

HOLDERS LANE (AREA 4)

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Holders Lane is my chosen path most days. During the working-week, I cycle-commute along with many other residents of Moseley and Kings Heath. At weekends, the River Rea end forms the turn-around point at Cannon Hill Parkrun affectionately known to runners as ‘The Triangle’.

From east to west, the route is gently downhill from the junction with Moor Green Lane before bending to the left and splitting into two: the left-hand fork has an impressive old Oak tree. This route is mainly used by traffic and residents; the right-hand fork is used by cyclists and pedestrians in the main, it passes a few residences and also allows vehicle access to Moor Green Allotments.

The two branches come together at the entrance to Holders Wood, believed to be of ancient origin, since replanted. It’s a prime spot for dog-walkers to park up and begin a walk through the woodland and for families and sports teams to use the all-weather playing fields. There are impressive views of Birmingham landmarks from this elevated position.

Beyond this point there is no vehicle access and Holders Lane continues as a footpath and cycle route. It descends quite steeply with the allotments to the right, playing fields to the left. The verges will soon be teeming with early snowdrops and then daffodils. At the bookends of winter, the path can often be lit by warm sunlight. At other times mists settle above the Rea.

Holders Lane then flattens off and terminates by forking at ‘The Triangle’. The left-hand fork takes you south for a short distance heading to a bridge crossing the Rea, with the right-hand fork heading northwards towards Cannon Hill Park, with another footbridge over the Rea directly ahead. The third side of the triangle is made by the Sustrans cycle path.

This area on the eastern bank of the Rea was the site of a grinding, rolling and blade mill in the 18th century, with records of a mill on the site dating back to 1597. Holders Lane may be a quiet, narrow pathway these days, yet it has a long history as one of the earliest defined Moseley roads. That world, dominated by farmland, is long gone, although it still links local people to many green spaces.