



Walk 7: Grindley Brook and back in two ways

Long route: **6.8 miles / 10.9km** • Duration: about **4 hours**

Short route: **3.5 miles / 5.6km** • Duration: about **2 hours**

Starting point: **The Horse & Jockey, Grindley Brook**

(Check with the pub, 01948 662723, if you wish to park there.

Or use the No.41 bus service from Whitchurch)

Mostly flat (only a few short, steep banks), with stiles, and gates.

There are places where it can be muddy.

In summer there may be crops to walk through.

Two wells and a church

St. Mary's Church, Whitewell (also known as Iscoyd), is a whitewashed brick church which was a former 'chapel of ease' (an alternative and more convenient venue) for parishioners of Malpas in Cheshire. It remains the only Welsh church in the diocese of Chester. The present 1830s structure replaced an earlier timber-framed building which collapsed during restoration work.



The two wells from which the name Whitewell derived lie to the south of the church. Some parts of the old chapel were used in the construction of the new building, especially the roof timbers and various oak panelling. The spire and clock were added in 1898.

Burial Ground and Mills at Iscoyd

The tumulus known as Warren Tump to the west of Iscoyd Park was probably a Bronze Age burial mound. This belief was reinforced by the discovery of a bronze axe in the grounds of Iscoyd Park in the mid-19th century. It is likely that the 'missing' Anglo-Saxon manor of Burwardestone, which is named in the Domesday survey of 1086, fell within the area of Iscoyd.



A series of corn watermills were constructed, possibly on earlier foundations, along the Wych Brook including Dymock's Mill, Wych Mill, Llethr Mill and Wolvesacre Mill from the later 18th century onwards. The remains include leats and millponds as well as some surviving structures.

Longer Route Description

Start at Grindley Brook **1**. Go through the car park on to the Malpas road (B5395 – narrow and quite busy). Just past a house is a stile to the left. This path is well way marked – continue across several fields, with the brook to your left, to reach a footbridge across the Red Brook. On the other side you are in Wales. Cross a wet meadow, through an open

gateway, to a waymark post directing you across a culvert and through a steel field gate. With the hedge to your right, cross more pasture to a stile and then a steel kissing gate. Turn right, and then left along a grass bank. Below is Wolvesacre Mill, which is now a cottage.

Another kissing gate leads on to a track, turn left, and after passing a cottage, Llethr Mill **2**, go over the

Where Canal crosses Brook

The Llangollen Canal ascends from Hurlstone Junction in Cheshire to Llangollen and is a branch of the Shropshire Union Canal. It was to have been part of a network linking Shropshire and Wales to the River Dee but was never completed. The Llangollen Canal was finished in 1806 and is very popular because of its spectacular aqueducts and splendid scenery.



At Grindley Brook, the most northerly settlement in Shropshire, there are three locks rising in a staircase and then three further locks as the canal passes through the village. The village is the starting point for four long-distance footpaths: the Maelor, Shropshire and South Cheshire Ways and the Sandstone Trail, and several others run through the village, including the Marches Way.

In the mood for Danson

Danson's Bridge, more prosaically known as No. 30, was originally Dawson's Farm Bridge. The change is probably explained by boatmen's abbreviation, different accents or just poor hearing!



The Woodland Trust acquired and planted Danson's Wood in early 2001 with a mixture of native broadleaves and created a small pond. There is a pleasant circular walk through the wood and several paths allow visitors to explore the site.

stile to your right. Cross four fields to a stile by a gate which leads on to a lane. This is Maes-y-groes **3**. Turn right, then left down Kiln Green Lane until the cattle grid and a sign for Foxes Hole Farm **4**.

The signpost will direct you through a wooden gate, up a steep bank to a steel gate and along the edge of a field with a wood to the left. After the next gate, but just before the field boundary, there is a footbridge to your left; cross this and turn right along a grassy track, eventually leading to some houses on a lane – Iscoyd Villa **5**. Turn right at the lane and then left through a gateway towards the church. Nearby is a large bronze-age burial mound now covered in pine trees.

Go through the grounds of St. Mary's Church **6** and turn left through an old iron gate then over a footbridge. Cross a field and, after a stile, bear left to an old iron kissing gate leading on to a lane and the hamlet of Whitewell. Turn left, and about 90 metres after a road junction **7** go left through a field gate, across pasture and follow the waymarks into a wooded dingle which is full of bluebells in the spring.

Go down into the dingle, across the footbridge and up the other side to a wooden wicket gate. Now cross two fields to a horse paddock and double wooden gates and a stile at a house. Having crossed, bear right and follow a track leading on to a lane near a T-junction. Just to the left of this

junction (amongst rhododendrons) is the Iscoyd War Memorial **8**.

At the T-junction turn right, with Iscoyd Park on your left, and turn left at a signpost **9**, along a track. At the end of the track is a waymarked post, turn left here down the footpath, which passes through woodland, and may be muddy. When you meet a track, turn right. More mud! Ignore the first footbridge to the right, as a short way on is a more substantial footbridge **10**. Now you are back in England.

*From here there is an alternative, easier and more attractive permissive route which crosses the rushes and bears right following the Red Brook along a faint path before turning left on to the bridleway from Hadley to rejoin the official right of way at **12**.*

*On the official right of way (from **10**) you pick your way through rushes, bearing left to a field gate and turn right up a grassy bank to another gate. After crossing the next two fields you come to a concrete track, negotiate the electric fence, and find a steel gate. This is Bubney Moor, now a modern mega-dairy farm.*

*The fields here are very large and it is difficult to find the line of the path which can be obstructed by crops such as maize. Bear left to two steel gates, and go through the second one. Cross another large field to reach the line of the old Shropshire Way **11** where a stile crosses on to a concrete track, and then over another stile **12**.*



Crossing two more fields will bring you to the canal at Danson's (No. 30) Bridge **13**.

Go through the steel kissing gate on to the towpath of the canal, turn left, and continue to the locks at Grindley Brook, and the café **14**.

To return to the Horse & Jockey, keep to the towpath **15**, going under the main road (A41) to Bridge No. 28. Go left here through a wooden wicket gate where a short lane leads to the busy A41. Cross carefully to the pub.

The Short Route

Follow the Longer Route to Llethr Mill **2**, but instead of crossing the stile, stay with the track to

Wolvesacre Hall **A**. The stile is on the left just before the farm buildings. It is very muddy here, and you might prefer to turn left through the gate before the stile (making sure to close it). The path crosses a pasture passing by a pool with some trees, and down a bank to a little wooden gate into a wood. Again more mud! Cross the footbridge **B** and it is a short way to a field gate, across a large grass field, a concrete track, and another large field to the junction with the old Shropshire Way **11**.

Now follow the directions for the Longer Route from **11**.