

**Eleven****GATHURST – ASHURST'S BEACON.**

An attractive, varied countryside walk up to a beacon with wide ranging views of the north-west. Those who like to pick out landmarks should choose a clear day and perhaps take binoculars.

Catch the train to Manchester and at Victoria change to the Southport train. Alight at Gathurst station just after Wigan Wallgate.

Go down the platform approach slope. Cross the road at the bottom and just follow the road opposite.

Eventually cross a small footbridge over a stream and go right to follow the side of the river.

At a field gate turn left and follow the fencing by the field up to a stile.

Cross the stile and go uphill ahead.

*This is an old paved route marked now by a conspicuous line of trees.*

Follow this and its curve to the right at the top of the slope.

Cross the stile into a small triangular paddock and go to the left between the low walls.

At the gate go left along the lane. You will come to The Star Inn on the corner.  
*Real ales and full meals.*

Turn left and after about 200yds look for Farley lane on the right.

Go up this lane and go right onto a road by a field immediately after the new houses (one called Stoneacre).

At the T junction with the large tree in the centre go left then immediately right into the fields and right again over the field boundary.

Then proceed to your left by the boundary to the top of this field.

Then re-cross the field boundary and go right to the top of this field edge.

At the corner of this field take the path to the right by the cricket pitch.

Where it joins the lane (Long Heys Lane) go to the left to the next junction. *Fifty yards to the left is the Prince William pub with Robinsons' ales and food.*

Turn right at this junction and you come to The Beacon Inn.  
*Jennings ales and food.*

Go on to the track on the right immediately after this and walk up to the beacon.  
*Ashurst's beacon was part of the signal beacon network – enjoy the fine views.  
There is a compass landmark pointer just beyond the beacon.*

Follow the path past the compass pointer into and down through the oak wood .  
*Notice the different feel of this woodland.*

Follow this path over a stile until it meets a tarmac road. This is Long Heys Lane again.

Go left down the lane and follow it to the bottom of the slope. It curves to the right and starts to ascend slightly.

At this curve go left towards the field entrance then immediately left onto the obscure path amongst the trees.

*This is an old paved route (I am not kidding) and you can hear a stream on the left of you.*

At the bottom as you come out into the open cross the stream to go right across the field and then between the river and some houses.

At the main road turn left uphill. Go over the river, the canal, and the railway and on your right is the road down to the Manchester platform of Appley Bridge station.

**CLASSIFICATION:** MEDIUM LENGTH, MODERATE WALK WITH UPHILL STRETCHES. THERE ARE SOME MUDDY SECTIONS ON PATHS.  
WIDE OPEN VIEWS, COUNTRYSIDE, WOODLANDS,  
PUBS – REAL ALE AND FOOD,  
RAIL FARE – category one

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