



Walking North East

APRIL 2014



TRAIL GUIDES 
publications



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Cover photo.

The currick above Allenheads in Northumberland's North Pennines.

This walk will feature in a new book, 'Walking in the Allendales' which will be available later this year.



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April brought some good weather with only a few of the famous showers. And this meant getting out and about quite a bit.

One of the highlights was visiting an area that I've not been to for about twenty years. When you think of Northumberland, the mind naturally brings forth images of the Cheviot Hills, the wild splendour of these hills just registers in the brain as the iconic Northumberland landscape. However, there is more than one part to this fascinating county and in particular, one that often gets overlooked sitting as it does at the top of the North Pennines.

The Allendales are two small valleys that run, surprisingly, south to north on their way to join the Tyne. As I've said, it's twenty years or more since I was last in these parts as a competitor on the Allendale Challenge and I'd totally forgotten what a wonderful part of our region they are. With the two valleys being located in the North Pennines I'd just naturally assumed that they would be similar to Weardale which lies 'just over the hill' and which is one of my regular stamping grounds. However, the landscape just seemed totally different, whether this is geological or due to the fact that the valleys go south to north rather than the usual west to east, I don't know. But it was a very enjoyable day.

Before anybody gets up in arms, I'm not saying that the Allendales are better than Weardale, I'm still very much of the opinion that Weardale is an under-appreciated gem for walkers in this region, but sometimes a change can be quite invigorating.

As you can guess, we've currently started work on a new book, 'Walking in the Allendales', which will be out towards the back-end of the year. In the meantime our second book on the North York Moors is nearing completion and should be available in five or six weeks time. Titled 'Walking around Helmsley and Ryedale', the book covers the area surrounding the River Rye on the southern edge of the Moors. More details on the book appear later in this newsletter.

Walking News :

The charity that works to protect and manage the North East's best-known ancient monument has announced its closure. In a statement last week, the Hadrian's Wall Trust has said that it will close within six months following an internal review of its financial position. Talks are now underway with other bodies to decide on alternative arrangements to maintain the World Heritage Site. In its statement the trust referred to the "ever increasing pressure on public funding" and said it had held discussions with key partners who were themselves working under "significant financial constraints." The statement also said that the trustees had "decided with deep regret that their only option is to seek the orderly and solvent closure of the Hadrian's Wall Trust over the next six months." Hundreds of thousands of tourists visit the Roman Wall each year and now English Heritage, Natural England and the eight local authorities who all part fund the Trust are working to put new arrangements in place to safeguard the landmark.

The distinctive Teesside landmark of Eston Nab was put up for sale last year as part of the Lazenby Bank estate, the asking price for the estate being the sum of £425,000. Now the campaign group, The Friends of Eston Hills, has managed to raise £15,000 to enable them to buy the distinctive summit of the hills. The group were never going to be able to raise enough money to buy the entire plot but did manage to put a bid into the owner's to purchase the pinnacle of the estate. Hundreds of on-line donations poured in from across Teesside while people also did sponsored walks, put on benefit gigs, sold raffle tickets, sold books of Eston Hills poetry and over 500 Eston Hills calendars to raise funds. The group contacted the owner directly and pleaded with him not to sell and their passion for the area resulted in the owner offering them the chance to buy just the summit of the hills. Now after three months of legal process the sale has gone ahead and the group have purchased the Nab with the intention of keeping it in public ownership forever. Group chairman Craig Hornby said: "It would have been impossible without the hundreds who put their hands in their pockets, the landowner who went out of his way to accommodate us and the solicitors who worked for free. It's amazing what people can do when they pull together for the benefit of everyone."

The first of Kielder's ospreys has now arrived safely back at the Northumberland water and forest park. Like others of their breed, the park's two breeding pairs winter in Africa and then return each spring. Now cameras concealed in nesting platforms have shown that the first female has returned back to her nest. The birds that once hunted the marshes across the county were extinct in England for 150 years but have now bred in Kielder Water and Forest Park every year since 2009. Hopefully her mate will soon follow and another osprey family will be raised this year.

A project by the North York Moors National Park to restore historic routes across the Moors has restored a once-popular horse-ride and walk by the village of Goathland, site of the TV series 'Heartbeat'. The original line of the public bridleway between Beck Hole and Thackside Farm at Goathland crossed an old ford but over recent years changes in the water levels and the movement of a large boulder downstream have left the ford difficult to use and impassable at certain times of the year. As a result many people abandoned the route, with walkers using a nearby footpath and riders switching to local roads. Now the Authority's field staff, have restored the route by diverting a section of the bridleway to connect to a nearby footbridge which has been widened to accommodate walkers, horses and cyclists. Signs have been put in place to guide users along the new route. The work also links in with improvements to a bridleway between Hazel Head and Hunt House near

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

Our latest new book and the second that we have based on the North York Moors will be available in six weeks time. Titled 'Walking around Helmsley and Ryedale' this book explores the countryside along the southern edge of the North York Moors National Park.

The small market town of Helmsley lies on the southern edge of the North York Moors National Park and flowing past the edge of town lies the River Rye. Born high on the slopes of the Cleveland Hills, this river cuts a deep sided valley as it makes it's way through the flat-topped Tabular Hills passing Hawaby, Rievaulx and finally Helmsley before entering the Vale of Pickering.

As it heads north-west from Helmsley, a network of footpaths takes you through this valley, along wooded trails and riverside fields to the heather clad moors that line the upper reaches of this quiet, little dale. For the walker, this presents some of the best countryside that Yorkshire has to offer. It's little wonder that the medieval monks chose this valley to site their monasteries and settlements. Here history mixes with the countryside with four thousand years of human habitation lying amongst the trees, in the fields and across the moors. A walk here tells you much more than where your next footstep goes.



Goathland, which involved widening and draining the eroded and overgrown lane to provide a better walking and riding experience. The initiative is part of the Missing Links project that is re-establishing routes in the North York Moors that have been missing for many years for a variety of reasons.

A revitalised tourism body is hoping that a newly created walking challenge will help boost visitor numbers in Upper Teesdale. The Cloverleaf Walking Challenge, produced by Upper Teesdale Tourist Network, is due to be launched this spring. It is modelled on the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge and will see walkers being awarded certificates for completing a set number of walks within a certain timeframe. “The idea is it’s a cloverleaf so you always come back to Middleton,” said acting UTTN chairwoman Lynda Bares, who is hoping accommodation providers and retailers would cash in on the extra visitors. The different walks have been categorised as gold, silver and bronze according to difficulty and a rainbow walk has been devised to cater for families. Also in development is a website to market the challenge which will feature award-winning images from a photographic competition that the network held in 2011.

Two of the region’s mountain rescue teams were involved in the rescue of an elderly walker last week. The 92-year-old man was with his wife in Plessey Woods near Blyth in Northumberland when he got into difficulties. Staff from the North East Ambulance Service called for help from mountain rescuers at about 5.30pm and members of both the Northumberland National Park Mountain Rescue Team and the North of Tyne MRT were called out. The location of the exhausted walker was between Plessey Woods and Stannington, on a very muddy path just above the River Blyth. Due to his location, the ambulance service needed assistance to extract him. Members from both teams were on scene within minutes and enough personnel for a carry-out were available by just after 6.10pm with the walker being evacuated on a stretcher to the Land Rover located near to Briery Hill farm, east of Stannington. The rescue involved 14 personnel from both teams and ended about 8pm.

Officials at the Moor House Upper Teesdale National Nature Reserve are hosting a Black Grouse morning for bird lovers. The event which includes a visit to a lek, or mating ground, to watch and listen as the male birds attempt to attract the grey hens is being held on Saturday, April 12, and will be led by senior reserve manager Chris McCarty and Fran Atterton, research assistant from the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust. This year sees a large number of black grouse in the upper dale following an excellent breeding season in 2013 which was subsequently followed by relatively mild winter. Those wishing to take part are advised it is a 5am start and the morning will finish with breakfast and a presentation on the black grouse and work being carried out in the North Pennines to help them and their habitat. The morning costs £16 and booking is essential. Call the nature reserve base on 01833-622374.

A new forest trail is about to be opened in North Yorkshire. The Ellerburn Trail is a multi-user pathway for disabled cyclists, walkers, and wheelchair users and will open on April 13 in the heart of Dalby Forest on the southern slopes of the North York Moors. The Forestry Commission has worked with a number of partner organisations, including the Cyclists' Touring Club, the Federation for Disability Sport and local community groups to develop the trail which has been funded by a contribution of £74,950 from Natural England's Paths for Communities Fund, £25,000 from Yorventure, and £25,000 from the Forestry Commission.

Northumberland National Park has been asked to take over the running of the Hadrian's Wall National Trail following the collapse of the Hadrian's Wall Trust due to funding problems. The Trail runs the length of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, passing through some of the most beautiful parts of England. It is currently managed through a partnership including Natural England, English Heritage, Northumberland County Council, Cumbria County Council, Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA), North Tyneside Council and Newcastle City Council, although the Hadrian's Wall Trust had been in charge of it.

The Teesdale Challenge Walks, is a new series of walks which start and finish in Middleton-in-Teesdale, County Durham, and will be launched on Monday, April 21. The walks are self-guided and range in difficulty from easy, family orientated walks through to 19 mile hill walks. The challenges are split into 4 categories, Rainbow, Bronze, Silver and Gold, with the Rainbow Award been designed specifically for young families up to the Gold Award, targeted at experienced hill walkers. To complete the challenges and gain a completion certificate you must first register and then complete a number of walks within that challenge. To register see the website teesdalechallengewalks.net or pick up a form at Middleton TIC or Bookshop. When you have finished your challenge you can collect your certificate from a range of outlets in Middleton.

Two valleys in Northumberland's North Pennines are in the running for a £2.7m investment which will seek to make the most of their natural and historical qualities. The Heritage Lottery Fund has confirmed a £1.7m grant for the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership which will manage the four-year project for the East and West Allen valleys. The aim is to now raise another £1m in match funding. It is hoped the scheme will provide a boost for the area by strengthening the visitor economy by allowing greater access to heritage sites and promoting an understanding of the area's cultural history. Some of the projects being planned include the preservation of historic buildings, restoration of hay meadows, and the management of woodlands and wildlife.

Over £73,000 has now been raised to help save the "wobbly bridge" at Allen Banks in Northumberland. The bridge was badly damaged during the floods of May 2013, and is one of the few surviving historic features of the original wilderness garden created by Ridley Hall owner Susan Davidson. She devoted 50 years of her life, during the mid 1800s, to turning Allen Banks into an accessible parkland complete with footpaths, bridges and summer houses. The estate is now run by the National Trust. The Trust's appeal was launched on Wednesday, January 22 and the money will be put towards the restoration of the bridge's original Victorian engineering. The Trust hopes to raise £100,000 through the current appeal. Donations can be made at www.justgiving.com/wobblybridge

News that some mindless idiot has defaced one of the spectacular rock art panels at Lordenshaws near Rothbury in Northumberland. The site, which lies below the Simonside Hills in Northumberland National Park, has sweeping views over the town and the Coquet Valley, and attracts many visitors. Now, after the art work has survived for over 5,000 years, the words "DONZ MIK JAZ" have been carved into the rock on the main cup and ring panel. The rock art is part of a



CHALLENGE YOURSELF to go that little bit further

The Northumbria Group LDWA organises the annual DURHAM DALES CHALLENGE, two separate and circular walks of 16 and 30 miles starting from Wolsingham in Upper Weardale. This event is not a competition, but a personal challenge, proving that you are above the average, capable of more than the humdrum of everyday life. You could walk on your own or with old friends or chance acquaintances. You could walk fast or slow. You will always meet encouragement, whether from fellow entrants or from the helpers manning the checkpoints.



"That certificate and badge says that you've walked your first challenge event. So, it's nothing much, but YOU did it. YOU kept going when every fibre in your body says that should have been at home, with a cuppa, in front of the TV. You proved that YOU are not a quitter. You have done something that those in the office haven't. Somehow it seems to rub off in your everyday life. You can cope, you can do it, and usually you do"

quote from a previous entrant

DURHAM DALES CHALLENGE Saturday 28th June 2014

**2 separate and circular walks of 16 and 30 miles
from Wolsingham School in Upper Weardale.**

This annual event is a unique opportunity for walkers and runners of all abilities to explore the remote and wild landscape that Durham has to offer, whilst completing either a 16 or a 30 mile route within 12 hours. There will be refreshments at checkpoints and a hot meal at the finish.

To enter, visit www.ldwa.org.uk/Northumbria and follow 'Latest News',

Other enquiries, email: northumbrialdwagroupsecretary@hotmail.co.uk



**Northumbria Group
LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION**



complex archaeological landscape at Lordenshaws, which was designated as a scheduled ancient monument as long ago as the 1950s because of its national importance. Damage to a scheduled monument is a criminal offence. Anyone with information is asked to contact Northumbria Police on 101, quoting reference 487 070414, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

The second Via Ferrata in the country has been opened in How Stean Gorge at Lofthouse in Niddendale, North Yorkshire. The kilometre-long chasm has opened three sections of Via Ferrata after securing permission from Natural England earlier this year and now has a network of iron cables, staples and bridges fixed to the walls and ledges of rock at heights of up to nine metres. The three walkways include Tyrolean Traverse, featuring an overhead cable and a seated pulley system, Burma Bridge with two hand cables and one foot cable and Postman's Walk, which has one top cable and one to walk on. Visitors who use the walkways will need to wear a safety harness and helmet and learn how to work others while traversing the cables. A spokesman for the attraction said the new walkways would offer previously unseen views of the gorge. For details, visit howstean.co.uk

Three walks have been organised by Natural England to help outdoor enthusiasts get up close and personal with the Moor House Upper Teesdale National Nature Reserve. On Monday, May 12, guide Peter Lowes will lead a three-mile bird walk around Widdybank pastures and meadows. Jo Hayes will join walkers for a strenuous 11km trek onto Cronkley Fell on Wednesday, May 21, to look for arctic-alpine plants that should be flowering among the limestone outcrops. The final event is a three-mile guided walk along the nature trail at Cow Green Reservoir on Thursday, May 29, starting at 2pm. Booking for both the Widdybank and Cronkley Fell walks is essential. Contact the reserve base on 01833 622374 for more details or to book.



**The trig point on Harnisha Hill above the Bollihope valley in Weardale.
Soon to appear as a walk in our forthcoming book 'Walking in Weardale 2'.**



WOOLER OUTDOOR WEEK

Later this month, the 22nd to the 25th of May to be exact, a new concept comes to the outdoors of this region. The first Wooler Outdoor Week takes place over those dates and offers to showcase the magnificent scenery of the northern part of the Cheviot Hills. The brainchild of outdoor specialists Maxine Lock and Karl Wait, the event is a mixture of activities, talks and film shows. The activities on offer include guides walks, classes for navigation in the hills, canoeing, mountain biking, archery, rock climbing, fell running and even gliding. Many of these being introductory sessions to introduce the area and the great outdoors in general to beginners.

For those that don't know this part of our region, Wooler is the gateway to the northern Cheviots, a well-kept secret of the outdoor world. Here you can walk all day through some of the best scenery that this country has to offer and consider yourself unlucky if you meet anybody else along the way.

WOW, as it is known for short, certainly looks as if it will have the WOW factor. For more details and to book yourself some outdoor fun see the website at www.wooleroutdoorweek.com



PUBLICATION LIST 01.05.2014

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

Durham

Ancient Stones.
Hamsterley Forest.
The Barningham Trail.
Mid-Teesdale Walks.
Walks from Stanhope.
Walking in Weardale.
[Walking in Teesdale.](#)

Now released.

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.

North Yorkshire

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

Long Distance Walks

The North West Way. **New publication.**

New publications on the way

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

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