

Bums Trip report

Saturday March 16th 2024

Macclesfield Forest and the Shutlingsloe Matterhorn

8 miles 2204ft of ascent 5 hours total time (easy pace)

Weather: mixed bag- blue skies, then drizzle

Walkers: Lesley (leader), Christine and David, Cate, Tony and Lynn with Ponya

This was never going to be a record breaking attendance as 12 BUMs were walking in Madeira, some attending theatre, some with grandparenting responsibilities – the list of reasons goes on, but never the less 6 of us made it to an 8:30 am getaway and were at the start of the walk beside The Crag Inn, Wildboarclough (pronounced Wilber Cluff) in Cheshire East by 9:30.

The leader had reced the walk the week before with support from Sue Lancaster, Chrissie and the leader's son. So, assured of the route, we headed off across well waymarked fields and then up onto a small road and into a dip where Highmoor Brook crosses and we walked beside this for a while, with a very pleasant coffee stop beside the brook. More fields, thankfully fairly dry and across a somewhat boggy area to emerge in front of a pub called The Hanging Gate Inn- the second highest pub in Cheshire dating back to the 15th century and an old drovers pub. It sits close to part of the Gritstone Trail which was our next destination.

This section was unreconnoitered so expect the worst.

However, with all eyes focused on the way markers we eventually made it with only a small back track, in to the forest and then circumnavigated Ridgegate Reservoir. Here the whole of Cheshire East seemed to have turned out and cars were everywhere, but the leader had reserved a picnic bench at the Visitors Centre for lunch before the big push up towards Shutlingsloe.

This is a walk done several times before and usually starting from this point thereby doing the 'mountain' early on. The fact that after lunch it was up, up and away, did not deter the group and with no sounds of dissent or moaning we made it swiftly to the top of Shutlingsloe, which most of the squad had never done. Great views from here but cold drizzle drove us quickly down.

Down the edge we went and very soon we were back at the cars, all claiming they enjoyed the walk.

This is a true classic, albeit of a slightly lower level, but classic never the less.

Thanks for joining me.

The book I took this walk from is: Cheshire: 40 favourite walks by John and Annie Ferguson.

Lesley