

Fell Walking Group – October Report

This month's walk was over in Swaledale, a good comparison after last month's walk in Wensleydale. Compare and contrast these Dales? An old A level geography question if I'm not mistaken. Well I've made it up. The walk was almost identical to last year's except no RAIN and no low cloud. The weather was perfect. The views of Swaledale were absolutely stunning.

The walk started above Reeth and Grinton at a layby on the road to Redmire. The evidence of the late summer deluge, storms and flooding that caused so much damage to this area was seen on our drive to the meeting place and on the walk itself. The damage that water can do is truly amazing!

The walk started with uphill climbs for the first few miles with the views of Swaledale below. We could see Grinton, Reeth, Fremington Edge (walkers always talk about the hill for obvious reasons, it is STEEP), Low Row and Gunnerside. The geography of the dale neatly mapped out. Drinks stop was at a shooting bothy, the posh end of it with chairs not benches. We continued on Harkerside Moor past evidence of old lead mining and modern shooting butts. On the top we turned away from Swaledale and walked along a lovely valley called Apedale to a footpath crossroads at Dents Houses, sheepfolds and a Castle Bolton estate Shooting Bothy. Here was the lunch stop, totally different to last year's rain lashed adventure when the food and drink from a shooting party was guarded by two lovely ladies, but this year we had the high end place all to ourselves. A friendly comment was left in the visitor's book. After lunch the walk headed back north past more and more shooting butts towards the meeting place with 11 miles done. Down into Swaledale for huge cakes and interesting conversations including dry stone walling and cycling at the Dales Cycle Centre in Fremington. Many thanks John Peat for organising the walk and the WEATHER.

Phil Clarke