

Trip Report 17th Feb 2018

The Long Mynd via Ragleth Hill and Ashes Hollow.

Distance: 9.2 miles

Ascent: 2650ft

Squad: Mike H (Leader), Dave, Steve, Sarah, Sue, Mike W, Selina, Jeff and Debbie (plus Spot and Ellie – our canine members)

The choice of route at this time of year, following a prolonged period of rain, proved a significant challenge. And I have a reputation to uphold for the muddiest walk, a badge of honour now taken over by Lesley. So, walks were planned in different regions and final choice of the Shropshire Hills delayed in order to get the better weather.

The group set off to Church Stretton just after 8 am which meant we were on the trail before 9.30. A brief walk from the car park leads directly onto the Shropshire Way and our route to Ragleth Hill. The hope of having clear views of our route from the top of Ragleth turned to disappointment as our early start meant morning mists still covered the hills. A steep grassy descent from Ragleth took us past a cottage with a memorial to a lost son. A speedy crossing of the A49 brought us to Little Stretton and the start of the route up Ashes Hollow.

The path up Ashes Hollow follows a stream and is mainly rock and peat underfoot – and very little mud! A couple of sections required crossing the stream – cameras on hand in case someone falls in. The path to the top of the Mynd is 2.5 miles of gradual ascent but no complaints as it is a very scenic route. As we climbed over the shoulder of Round Hill we made a lunch stop just below Narnell's Rock. As we munched our way through our butties in glorious sunshine, Selina kept the dogs happy by throwing them her crusts. However, Selina's dog-loving nature was stretched when Ellie stole her last sandwich.

When we reached the top of the Mynd we had to visit Pole Bank the site of a trig point and view indicator. From here we had clear views of the rocky crest of Stiperstones, Corndon Hill, Caer Caradoc, the Berwyns and Snowdonia.

From Pole Bank we retraced our steps and continued along a grassy path close to Devils Mouth. The path down to Church Stretton passes through an ornate garden inspired by Capability Brown. A scenic finale to a good days walking.