

BUMS Christmas Family Walk – Sunday 28th December 2025

Location: Wirral Way

Route: Caldy – Thurstaston – Caldy

Weather: Dry, Overcast and Cool

Party: Mike A (leader), Lesley, Neil, Ann, Eilidh (guest), Bruce, Lynn, Andrea, Heather, Richard, Della, Chrissie, Dave Barker, Dave Bond, Janet, Jim, Tony, Cate, Anne, Charlie & Jess (guests), Bob & Jenny Capes (guests), Cleo & Ponya (hounds)

Distance: 13.45 km (8.4 miles) **Total Ascent:** 201m (660ft) **Time** 3 hrs 50 mins

We did recce this walk a couple of weeks ago and it turned out to be gruelling 11 miles which I guessed would not be too popular. The revised version certainly generated some interest and promised a bumper turnout, with the final number in doubt right up to our 09.30 departure from the Pavilion. It was great to welcome some seasonal guests, including former members, Bob & Jenny who made the short journey from Heswall to be with us. Bob was, in fact, a founder member of the BUMS.

The walk started from a very convenient free car park on the Wirral Way and despite the large numbers, everyone made the rendezvous without mishap. We followed the Wirral Way, a disused railway, for a mile or so as far as the visitors Centre at Thurstaston, which still retains the platform from the old station. We took the opportunity to visit the toilets (predictably) and also to take our coffee break where a good deal of Christmas cake appeared.

The Wirral Way had doubled up as the England Coast Path up to this point, but here they split and we followed the coast path which had the option of descending down to the beach. This we followed, since the tide was a long way out. After about a km. we turned inland and rejoined the Wirral Way before turning onto a path signposted to The Dungeon. The Dungeon turns out to be a SSSI and is an attractive woodland gorge through which a little stream creates a waterfall.

Leaving The Dungeon, we followed the track towards Thurstaston Church and village where we had to negotiate the A540 and pass by the Cottage Loaf pub before soon entering Thurstaston Common. By ensuring that we kept ascending, we soon reached the summit of Thurstaston Hill, the highest point on The Wirral. It was the perfect location for our lunch stop with views over the Dee Estuary to Wales in the west and over to Liverpool in the east. Even on a dull day the view is impressive.

It was too cold to hang around after eating, so we moved on after the obligatory summit photo. With Jenny's local knowledge, we followed the ridge for a while before plunging downhill through the bracken to a lower path which led us to the rugby pitches which we crossed over, back towards the main road again. This we crossed (with difficulty) and took a path on the other side which led us through horse paddocks towards Caldy village and we entered Stapledon Wood, a labyrinth of paths leading to Caldy Hill. Again, we stopped to enjoy the fine view of The Dee Estuary which, this time included Hilbre Island, a great destination on a fine day when the tide is out.

By some miracle, I managed to find the correct path heading down to Caldy and back onto the Wirral Way and our car park with a brief detour to Cubbins Green nature reserve to conclude an excellent day out with half decent weather.

After the farewells to our special guests, most of the party returned to enjoy the roaring fire and fine ales (and wine) at the Dysart Arms.

Mike A

