

Shorter Walks Group Report by Deb Nicholson

Fourteen members met on a beautiful afternoon for a 4 mile circular walk from Cotherstone.

We set off from the church to beautiful blue skies, some walkers were even wearing sunglasses and sun hats!

We headed west along the railway path towards Romaldkirk, carefully avoiding the many rabbit holes. We all enjoyed the surrounding views over towards the hills and moors surrounding Folly Top, Eggleston, and the nearby fields where lots of newly born lambs limbered up around the fields with their mums.

We crossed the river Balder viaduct and stopped on a nearby seat for a quick drink and traditional mints from Sue.

When I did a recce of the route with my husband only 3 weeks earlier, lots of lapwings and curlews sky-danced around the fields adorning the railway which was a wonderful sight to see and hear! Spring is here...? None however were visible on this day, sadly, though I did hear one curlew a little further on.

The impressive Goldsborough was visible in the background and primulas lined the embankment as we left the railway path to join the 'C' road at Wilden Beck. We took a right turn, following the road past the old scarlet fever hospital and headed towards the main road that leads to Romaldkirk. At the junction we turned right and followed the main road for approximately 200 metres. We then turned left off the main road and back onto a nice, grassed track towards Woden Croft. This was our point to head back east following the river Tees back to Cotherstone. A buzzard was flying overhead on the opposite bank.

The only muddy path we had to endure was near to where the footbridge crosses the Tees. Here was one of the dales' art structures, an iron branch laid on the wall. I walked past it not realising it wasn't a real branch!

We continued to walk straight on and over the Balder footbridge towards The Hagg where one final uphill trudge led us back into the village and our cars. We all enjoyed the walk aided by the beautiful blue skies.