

Trip Report: Cyffylliog, Denbighshire

Date: 31st July 2015

Group: Mike A (leader), Lesley, Colin, Jim G, Dave C, John, Heather, Mike W, Selina, Lynda, Chrissie

Route: Cyffylliog - Pincyn Llys (1374ft) - Cyffylliog - Foel Uchaf - Carreg y gath - Cyffylliog

Total Distance: 8.5 miles

Total Ascent: 1988 ft

Time: 4 hours

There was an excellent turnout for this midweeker with the prospect of some half decent weather following the recent autumnal conditions. A civilised rendezvous of 08.30 at the pavilion perhaps also helped to swell the numbers, and we set off to the remote village of Cyffylliog, to the west of Ruthin.

The leader led the convoy on the basis of a recent recce of the walk but somehow took the wrong road out of Ruthin (I blame the on board back up navigation but that's another story). We eventually found the village with some help from Mike's satnav and no damage was done (apart from that is, to my reputation).

We set off south on the Hiraethog Trail, climbing steadily through dense coniferous woods and then fields and farms dense with sheep, to the edge of The Clocaenog Forest and then a short distance up to the trig point and monument in the clearing of Pincyn Llys. Here we stopped for a coffee break and enjoyed superb views to the Clwyddian Range in the east. The planned walk was a figure of eight circuit and the next leg was simply to take a different route back to the village. It looked easy enough on the map, but the farmers in this part of the world have a reputation for making it as hard as possible (if not impossible) to locate rights of way. Waymarks are removed, stiles dilapidated and gates lashed up and impossible to open. Still, it makes for some interesting bushwacking and navigational challenges. We also had the strange experience of a farmer woman shouting at us from across two fields. Rumour had it that she was concerned about the noise we were making, but more likely miffed that we were attempting to use her carefully hidden paths. Fortunately Jim's satmap was working well and we emerged at Cyffylliog without any further drama, if you disregard the nettles and gate hurdling.

Ignoring our parked cars, we headed west on the Hiraethog Trail, following the attractive river (Afon Clyedog) upstream, and finding a scenic lunch spot on the rocky river bank which was actually bathed in sunshine. Dave and Heather were moved sufficiently to take a paddle in

the river or at least remove boots and dip feet in. Not sure if that qualifies as paddling but it does qualify as unusual behaviour on a BUMS walk.

When the squad were fully fed (and bathed) we continued along the river bank and then headed north uphill on forest tracks onto the open moorland below Foel Uchaf. Arriving at a road we turned east and followed the road for a mile or so, again with views of the Clwyddian Hills. Turning south through fields of sheep (there is a definite sheep theme to this district!) we arrived at a steep road cum track which descended steeply to Cyffylliog and which the more alert members of the group will have recognised as the last half mile of our unplanned driving route to the village.

So, it was back to Bunbury for rehydration in the Dysart garden to round off an interesting yomp in a rarely visited part of the world.

Mike A