

Fellwalking Report by Annie Clouston – March 2023

Eight of us set off from Muker on a sunny day that would have been perfect walking weather were it not for a forecast of heavy rain at 2pm and the presence of a wind that whipped us like a vicious cat-o-nine tails with increasing zeal the higher we climbed. So it was a marvellous if exhausting twelve miler with quite literally a sting in the tail when the expected rain turned to malevolent hail not long after lunch stop. In the midst of which one of us was heard to say “Remind me again, why do we do this?”

The route took us from Muker across the meadows to Gunnerside, along Gunnerside Gill, over Gunnerside Fell and back via Swinnersgill and Kisdon Force. A democratic (welcome) decision was made to avoid the ankle-breaking upper path along the Pennine Way back to Muker, a decision that was unopposed on account of the severe wetting we were exposed to by this time. Funnily enough – haha – we drove home in sunshine!

I reiterate, this is a marvellous walk, the views were fabulous and our lunchtime break was in a delightful if daunting landscape of old lead mine workings and gushing streams. We reminded ourselves that however tough we found it, the leadminers who toiled in that terrain for twelve hours a day at least, in all weathers, and still had to walk back to their homes at the end of their shift, and do the same six days a week, were unimaginably heroic.

