

7-9 Mile Walking Group – Report by Alan Kenwright

On Wednesday 21 August, 11 members of the group assembled at 10:00 at the picnic area at the east end of the north shore of Blackton Reservoir. Even getting there was a bit of an adventure since it involved driving a couple of miles down a single-track road from Cotherstone and then a further kilometre or so down an unmetalled track and across the reservoir dam. The reward for our endeavour was that we were already at a reasonably remote location and actually on the route of our walk. So we set off back across the dam (on foot this time!) and then crossed a style built in to one of the nearby walls, constructed by the same people who built the dam. It turns out that they were not especially considerate of people of limited stature, or afraid of heights! But once that was safely negotiated, the walk settled down to a steady plod with no more major styles in the remaining seven miles. We soon picked up the “Bowes Leg” of the Pennine way and made our way around Goldsborough, where we briefly paused for a photo before pressing on to the boundary of the MOD training area at Loup’s Hill. Fortunately, the army were having a day off so we could still enjoy pleasant conversations as we made our way south to Ladyfold Rigg where we paused for a coffee break, taking shelter from the wind behind a wall. Suitably refreshed, we turned west and continued the steady climb up to Race Yate Rigg, which affords impressive views over both Baldersdale and the upper reaches of Deepdale. Conversation was somewhat more sporadic on this leg because we were walking uphill into a steadily freshening breeze (gusts of up to 40 mph according to the Met Office), but we made it and again took advantage of what shelter we could find to have our lunch. We did not tarry o’er long over lunch because ominous grey clouds approaching from the west suggested that we might be in for some serious precipitation. So we made our descent northwards down the Pennine Way, being duly thankful that it hadn’t rained too much in recent days, because parts of the track were still boggy in places! Having crossed Blackton Bridge, (traditionally regarded as the half-way point on the Pennine Way) we turned east along the north shore of Blackton Reservoir and managed to make it back to the cars without the rain arriving. A very enjoyable if somewhat windy excursion.

Many thanks to Alan for a good leg stretch. Unfortunately the photo is “unreadable” so we just have memories.

Please note a change of venue for our September walk. Our next walk on September 18 will be led by David. It will be an 8 mile circular walk from Wolsingham to Tunstall reservoir and back on a mix of terrains. Please let me know if you are interested in coming along nickygrace729@gmail.com