

Clwydian Hills

Walk Date: Saturday 11th November 2023

Distance: 10.40 miles according to Satmap

Ascent: 2435ft according to Satmap (I think Satmap always reads high)

Walkers: Dave Bond (leader) and Christine, Lesley Arrowsmith, Mike Willis, Steve and Sarah Hammond, Derek Burrows, Ian Langford, Della Kamil, Ray Bunting + a well behaved Flora

We left the Pavillion Car Park shortly after 8.30, and thankfully, everyone met up at the correct walkers' car park on the unnamed lane leading out of Cilcain.

Booted Up and wearing plenty of warm winter clothing we commenced walking shortly after 9.30, continuing along the lane, which quickly became a dirt track, skirting the north-west (shady) side of Moel Llys-y-coed.

The main Offa's Dyke Path was soon joined, and now in the warmth of the sun, the climb up the slopes of Moel Arthur commenced, swinging left to reach the top at 1495' above sea level (I have not yet been 'metrified'). Coffee break was duly taken with fine views of the Vale of Clwyd with Snowdonia in the distance.

We rejoined the ODP and began our descent.

This being Remembrance Day, a two minutes silence was observed at 11 a.m.

Commencing the walk, one (unlikely!) member of the group commented how lovely it was to experience the silence of the hills, and hearing the occasional bird song.

Our first boggy section of the walk was encountered on a slope near the foot of the hill. Most of the group dealt with this easily, with nothing more than muddy boots. Ian, however, decided to keep his boots clean, and negotiated the boggy slope by alternative means (see photos). Much laughter followed!

Leaving the ODP, we commenced through fine woodlands, swinging steeply right then left and followed the ancient ramparts to reach the ancient hill fort of Moel Penycloddiau (the largest hillfort in the Clwydian range and one of the largest in Wales). At 1442', and at the northern end of the range, uninterrupted views of the North Wales coast, Liverpool Bay and the Mersey Estuary were enjoyed.

Moel Penycloddian marked our half way point and the route now headed south, along the ridge where lunch was taken in the very warm November sunshine. Most of us could have lingered longer.

Commencing the walk, we skirted Moel Arthur to the West, before a tough climb up the ODP to regain the ridge. All downhill now, initially heading towards the low sun, before turning left, down a good track back to the carpark.

Glorious winter walking on a warm and sunny day with good paths. Thanks to all those taking part.

David