

Lancashire Walks

Hesketh Bank



Lancashire's most artificial landscape is to be found out on the marshes towards the Ribble Estuary. From the late 17th century onwards this area around Hesketh Bank, Banks, Mere Brow and Tarleton began to be drained through the digging of sluices in what became a major exercise in land reclamation. This was coupled with the need to prevent the danger of flooding from the sea, which led to the construction of embankments to protect the low lying land in this part of Lancashire, and indeed gave Hesketh Bank and Banks their names. This walk will take you across the marshes towards the Ribble Estuary where the landscape is made mainly of sky.

Start: Chapel Road, Hesketh Lane.

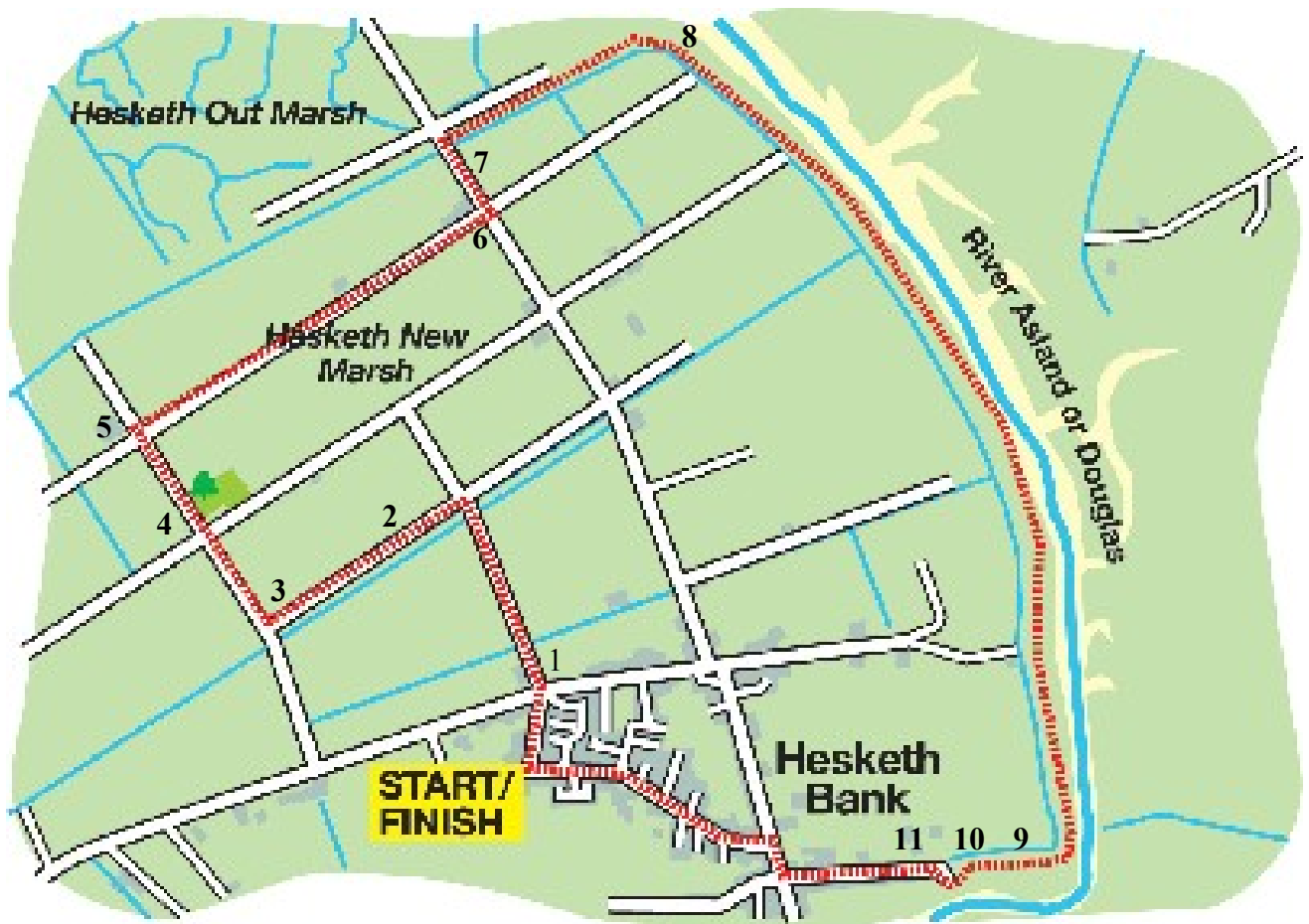
No official car park but reasonable places on Chapel Road or one of its numerous side streets. Take the A59 towards Liverpool. On reaching the traffic lights at Tarleton, beyond Bank Bridge, turn right into Coe lane. After the road bends left into the village centre, turn right into Hesketh Lane. On reaching Hesketh Bank turn left into Chapel Road opposite the parish church. Alternatively take the No. 2 bus service between Preston and Southport alighting at junction of Chapel Road and Shore Road.

Distance: 10 Km or 6 miles

Time: 2½ - 3 hours

Terrain: Very flat easy walking.

Directions: Walk down Chapel Road to its junction with Shore Road. On opposite side of Shore Road take the footpath just to the right. **(Pic 1)** This leads out onto the flat landscape of Hesketh Old Marsh. After 700m (10 mins) the track crosses a pronounced ditch. This is the Carr Heys Watercourse. Here turn left. **(Pic 2)** With the ditch on your left walk for 800m until you arrive at a farm drive. (Dib Road) **(Pic 3)** Turn right. Walk for a further 800m to reach Hesketh Lodge. **(Pic 4)** Here the public footpath has been re-routed denying immediate access to the embankment. **(Pic 5)** To reach it turn right and walk almost 1500m to Ribble Bank Farm. **(Pic 6)** Here turn left and after passing the farmhouse on your left, go through a pair of metal gates and onto the embankment. **(Pic 7)** On reaching the top of the embankment turn right. This will now take you on a wide sweep back to Hesketh Bank. Initially walking may not be as easy as you would like owing to a narrow concrete strip running along the middle of the embankment. It requires a degree of concentration entirely absent on the rest of the route. On reaching the turn, close to the confluence of the Douglas and the Ribble, the strip blessedly disappears. **(Pic 8)** Flat landscapes offer a different perspective on things and you may be surprised what features you will be able to pick out. Ahead you will see St. Walberge's church in Preston and Deepdale; to the right Winter Hill. Follow the embankment as it swings to the right. You are on it another 3 Km or 2 miles: 45mins. After passing the sewage works on the right walk for another 500m and the embankment will turn to the right. You will come to a boatyard. **(Pic 9)** The path will take you through it. **(Pic 10)** On reaching the public footpath signpost turn right onto a lane that soon leads past an ancient chapel. **(Pic 11)** Here follow the lane as it turns left. As if stepping through some magic portal you have now been returned to the familiar world of brick and tarmac. These quiet residential streets seem a world away from the marshes you have just walked across. After 500m you will reach Station Road. Turn right and then left into Chapel Road.



Pic 1



Pic 2



Pic 3



Pic 4



Pic 5



Pic 6



Pic 7



Pic 8



Pic 9



Pic 10



Pic 11

