

Learning about  
Local History



## Education, Leisure and Recreation

From its industrial origins, Stanley Bank has been transformed into a heritage attraction offering a wide range of educational and leisure opportunities. It is suitable for walks and visits for most abilities with a wheelchair-friendly route from the car park, around Stanley Mill and along the Black Brook.

Schools and colleges can take advantage of a variety of educational activities and research opportunities to link in with their studies.

There is an extensive annual events programme, where anybody can come along for a ramble through the local countryside, learn skills such as willow weaving or to learn more about the natural environment

Many visitors also come to learn more about St.Helens' rich history or to take part in archaeology events.

To book a talk, walk or other event for a community or school group, contact St.Helens Ranger Service at Sankey Valley Heritage Visitor Centre, Stanley Bank.

## Further Information

To find out more about Stanley Bank and the Sankey Valley Country Park, contact St.Helens Ranger Service at:

### Sankey Valley Heritage Visitor Centre

Blackbrook Road

St.Helens

Merseyside

WA11 0AB

Tel: 01744 677772

Visit: [www.stanleybank.org.uk](http://www.stanleybank.org.uk)

[www.stanleymill.org.uk](http://www.stanleymill.org.uk)

Email: [sankeyvalleyrangers@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:sankeyvalleyrangers@sthelens.gov.uk)



St.Helens Council

**Contact Centre**, Wesley House,  
Corporation Street, St.Helens WA10 1HF

**Tel:** 01744 676789

**Minicom:** 01744 671671

**Fax:** 01744 676895

**Email:** [contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk)

→ [www.sthelens.gov.uk](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk)



Please contact us to request translation of Council information into Braille, audio tape or a foreign language.



# Stanley Bank

Gateway to  
The Sankey Valley



## Welcome to Stanley Bank

Welcome to Stanley Bank, a pioneering site in the industrial development of the St.Helens area and now a beautiful area of leisure and relaxation.

Set in the Lancashire Coal Field, Stanley Bank was important in the link between industry and transport. The need to transport the coal mined in the surrounding areas to its markets in Liverpool and Cheshire led to the cutting of the Sankey Canal, England's first Canal. This transport network allowed the area to be exploited for other industries, such as copper and iron working.

Over time, nature has healed the scars of industry and nowadays wildlife abounds with nationally and locally important natural areas with species-rich grassland, wetland and ancient woodlands.

With a bridleway, numerous tracks and trails linking into the Sankey Valley and a wider network of paths, Stanley Bank is an ideal spot for the whole family, whether your interests lie in history or nature, walking, running, cycling or even horse riding.



Pair of Mute Swans

thedesignstudio@sthelens.gov.uk 11004956



LOTTERY FUNDED

[www.stanleybank.org.uk](http://www.stanleybank.org.uk)



# Stanley Bank

History and Nature Together



## Stanley Bank Triangle History

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 the Stanley Bank, Laffak, Haydock, Garswood and 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. By 1785 the works were owned by Stanley Smelting Company, who also owned the Sloop Inn and Copper House Row - cottages where the workers from the Copper Works lived. Powered by water, Stanley Iron Slitting Mill, built in 1773, heated and rolled iron ingots, forged at Carr Mill, into sheets which were then “slit” into bars for use in the nail-making industry such as at Moss Bank. The mill was demolished in the 1820s and a Corn Mill built in its place, again utilising waterpower. The Corn Mill eventually ceased production by the turn of the 20th Century. Stanley Mill has now been mapped and recorded by the Community Archaeology Society with the help of Liverpool Museum Field Archaeology Unit and conserved as a monument to St. Helens’ industrial heritage using money granted by the Heritage Lottery Fund.



## Natural Environment

Stanley Bank has a wonderful mixture of habitats. Ancient Woodland, wet woodland, ponds, rivers, canals and even farmland attract a wide range of plants and animals. The valuable ancient semi-natural woodland of Glass House Close Wood and Stanley Bank Wood has existed on this site since at least the 1600s. Evidence suggests that trees in these woodlands were once harvested, possibly to be used to make charcoal for a fuel source. When wandering through the woodlands, things to look out for are Wood Anemones and Bluebells and birds such as Tawny Owls and Greater Spotted Woodpeckers. The rivers and canals of Stanley Bank provide food and shelter for many types of wildlife. Grey Wagtails nest in the nooks and crannies of the walls of the Black Brook, while Kingfishers can be seen feeding along the length of the Brook. Water Voles have been found in both the Black Brook and Stanley Brook, and the old Carr – Stanley Contour Canal is home to plants such as the Yellow Flag Iris.

The grasslands, including the nationally important Stanley Bank Meadow, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, contain lots of wild flowers such as Southern Marsh Orchids, Yellow Rattle and Adder’s Tongue Fern. It is also home to insects such as Leopard Moth and Eyed Hawk Moth; birds such as Buzzards, Kestrels and Sparrowhawks, and small mammals such as Field Voles and Pipistrelle Bats. At the Heritage Centre there is a wealth of information on history, wildlife and things to see and do. Also at the Centre is a birdwatching area, where there have been sightings of locally rare Willow Tits amongst the usual visitors like Collared Doves, Blue Tits and Green Finches.



Eyed Hawk Moth



Willow Tit