

## **4-6 Mile Walking Group, 9 April, High Force** **Lead by: Gillian Barnes-Morris**

In spite of rain and gusty winds 5 intrepid walkers – Ruth, Janet, Liz, Pete and I decided that in spite of the forecast we were ready for some exercise and company. The plan was to meet in the car park at Bowlees, walk to High Force and to return via the High Force hotel.

The rain began just as we walked towards the Wynch Bridge. Crossing over the river we couldn't help but notice that the force and volume of the water was just amazing. None of us had seen the river moving so fast. The path was, as expected, a little slippery but the river was captivating and there was plenty of new growth on trees and bushes and clumps of primrose to distract us from the weather conditions.

As we reached the second bridge we took a poll to see who wanted to continue on and up to the Force and who was ready to turn back. Three of us couldn't resist carrying on to see just how spectacular the top of High Force was, while two decided to return via Holwick Head, thereby missing having to trek up the many steps to the High Force Hotel.

The weather seem'd to take a turn for the worse as we carried onwards, with harder wind and rain so it we stopped for just a short while to admire the view and take a few photos before turning back to join the others.

I had never taken the Holwick Head route, which takes you past Holwick Lodge, Hield House and Holwick Head House. It's a shorter route but one that offers a different perspective from the High Force Hotel route as you are able to look down to follow the bends in the River until eventually arriving back at Low Force.

Once the visitor centre came into sight it was a race to see who could get there first for a welcoming hot drink and a bite to eat. Although we were rather wet and little cold at the end we agreed that the effort had been worthwhile.



