

# A rides to Bellis's Garden Centre, Holt - 24th May 2017

## C ride to the Grosvenor Garden Centre via Poulton

### The A rides

Jane and Colin took us to Bellis Bros Garden Centre at Holt.

Another great turnout in beautiful weather. Eight of us went with Colin and fourteen with Jane. Colin set a blistering pace along the Greenway, somehow we all held on although Sue's bag fell off! I noticed later that I had knocked thirty-four seconds off my previous fastest time along there.



We made our way up Harthill and through a beautiful route to Holt where we caught up with Jane's group who arrived about ten minutes earlier. Hearing that some people had encountered hostility from staff at Bellis's about cycle parking some of us lunched at The Deli, and the sandwich eaters ate in the Square - and I think some went to Cleopatra's.



### Cleopatra's in Holt

Oddly (I thought) the choice was a shorter return ride with Colin or longer with Jane. I went with Colin although after some of us stopped to help (or otherwise) Sue with her wayward bag, we saw no more of him. Only six of us remained to enjoy the traditional jellybaby at the Saltney Ferry.

A very successful day and thanks to Jane and Colin for their parts in organising and leading the rides. My own mileage for the day was sixty-three miles, but there were many variants so others will have been more or less.

### Chris Smith

### The C ride

Only three set off for a leisurely ride to the Grosvenor Garden Centre - Brian L, Glennys and Roy. Nothing unusual about our route - the Greenway, to Blacon, the Ferry Road and on to the

river path to Chester. The route through the housing estate to the Eccleston Road seems to be different every time.

At the end of the **Straight Mile** to **Poulton**, (at **Glennys'** wild suggestion), curiosity got the better of us and we decided to see what **Poulton village** was like. There were a couple of farms, some large houses and when the road finally ended there was a further off-road track. Another mile down the track, after swerving to avoid many potholes, we arrived at a small stream, a locked gate (but passable on foot) and a **pumping station**. We'd had enough jolting by then so turned



tail and returned via Old Lane to the Wrexham Road and on to the **Garden Centre** for lunch. We agreed that it was probably the first and last time we would visit **Poulton**.

### **Grosvenor Garden Centre Café**

A search for further information on the **Internet** revealed that there is an ongoing archaeological investigation called **The Poulton Project**. This is a multi-period rural excavation which has produced extensive evidence of 10,000 years of human activity. The site was discovered during the search for a lost **Cistercian Abbey**, when excavation unexpectedly revealed the foundations of a **medieval Chapel** and associated graveyard, with an estimated 2000 burials. **Poulton Chapel** became home to **Oliver Cromwell's** troops during the **English Civil War** when they were billeted there. It later fell into disrepair and became a ruin not long after the siege of **Chester**. An episode of **Time Team** was filmed at **Poulton** in **June 2006**.

All in all a very interesting ride on a lovely sunny day.

**Glennys Hammond**



### **Poulton Abbey Excavations**