

Fifty CHESTER-SOME REAL ALE PUBS.

It has not escaped my attention that some Eccles people like to visit a pub while out for the day or evening. If you like the idea of real ale (forget keg rubbish), good food and historic inns then Chester is hard to beat. Treat yourself-during the day you can combine this with shopping, visits to Museums, an afternoon at the races, or a boat ride on the Dee.

Catch the stopping train to Newton-Le-Willows and change there to catch the Llandudno/North Wales train soon after on the same platform.
Alight at Chester Station.

Leave the Station and go ahead between the Queens Hotel and the Town Crier. Notice the elegant hotel and once across the road look back to see the impressive Italianate façade of Chester General. It was opened on the 1st August 1848 built by the famous railway contractor Thomas Brassey.

Continue down the road, which has many hotels, and cross the Canal Bridge. To your left you see *The Steam Mill and the shot tower*. Descend the steps on the left to 'The Old Harkers Arms'. U-turn to your left to follow the canal towpath into Chester. (*The Old Harkers Arms has a selection of well-kept real ales and has a good menu.*)

On your left you pass 'The Frog and Nightingale' (*real ale and food*) and go under a bridge. A little further and take the path going left from the canal bank to a set of wooden steps up to the wall.

At the top of the steps go left along the wall.
On your right is Chester Cathedral. Then cross the bridge over Eastgate *On this bridge is the Victoria Jubilee Clock (1897).*

Descend the steps onto Eastgate and turn left past the front of the Grosvenor Hotel. A short way along Eastgate you will see a sign on the right for 'Ye Olde Boot Inn 1643'. *Go up the steps onto the row to visit this one. (Classic Samuel Smith real ales and food. It's not a pub for tall people though!)*

Continue along Eastgate Street to the stone pillar. Turn left to go down Bridge Street.

Half way down at the crossroads is the Chester Heritage Centre; on the right is 'The Falcon' and down the street on the right is the Grosvenor Museum with many Roman artefacts. (*The Falcon is a half timbered pub; it serves Sam Smith real ales and good food. Well worth a visit*)

Continue down Bridge Street towards the River. On the right up a flight of stone steps is 'The Brewery Tap' at number 52.

This is the home of The Spitting Feathers Brewery. When I opened the door I thought I'd gone to heaven! In a Jacobean hall there is range of well-kept microbrewery ales and an excellent menu of freshly prepared food served.

Continue down to 'The Bear and Billet' on the right. *This is a half-timbered old pub offering good pub food and serving well kept Okell's Isle of Man beers!*

[OPTION: At this point you may retrace your steps through the centre. *Is that a challenge?*]

Otherwise go through the Bridgegate *Take a look at the bridge and the Roman symbols of justice and power on the Bridgegate.*

Turn right, and then right again onto the walls.

Continue along past the WatchTower. *There is now a fine view of the River Dee. On the right is the pleasant quayside where one can hire rowing boats or take the tourist boats along the river, and also the suspension bridge.*

Continuing, down on your left is 'The Albion'. You may wish to visit this – *real ales, range of whiskies, and food.*

Eventually you will come once again to the wooden steps near the Cathedral. Descend these to the canal bank to return towards Chester General station.

On the left of the canal you will see the Mill Hotel. *This serves a good selection of real ales and an extensive menu of good food.*

Back at Chester General station catch a train to Newton le Willows and change there for Eccles.

CATEGORY: SHORT EASY.
 ARCHITECTURE, SHOPS, PUBS, FOOD,
 MUSEUMS, BOAT TRIPS

RAIL FARE: category four.

MAP OS 1:50 000 sheet 119

Chester A-Z.