

St. Michael's Way (The Coffin Way)

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Distance: 8½ kms (5½ miles)
either route
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Time: Allow 2 to 3 hours
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Start: From the Vernon Institute
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Terrain: Mostly flat but with some short, steep sections and many stiles. Largely on field paths with variable grass/earth surfaces. Some busy roads need to be crossed.
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St. Michael's Church at Shotwick was the mother church for Saughall until 1901.

This walk follows the path along which the villagers walked to worship at St. Michael's Church before Saughall All Saints Parish Church was built. Coffins would be carried along this path for burial at St. Michael's.

Directions: Cross over **Church Road**, turn right and walk along the pavement past The Old Vicarage. After 300 metres you will reach a fingerpost on your left next to Rustic Cottage, indicating an alleyway into the fields. Walk over the meadow, across the plantation and down to the footbridge. Cross the brook and continue in a more or less straight line through several fields, sometimes on one side of the hedge, sometimes on the other. When you reach a wide well-made track; turn right onto this, past Pleasant View Farm and continue to the bridge over the A494.

Follow the bridge to **Woodbank Lane**, turn left and proceed to the traffic lights to cross over the A550 **Welsh Road**. Turn right for a short way on rough grass to reach a marked footpath on the left. Cross the field diagonally (boggy) and continue over a footbridge and through gates to reach **Shotwick Lane**. Turn left into Shotwick Village and reach St. Michael's Church.

You can return by the same route, but it is more interesting to follow a circular path back to Saughall. Continue past the church into Green Lane West, crossing over the roundabout (carefully!) to reach Green Lane East. Follow this road till, a few yards before reaching the footpath/cycleway, a waymarked path on the left follows an earthwork, drops to a bridge, crosses a field to enter a lane, and then, a short way to the right, climbs the Dee embankment. Take the track diagonally across the fields towards the Vernon Institute clocktower.

