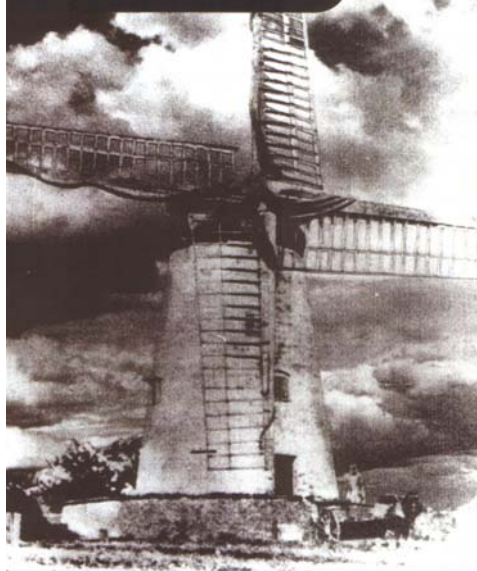


THE
Hammerwich
WALKS

Walk 1 - Triangle

Distance = 2.5 Miles



Walk 1 is along village roads and across fields. Easy walking although some sections may be muddy. There are some stiles to climb.

- A** The Ashmall Institute was established in 1911 as an 'Institute, Reading Room, Club and Recreation Room'. The family of the late Elias Ashmole Ashmall (founder of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford) intended it to be a memorial to 'him, and of his life and works', and was designated for the use of 'men...18 yrs and upward...and sober, industrious and of good character, without regard to their political or religious opinions'.



- B** On the left is the house that was the farmhouse for the Old Farm. The farmyard is now a housing development. There is a date on the front of the farmhouse of 1767 but the back of the house is thought to be an older cottage. There is a fire plaque on the gable wall proving that the owner had paid insurance to ensure that the 'Birmingham Fire Company' would turn out in the event of a fire.

- C** There has been a mill in Hammerwich since 1300, but its exact site is not known. The present building was originally a stone tower, which was bricked on the exterior in 1779 when it was a working flour mill known as Speedwell Mill. It was worked until the early years of the 20th Century, when it began to fall into disrepair. The sails were removed in about 1908 and a fibreglass cupola added in 1977 when it was converted to a dwelling house.

- D** The original name for Overton Lane was 'The Plateau' - a name still used by older residents. The first houses, numbers 17-47, were built here by Mr T J Moss, a local builder, in 1904. They housed several mining families, many of whom also ran small businesses used by local people, including a bicycle repair shop (17), a general store (37) and a cobbler's (39). In late spring and early summer, you may see Swifts and House Martins sweeping over and around the houses and Swallows resting on the overhead lines. Look out for the House Martin nests under the eaves. A survey in a nearby garden recorded 26 species of birds.



House Martin

Photo by Phil Ward

E The Public Footpath was known at one time as 'Occupation Lane' and served, in the pre- and post-WWII years, a nursery owned by the Croxall family, who supplied fresh produce to many local shops.

F The way across the fields is no longer obvious as many of the hedgerows have been removed. This area was, in living memory, a patchwork of small meadows, supporting a wide variety of wildlife including Skylarks. The blackberries were renowned among many local people who remember a particularly fierce farmer called 'Lanky Pyatt' who would regularly chase them off his fields. You may still be lucky enough to hear a Skylark overhead.

G The farm and small wedge of land down the hill to the left is known as Brook Cottage and was the home for many years of the Burke family, one of the many families who came to Hammerwich looking for work as a result of the Irish famines. This cottage and its surrounding fields supported a large family, despite the lack of mains water until the last few years of the 20th Century.

H The Triangle-known to older local residents as simply 'Triangle' is an area of Public Open Space administered by Hammerwich Parish Council. In the early 20th Century there was a block of four three storey houses called the 'Bunch of Fours' at the far right hand corner facing Wharf Lane. These houses were often a first stop for incoming Irish men looking for work in the local mines and on the railways and canals.



Crane Brook