclesfield. The farmer thought about the offer, but, he decided not to sell the horse to the old man. He thought that he might get a better price at the market, as his horse was fine and strong. The farmer also felt uncomfortable with the old man and the way he had just appeared. The farmer made his excuses and said that he didn't want to sell his horse. How did that old man know that he was selling the horse??? As the farmer started to ride away the old man called after him. "You will not sell your horse at market. People will look and admire your horse, but they will not buy it..... I will be here when you return and **I WILL BUY YOUR HORSE**". This made the farmer feel really uneasy and he was glad to be moving away. The farmer continued to ride on past the old man and increased his pace. He turned around to check where the old man had been stood. He had gone!!!!

The farmer spent a long day at Macclesfield Market. People came and looked and chatted, but no one offered to buy his horse. He started his return journey home. Whilst he was riding he kept thinking about the old man. "He doesn't know when I will be coming back, but if he is there I will see how much he offers for my horse. Nothing to lose? He is an old man".

When the farmer reached the **Thieves' Hole (Q1)** again he was amazed to see someone there, but it wasn't an old man, it was a tall, proud wizard holding a staff in his hand. The Wizard spoke to the farmer and offered to buy his horse and said he would pay a good price. He asked the farmer to follow him so that he could collect his price. He led both farmer and horse past **Seven Firs (Q2)**, **the Golden Stone (Q3)**, **Stormy Point (Q4)** and **Saddlebole (Q5)** until they reached a large rock embedded in the hillside somewhere near to Saddlebole**(Q6)**.

The Wizard stopped and banged his staff on the ground. The earth shook and trembled and then as if by magic two large iron gates appeared before them. The farmer froze, he was unable to move. The horse reared and the farmer fell to the ground. He begged the wizard not to hurt him. The Wizard spoke calmly and told the farmer not to be afraid, but to follow him with his horse into the cave that was behind the Iron Gates.

The Wizard led the farmer through caverns and caves each held thousands of sleeping knights with their horses. A formidable army. Lying beside each knight, except one, was a milk white horse.

The wizard spoke gently to the farmer. "No harm will come to you. I need your horse for the last soldier there. Your horse is noble and fine and its destiny is here. I will pay you well you have nothing to fear. The wizard took the farmer to another cave that was filled with jewels and gold and asked him to take whatever he could carry. Our army lies here asleep waiting for the day that the country needs them to fight and protect our land and dwellers. The farmer loaded what he could into his saddlebag. It was more than enough for his needs and his family. The Wizard took the horse and guided the farmer to the iron gates. As soon as the farmer stepped outside the cave, the iron gates and the wizard vanished. There were pots of dreams in his saddlebag, he wanted for nothing. He returned many times to try and find the Iron Gates. No sight or sound was ever heard. However it is said that on stormy nights the sounds of horses can be heard from the very depths of Alderley Edge earth..... Listen on your visit, you might hear an army under the ground!!!!

The Wizard Walk: Story locations.

Look For	Location	Story
Q1.  ☐	Thieves' Hole. A wooded area on the right with dip. 	The Wizard first appeared to the farmer here.
Q2.  ☐	Seven Firs. An area on the left next to Vein Engine- Just to the left of the path. Look for 7 Fir trees.	The Wizard asked the farmer to follow him. He led both farmer and his horse past Seven Firs.
Q3.  ☐	The Golden Stone. 	Then past Golden Stone. 
Q4.  ☐	Stormy Point 	The journey went onto Stormy Point.
Q5.  ☐	Saddlebole 	And onto Saddlebole. It is an area that is  saddle shaped.

Q6.  ☐	"Iron gates" in the legend?	Until they reached a rock embedded in the hillside near Saddlebole. Have look. Can you see anything that could be turned into "Iron Gates" by magic?
Q7.  ☐	Wizard's Well 	The Wizard's Well is formed by a natural spring near Castle Rock which dates back to pagan times. Carved in the rock above the well is the face of a wizard and an inscription. As with most ancient wells the water was believed to have had magical powers. Don't drink this water as it contains lead and would make you ill.
Q8.  ☐	Castle Rock 	The last Earl of Chester decided to build a castle at this point during the 13th century. Soon after work on the foundations began the project was abandoned. It would have been an ideal location for a castle and supporting army.
Q9.  ☐	The Beacon 	The site of the Armada Beacon.
Q10.  ☐	Church Quarry. To the side of the Wizard Restaurant. See the cave at the end. The stone from the quarry was used to build churches.	A Hermit lived here. He lived here alone. He stored his food in a cave made of stone. He had a garden and kept it well. John Evans was his name, we had to tell.