



**ERSEY THIRSTDAYS
HASH HOUSE HARRIERS**

Run Number 579

19th June 2025

Pickering Arms, Thelwall and Parr Arms, Grappenhall

The Pack: fcuk (Hare), Mad Hatter, Snoozanne, OTT, 10secs, Grutel, Cleo, Overdrive, Roz

The Hare had proposed a two-part Hash with a first part starting at 5.30 and including a special "heritage experience", followed by a second part starting at the end of the first part at the usual time. On the day itself, the Hare revealed that the experience might also include a night in A&E after a brush with the malevolent Giant Hogweed, which made it all sound even more mysterious.

When the first-parters gathered in the hot sunshine outside the Pickering Arms, it became clear that time was of the essence as the Hare nervously tracked the approach of latecomers with his eye on his watch. The vanguard set off down the road as OTT and Cleo were screeching to a halt in the car-park.



When we found ourselves on the edge of the Manchester Ship Canal, it suddenly became clear what the experience was to be, and why there was a hurry. In fact the ferry finished at 18.00...



...and it was quite a small ferry so it would take two crossings to get us all over.



So the first boatload was setting off as Cleo and OTT panted up, clearly thinking they had literally missed the boat and not helped by exhortations to “run faster”, “swim for it”, etc



But the ferry did return for the second cohort...





...and soon they were on board and casting off.



There were lovely views along the canal towards the Thelwall Viaduct.



Finally we were all reunited. The ferryman just had time to pose with us...



...and take a photo.

The hare explained that the trail was mostly marked in shredded paper but it was shredded so finely that not even Snoozanne would want to tidy it up. And he explained that the dreaded Giant Hogweed looked a bit like cow-parsley but bigger, and that he had flattened most of what he had found along the trail; touching it was to be avoided on pain of serious burns and blisters requiring medical treatment.



Setting off, we were almost immediately confronted by a serious obstacle



The shredded paper on the far side made it clear that we were supposed to get through somehow.



And it was possible to go round the fence...







...but only after a bit of an obstacle course.



Shortly afterwards the fearsome hogweed was indeed found in large quantities...



...even though the Hare had vanquished most of it, at least along the trail.



Out in the open the hogweed was towering above us in its full glory...





...and Snoozanne made a hat from it in much the same way as hunters used to make a necklace of tigers' teeth.



Grutel told us that this whole area was built out of slurry and waste from ships' bilges and he and his friends would play there as children, jumping up and down to feel the ground shake under them. Those who survived would often reclaim useful amounts of fruit and coal to take home. There was a chorus of "That's nothing! We used to live in a hole in't middle o't'road" etc.



The Hare hadn't warned us that part of the trail would be set in discarded socks – there were several of them.





The trail wound along an embankment and then there was a checkback down an almost invisible tunnel through the brambles.



Eventually we emerged into civilisation where it was noticed that Grutel was bleeding profusely from several wounds, but being very strong and silent about it.



Soon we were again on the edge of the Manchester Ship Canal where we were following the Trans-Pennine Trail.





Eventually we crossed the canal over some lock gates. The impressive bridge used to carry the railway but apparently has now been derelict and in danger of collapse for years. Beyond again is the well-known swing bridge.



There was an old friend at anchor nearby.



A few minutes later we arrived at The Parr Arms in the peaceful old village of Grappenhall, our second On Inn. It took us a while to realise that Overdrive and OTT were already there in the back garden while we were in the front garden, complaining about how late they were.



But eventually we were all on the same side of the pub, also joined by Roz, a friend of Cleo's who lives nearby.



“It’s just a flesh wound!”





"It was me or the hogweed" recalled the Hare grimly, showing us how he had grasped its evil stalk

Soon we were off on the second of the evening's hashes. The trail led along the nearby Bridgewater Canal and then into the woods. Here the Hare offended both Grutel and Overdrive by mixing them up. He claimed it was their similar orange T-shirts, but no-one was completely convinced...





As usual in woodland, we found a strange structure evoking nocturnal rituals by deranged hillbillies...



...but who are we to talk, when we have the Chico Hook...



We roamed around the woods and eventually found ourselves back at the point where we had entered them; then it was back to downtown Grappenhall where we deployed the food tastefully on a plastic bag in a church car park.



It was OTT's first experience with a Baby Bel and she was uncertain if you could eat the waxy red coating or just the waxy white interior.

Then fcuk called the circle in his capacity as RA. He invited comments on the run and it described as having not enough undergrowth, not enough slurry, etc. Down-downs were awarded to:

OTT and Cleo: for nearly missing the boat

Grutel: for fighting with the local undergrowth

OTT: for her belated initiation into Baby Bels



Hash newcomer: Roz, who revealed that it had been Cleo who made her come



10secs and Roz: for wearing matching footwear

Overdrive also nominated fcuk as Hare, for mistaking him for Grutel and for spraying salsa all over the other food and the church car park (as may be seen in the above photo).

We then retired over the road to the Parr Arms. fcuk tried to shame people by giving them the list of Hares, which provoked a horrified recoil like Long John Silver being given the Black Spot.