

One of a series of local walks produced by

Aston on Trent Local History Group

**More detailed route information and other
footpath links can be found on OS Explorer
Maps 245/259.*

If you have mobility issues please check first

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LOCAL HISTORY
GROUP

Aston on Trent History Walks

Number: 4

(Aston – Shardlow Circular)

4.5 miles / 6 kms

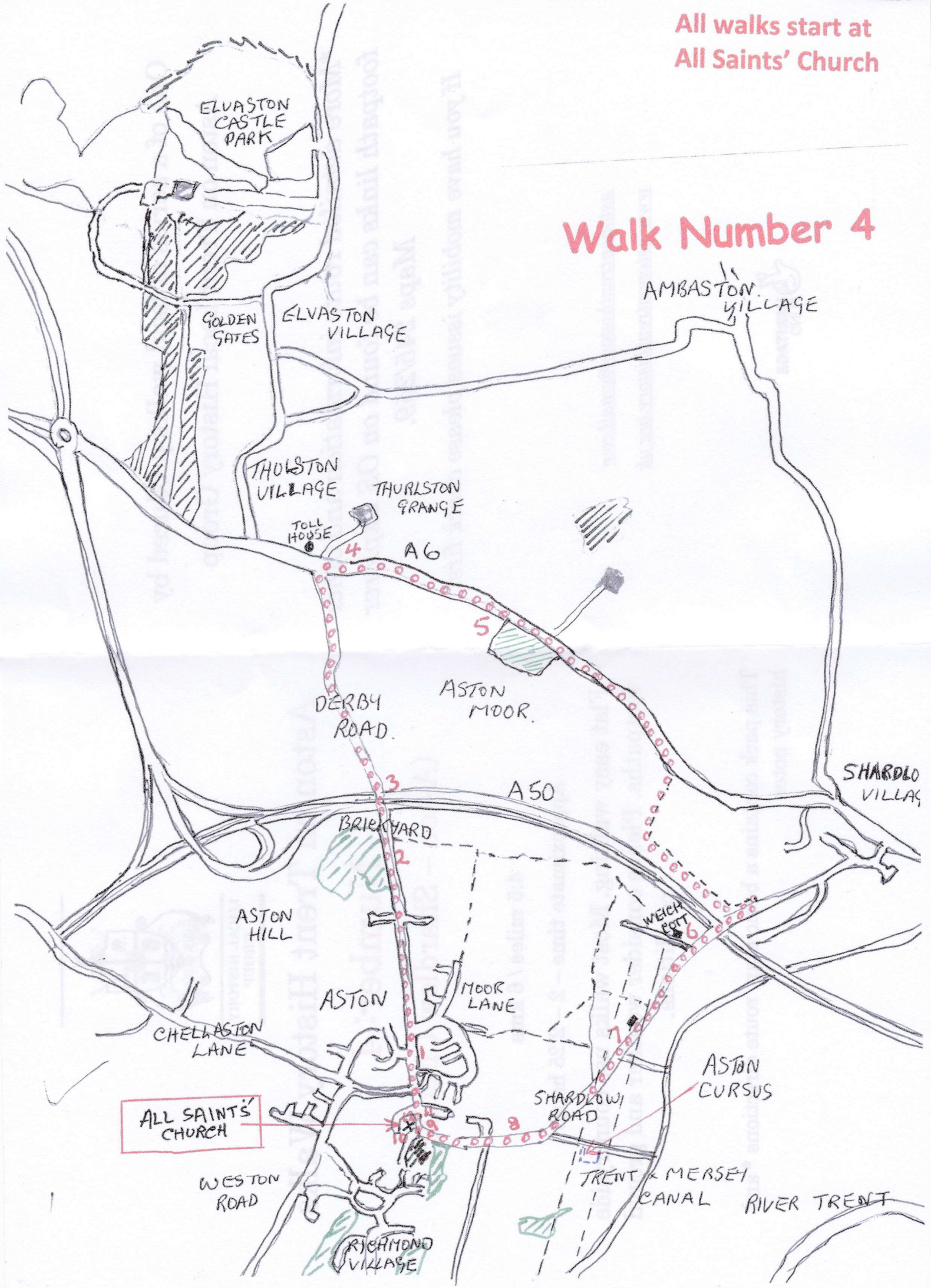
Approximate time – 2 – 2.25 hours

Flat easy walking. Most walks use countryside footpaths. Please consider weather and ground conditions.

This pack contains a basic map, route directions * and history notes

All walks start at
All Saints' Church

Walk Number 4



Aston on Trent History Walks

Walk 4. (The Aston - Shardlow Circuit)

Caution. This walk includes the option of a stretch of Shardlow Road which does not have a pavement for about a quarter of a mile.

From All Saint's Church Lychgate, walk northwards to the Post Office and follow Derby Road north passing Long Croft, the **Old School House**, (1) Moor Lane, Alderslade Close and the **Brickyard Plantation**. (2) Leaving the village over the **A50 bypass bridge** (3) you will join the main road, (B5010.) Cross over and notice driveway to **Thurlston Grange** (4).

Turn right and continue for about 1½ miles, passing fields and small woods known as **Aston Moor** (5) to your right. Before entering Shardlow village take the signed footpath just after a driveway on your right which will bring you out, across fields to the Shardlow/Aston road. Turn right and re-cross the A50. On your right there is a driveway to a cottage, This is **Weigh Cottage** (6)

HERE YOU HAVE A CHOICE

OPTION 1. The pavement ends at the entrance to a private road on your right. Continue along Shardlow Road. You are now crossing the **Aston Cursus** (7). **CAUTION there is no footpath for a quarter of a mile** so take care on this stretch of road. The pavement returns just past a driveway to Far Moorside. * Continue south on this pavement passing the village **playing fields** (8), Recreation Centre and Shirley Park, the entrance to **Aston Hall** (9) on your left and **Lodge Mews** (10) Cross over to the **lychgate** (11) and **All Saints' Church** (12)

OPTION 2. (to avoid walking on the road)

Take the private road on your right past Weigh Cottage take a narrow footpath on the right into fields, carry straight on across a well-defined path.

Look for a footpath sign to the left. Turn left across the field passing the farm and Far Moorside. Carry on to join Shardlow Road. Turn right

***As Option 1**

Items of Historic Interest **Walk Number 4**

1. Old School House The old school was established in 1845. Built on land donated by Sir Richard Wilmot and funded by the Squire Edward Anthony Holden of Aston Hall in trust to the Rector and Churchwardens. It was closed in 1983 upon the opening of a new school situated in Long Croft. Opposite the old school stands the former Long Croft farmhouse which dates back to the end of the 16th century.

2. Brickyard Plantation Nature Reserve Once the site of Gypsum mining and brick making. When the production of bricks ceased in 1965 much of the site was used as a refuse tip then covered by clay soil. During the late 1970s Aston residents planted many trees over the site. In 2012 "The Friends of Aston Brickyard" volunteer group was formed gaining the site Local Nature Reserve status in 2019

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CONTINUED **3. Bridge over the A50** This major road, initially known as the Derby Southern By Pass, was built in 1995 and took a considerable amount of traffic away from local villages. Aston residents organised a protest under the banner of SAVE (Save Aston's Village Environment) to oppose a village slip road and the idea was dropped.

4. Thurlestone Grange and Toll House Opposite the end of Derby Road is the driveway to Thurlestone Grange, built by the Earl of Harrington of Elvaston Castle for use as a Rectory; later became a private school and then a private house. About 75 metres to the left of the driveway there stood a toll house for the Turnpike Road to Shardlow and the river Trent crossing. Hexagonal in shape it was known locally as the "Threepenny Bit House" alluding to a pre-decimal coin discontinued in 1970.

5. Aston Moor Walking towards Shardlow the area to the right of the road is known as Aston Moor. Consisting of low-lying fields and scattered small woodlands it was once used as a regular meet of the Harrington Hunt.

6. Weigh Cottage The dwelling here stands on the site of Weigh Cottage. Gypsum from the mines at the Brickyard Plantation would be weighed and checked before crossing the road on the way to a canal wharf near Hickins Bridge continuing its journey on the canal to Kings Mills, via Weston, for grinding. Weigh Cottage was once one of a group of cottages known as Far (or Big) Moorside.

7. Aston Cursus On the left is Acre Lane which gives access to the Trent and Mersey canal and the Gravel Works. It is at this point in your journey that you will cross the Aston Cursus. The Cursus is a Neolithic earth work dating to c2500/3000BC. It takes the form of two parallel ditches running in a southwest to northwest direction from Weston Grange Farm towards Shardlow, probably being used for rituals. This area contains Bronze Age burials identified in the 1960s by the use of aerial photography to locate crop marks.

8. Playing Fields As you approach the village on the right are the Aston Playing Fields. Originally part of the extensive land and gardens belonging to Aston Lodge. This major house was built in the 18th century but ceased to be a domestic dwelling in 1925 then becoming the Vale of Belvoir Nursing Home for only three years when it was then purchased by Albert Looms. This Derby businessman began to dismantle the house and sell off the land from 1932 which resulted in the site being eventually utilised for the building of Lodge Estate in the 1940s and ultimately Park View in more recent times.

9. Aston Hall At the right hand bend by the east end of the Parish Church of All Saints' is the entrance drive to Aston Hall. Built in 1735 for Robert and Elizabeth Holden this building and its estate remained in the Holden family until 1898 at which time the estate was purchased by William Dickson Winterbottom. On the death of the latter gentleman the estate passed into the hands of Nottingham Corporation who established a 'Colony for Mental Defectives' (as was the terminology of the time). The estate remained in the role of a hospital, including a period during the First World War when the Hall became an Auxiliary Red Cross Hospital, until 2005 when Richmond Retirement Villages purchased the grounds.

10. Lodge Mews The large building opposite the church was built in the early 1900s as an addition to Aston Lodge to provide stables and grooms quarters together with a water tower. (now houses private apartments).

11. Lychgate Built in 1919 as a memorial to the Rev. James Shuttleworth Holden who died in 1916 after serving as Rector of Aston for 47 years.

12 All Saints' Church Christianity came to Aston and district between the years 673 - 700. Paeda the King of Mercia married Elfreda, a daughter of the Christian King of Northumberland. As a condition of the marriage the Mercian King converted to Christianity following which event four priests began their preaching from their base in nearby Repton. Early preaching would have been conducted around a preaching cross until the Saxons built a church on the present site. A fragment of a Celtic preaching cross is preserved in the west wall of the church.