

## SHORTER WALKS GROUP

### January 2026 Report

#### Plan A, B, or C?

January is a tricky month for walking with the weather challenges and early sunset, so I started with a plan which would take us around the edge of town, through Flatts Wood, past the golf course and over to the actual Red Well, returning via the railway line. Unfortunately, it rained so much in the previous week that the ground all around was absolutely sodden, I thought no one would appreciate walking in these conditions

So it was time for plan B, a route that stayed on hard surfaces. Sixteen of us gathered at Scar Top, there was a collective need to get out walking again. It was at least dry for the afternoon although chilly and the sky grey with heavy clouds. This route took us down to the Silver Bridge and along the river towards the castle. It was opportunity to see the river roaring past the weir.

We carried on towards the Demesnes, following Gray Lane up to the churchyard and onto Newgate and the Bowes Museum gardens. This was where plan B started to become plan C. Gradually walkers who lived on this side of town began to leave the group and head home. We said goodbye to three people as we arrived at Green Lane, we even walked past the house of one walker and by the time we arrived back at the start, there were only four of us left.

It was good to meet up for our first walk of the year; it felt like an achievement to dodge the worst of the January weather. We have made a plan for February to walk in Hamsterley Forest. Hopefully Spring will be just around the corner by then.

Liz Colley  
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