

**Trip Report: Clun****Date:** January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016**Group:** Mike H (leader), Lesley, Selina, Lynn, Sarah, Mike A, Mike W, Jim and Tony**Route:** A circular walk around Clun - AKA The Trenchfoot Walk**Total Distance:** 12.3 miles**Total Ascent:** 2540 ft**Weather:** Rain

The intended walk was get into the high mountains, but yet again the horrible wet weather forced a change in plan. Cancelling the first walk of the year was a non-starter despite the possible drenching. After checking the latest weather forecast we headed to South Shropshire where the forecast predicted the least wet weather. The journey down in pouring rain gave us an indication of what was to come.

Arriving at the car park in Clun still in pouring rain, we geared up into our waterproofs and set off across the footbridge over a very swollen River Clun. We walked through the grounds of Clun Castle, ankle deep in water, and then followed well established paths along the Shropshire Way. At various points the path resembled the river and we had to walk along neighbouring fields. When the path was not flooded it was a quagmire of mud.

As the path followed a broad ridge called Cefns the going got even worse. The normal rolling Shropshire hills became very hard work as we tried to walk through thick slippery mud. Even the local flocks of sheep had tried to avoid the sodden pastures by following the same ridge churning up the mud. By now the mood of the group was changing and with only a third of the route completed it was already becoming the Bums worse bog trot!

We continued to reach Three Gates and then onto the return part of the route along Offa's Dyke. After the sign marking the mid point of the Dyke the going got a little easier but the weather worsened and we walked back to Clun in heavy rain. Normally walking on Tarmac is met with groans but this time it was met with relief. A thoroughly wet, tired, and muddled group eventually made its way back to the car park. Arriving back in the Yew Tree it was amazing to witness how much the mood had changed and the Shropshire mud became a distant memory. Ironically the date for this walk was changed and forecast for the original date is for dry and sunny weather!! My thanks to all on the walk for your determination, good humour (most of the time), and stoicism in very demanding conditions.

Mike H