

# Old Town Vaults, Whitchurch - 3rd July 2019

From Chris L...

Three different rides were on offer for this expedition - a fine day was in store although a tad cloudy (most cyclists will have been grateful for this).

Brian L had organised the routes, 44 miles, 37 miles there plus a car assist from the ICF of 24 miles. The return route would be around 36m 7 23m to the ICF. Colin B sped off with seven riders (I nearly got left behind!) for the 44m, Brian



took six riders on the 37m after taking numbers for the chips and butties deal, whilst Dave W had nineteen turn up for the car-assist - all but two having the sandwich deal!

Having recorded a PB from Eureka to Woodbank playing catch up (they waited for me), Colin - with a little help - did not hold back and this was to be a day of PBs for many of us who use Strava to record our rides; as with the Midsummer Madness ride I was to pay for this on the return route! There was the occasional water stop with the turning nearly missed



when people forgot to look down at their Garmins - usually one of us was alert, but we did take turns!



Holt and Cleopatra's couldn't come soon enough with a welcome coffee and cake to die for.



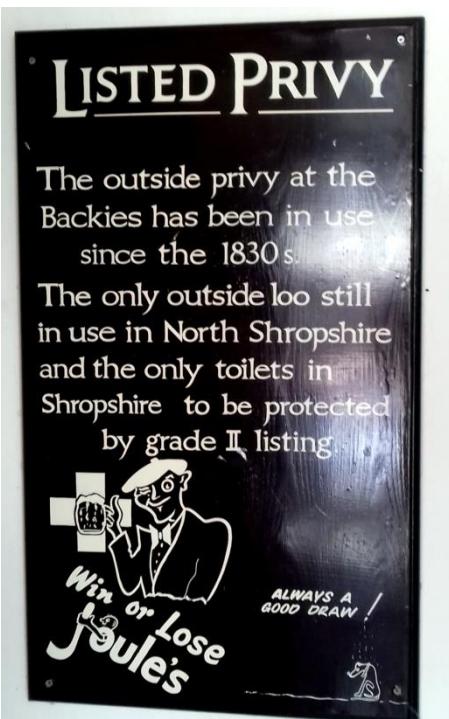
Brian had suggested that their group would be leaving as we arrived having done our extended route but they were still merrily enjoying the sunshine.

Brian's group did leave well ahead of us before we set off towards Tilston and Malpas - a nasty hill approaching here! I'd noticed Colin falling back on the hills - he wanted to stay on his big ring to improve fitness, but he soon caught up with us afterwards.



We stopped not far from Whitchurch - near the top of Wirswall Hill with a view right over the Cheshire Plain - time to get your breath back. A pleasant

drop in to Whitchurch from here and to find the pub. Just as we arrived I used a very unusual version of "Cyclists Dismount" where all sense of grace and decorum completely deserted me (feet stuck in SPDs) - as luck would have it only Chris S was aware of this and he hadn't got his camera ready!



Lunch was as ever excellent with abundant sandwiches and staff ready to bring out more chips every time the dish looked empty. The beer was good too, the landlord must've been well pleased (something like 30 x £5 for lunch); he took photos which will no doubt find their way on to their website. There is a beer garden (or outside seating area), but this was completely filled with bikes -

also a very quaint outside loo - it's been there a long time!



Upon leaving John F wanted pictures of us all going up the hill (for his entry to the Photo Comp) - I think we wanted to go the other way, lots of people were in the wrong gear, but soon back on route.

Brian had suggested a canal route, we must have missed that - however more PBs were about to be recorded - not all voluntarily either! We went through Higher Wych then Lower Wych, well you would wouldn't you! Back through Malpas passing the car-assist group on the way, and a stop to allow the concertina effect to recoil. Back in to familiar territory now as Bickerton approached - oo'er Harthill, funny enough it didn't seem so bad this time; however just as we were all settling down to the long downhill to Tattenhall the Garmin

beeped and sent us up to **Burwardsley**! We did get an **Solero** at the little shop there which the lady told us is soon to become a coffee shop!

No time to hang around, on to **Gatesheath** where we caught sight of **Andy** waving (and laughing) on his way home from the **ICF**. I think we all set a PB by the canal here as I was determined not to lose the back wheel of our mini peleton! When we arrived by the **Greenway** the general consensus was the shortest route home - **Garmin** said to go via the **Zoo**.

**Richard** went his way as did **Chris** - **Colin** had long since left us. Great ride - just under 80 miles for me. Thanks **Brian**, **Colin** **Dave** and all.

### **From Chris S...**

I was interested in what Chris had to say about the landlord's photos and found them on the pub's facebook page here <https://www.facebook.com/oldtownhallvaulstswhitchurch/> Although the pub is known to me, and I think most of us, as the "**Old Town Vaults**". it seems it is more correctly the "**Old Town Hall Vaults**"!

[This "Flyby" video of the ride](#) shows the progress of the three groups.