

## Tailored Travel trip to Cheshire and RHS Bridgewater Report

The Delights of Cheshire and RHS Garden Bridgewater trip last month was based at the modern Salford Quays. On the journey up we visited the new Coventry Cathedral and, next door, the bombed former cathedral site.



Coventry Cathedral

The first day featured a cruise on the Manchester Ship Canal/River Irwell and a visit to Arley Hall Gardens, a truly impressive 8 acre spread of formal garden.



Arley Hall Gardens

The second full day was spent at RHS Garden Bridgewater, which includes, at 11 acres, one of the largest walled gardens in the UK. Just recently opened, the whole site covers 156 acres and gave us a huge variety of gardens and other areas to enjoy.



RHS Garden Bridgewater

Capeshorne Hall and Gardens near Macclesfield were visited during the morning of the following day. The House featured a mix of architectural and decorative styles and what were called tranquil gardens. The afternoon was a visit to World of Wedgwood near Stoke-on-Trent which included a fascinating factory tour where some of the skilled staff clearly enjoyed explaining the various stages and techniques employed in the ware's production.



Capeshorne Hall



World of Wedgwood

We were accompanied throughout by a Blue Badge Guide who added context and narrative to what we were seeing and she commented too throughout a coach tour around the city of Manchester when there was a spare hour.

It wasn't necessary for everyone to participate in all programmed events and some squeezed in time visiting the Lowry Gallery which was barely 15 minutes from the hotel and other nearby places while others used the tram to explore Manchester, some getting as far as Eccles, where one of the tram routes finished.

On the way home we visited Cadbury World in Bourneville outside Birmingham. There we learnt about the story of chocolate and were given samples, a fitting way to end the trip. All-in-all a very successful holiday and it is very much hoped the Black Country and Shropshire trip next year can be a similar success.

Philip Heady