

Chirk Castle - Pontcysyllte Aqueduct Circuit, 31st May 2023

Group Participants: Fred & Anne, Tony, Lynn & Ponya, plus Iain (walk leader).
We departed in 2 vehicles from Bunbury Pavilion car park at 9:00.

Circuit starting and finishing at Chirk Castle (free) car park. Despite being half term there was plenty of parking available in the National Trust car park.
The walk was approximately 8.5 miles long with around 400' fall and rise in overall elevation.

A warm day with mainly clear skies and a gentle refreshing breeze.

We initially headed down towards Chirk and the Llangollen canal through parkland and pastures and reached the elegant gates of the Chirk estate. Here we skirted through woodland past a caravan site and down to a viewing point above the canal. Turning north, we entered the towpath tunnel, which was largely dry and even underfoot, with no surprising projections hanging down from the tunnel roof, thankfully.

On exiting the tunnel, the towpath followed a cutting lined with lush vegetation and lit by dappled sunlight. After a short coffee break in the sunshine on a conveniently located bench, we followed the canal towpath as it wound above the valley towards Telford's Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. Here the canal and towpath traffic increased as we encountered several groups of canoeists crossing the aqueduct. We took lunch by the visitor centre before crossing the canal and winding our way up fairly busy minor roads towards the A5. Regular pauses were taken to allow cars to pass which also gave the opportunity to take in the open vistas down the valley back towards the aqueduct plus rail viaduct.

After crossing the busy A5, we headed up through woodland back towards the Chirk Castle Estate. The car park was now much busier!

In summary a gentle, pleasant well marked walk which was mainly dry underfoot with no requirements for Dave's patented barbed wire protector or balancing on rickety stiles! Even when crossing the occasional ploughed or seeded field where the path was a bit unclear, the exit points were easily discerned due to there being plenty of 'kissing gates' along the route.



