

# AN OUT-OF-DOORS DAY EXPLORING THE MERES AND MOSSES

by Lynn from Mile End Visitor Information Centre, Oswestry

## A Day Out



From Oswestry take the A5 towards North Wales, at the next roundabout take the 3rd exit onto the A495 into the village of Whittington. You might want to stop off at the small but pretty castle with its picture book gatehouse – all turrets & swans. It has a tea room, book shop and hosts events throughout the year. Entry is free, but there is a small parking charge  
**Whittington Castle** SY11 4DF

Tel: **01691 662500**  
**[www.whittingtoncastle.co.uk](http://www.whittingtoncastle.co.uk)**

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Continue on the A495 towards Ellesmere - you will eventually come to the Narrowboat Inn, good value pub food and a canalside setting. Alongside the pub is Maestermyn Cruisers which offer narrowboat holidays. They also have day boats for hire which allow you to take a boat along the canal into Ellesmere and beyond.

**Maestermyn Cruisers**  
SY11 4NU  
Tel: **01691 662424**  
**[www.maestermyn.co.uk](http://www.maestermyn.co.uk)**

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Bill Pearson  
<http://goodfoodshops.blogspot.co.uk>

Continue on the A495 into the town of Ellesmere, where you will find plenty of car parking and a range of shops selling a good range of everyday items and lovely gifts to take home. If you want to eat in the town before venturing further afield Ellesmere has pubs and restaurants, cafes and takeaways, or buy homemade pies, pasties and local cheeses at Vermeulen's Deli.

**[www.ellesmere.info/tourism](http://www.ellesmere.info/tourism)**

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Next stop is the Mere. There are parking bays along the road and a car park opposite – all pay & display. The Mere is a haven for water birds, some now quite tame. In spring you can watch the herons nesting on the islands by means of cameras and live screening in the Boathouse. The little kiosk on the Mereside sells bags of birdseed as well as some of the best locally produced ice cream in Shropshire. My favourite? Honeycomb!!

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The Boathouse by the Mere houses a lovely restaurant offering full meals, snacks, drinks and cakes with plenty of local produce on the menu. The Boathouse also has displays and information on wildlife in Shropshire and sells some locally produced crafts, gifts and a number of publications on walks in the area. "The Mere at Ellesmere" £1.00 is a good one to begin with.

Tourist Information Centre  
Tel: **01691 622981**

Boathouse Restaurant  
Tel: **01691 623852**

Boathouse Restaurant  
**[www.ellesmereboathouse.co.uk](http://www.ellesmereboathouse.co.uk)**

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You now have a number of options. A gentle stroll through the Cremorne Gardens offers a Mere side walk. At the top end of the gardens it is possible to go a little further towards The Crimps which offers a good view back over the Mere to Ellesmere. This is easy level walking. If you prefer a longer walk the "Welshampton Wonder" offers a stunning walk of 8 miles along the canal, around Cole Mere, on to Welshampton and back over the fields to Ellesmere. If you wanted to shorten the walk you could just do the bit to Cole Mere retracing your steps back to the canal bridge at the junction of the A495 and then walking back along the road to the Boathouse.

Tel: **01948 880362** for further details or download a leaflet from **[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)**

Stick to the designated paths.

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Leaving Ellesmere behind follow the A495 towards Whitchurch, in the village of Welshampton take the B5053 towards Wem. Follow the signs for Fenn's, Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses. These will take you to the National Nature Reserves which are managed by English Nature. The Mosses are an unusual, unworldly landscape of peatlands and a wildlife habitat of international importance. Tel **01948 880362** for further details or download a leaflet from **[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)** . Stick to the designated paths. Head into Wem for tea in the café at Wem Town Hall where you may also find an art or craft exhibition. Or to Dearnford Lake Café just off the A41 south of Whitchurch.

Tel: **01948 880362** for further details or download a leaflet from **[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)**

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For more information visit:

**[www.northshropshire.co.uk](http://www.northshropshire.co.uk)**  
**[www.oswestry-welshborders.org.uk](http://www.oswestry-welshborders.org.uk)**  
**[www.visitshropshire.com](http://www.visitshropshire.com)**  
**[www.themeresandmosses.co.uk](http://www.themeresandmosses.co.uk)**

or contact:

**Oswestry Mile End Visitor Information Centre**

Mile End Services tel: **01691 662488** email: **[oswestrytourism@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:oswestrytourism@shropshire.gov.uk)**