

SHORTER WALKS GROUP
April Report by Liz Colley

SPRINGTIME IN TEESDALE

A hardy bunch of walkers met on a disappointingly soggy afternoon in Eggleston for a 3 mile walk from the Village Hall. However, we were rewarded by enjoying the early signs of Spring. Learning to recognise trees by their buds and seeing conifer flowers. There were banks of primroses to appreciate and even a few violets dotted in the grassy banks.

This walk starts down Balmer Lane to join the Teesdale Way where there are usually good views across the Tees Valley but it was all rather misty today. The next stage took us on a steep climb up the tarmac road to the Stanhope road. Using this road to cross the Blackton Beck we then stopped to learn more about the history of lead mining in this area. More information was to be found on the display board next to the Saddle House on the road to Middleton. Just before we reached the Saddle House, we passed a line of dead moles hanging from the fence, evidence that the mole catcher had done his work. We then crossed the impressively high Blackton Bridge which had been built so that the pack horses carrying lead ore had an easier route up to the smelting mills.

Heading back to Eggleston we took the pack horse route, crossing the twisting Eggleston Burn by footbridges rather than the traditional cobbled ford. Then returning by the route we had set out on we were rewarded by super views over the dale as the mist had lifted. In all a gratifying walk in good company.

See you again on May 20th.

Liz Colley
22nd April 2024