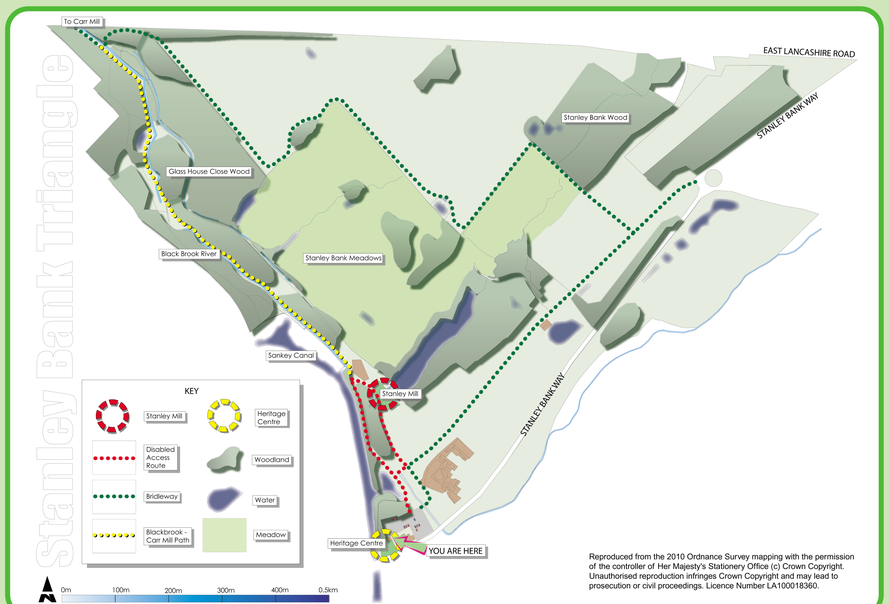
Stanley Bank

History and Nature Together

Stanley Bank is the gateway to the Sankey Valley and has itself a rich historical and natural importance. It is the site of an 18th century Iron Slitting Mill, the terminus of England's First Canal and contains a Site of Special Scientific Interest, two Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands and the Black Brook River. Today it has been developed as an area of recreation, education and special natural interest.



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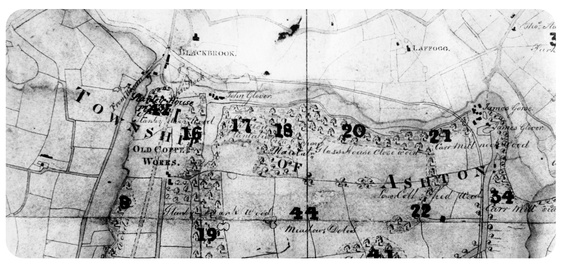
Heritage

The St.Helens Canal, the first industrial canal in England was completed in 1757. Engineered by Henry Berry of Parr, it was built to transport coal from pits around Stanley Bank, Laffak, Haydock, Garswood, Pewfall areas to the markets of Cheshire and Liverpool.

Capitalising on this transport artery and the abundant local coal, Thomas Patten of Warrington developed his copper works at Stanley Ground in 1772. Copper ore from Parys Mountain in Anglesey was processed into a range of products including Manillas – trading bracelets sometimes used in the slave trade.

Powered by water, Stanley Iron Slitting Mill was built in 1773, took iron ingots forged at Carr Mill, heated them and rolled them into sheets which were then "slit" into bars for use in the nail-making industry such as at Moss Bank.



19th century estate map showing the location of the copper works.

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Local Nature Reserve

Stanley Bank Local Nature Reserve consists of Stanley Bank Meadow, the only designated Site of Special Scientific Interest in St.Helens; Stanley Bank Wood and Glass House Close Wood, two Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands; Stanley Bank Stream, the Black Brook and various other ponds and wetland habitats.

This means that Stanley Bank has many different species of plants, flowers, birds, insects and mammals.

Access and Recreation

Stanley Bank is an ideal destination for bird watching, walking, cycling and horse riding.

Routes around the area provide access to nature and heritage for all ability levels and link to the wider rights of way network. Stanley Bank is the ideal starting point for longer walks around Carr Mill Dam and up to Billinge Hill. More information is available at the Sankey Valley Heritage Visitor Centre.

Please respect the wildlife and other park users by taking all litter and waste home with you and keeping to the marked paths and trails.

Wildlife

On Stanley Bank Meadow you can find Southern Marsh and Common Spotted Orchids, various moths including the Leopard Hawk Moth, birds such as Tawny Owls, Kestrels and Sparrowhawks and mammals such as hedgehogs, bats and foxes.

Within the woodland there are Wood Anemone and Dog's Mercury plants, birds such as Greater Spotted Woodpeckers, Wrens, Treecreepers and Nuthatches and mammals such as Grey Squirrels and Wood Mice.

Within the wetland habitats there are Dragonflies, Damselflies, Kingfishers, Pied Wagtails, Grey Wagtails, Teal, Mallards, Swans and Geese; also Water Voles, Pipistrelle and Daubenton's Bats.

St.Helens Council
National Museums Liverpool
Sankey Canal Restoration Society
Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust
heritage lottery fund
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Environment Agency