

Trip Report: Shropshire

Date: 28th April 2012

Group: Lynn (leader), Colin (driver), Mike H, Rob and Roxie (dog).

Route: The Wrekin and the Ercall (pronounced Arkle)

Total Distance: 8 miles

Total Ascent: 1585 ft

Weather: Rain all day

With a relatively short journey ahead of us to Shropshire, we were able to meet at a very civilised 8.30 at the pavilion, mind you Mr Sinnott was still late and Philip was a no-show. He said he was held up in Dublin, maybe he took one look at the weather here and thought Dublin looked the best bet!

The small select group travelled through rural Shropshire to the car park at the base of the Wrekin, where the ever reliable Hugh was waiting. If only the map was as reliable, it promised toilets at the car park, there were none, so it was a quick trip behind the bushes before we donned our waterproofs and began our ascent of the Wrekin.

We followed the Shropshire way (not a well signposted trail!) through woodland towards the summit as we listened to tales of cardiac woes, hip-replacements, hernias, sciatica and a whole host of ailments. Beta blockers, angiograms, triple-bypass were the buzz-words of the day.

Thankfully we all made it to the summit in one piece! We could see the Cheshire plains, but sadly it was too misty to spot the leader's office in Crewe, from where on a clear day one can see the Wrekin in its full glory!

Now for the geology bit - many people wrongly believe the Wrekin is an extinct volcano, although it is volcanic in origin it is an eroded remnant of a vast chunk of rock thrust to the surface around 700 million years ago, putting it among the oldest rocks in the world.

With no sign of the precipitation ceasing we stopped for coffee on a rocky outcrop overlooking Wenlock woods.

We carried on with our descent of the Wrekin, then on through Wenlock Wood, it was here that Hugh said he would bail out and head back to the car. (I think an old war wound was playing up). We had lunch together and said farewell to Hugh.

Without the help of Hugh's GPS we made our way north through Limekiln Wood, then skirting the edge of the M54 turning south and a short but steep ascent took us to the top of the Ercall. After a photo shoot at the quarry, it was back to the car, apart from a very smelly unladylike moment from Roxie the journey home was uneventful.

Anyway we all had a great walk, we didn't get lost and Roxie was still allowed in the Dysart with the rest of us for the customary rehydration.

Lynn