

**Trip Report: Greater Manchester**

**Date:** 12th June 2016

**Group:** Lesley (leader), Mike A, Jeff, Ali and Dave, Debbie and two dogs

**Route:** Alderley Edge

**Total Distance:** 9.3 miles

**Total Ascent:** 0 ft

**Weather:** Wet and miserable but warm

**Time:** 5 hours

The 'Not Jack's Rake' walk proved more popular than the original. It seemed that even the hardiest Bums had valid excuses for not scrambling in the Lakes this weekend. A viable alternative brought some lesser seen members out of their burrows for a ramble over Cheshire's easterly ridges.

Meeting up proved easier than I thought as we were roadside parking on the mean streets of Alderley Edge. Navigating the start was easier than I anticipated and we were soon on our way across fields heading towards Nether Alderley (an even more expensive post code than Alderley Edge). Approaching the local church of St Mary's Nether Alderley the first heavy pulse of rain started. With a very quick waterproof layering stop we made it into the church yard just as the service was ending and found ourselves invited into the church hall for coffee and cake, celebrating the Queen's birthday. Some of the party were nervous on two counts (church and Queen) but as the rain rattled down the downspouts we were all glad of the shelter and the great and the good of Nether Alderley were very welcoming to us and the dogs. There was even offer of a loo. Result! Rain bating slightly we set out again and headed uphill towards Hare Hill. After a delightful foray up Bradford Lane (must have known I was coming) and a few more (wet) fields and footpaths we found ourselves within the National Trust lands of Hare Hill Gardens. Luckily there were two enormous fallen trees just right for a lunch spot before we headed off on a permissive footpath to Alderley Edge - the actual sandstone ridge this time.

This section was very nice and not rainy at all and led us to The Wizard pub just past the Wizard Walk - now the climax of the whole day. It was a long time coming and was a little bit over sold, but the party seemed to enjoy the taking off of their waterproof trousers very much. Some of the features of the Edge were slightly bypassed inadvertently but overall we got the flavour of the area.

I have to say I think that Peckforton, Larkton and Bulkeley Hills take some beating for this sandstone type of scenery but it was a new area for some of us and well worth the soaking (most said to my face at least).

We never did see David Beckham (probably at the Euros) but there was a slightly strange wizard called Gina who tried to lure us into The Wizard for a pint—but we demurred (Jim you would have been proud).

The book from which this walk came is: *Adventurous Pub Walks in Cheshire* by David Dunford.

Information on the famous children's book (which Dave F had first hand knowledge of from primary school days) is below.

***The Weirdestone of Brisingamen: A Tale of Alderley*** is a [children's fantasy novel](#) written by the English author [Alan Garner](#) (born 1934).

Garner began work on the novel, his literary debut, in 1957 after he moved into the late mediaeval house Toad Hall, in Blackden, [Cheshire](#). The story, which took the local legend of [The Wizard of the Edge](#) as a partial basis for the novel's plot, was influenced by the folklore and landscape of the neighbouring [Alderley Edge](#) where he had grown up. Upon completion the book was picked up by the publisher Sir William Collins who released it through his publishing company [Collins](#) in 1960.

**Erratum from Leader:** Alan Garner won the Carnegie Medal for The Owl Service in 1967, not the above

Lesley