

Walking North East

APRIL 2013



TRAIL GUIDES 
publications

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Bit of a bumper issue this time, mainly because we didn't issue a Walking North East last month. So you've now effectively got two months in one.

Why didn't we issue last month. Well we normally try to time our issues to coincide with the releases of our new books and the April issue was supposed to be timed with the release of "Walking around Osmotherley and the Cleveland Hills". Unfortunately problems with the printer meant that the release just kept getting pushed further and further back, as did this issue. But both the book and the newsletter are now out there and we can start working on the next new release.

Well the weather has now improved a bit after a long cold winter. Maybe enough to start getting out on the hill on a regular basis. However, while I'm sat typing this the radio has just warned of possible snow on the high Pennine tops at the beginning of May !

If you are deciding to venture out, why not have a look at the details of the first Dalescape Walking Festival being held at the beginning of June in Teesdale and Weardale. Details are further back in this issue. One of our writers, Kev Shevels, is acting as facilitator for two of the walks in Weardale, guiding you round the sights and history of this part of the dale. An opportunity to put a face to a name and, with the help of somebody who knows the area well, see a fascinating part of Weardale.



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FRONT COVER PHOTO.

The funny things that you see on the hill. The remains of an old armoured vehicle on what was a World War Two tank training area in Teesdale.

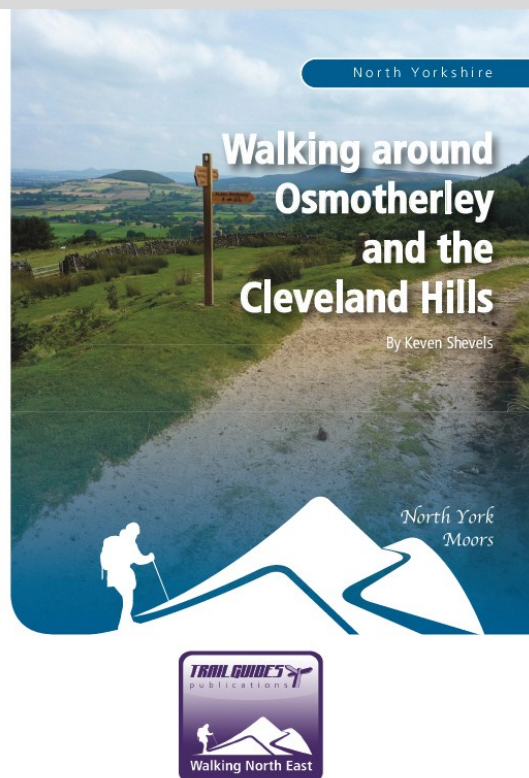
NEW PUBLICATION

Our first walking guide to the North York Moors is now available from our website at www.trailguides.co.uk

Titled "Walking around Osmotherley and the Cleveland Hills", the book covers nine walks in the varied landscape that surrounds this historic little village. The walks cover a range of distances with the shortest being just over three miles and the longest around nine miles in length. Here in this corner of the Moors, where the rugged Cleveland Hills meet the more gentle, rolling Hambleton Hills, the countryside gives a wide selection for the walker to explore from moors to hill top meadows and the woods and forests that line the escarpment edges.

This is also a place where mankind has left its indelible mark shaping both the valley's and the hills. Here you can walk with Neolithic man and touch the standing stones that are his legacy, see the stone settlements left behind by the Bronze and Iron Age farmers, explore the effects that Medieval religious orders had on the landscape and even learn how the Moors were used to defend the people of Middlesbrough during the Second World War.

Priced at £9.99, this full colour book is available direct from our website or alternatively try Amazon or just go into your local bookshop and ask for it by name. The book is also available as a PDF download from our website priced at £4.99.



Walking News :

A picturesque area of Coquetdale and Whittingham Vale in north Northumberland is currently under siege by bids for wind turbines in the view of one of the local councillors. At the moment there are a number of applications all at different stages of the planning process. Work is currently ongoing by developer Infinis at its Wingates site for six turbines, each up to 110 metres in height. Permission for these was granted in 2011 and they are due to be operational in the spring. In addition to this there are a number of other proposed projects in the pipeline. A plan for a 78 metre-to-blade-tip turbine has been submitted by Ogden Renewable Energy for land associated with Follions Farm, near Lorbottle. A bid is also being lined up by renewable energy company RES and telecommunications giant BT for up to five turbines on land approximately 5 km south of Wingates and 2 km north of Netherwitton. A scoping request indicates that these turbines would be up to 127 metres-to-tip height. Meanwhile, nine turbines are also being earmarked near Elsdon while yet another application for up to 25 turbines is proposed for Harwood Forest, near Simonside. This later application having to be determined by the Secretary of State given its scale and size.

A NEW group has been launched to protect one of the region's last red squirrel strongholds. The Wensleydale Red Squirrel Group has been established in order to conserve an existing red squirrel population living in woodland near Hawes in the Yorkshire Dales. The group is being given support by the conservation charity Red Squirrels Northern England as well as the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. The project, which is a community-led venture, hopes to conserve the existing red squirrel population in Upper Wensleydale by monitoring and conservation work and that, over time, the squirrels will expand their range and also populate adjoining Dales. The group will hold its first public meeting at the Dales Countryside Museum, in Hawes, on Wednesday, March 13 at 7.30pm. For more details visit wensleydalersg.co.uk

A CRACKDOWN has been launched against those motorcyclists who practice their scrambling skills by blasting round through the woodlands of the North York Moors. Police and forest chiefs have joined forces to stop this practice and are warning that local woods are strictly off limits to the bikers. Patrols are being stepped up in Dalby Forest, near Pickering, and Ingleby Greenhowe, near Guisborough in an effort to deter the illegal scramblers, whose activities pose a real danger to both woodland visitors and wildlife sites. The Forestry Commission say the problem has escalated recently and they are determined to nip the problem in the bud. The registration numbers of several bikers have already been recorded and handed over to police. Illegal use of off-road 4 x 4's and motorbikes affects the safety of walkers and other authorised users of the forests and anyone found riding or driving in the forestry either on or off-road can be dealt with in a number of ways including fixed penalty tickets, vehicle seizures and potentially arrest and detention.

The public inquiry into a long-running dispute over a footpath has finished, but we still await the result. The three-day inquiry was held to decide whether a footpath along the River Tees, from Croft Workingmen's Club to Rockliffe Hall Hotel, in Hurworth, can be used as a public right of way. Hurworth Parish Council is in favour of the route being used as a public footpath, stating that many residents in both Croft and Hurworth have been able to use the path without interference for decades. However, Croft Workingmen's Club has denied the parish council's claims and says there has never been any lawful public access to the path. It later put a locked gate across the path after the parish council made an application to add the footpath to definitive maps of the area. The club lost the battle at a Darlington Borough Council rights of way panel in 2011, which saw the parish council submit 164 witness statements in support of its claim, detailing use of the footpath going back for more than 70 years. The workingmen's club appealed against the decision and the path has since remained closed off. The inspector will confirm his decision in the next few weeks.

A small micro-brewery near York is reviving a medieval beer recipe and using plants harvested from peat bogs. The North Yorkshire micro-brewery, Treboom Brewery, is using bog myrtle leaves picked by members of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, from the trust's North York Moors peat bog reserve. The brew is being launched to help raise awareness of the endangered nature of peat bogs which are one of the world's rarest habitats. Most were formed more than 10,000 years ago and as well as being a habitat for many endangered species, they also capture and hold rainfall that would otherwise flood lower-lying areas. Bog myrtle was commonly used to flavour beer from the Middle Ages until the 16th Century. Hops only became popular in Europe about the 11th Century and then spread to England during the 16th Century. At one point, they were barred from being used at all in this country as it was thought that they were an undue European influence and that they shouldn't sully English beers. The brew, which is named Myricale, will be launched on Thursday, March 21, during a pub quiz in The Slip Inn, off Bishopthorpe Road, York. For each pint of the beer poured, 5p will be donated to Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

A GROUP of volunteers who are dedicated to improving the experience of both residents and visitors in an area between two national parks has won support for a scheme to create a hub for walkers. Thirsk Tourist Information Centre has received the backing from more than 100 residents, rambling groups, Thirsk Rotary Club and the town council to create a pool of information about walking opportunities and to extend its services for hikers. The centre has also had an assurance from Hambleton District Council that it would be given help with any building infrastructure, such as new signs, for the walking hub. The initiative would have a wide range of benefits for the area, including boosting the local economy, encouraging the use of public transport and improving health. The first step for the volunteers will be to seek accreditation with the Walkers Are Welcome UK Network, an on-line group of more than 100 towns and villages, that includes Richmond, Knaresborough, and Boroughbridge, who all seek to attract more walkers to their areas. The centre would also encourage traders in the town to place a Walkers Are Welcome sign in their shops and would also organise walks to enable it to invite people for events.

Approaching Widdy Bank Farm in Upper Teesdale during the early part of the month.



Northumberland National Park Authority and Shepherds Walks have joined forces in order to keep visitor information available at the Coquetdale Centre in Rothbury. The Coquetdale centre was one of two visitor centres that the National Park Authority was forced to close last autumn as a result of budget cuts. Shepherds Walks are the largest walking provider in the region, with over 3,000 participants attending their events, walks

and courses and an agreement has been reached with Jon Monks, owner of the walking guide company, to base both of his businesses, Shepherds Walks and Capricorn Mohair Socks, in the former National Park Visitor Centre and TIC, and to run a National Park-branded information service as part of this operation. The legal and other practical details are now being finalised with the intention of Shepherds Walks opening in the Coquetdale Centre as soon as possible for the coming season.

European funding for conserving agricultural landscapes will be cut by about 10 per cent over the next seven years. Following the recent budget summit between EU leaders in Brussels, a spokesman for the European Commission said that farmers needed to do more to earn their subsidies. In the meantime, conservationists say the cuts spell bad news for wildlife-friendly farming and will lead to less money being spent on maintaining hedgerows, wildflower meadows, wetlands and other important natural habitats with a subsequent decline in farmland birds and other species. The RSPB is against the budget cuts and is calling on both Defra and the European Commission to keep their vow to protect wildlife and the environment, stating that wildlife across Europe will pay a heavy price for this terribly regressive deal and that there are bound to be further declines in some species whose numbers have already crashed over recent decades. Since the 1980's, as a whole, Europe has lost 300 million farmland birds and this cut poses the question of how many more will be lost over the coming seven years.

Richmond Tourist Information Centre has closed after only seven months under new management because it was not making enough money. Richmondshire Leisure Trust (RLT) took over the TIC, based in Friary Gardens, in August last year and had plans to include a Starbucks coffee service, washing facilities for walkers and an internet cafe. Unfortunately, because of the wet weather last year the centre was very quiet and did not do as well as expected with the result that the trust can no longer afford to run the volunteer-led service. Richmondshire District Council are looking to find a solution and, hopefully, the centre will only be without an operator for a short period of time. In the meantime the council is putting in place an interim solution and the centre will re-open on Saturday, March 23 under these arrangements, just in time for the Easter break.

Kate Ashbrook, the general secretary of the Open Spaces Society, has blasted coalition Government proposals that will do away with ancient rights used to guarantee public use of open spaces. There are also fears that another Parliamentary bill will create exclusion orders for some public spaces.

Writing in the society's Open Space magazine, she said: "The Government is striking at the very heart of prescription, the ancient right whereby an activity enjoyed for 20 years, unchecked, openly and without permission, acquires the sanction of law. That is how village greens are won, on the basis of 20 years' enjoyment for recreation. The Growth and Infrastructure Bill will outlaw any application for village green on land which is earmarked for development, even though the earmarking may have been done in secret. And now the Government proposes to do away with people's ancient 'right to light', based on householders' uninterrupted enjoyment of natural light for 20 years. The Law Commission, with backing from ministers, is consulting on plans to axe the right to light, inspired by a court case which required the top storeys of a building to be removed because they blocked the neighbour's daylight. Village greens and rights to light: both are alleged, with little evidence, to stand in the way of development – which for this government is paramount. Even where we still have greens and open spaces, we may find we can no longer enjoy them. The draft Anti-social Behaviour Bill proposes to replace the current, nasty, gating orders, with even nastier 'public spaces protection orders' – in fact, exclusion orders. Unless the draft bill is amended, these orders may be applied to public paths and open spaces, including commons and greens. After limited consultation, they will make trespass there a criminal offence; unprecedented and oppressive. So there is plenty to fight against, and fight we shall."

Under current rules, land can currently be registered as a town or village green if it has been used by local peo-

ple for lawful sports and pastimes, known as informal recreation, for 20 years freely and openly. Once registered the land is protected from development by nineteenth-century legislation that the Government wants to change.



Those of you that have walked the hills behind Stanhope in Weardale will know the large radio mast on Collier Law. A structure that is visible for a sizeable area throughout the dale. What many people don't know is that the mast, built in the 1970's, was a crucial part of the police communications system for the county.

Well communications technology being what it is, it has moved on and it now seems that this prominent friend is no longer needed and is surplus to requirements. Durham Constabulary have applied for and have been granted permission to dismantle both the mast and the buildings that service it and they will all disappear in the near future.

It is going to seem strange at first walking around Stanhope and not seeing the mast but I suppose that we'll get used to it.

The North York Moors National Park Authority are conducting a survey of the wild daffodil population in Rosedale. The wild Farndale daffodils in the National Park are well-known and a popular visitor attraction, however, there is also an impressive display of the wild variety of daffodil in Rosedale. Now the Authority wants to establish just how big the Rosedale population is and also the size of any other well-populated sites within the National Park. Despite the popularity of the garden daffodil there is only the one species of wild daffodil that is native to Britain, the *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*. However, garden daffodils are now spreading into the countryside and there is the risk that they will hybridise with the native wild daffodils. The true wild daffodil is distinct from introduced non-native species, including the naturalised Tenby Daffodil and can be recognised from the more showy garden varieties and hybrids by their altogether smaller, but perfectly formed, appearance. However, despite being smaller, it is still a sizable wildflower that grows in groups that create a carpet of colour in early spring, growing mainly in partial shade in such habitats as woodlands, on riverbanks or in fields and grassland with clay or loam soils which are not too acidic. These habitats are abundant in Rosedale which is why the daffodils are growing there. Monitoring of the Rosedale daffodils is simple just taking notes on how densely the daffodils are growing, how successful their flowering is and, possibly providing photographs of the daffodils in key areas. If you are planning on walking in Rosedale during the spring months

and would like to get involved in the surveying then contact Alex Cripps, Conservation Graduate Trainee, at a.cripps@northyorkmoors.org.uk

Volunteers and villagers are working with the Wear Rivers Trust to spruce up a stretch of riverbank along the River Wear between Sunderland Bridge and Shincliffe, near Durham City. The work involves building fences, planting trees and creating wildlife habitats along this stretch of the river. The £15,000 project was developed in cooperation with members of Ferryhill and District Anglers' Club. For more information on how to volunteer visit wear-rivers-trust.org.uk

A new walking event is to form part of inaugural Durham Dales Walking Festival. The 40km trek, to be called the Three Rivers Challenge, will take in the three rivers of the Tees, Lune and Balder as the route makes its way down from Forest-in-Teesdale to Barnard Castle and will take place on October 5. Called Dalescape, the first Durham Dales Walking Festival will be made up of two events. The first will be a series of guided walks organised daily between June 7 and 9 in both Teesdale and Weardale with the series being linked to a programme of other events based in and around Barnard Castle. There will be a selection of guided walks available, some may be as short as 6km while others will be up to about 19km in distance. Each will be led by a trained mountain leader. The second event will be the Three Rivers Challenge itself in October.



The new boss of the National Trust has angered anti-windfarm campaigners by describing turbines as “beautiful”. Dame Helen Ghosh, the trust’s recently appointed chief executive, has claimed that the turbines can look “graceful” and likened their arrival in society to that of railways and canals in centuries past. Her comments have brought an angry reaction from campaigners with a number cancelling their membership of the Trust as a result. Dame Helen is reported to have said: “Personally, I think a wind turbine in the right place is a rather beautiful thing. I think they can look graceful, and this goes back to thinking in centuries. If you think

back to what the railways looked like to the 19th Century mind, or indeed the 18th Century when the canals were coming through, I think we have to have our minds open to how the wind turbine will appear to us in 100 years.” With some protestors pointing out that the railways are still in place 150 to 200 years later but that windfarms only have an effective lifespan of 20 years, then there can be no comparison between the two while others state that she just doesn't know what a landscape looks like when it is covered in turbines and have invited her to take a look at the Lammermuirs Hills just over the border in Scotland.

Parts of the Pennine Way that cross the northern Cheviots are having floating flag stones laid as part of measures to control erosion of the peat surface. More than a kilometre of footpaths, some of which currently have duckboards, are being upgraded by Northumberland National Park. Work on a 1,000 metre section of the trail at Auchope Cairn and a further 60 metres at Wedder Hill are now underway, and will be followed by further work on the section of the route at Padon Hill in Redesdale. The work, which is part of a £160,000 project, will help walkers nearing the end of the 431 km (268-mile) long-distance path, which was the first to be established in Britain in 1965. The old recycled sandstone mill flags float on the vegetation, providing a firm walking surface and preventing further erosion of the peat. Natural England, the Government's body for the outdoors in England, has provided the cash for the work and the funds will also enable the hundreds of tonnes of stone to be airlifted onto the Border Ridge, where there is no vehicle access, while at the same time hiring local contractors to help put the flags in place.



The influential community group, Teesdale Action Partnership, has thrown its support behind a potential £2 million project to turn the disused former railway line between Barnard Castle and Bishop Auckland into a pathway for walkers, cyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts. Members of the TAP board were told that if the 12-mile line between Barnard Castle and Bishop Auckland was developed, then it would form a link from Teesdale to the rest of the paths network in County Durham and could link Middleton-in-Teesdale to the coast. The board agreed to spend more than £8,000 on a feasibility study if senior officers at Durham County Council de-

cide that the project is viable. If the scheme does progress then the TAP money would be spent on more detailed design work, legal costs and ways of sourcing the major funding that would be required. The Bishop Auckland to Barnard Castle line was opened in 1863 and was eventually shut as part of the Beeching closures in the mid-1960s, the line has a number of features, including the Gaunless, Forthburn and Langley viaducts.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust is seeking to recruit a large team of volunteers to help with the fifth Kielder Osprey Watch at Leaplish Waterside Park this summer. The volunteers will spend weekends, including bank holidays, and Wednesdays from the end of May until August, between 10.30am and 4.30pm, staffing an information area complete with information boards and telescopes set up for visitors to view the birds. Full training will be given at an induction session on Thursday, April 24, at the Waterside Park and all volunteers will be formed into teams of three, comprised of experienced members who have volunteered in previous years and new volunteers. Anyone interested can contact Lou Chapman at louise.chapman@northwt.org.uk

Nidderdale AONB, in partnership with the Yorkshire Dales River Trust are undertaking a three year conservation project that will be focused on the River Laver. The project, which is funded by the Environment Agency, aims to improve water quality, bank stability and to also remove barriers to fish passage. One key aspect of the project is the survey and control of the invasive, non-native plant Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*). The Laver Project plans to work with local volunteers and landowners to both survey and map the current extent of Himalayan balsam on the Laver and Kex Beck and then to use the survey information to put in place a control programme that will work from the top of the river catchment to the bottom, gradually removing the balsam from the banks of the river. Himalayan balsam was introduced into the UK from Northern India in 1839 and has been a prolific grower in the wet British climate and is particularly abundant on river banks. It is present at a number of locations on the River Laver and Kex Beck, displacing native plants, contributing to bank erosion and preventing the recreational use of the river. Being a tall plant with distinctive red stems and large pink flowers, it is very easy to recognise in summer but dies back each winter, starting again in spring as tiny seedlings and making it hard to recognise at this time of year.

Bosses from the UK's outdoor industry are preparing for the launch of their major campaign to persuade more people to get active in Britain's countryside. The Britain on Foot scheme was one of the main talking points at the Outdoor Industries Association's annual gathering at Malhamdale in the Yorkshire Dales. The association represents most of the main players in the outdoors, including retailers, top gear brands and activity providers, as well as organisations such as the British Mountaineering Council. The OIA's chief executive Andrew Denton announced Britain on Foot would go public in May, to coincide with the Ramblers' Get Walking Week. More cash has been set aside to get rid of unsightly overhead power lines in the Yorkshire Dales National Park and residents and visitors are being asked to suggest areas where cables should go underground in the next few years. Ofgem, the regulator of the electricity industry, is currently in the process of allocating funds for the undergrounding of more power lines in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Although the YDNPA hasn't received confirmation of their final allocation from Ofgem yet, it is estimated that it will be around £3 million. As part of an existing £1.8m five-year scheme, the YDNPA has worked with power suppliers on projects to put a number of overhead lines underground, including some from Dent Station to Cowgill and from Grimwith to Stump Cross. Dozens of prehistoric flints hidden for thousands of years were unearthed during the first phase of a £300,000 project with Electricity North West on the Malham Moor Estate. Work was put on hold so archaeological students from Bradford University could investigate further. The Malham scheme will see 23 electricity poles removed and overhead powerlines replaced with 2.2km of underground cable. Other schemes that are on-going include lines in Upper Wharfedale from Deepdale to Beckermonds and in Ribblesdale on Swarth Moor.

Berwick is preparing to stage a new three-day walking festival next year that is hoped will emulate the popularity of the old Border Marches. Hundreds of walkers used to turn out for the Border Marches, which offered a range of long-distance walks through the Tweed valley. The event, which was organised by Berwick Borough Council, was last held in 2008. Jon Monks of Rothbury-based Shepherds Walks has offered to organise the

inaugural festival to be held at Easter 2014 with Berwick Town Council's events committee agreeing to meet the predicted first year costs of £2,200. Shepherd Walks already organise the successful Rothbury Walking Festival. The provisional programme includes walks from Holy Island to Berwick, walks up the Tweed and from Berwick to St Abbs, along with shorter walks around the Elizabethan Walls and following the Lowry Trail. Although it is planned to hold the first event over Easter, the date is flexible.

The future of the organisation that co-ordinates the policing of wildlife crime now remains in doubt after the coalition Government has refused to confirm that it will continue to be funded. Defra and the Home Office have provided £136,000 for the national wildlife crime unit in 2013-14 but the Government has refused to guarantee any similar funding beyond next year. MPs have criticised the move, along with a Government refusal to criminalise the possession of a poison that has been used to kill protected birds of prey. The House of Commons' own environmental audit committee said the Government had missed an opportunity to protect wildlife with these two simple measures. The Scottish Government has already made it an offence to possess carbofuran, the poison that is used to kill raptors, including golden eagles. The Government has also said that it will wait and see how the 'vicarious liability' law works in Scotland before it will consider whether to introduce similar legislation south of the border. This law makes landowners responsible for wildlife crime committed on their land and has widely been seen as a way of making shooting estates control the activities of their gamekeepers.

Chair of the Commons environmental audit committee Joan Walley said: "The Government has missed an opportunity to take two simple measures to protect important wildlife threatened by poachers and criminals in the UK. It has failed to follow Scotland's lead in criminalising possession of carbofuran, the main poison used to kill birds of prey. And it has refused to provide the long-term financial certainty that the national wildlife crime unit needs, only making money available for the next 12 months. It's good news that the Government will watch how well the vicarious liability law works in Scotland, making landowners responsible for what happens on their estates. But the Government should also look at how well the tougher law in Scotland acts as a deterrent, not simply how many convictions there are there."

The Mountain Bothies Association has announced that it plans to open two new shelters this year, one of which will be sited in our region within the wilds of Kielder Forest in Northumberland. The Association is a charity



that was established in 1965 and which undertakes the restoration and maintenance of a number of old cottages, huts and similar buildings throughout the wilder parts of Scotland, England and Wales for use as open shelters for walkers and other outdoor enthusiasts. All of the restoration and maintenance work is undertaken by volunteers and is financed by member subscriptions and by donations. New volunteers would be welcomed for its programme of works to restore and maintain the hundred plus rudimentary shelters that it looks after and which are available for outdoors enthusiasts to use free of charge. The Association can be contacted through its website for further information.

Durham County Council has released its programme of guided walks for the summer. The programme contains nearly two hundred walks that are available between April and September. The walks range from under two miles in distance to a more strenuous seventeen and cover many interests such as nature, history, photography, art and creative writing. All of the walks cost £4 per person with no advance booking being required, just turn up on the day. The programme can be downloaded from the Council website or alternatively email countryside@durham.gov.uk

2013 marks the 25th anniversary of the creation of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and twenty-five events have been planned throughout the year to help celebrate, the events ranging from bat watching to moorland walks. One of the major highlights will be the North Pennines Walking Festival which will be held towards the end of September and will comprise of fifteen walks each one following a section of Wainwright's Pennine Journey. To find out more information on all of the events and, possibly book a place on any of them visit www.25events25years.org.uk

A mountain expert has highlighted a problem that affects one of the walker's most trusted instruments, and one that is vital for navigation in poor visibility. Heather Morning, mountain safety advisor for the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, points out that a compass' needle can be afflicted by reversed polarity, which could lead to potentially lethal consequences. The needle of a compass is sensitive and can be affected by magnets built in to many modern devices causing it to flip so that, instead of pointing to magnetic North, it actually points South. Many modern gadgets are capable of affecting compasses including mobile and smartphones, magnets hidden inside mobile phone cases, avalanche transceivers, radios, personal locator beacons, GPS units, cameras, car keys, small magnets on belt fastenings, and even underwired bras. The mountain safety expert said even if your needle doesn't flip completely, it may become sluggish and slow to settle if it has been even partially reversed. It is important to keep the compass away from potential sources of magnetism both on the hill and in the home. If a compass has been affected, it is possible to 'stroke' it back to correct polarity by running a strong magnet outwards along the north end of the needle.

If your compass does flip, then the obvious thought would be to just use it reversed with the needle pointing south. However, she cautions against attempting to use this approach as with a reversed magnet the needle does not invert by exactly 180 degrees but generally appears to be approximately 10 degrees out and therefore totally unreliable.

Three golden rules for the use of a compass:

1. Keep your compass away from any electronic gadgets you are carrying and hold it well away from your body when using it.
 2. Make sure you take note of contours on a map. If the route under your feet is not what you anticipated, then alarm bells should ring. Stop and re-evaluate your course.
 3. Always carry a spare compass in case your main one malfunctions or is damaged or lost.
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This summer, the North Pennines AONB Partnership will launch its Nectarworks programme with the help of a £370,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and a £20,000 grant from Northumbrian Water's Branch Out fund. The project is aimed at increasing the number of flower-rich grasslands and gardens in order to boost the amount of nectar-producing plants in the area and through this, increase the number of bumblebees throughout the North Pennines. Through Nectarworks, the Partnership plans to work with smallholders and farmers who want to look after their hay meadows, and also with gardeners and schools who want to develop their own flower patches. Specialist AONB staff will be on hand to give expert advice and guidance throughout the process from managing sites that already have flower-rich areas to sowing the first seeds with primary school gar-

PRODUCT NEWS

Being North Easterners, we are always pleased to support fellow organisations from our region particularly if they relate to the outdoor scene. After all, if you are going to spend money then spend it locally rather than with one of these large multi-national corporations. To this end our friends at H18 have brought out a new piece of kit that looks extremely useful.

Hangar 18 is dedicated to bringing the best performance for ultra light products to the extreme enthusiast. It's designed by mountain marathon runners and lightweight adventurers.

The H18 down-insulated vest is the most versatile piece of outdoor kit you'll ever buy, pack it any time of year, winter through to summer. It provides the extra insulation on winter bivvies or over- night camps and take it on summer trips as your lightweight insulation. Pull it out of your rucksack as needed, the down vest is unbelievably light and packs down small in it's own stuff sac, so there is no excuse not to take it with you.

H18 Down Vest Features:

- Full front Zip
- 2 zipped hand warmer pockets
- Outer: 400T Nylon Ripstop, showerproof, downproof
- Construction: Stitch through for lightweight, 200gm for medium size.
- Fill: 650 fill power, 90% New Duck Down

Stuff sack included

Hangar 18 are based in the North Pennines and offer a range of lightweight products suitable for any fell walker, check them out at www.h18orr.com



Reader's letters and emails.

We are always willing to print reader's comments and reply to questions. Both the email and postal address are on the Trailguides website.

Contributions from readers will always be considered for inclusion within this magazine. Please feel free to send any articles, news or other pieces that you feel would be of interest to our readers to trailguides@uwclub.net.

deners. The programme will then develop a 'nectar source network map' for the North Pennines which will track the areas that provide a plentiful food source for bumblebees and other wildlife, including butterflies and hoverflies, and help to target the creation of new areas where there are gaps in this network.

The Newcastle and Northumberland Society, which works to protect valuable buildings and landscapes, has called for robust planning measures to be put in place to ensure that large areas of Northumberland do not become "wind farm landscapes". A scenario which it says has happened to parts of neighbouring Berwickshire in the Scottish Borders. Northumberland County Council is currently preparing its 'Core Strategy, Preferred Options', document which will provide the strategic planning framework to guide future development and planning decisions within the county up to 2030 and the society wants the council to take its concerns on board during this preparation. The society is urging the council to recognise that Northumberland already has more renewable capacity built, under construction and consented than any other county in England and there are concerns that the council has not adequately recognised the cumulative effects of turbine development.

The £2 million plan to open a 12-mile walk and cycleway along the old railway line between West Auckland and Barnard Castle hangs in the balance. Teesdale Action Partnership have agreed to give Durham County Council £8,070 to fund a feasibility study but have been told that County Hall has not made its mind up whether to go ahead with the project. If they say yes, then applications will be made to various funding bodies to pay for the work, which is estimated to cost £2million. Durham County Council is first carrying out a survey of the line to establish land ownership and to also assess the safety of a number of disused viaducts along the route. Problems with either of these may make the project unviable. If the county council decides not to pursue the scheme, then officers have agreed to re-invest Teesdale Action Partnership's money into other rights of ways in Teesdale and this would also be matched by £21,030 from the council.

MOORLAND conservation officers are bracing themselves for a large drop in the area's black grouse population after the worst breeding year on record. Conservation efforts in the North Pennines had helped to increase numbers, with black grouse numbers in 2012 estimated at 936 males. However, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust says that last summer was catastrophic for black grouse, the impact of which will only become clear as the 2013 survey gets underway in the coming weeks. Harsh winters are also known to affect the population, with the severe conditions of 2009/10 resulting in a 35 per cent decline in black grouse numbers.

Black grouse were once common across Britain, but a huge decline in their numbers mean they are now restricted largely to the Scottish Highlands, North Wales, and the Pennines fells of northern England. A recent initiative supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Woodland Trust has seen many small woodlands planted to provide winter feeding habitats for black grouse in Teesdale and Weardale with many of the woodlands being planted by volunteers.

A new 100-mile cycle route has been planned to follow the sandstone spine of Northumberland and will take in some of the county's finest scenery. The route links together existing tracks, rights of way, byways and bridleways, lanes and quiet minor roads to create the route, which has been developed mainly for mountain bikers but which will also be available for walkers to use. Called The Sandstone Way, it will run between Berwick and Hexham while also linking in with Wooler, with a spur to Belford, then Rothbury, Elsdon, Bellingham and Simonburn. Following the geological ridge that runs down the spine of Northumberland the route will link sandstone features such as the pink coastal cliffs at Spittal, St Cuthbert's Cave, Bowden Crag, Simonside, Lord Armstrong's carriage drive at Rothbury and Warden Law near Hexham. Provisionally the route has a launch date of around the end of June and will be partially waymarked with a map being planned as part of future developments.

The native bluebell, the iconic symbol of British woodlands as it carpets the ground beneath the trees, may soon be a thing of the past. Experts at the Forestry Commission are predicting that the native bluebell could be overtaken by hybrid varieties within a generation. The native bluebell has been breeding with the Spanish bluebell since the introduction of the Spanish variety to ornamental gardens over one hundred years ago. Now varieties of hybrid, the cross between the native and Spanish species, and Spanish bluebell itself can be seen grow-

PEG POWLER'S SUDS

If you go down to the Tees today

Keep your eyes open for the whitey-brown foam building up on the surface and if you see it keep well away from the water's edge.



Peg Powler is not a nice creature. A green haired, snaggle-toothed water hag that lives below the surface of the river and preys upon the unwary, dragging them down into the depths and a watery death. For generations Teesdale folk have kept their children in check with tales of Peg and her fondness for naughty children who would suddenly disappear if they got too close to the water's edge.

Peg roams the length of the river, over the centuries taking victims from the upper reaches down to Pierce-bridge. Her presence being indicated by the whitey-brown foam on the surface of the river caused by her passage under the water and known locally as Peg Powler's Suds.

Since the building of Cow Green Reservoir and it's dam in the 1960's, Peg has been relatively quiet but she is not gone only sleeping.

As you walk along the river's edge and the foam rises then be careful. If you suddenly feel a hand around your ankle and you then look down into the face of an old hag with long, unkempt green hair billowing across the water then you've met Peg. Struggle as much as you like, her grip is like iron and she'll slowly drag you under to your doom.

ing amongst the native bluebell in woodlands across the country. With the growth of the hybrid being more vigorous than that of either parent, they are fast overtaking the native variety in many places. The effect of this expansion is that the British bluebell landscape, however beautiful, is changing and native bluebells may be much harder to find for the next generation of woodland visitors. The real problem that this gives lies in the fact that once the population consists of nothing but hybrids then the original genetic material has been lost. If the hybrid is then subsequently affected by disease and there is none of the original species left, there is then the real threat that the whole bluebell population could be in danger.

The long-running dispute over whether a riverside path alongside the River Tees from Croft Workingmen's Club in Hurworth Place to the Rockcliffe Hall Hotel in Hurworth has finally been resolved to the disappointment of the campaigners who have been fighting for the path to be designated as a right of way. After a three-day inquiry and then a wait of several weeks for the planning inspector to make his decision, the inspector ruled in favour of Croft WMC and stated that the locking of an access gate when the club was closed was a clear indicator that walkers could not use the route as a right of way and without interruption.

Scottish company 3R Energy Solutions, who had applied to Northumberland County Council for planning permission to build a 74 metre wind turbine less than two miles from the 4,000 year old Duddo Stone Circle before it was unanimously rejected in October last year, have refused to accept the decision and have now lodged an appeal with the planning inspectorate. The Duddo Stone Circle is a scheduled ancient monument and is made up of five large blocks of stone although a 19th-century dig revealed the base of two additional stones, which it is believed were removed in the mid-1800s. The circle stands on a small knoll overlooking the Tweed basin, next to the hamlet of Duddo and was created 4,000 years ago during the Neolithic period. Also known as The Women or the Singing Stones, the circle has often been referred to as Northumberland's Stonehenge. The original planning application had been unanimously rejected by the Council's planning and environment committee due to concerns that the turbine would cause substantial harm to the setting and significance of the stones.

The North Pennines AONB is hosting a number of events over this coming year as part of its celebration of being designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty 25-years ago and chief among these will be the re-opening of the visitor centre at Bowlees in Teesdale. The building has been shut for two years but is now nearing completion after a £150,000 revamp and will be opened next month. The vastly improved centre will be the first visitor centre operated by the AONB itself. The alterations to the centre include major improvements to the inside of the building which will provide information about the area, including places to visit, stay and things to see. A new cafe has been created which will be serving locally produced produce and there will also be a shop selling items of local interest. Along with these internal improvements a bigger seating area is being created outside, along with better parking and an electric vehicle charging point.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust has set out an ambitious Vision for Hauxley Nature Reserve, a scheme that when complete will cost just under £500,000. The project will include extending the reserve, creating new habitat areas and also a new visitor centre, after the previous one was destroyed by arsonists in 2010. The Trust are aiming to purchase an adjoining area of land which will extend the reserve by five hectares and will enable them to create new wetland areas, as well as grazing meadows with vegetation. Funding of £100,000 is needed for this purchase and it is hoped the land can be secured this year. Once the reserve has been extended, the plan will be to create a new circular walk, costing £104,000, with viewing areas, benches and signs to help visitors enjoy their walk. The aim is to have this opened in 2014 as a grass path and then surfaced in 2015 to make it fully accessible.

Since 2000 there has been at least 150 reports of wild cats seen in the North East and North Yorkshire including more than 30 sightings of the Durham Puma. Now researchers from Durham University have found conclusive proof that big cats have roamed the British countryside at certain points in time within the last hundred years. For years, sightings of cats such as the Durham Puma have been dismissed as myths but now the rediscovered remains of a mysterious carnivore lying in a storeroom at Bristol Museum have been identified by the researchers as those of a Canadian Lynx. The creature had been shot in the early 1900's by a landowner in Devon after it had killed two dogs and the remains had then been given to the Museum. The team from Durham analysed the skeleton and skin of the animal and identified it as a Canadian Lynx, a predator that is more than twice the size of the domestic cat and alien to this country. An analysis of the creature's teeth and bones proved, through tooth decay, that it had been held in captivity for a long period before it either escaped or was released. This is the earliest example of a big cat at large in Britain and, although considered by the academics to be a rare occurrence, does demonstrate that exotic big cats have the potential to be out there in the British countryside.

Be careful as you walk those hills

PUBLICATION LIST 01.05.2013

Below is a full list of all of our current Walking North East publications.

Durham

Ancient Stones.
Hamsterley Forest.
The Barningham Trail.
The High Hills of Teesdale.
Mid-Teesdale Walks.
Walks from Stanhope.
Walking in Weardale.

Northumberland

The Cheviot Hills.
The Hills of Upper Coquetdale.
Walks from Kirknewton.
Walks Around Rothbury & Coquetdale.
Walks from Wooler.
Walks on the Wild Side: The Cheviot Hills.
Walks in Hadrian's Wall Country. **New publication.**

North Yorkshire

Walks from Gunnerside.
Walks around Reeth and Upper Swaledale.
Walking the Hills of Upper Swaledale.
Walking around Osmotherley and the Cleveland Hills. **New publication.**

New publications on the way

[Walking in Teesdale.](#)
[Walking in Weardale 2.](#)
[Walking around Darlington and the Tees Valley.](#)
[Walking around Helmsley and Ryedale.](#)

All books can be obtained via our website at www.trailguides.co.uk , via Amazon or alternatively just ask your local book shop to order them.

A new walking and cycling guide to 120 trails around the Durham Dales has been launched at the Durham Dales Centre in Stanhope in Weardale. The guide and accompanying website is part of Visit County Durham's campaign to encourage visitors and residents to explore Weardale and Teesdale by bike or in boots. Ultimately the aim being to attract more visitors to the area. Walking and cycling is the first theme in a three year marketing campaign that will see Durham's heritage and food and drink offer promoted on a national level.

Thought about signing up for one of the guided walks being staged as part of this year's Dalescape Festival, the first walking festival being staged within the Durham Dales of Teesdale and Weardale ?

There are a number of walks to sign up for including two in Weardale that are being facilitated by one of our own authors, Keven Shevels.

Sign up for a walk and extend your stay in the Dales to get free admission to Bowes Museum, a perk worth £9 for each adult. In addition, if you book up in a group of four then you'll get a fifth ticket free.

To see more details on the walks offered, to book your place and to also information on offers on accommodation during the festival see the website at www.discoverdurhamdales.co.uk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

May 6th Northumberland Coastal Challenge Walk

The third Northumberland Coastal Challenge walk takes place in May 2013. This 26 mile linear walk covers the fantastic Northumberland Coastal line from just North of Bamburgh to Alnmouth. After checking in on the morning of the walk in Alnmouth, transport is provided to the starting point near to Bamburgh. Participants then follow the Northumberland Coastal path back to Alnmouth. Support vehicles will be on standby, water stations, and emergency first aid cover will all be present on the day. Every participant will receive a goody bag at the end of a great days walking. Please book early as places are limited.

For more details and to book see the Shepherd's Walks website at www.shepherdswalks.co.uk

June 1st Three Peaks Challenge.

Anybody interested in the Three Peaks Challenge ??

The Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge is 25 miles over the 3 highest peaks in Yorkshire (Ingleborough, Wharfedale, Pen-y-Ghent). A charity event is being organised on Saturday 1st June to raise money for Guide Dogs for the Blind and Blackpool Tiggers (supporting children and young adults on the autistic spectrum). Support vehicles are provided. BBQ and party afterwards. For more details email Y3P@outlook.com

June 1st - August 31st. 'WALK ON' Art Festival.

See following pages for details.

June 7th - 9th Dalescape Walking Festival

See the programme of walks later in the newsletter, includes contact details.

June 22nd Duham Dales Challenge.

Organised by the Northumbria branch of the Long Distance Walkers Association, is now in it's 24th year and is one of the most popular events in the North East. This year's Challenge is being held on Saturday, 22nd June and starts at Wolsingham in Weardale. Two options are being offered, a 16-mile route and a 30-mile one. Both routes are circular, starting in Weardale before travelling over the watershed into Teesdale and then looping back into Weardale and returning to Wolsingham. The event is open to both walkers and runners with entrants on both routes being set away at 09.00 am. More details, and a downloadable entry form, can be accessed on the Northumbria LDWA website at <http://www.ldwa.org.uk/Northumbria/> Closing date for all entries is Friday, 14th June.

June 22nd - June 30th Rothbury Walking Festival

The fifth Rothbury and Coquetdale Midsummer Walking Festival. The premier walking festival in Northumberland. With 18 walks over the nine days there is something for everybody. All the walks are taking place in the best walking landscape that Northumberland has to offer, Rothbury and Coquetdale and this year a little further afield.

For more details on the individual events and to book see the Shepherd's Walks website at www.shepherdswalks.co.uk

June 29th Cragside Challenge Walk - Self Guided or Guided

Shepherd's Walks has again teamed up with the National Trust to put on the third 13 mile Cragside Challenge walk/run. NEW for 2013 - Participants will be doing the route in the opposite direction than that done over the past two years.

Starting at Cragside (free entry included in entry fee), the former home of Lord Armstrong this 13 mile walk will pass through this superb National Trust estate before following the River Coquet to Rothbury. From here the route rises up past Lordenshaws Iron Age Hillfort (Checkpoint 1) to Dove Crag, the highpoint of the walk. The route then drops down passing Tosson Lime Kiln (Checkpoint 2) to the small village of Thropton, before crossing the River Coquet. The route then rises up to the Cragside Carriageway drive which is the picturesque landscape to the north of Rothbury. You will then drop down to the stunning finish on the banks of Tumbleton Lake.

The route is good under foot. Way markers will also be in place to make for easy navigation. As you complete the 13 miles challenge walk at your own pace you will pass through checkpoints and snacks and drinks will be available on route. Event t-shirts will be given to all participants and certificates will be available to those requesting them. Please do book early to avoid disappointment. For more details on the event and to book see the Shepherd's Walks website at www.shepherdswalks.co.uk

August 10th Hanging Stone Leap.

A 24 or 13 miles circular challenge event across the North York Moors via forestry, moorland and road including Guisborough Moor and Roseberry Topping. Cleveland LDWA have hosted the event for many years, it takes place in August each year and starts from Guisborough Rugby Club at 8:30 am and has a time limit of ten hours. The event is open to both runners and walkers. Badge, certificate and meal are provided at the finish. For more information and an entry form see the Cleveland LDWA website at www.ldwa.org.uk/Cleveland/

August 10th St Cuthberts Way Challenge Walk

This 19.5 mile cross border challenge takes in the best section of St Cuthbert's Way as you start walking in Scotland and finish in England. After registration in Wooler you will be transferred up to Morbottle to start the walk. You initially climb Grubbit Law, follow the ridge over Wideopen Hill (the highest point on St Cuthbert's Way at 368m) and pass over Cookedshaws Hill before dropping down to Town Yetholm. This section of the challenge walk is truly stunning with the Cheviots to the South and the Scottish Borders to the north. After leaving Yetholm you then have a climb up to the border ridge where you pass from Scotland into England before dropping down to Hethpool. From Hethpool the route passes just south of Kirknewton as you pass in between ancient hill settlements in such a picturesque but rugged landscape as you make your way back to Wooler.

Throughout the challenge walk you will pass through checkpoints with water available on all of them and snacks on one. Emergency first aid is provided and if you drop out during the walk we will take you back to Wooler. The total ascent on this walk is - 3333 feet (1016m). A truly special challenge walk passing along the best section of St Cuthbert's Way as you make your way from Scotland back into England before receiving a well deserved welcome back after completing a true challenge. For more details on the event and to book see the Shepherd's Walks website at www.shepherdswalks.co.uk

September 7th Kielder Challenge Walk

The Kielder Challenge Walk has become one of the most popular challenge walks in Northumberland over the past few years. The route is easy to navigate and is great under foot so is suitable for runners as well as walkers and what better location. The route encircled Kielder Reservoir. After checking in on the day you are on your way along the 25.3 mile route. Initially you go along the remote North Shore passing through checkpoints on your way. Water and snacks are available on route and a support vehicle is on hand all day, to pick those up who drop out. Emergency first aid is on site all day, so you can relax and enjoy a great days walking. People perceive it is a flat route, but the Kielder Challenge Walk goes up (and down) 1,500 feet over the 25.3 miles. Limited edition T-shirts are available for all participants so please choose your size when booking. For more details on the event and to book see the Shepherd's Walks website at www.shepherdswalks.co.uk

A new poem from Geoff Holland reflecting a winter walk in The Cheviots.

DECEMBER DAY

Drab December day,
Wooler sleepwalks through half-lit dawn.
Alone in north Northumberland,
silent beside giggling burn & primed.
The easy track leads on.
Reastead renamed & bullocks eyeing with suspicion.
Hart Heugh, stone-strewn & ancient,
drifts in & out of sight.
Pheasants shriek at Switcherdown,
a single tree & tumbled stones.
Little remains, only a witches ghost.
Then Cold Law, head in the clouds,
feet in the bare winter valley,
a reluctant, retiring host.
A red grouse warns, 'go-back, back, back',
but up past boundary stone to summit cairn,
drenched to its own skin, sullen.
Carling Crag, shrouded & mysterious
dissolves once seen
& then to Carey Burn
bristling, scurrying downstream. Pell-mell.
The linn, grey, flood-washed rock,
white beard reminding me
it is Christmas time. But, first,
the Hellpath, tree-lined & saturated,
strength-sapping as it angles skywards.
The sting in the long tail home.

GEOFF HOLLAND

‘WALK ON’

40 YEARS OF ART WALKING FROM RICHARD LONG TO JANET CARDIFF

Exhibition dates: 1 June – 31 August. Preview: 30 May 6:00 – 8:00pm

‘Walk On’ is the first exhibition to examine the astonishingly varied ways in which artists since the 1960s have undertaken a seemingly universal act – taking a walk – as their means to create new types of art. The exhibition offers an as-yet-unwritten history of recent art practice. It proposes that, across all four of the last decades, artists have worked as kinds of explorers, whether making their marks on rural wildernesses or acting as urban expeditionaries. It argues that from land art to conceptual art, and from street photography to the essay-film, much of the important art of our time has been created through an act of walking.

The exhibition brings together nearly 40 artists who all make work by undertaking a journey on foot. In doing so, they all stake out new artistic territory. They do so whether using the city street as their studio, or the landscape as their natural habitat – as a place to dwell in and dwell upon rather than represent in conventional ways. Artists such as Richard Long have crossed countries and continents to create works, leaving traces of their movements on the land itself. Some walking artists only exhibit documents from their journeys, whether photographs, texts or artifacts. For them, the walk undertaken is itself the artwork – as a kind of performance over time – and anything else only evidence or documentation. Others, such as Bruce Nauman, have explored the infinite grammatical possibilities of walking: looking at how we walk shows the world who we are. Others still, such as Marina Abramovic, have walked on historic sites – undertaking an epic journey across the length of the Great Wall of China, in a symbolic act of separation and being reunited with her then collaborator Ulay. The exhibition includes several internationally celebrated artists alongside emerging figures who have created new works for the project.

MORE INFORMATION: T 0191 561 8478 / E ngca@sunderland.gov.uk

In partnership with Art Circuit Touring Exhibitions, and in association with Visual Arts in Rural Communities. The exhibition is curated with Cynthia Morrison-Bell and artist Mike Collier in partnership with NGCA, and supported by Arts Council England.

The exhibition is being held at the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art at Sunderland.

Image: Dan Holdsworth ‘Blackout 10’, 2011



Dalescape Walking Festival 7th - 9th June

The programme of walks for this Festival have now been released and, along with the organiser's own comments are listed below.

All walks are fully guided so you don't need to worry about getting lost and we'll look out for your safety. International company Mountain Explorers have researched the walks and provide qualified mountain leaders to accompany each group. We encourage bookings from organised groups and small parties. Independent travellers are welcome, but you do need your own transport to get to the start point for the walk. Walks are circular and vary in length from as little as 1.5 miles up to 13 miles. Each walk is graded for difficulty.

Walk into the History of Weardale

Start/Finish Point: Stanhope

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Grade: Moderate/Full Day

A fascinating walk through the heritage of Weardale's industry of coal, stone and steam, set in beautiful valleys and open moorland.

Essential Information: There will be plenty of opportunities to take photos so bring your camera along.

Waterfalls Walk

Start/Finish Point: Bowlees Car Park

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Grade: Moderate/Full Day

The legendary High & Low Force waterfalls have been attracting visitors for centuries, and kayakers come from all over the UK to paddle this beautiful and challenging stretch of water. Fortunately you won't need to get your feet wet as we start our walk by crossing a suspension bridge originally constructed in the 18th century. We then follow the River Tees past the largest waterfall in England, High Force, before retuning via moorland tracks with the down dale vista of Teesdale ahead of you.

Essential Information: Bring your camera!

Tees Treasure Trail

Start/Finish Point: Barnard Castle

Distance: 3 miles (5km)

Grade: Easier/Half Day

A route taking in some of the finest views 'Barney' has on offer, as our route takes us by tumbling rapids, an ancient abbey, beautiful countryside and views of this wonderful area... and for those who are perhaps not quite as interested in the scenery, we have a great treasure trail and scavenger hunt to keep everyone involved! Ideal for children.

Essential information: Not suitable for pushchairs, but ideal for backpack carriers and little legs that prefer a walk on the flat!

Weardale Lead Mining Legacy

Start/Finish Point: Westgate

Distance: 10mils (16km)

Grade: Moderate/Full Day

There is evidence that the lead mining in this region goes back to the Roman times and Bede certainly records Pennine Lead miners haggling with merchants over the price of lead at Catterick markets in the 8th century, and a walk on the wild moorlands of upper Weardale will reveal the secrets of hundreds of years of fortunes made and lost in this long gone industry. This walk is facilitated by local guide and writer, Kevin Shevels.

Alpine Environment

Start/Finish Point: High Force Hotel

Distance: 8.5 miles (14km)

Grade: Harder/Full Day

A full day walk taking in England's largest waterfall and the unique 'alpine environment' of Cronkley Fell before returning by a riverside path along the River Tees. Although late in the season there is the possibility of seeing the beautiful and rare Spring Gentian in its only habitat in the UK.

Essential Information: The riverside path beside the River Tees is rugged in places. A full set of waterproofs, walking boots and warm clothing is very important for this walk.

Start Fell Running

Start/Finish Point: Middleton-in-Teesdale, Hudeshope Beck car park

Distance: Approx 3-4 miles (5-7km)

Grade: Harder/Half Day

Aimed at runners who are comfortably completing 10km road/trail events, this event is designed to give you a taster, under the guidance of your trainer, an introduction to fell running, focussing on safety, route choice, navigation and what to wear, eat and carry on the hill.

Essential Information: You do not need to be super fit to join this session, the leader will set a pace that suits the group's abilities, but you will need to come with appropriate running shoes and a bumbag/running sack capable of carrying your kit.

The Pennine Ice Age!

Start/Finish Point: Cow Green Reservoir car park

Distance: 13 miles (21km)

Grade: Harder/Full Day

'High Cup Nick' – one of Northern England's most spectacular geological wonders! This awesome 'U' shaped glacial valley is the culmination of this wild and remote walk following the Pennine Way across the "backbone of England". Although late in the season there is the possibility of seeing the beautiful and rare Spring Gentian in its only habitat in the UK.

Essential Information: Sections of this walk are across open moorland at a height of over 600m. A full set of water-proofs, walking boots and warm clothing is very important for this walk.

Navigate around Baldersdale

Start/Finish Point: Baldersdale

Distance: 9 miles (15km)

Grade: Moderate/Full Day

This walk takes us through beautiful Baldersdale, the valley of the 3 reservoirs, as well as visiting Hannah's Meadow, the former home of the iconic Hannah Hauxwell which is now a nature reserve. There is also the opportunity to follow the route on a map with tips for successful navigation provided by the leader.

Essential Information: Map and compass will be provided for those walkers interested in learning the basics of countryside navigation. If not just enjoy the walk.

Wild Photography

Start/Finish Point: Barnard Castle

Distance: 3 miles (5 km)

Grade: Easier/Half Day

Led by Eva Zandman Photography, this walk will help you to take better landscape, architectural and wildlife shots. You will learn about composition, lighting and making the most of your camera's features.

Essential information: Bring your own camera and tripod if you have one. There will be a chance afterwards to visit Eva's studio and the gallery space at NeST in Barnard Castle.

Landscape Art

Start/Finish Point: Frosterley

Distance: 5 miles (9km)

Grade: Moderate/Full Day

Led by abstract landscape artist Jill Campbell this walk will help you make the most of time in the field to take notes, photographs, sketch and think about new ways of interpreting the landscape with reference to its history and the work of other writers and artists.

Essential information: Bring your drawing equipment and camera.

Creative Writing

Start/Finish Point: Bowlees

Distance: 3 miles (5km)

Grade: Easier/Half Day with optional walk extension Led by writer and creative writing coach Judith Marshall, this walk follows in the footsteps of the Teesdale poet Richard Watson and his journey to work in the lead mines above Middleton-in-Teesdale. Afterwards you can either take time to write up your thoughts, or extend the walk.

Essential information: bring your notebook and camera.

Teesdale Tough Trek

Start/Finish Point: Langdon Beck Hotel

Distance: 7 miles (12km)

Grade: Harder/Full Day

This walk takes us along the Pennine Way passing dolerite crags home to peregrine falcons and a range of other up-

land wildlife. Our route takes us up a wild and beautiful valley then a clamber up the side of Cauldron Snout, an impressive multi drop waterfall. After taking time to savour the views of the High Pennines and Cow Green reservoir, we return down the valley to a welcome pint (or brew!) at the famous Langdon Beck Hotel.

Essential Information: The riverside path is rugged in places and at times requires some boulder hopping. The easy scramble up beside the waterfall requires the use of your hands at times for balance. A full set of waterproofs, walking boots and warm clothing is very important for this walk.

In Search of the Gruffalo

Start/Finish Point: Blackling Hole Car park, Hamsterley Forest

Distance: 1.5 miles (3km)

Grade: Easier/Half Day

A half day of walking, exploring and creative activity in Teesdale's very own deep, dark wood...as we go in search of signs of mouse, owl, fox and snake! At the end of the walk you get to make your own wildlife feeder to take home with you!

Essential Information: Terrain suitable for all-terrain pushchairs. Wellies, waterproofs and sense of adventure essential!

For more information and to book:

Ticketline 03000 262626 www.discoverdurhamdales.co.uk



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