

**Trip Report: Stiperstones**

**Date:** 26th February 2016

**Group:** Jim G (leader) Debbie, Mike H, Ann & Sue (Elie & Spot)

**Route:** A circuit over and around the Stiperstones, Shropshire

**Total Distance:** 7.2 miles

**Total Ascent:** 2165 ft

**Weather:** Cloudy, bright and chilly in the easterly wind, no rain

Another trip constrained by the weather on the high mountains, lots of snow and ice about requiring crampons and ice axes. So we are back to the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, fast becoming our favourite County, or at least our most visited.

(<http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/>)

A leisurely start at 8am from the Yew Tree car park, with an uneventful drive to our start point at The Bog, a bit ironic really as when we got there the Ladies had to use the bushes as the Visitor Centre does not open until the 23rd March, so there was no toilets available! The Bog Mine once had over 200 buildings and was a very big producer of lead and barytes in days gone by.

The route starts off gently along the Shropshire Way heading for the Stiperstones, the path is surprisingly rocky and not the usual Shropshire bog trot (see Clun trip report). We pass Cranberry Rock before the short scramble up to the Trig point on Manstone Rocks (536m) where there are magnificent views across Shropshire and the Welsh Marches. We continue along the ridge past the Devil's Chair before taking a well earned coffee break in the shelter of Shepherd's Rock, out of the biting easterly wind. We continue northwards before dropping down into the slightly boggy Crowsnest Dingle, a little bushwhacking leads us down to a track and into the village of Crowsnest.

Debbie's dogs are not yet stile climbers so Mike is called upon to assist them over a few as we head for Mytton Dingle before heading steeply uphill alongside Perkin's Beach and a well earned lunch stop, again with great views of the Welsh Mountains. Once at the top there is a clear level track, beneath the Stiperstones, that eventually takes us back to our cars at The Bog car park.

An uneventful drive back to for a very early drink at The Yew Tree, where we are joined by other drinking but non walking Bums.

Jim