

### Brown Moss – commoner's rights

Brown Moss was re-registered as a common in 1972. The area has commoner's rights which allow for grazing, cutting of peat, taking of sand and gravel, collection of firewood, swimming, skating and fishing by the registered commoners. No one commoner can exercise all the rights, which are attached to the ownership or tenancy of specified properties.



### The Award Winning Truck Stop

At the junction of the A49 and A41 there is an amazing variety of food outlets. The Midway – originally built as a cinema for the army camp – has won awards. Here is an extract from a lorry driver's blog: *'This is a very good place, very much like transport cafés used to be, every table a slightly different style but it adds to the character of the place. The staff are friendly and welcoming, the place is very clean. It has plenty of room and showers – it even has a library.'*

The area is also a convenient viewing point for cycle trials, which regularly take place on the Roman-straight stretches of road in the vicinity.

### Nissen Dorma

The remains of the huts in the woods near Higher Heath are Nissen Huts. These were semi-cylindrical prefabricated structures made of corrugated iron, invented by Major Peter Nissen in 1916. Over 100,000 were produced in WWI and many more in WWII.



The Nissen Hut could be packed in a standard army truck and erected by six men in four hours. The world record for constructing one is 1 hour 27 minutes.

Nissen Buildings Ltd. waived their patent rights for wartime production during World War II.



## 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 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**.

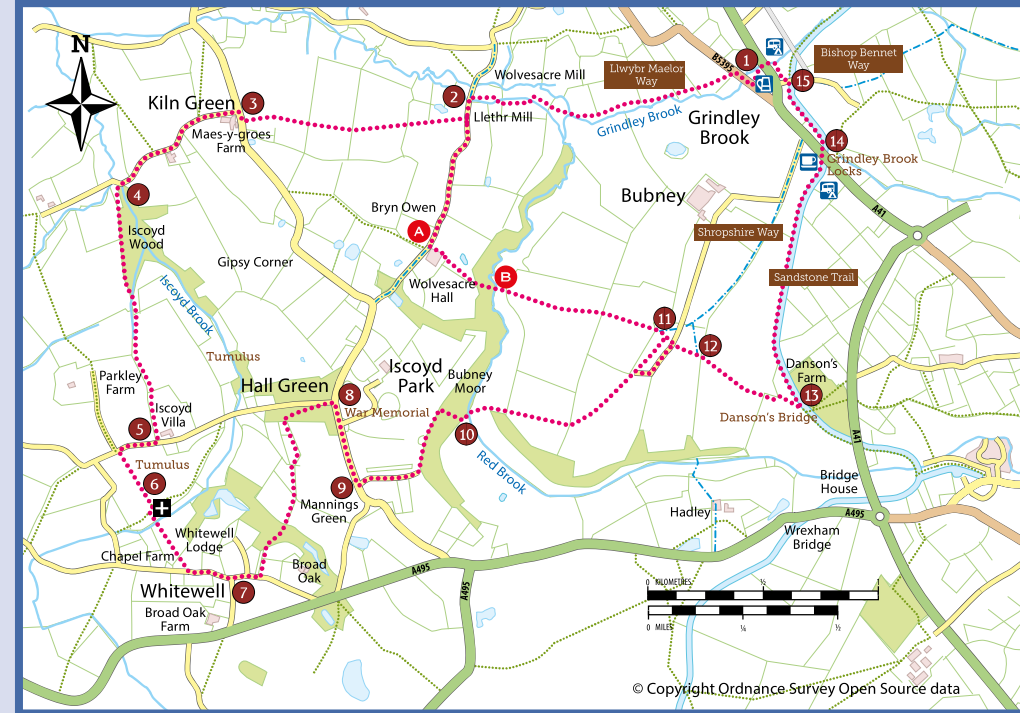
The signpost will direct you through a wooden gate, up a steep bank to a steel gate and along the edge of a field with a wood to the left. After the next gate, but just before the field boundary, there is a footbridge to your left; cross this and turn right along a grassy track, eventually leading to 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 the bridge, bear 45 degrees left to the end of the uncultivated bank facing you. Now turn straight up the bank towards a slight dip in the skyline. Keep right of any manholes you encounter and continue until you reach a concrete track which you cross. From a point 10m right of another manhole, bear 45 degrees left to a gate near the far corner of the field joining a stone track (shown on the map). If there is a path through the crop you can use it, otherwise follow the track for nearly 200m to meet the path joining **11** & **12**. Turn right towards a stile and another concrete track **12**. Bearing slightly right, follow the path to Dan's 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.

*Walkers should be aware that farming practices on this farm may make this bit of the route tricky to follow at times. There have been issues with cropping and frequent changes to the field pattern. Efforts are constantly made to improve the situation.*

### 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. The path crosses a pasture passing by a pool with some trees, and down a bank to a little wooden gate into a wood.

If using the OS map, follow the black dashed path line by the pool.

The right of way shown on the OS map, is not where the path is on the ground.

Again, more mud! Cross the footbridge B to a gate, cross the next field, steps up a bank to a wicket gate, then across a large field to a concrete track, through a gate across another large field to point 11.

Now follow the directions for the Longer Route from 12.

### 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 descending 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.



## Walk 8: Wet your Whistle in Ash

Distance: **3.2 miles / 5.2km** • Duration: about **1½ hours**

Start point: **Brown Moss Nature Reserve** car park

A pleasant walk along quiet lanes and undulating fields with some lovely views of surrounding countryside. The White Lion in Ash Magna, a community pub, offers an early opportunity for a rest and a drink.

### Grazing to protect rare species

After extensive consultation Shropshire Council has put up fencing around the main part of Brown Moss to allow cattle to graze throughout part of the year, as they would have done in the past. The idea of this is to keep the overgrowth of naturally dominant species down and to allow rarer, more sensitive plant species to prosper.



Unfortunately, in recent years the site has been invaded by *Crassula Helmsii* (New Zealand pigmyweed), a very successful non-native, which is smothering some of the more delicate plants on site. When visiting this site please keep to



the paths and away from the edges of the pools. This will help limit the spread of this plant and reduce the damage to fragile marsh areas.