

Trip Report: Shining Tor from Lamaload Reservoir

Date: 26th August 2015

Group: Steve (leader), Mike A, Mike H, Mike W, Selina, Dave C

Route: A combination of Walk 27 and Walk 29 in "100 Walks in Cheshire" (Crowood Press, 1990)

Total Distance: 10.8 miles

Total Ascent: 2300 ft

Weather: Mostly fine but with a couple of heavy showers

A walk in our home county, but only just - we drove east through Macclesfield and found Lamaload Reservoir shortly before reaching the boundary with Derbyshire. Right on cue, as we arrived at the car park, the heavens opened and everyone was reaching for their waterproofs even before putting boots on. A couple of anglers who were preparing to try their luck in the reservoir looked equally disappointed with the start to the day and assured us that rain doesn't usually make for good fishing. None of us had brought a rod anyway and so, wishing them luck, we set off on the planned route!

Fortunately the rain soon stopped as we climbed gently up on a path that provided a good view of the reservoir and its dam. We followed well-marked paths across fields and through the yard of a farm which rather oddly seemed to also be a wedding venue. After crossing a road we descended through a short section of woodland and, as the sun had appeared, we stopped to make clothing adjustments, take a drink, check the phone etc.

We soon reached our next landmark, Jenkin Chapel, an isolated place of worship built by farmers in the late 18th century. From the chapel we returned to walking through fields, heading north past three farms almost to the village of Kettlethume. Before reaching the village the route turned east and started to climb up towards Windgather Rocks where a group of young climbers were enjoying the challenge offered by these popular crags. We found a sheltered spot for lunch and in the course of our idle chat an interesting question came up - was this the first BUMS walk to have 50% of participants called Mike

Continuing along the ridge south of Windgather Rocks there were good views in all directions, across the Peak District and over Cheshire. One benefit of the good view was the early warning it provided of the approach of a heavy shower and we soon suffered another downpour. At this point I managed to leave the map on a wall but fortunately it was well protected and I realised when we had only walked another couple of hundred metres, so retrieved it swiftly. The path followed the ridge for

about another two miles over Cats Tor and then up to Shining Tor. As the terrain here is open moorland and potentially boggy the path has been flagged over most of this section and it made for easy walking.

The usual compulsory photos were taken of the triangulation pillar at Shining Tor and we scanned the view for landmarks, such as Beeston Castle which was readily visible on the flat Cheshire plain. We then retraced our steps for a short distance to a stile and turned to start descending towards the reservoir. It was good to find that all the dodgy knees in the group survived the descent and within half an hour we were back at the cars and soon heading for the Yew Tree.

Thanks to Mike A for taking some photos along the way to supplement the couple that I have included with this report - I'm sure some of them will appear in the blog.

Steve