

The Dales Way Association.

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Editorial.

Lambrigg Head to Grayrigg Foot. The Dales Way footpath. Cumbria.

When I took responsibility for “footpaths” in 2006, my first assignment was to look at a walker’s complaint of debris being dumped across the Dales Way footpath at Holme Park farm. Over the years other complaints came in regarding this location. Way marks disappearing, misleading waymarks appearing and more debris, culminating in police being involved as loose dogs harassed walkers, on the right of way through the farm.

Green Head Farm has had numerous complaints about the unacceptable state of the road - track leading to the farm. Water, deep mud, slurry and cow droppings.

Lambrigg Head farm’s cause for complaint was debris and large farm vehicles blocking the footpath, way marks and signs disappearing or being damaged and at least one altercation with a walker re the alleged chaining of the metal gate at the end of the animal bridge over the M6.

At Grayrigg Foot farm there has been several cases of friction with the owner – occupier as walkers have strayed. Again signs have gone missing or been damaged.

All of the above and other minor problems were reported to Capita Symonds, who were then working for CCC.

Everything however has not all been negative. A finger post was provided at Moresdale Hall to keep walkers on the correct path, an electric fence reported was not in fact on the Dales Way footpath, the alleged chained gate on the bridge was checked as soon as reported, and found to be incorrect, etc etc. All these incidents dealt with in a reasonable time frame working in harmony with the Access Consultant/Ranger.

However, letters from walkers who walked the Dales Way last September have confirmed that all of the problems listed in the first paragraphs are still there. Cumbria is the gateway to the Lake District with at least 3000 walkers per year. To have the same problems reoccurring year after year on this part of the Dales Way footpath is not satisfactory.

The Dales Way Association has written to the Chief Executive Officer of Cumbria County Council asking her to provide leadership and support from the top to the various officers, consultants and rangers responsible for the footpath, to enable them to carry out the tasks required and also ensure that these duties will be carried out with due diligence in the specified time frame.

Tim Farron, local MP who has been asked by two local constituents to persuade CCC to act, has supported this. His request was for a full inspection of the sections of the path that have been criticised in order to have them repaired.

Alex McManus.

Dales Way Bradford Link – 15 October 2011

Bradford to Ilkley – 12 miles.

After a week of grey skies and cloud so low that you could barely see the horizon, the Autumn Dales Way Association walk was blessed with glorious sunshine.

This year's walk followed the Bradford Dales Way Link from the centre of the city to the start of the walk proper in Ilkley. The route was first devised by the Bradford branch of the Ramblers' Association in the 1970's and originally started in Shipley. Bradford Council's countryside service more recently extended the trail by four miles to start in the heart of the city outside the Cathedral gates.

A small group of people gathered at the Cathedral gates at 10am. Amongst the walkers was the head of Bradford Council's countryside service, Danny Jackson, and two of his colleagues.

The route out of the city is a surprising mixture of green corridor and urban deprivation. Minutes after crossing the busy ring road we found ourselves in the Boar's Well Nature Reserve, a wildlife area managed by volunteers. Although never far from the roar of traffic it nevertheless is an oasis of mixed woodland. The path leaves the reserve to climb up the hillside to Bolton Woods where there are fine views over Bradford Dale where the mighty bulk of Manningham Mills still dominates.

The path took us down towards Shipley alongside Bradford Beck. We soon joined the Leeds Liverpool canal and in another mile were in the more picturesque Saltaire where we had a short break for lunch. At this point we both lost and gained walkers – countryside officers from Bradford Council left the walk and we met up with the Friends of A Dales High Way. Saltaire is the start of A Dales High Way and the first



section shares much of the route of the Bradford Dales Way Link from Saltaire to Ilkley.

The two routes, Dales Way and Dales High Way, complement each other perfectly, the one following the valleys and riverbanks, the other seeking out high places and fell tops. Dales Way Association members and Friends of A Dales High Way are always keen to work - and walk - together.



We left the towpath at Hirst Wood with its lock gates and old mill cottages and were quickly climbing through the ancient woodland of Trench

Wood onto Shipley Glen. Mill workers from Bradford traditionally escaped onto Shipley Glen to enjoy open countryside far above the dirt and grime of the city. Today it's still a favourite and we greeted families, dog walkers and joggers as we headed north towards the moors.

At Golcar Farm the two routes part company for a while and we stopped for a "you tak the high road and I'll tak the low road" moment. The Dales Way group headed north to Dick Hudson's pub where we avoided the temptation to call in and were soon over the stile and enjoying the isolation of Rombalds Moor. As one walker commented, "One minute we were enjoying the bustle of Saltaire, the next we're high on the moors with no-one in sight."

Our route continued north in a steady climb over the moor. Looking back we picked out familiar landmarks as far away as Ferrybridge Power Station and the wind turbines on Ovenden Moor. It was wet underfoot at times from the recent heavy rain but perfectly passable and before long we spotted the boundary stone where



the Dales Way and Dales High Way routes meet again. We were only a minute or two behind the Dales High Way group who were waiting for us at the milestone and we set off together for the last two miles or so down into Ilkley.

We took a short break to admire Yorkshire's very own mini Stonehenge, the Bronze Age Twelve Apostles stone circle before tackling the knee-crunching descent into Ilkley where we rounded the day off with a pint of Ilkley Brewery's very fine Mary Jane. It was a grand day out and we look forward to our Dales Way Association Spring Walk.

We do hope you'll be able to join us.

Tony Grogan.

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Nikki Trask

Due to a change in her career and the extra pressure of work, Nikki has reluctantly had to leave the committee. In June 2008 the Dales Way Association was on the point of winding up. This situation was saved as Nikki and Steve Taylor stepped forward to take over the duties of Treasurer and Membership Secretary respectively, in view of David Smith's illness. Together with Steve, and with David's help the Association continued on. When Carol joined us and took over as Treasurer, Nikki moved on to look after our accommodation providers, which she did with her usual smile and efficiency. A big thank you Nikki and best wishes with your career. We will miss you.

4 of the 12 Apostles, on Rombalds moor, on the Bradford Link walk.



Visitors to the Twelve Apostles should be aware that the circle they see today bears little resemblance to the place when it was first constructed around four thousand years ago. The scattered woodland which covered most of these now-barren moor land heights have long since gone and the stones have been moved and overthrown so many times that it would be very difficult indeed to gain an actual picture of what the circle actually looked like.

In the 1960s all of the standing stones in this circle had been knocked over and were left ruinous in deep heather. With no action from the authorities, a group of local “*heathens*” took it upon themselves to stand the stones back upright and restore the circle to roughly how it looks today. They continue to look after the Apostles, restoring it when vandalised, from the ‘70s on.

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Dales Way Committee Meeting 10th September 2011.

Points of interest from the meeting.

The **2012 AGM** will be held in **Ilkley** on a Saturday in late October starting at 12 noon with a buffet lunch, followed by the meeting at 1pm.

The **Sprint Mill Road diversion** proposed route was accepted as very good. The DWA would make a suitable donation if it eventually went ahead.

The DWA is in a healthy financial situation but membership is declining. Membership details will be sent to anyone ordering a badge or Handbook. This is also on the Website.

The Website to be upgraded and controlled by committee members.

Nikki Trask, who looked after our **Accom Providers** has resigned and needs a replacement She was thanked for her efforts in the past.

Next Meeting 18th February 2012.

Walkers Comments and requests for Certificates and Badges.

Four requests for certificates and badges were received in October. The walkers had accomplished the walk between the 3rd and 25th September, all with various fortunes.

JT, her 20 year old daughter and collie dog.

We walked the Dales Way in the first week in September, which was admittedly a very wet week. We were back packing, so carrying a heavy load with all our camping equipment. We are experienced walkers and backpackers having recently completed Hadrian's Wall walk. Although the way was hard, cold and muddy and we encountered swollen flooded rivers, with blocked paths [because of flood debris] we did not encounter any real problems until getting into Cumbria.

The footpaths through the woods north of Sedbergh were difficult to transverse – at one point the path along the river was covered in human effluent and in another strong smelling chemicals – which incidentally brought my daughters feet out in a series of burns and blisters. Stiles had been replaced by gates [not a bad thing] but the signs had not been replaced. We encountered several other walkers who had the same problems.

On reaching Lambrigg Head we encountered a tractor and trailer completely blocking the path and had to climb over the wheels with the dog to get past. A little further along on leaving the road we entered the field where all the top soil had been removed, the field was a quagmire. We had to carry the dog and were up to our knees in mud. On reaching the very high wall the stile had been blocked up and replaced by stone steps which were almost impossible for us to reach, because of the removal of the top soil. It took us nearly 20 minutes to get us, our packs and the dog to the other side.

After Thursgill Farm the field was completely cut in half by an electric fence with no means to get through. In pouring rain we had to crawl under the fence into a large herd of cows. On going through a gate it was very difficult to open and resulted in a very bruised knee and ankle.

At Green Head farm we crossed a field to enter a farm trackthe track was at least 2 foot deep in mud and cow poo and about 40 aggressive cows, if we had let the dog walk, she would have drowned.

Going onto Black Moss Tarn we reached the wall with the Dales Way sign which had been removed and thrown on the fall [sic]. Further past along we reached another wall with the Dales Way clearly marked to go over the wall stile – this was impossible to pass as it had been completely bricked up. We had to detour further up the hill and pass through barbed wire and cross a partly demolished wall.

[In conclusion] We found the footpaths badly maintained and difficult to walk on – clearly in some parts the weather was to blame in others it was clear that the farmers had deliberately blocked or hindered the passage of walkers.

In the main the worst parts were in Cumbria – sad to admit because we actually live in Cumbria.all in all a disaster.

C and A W.

*They commenced their walk at Ilkley on Friday 9th September*slightly cloudy with some light showers.lunch in the “Tea Shop” Bolton Abbey, good choice. B and B in Burnsall was very good, the owner made us very welcome.

Saturday. The walk between Grassington and Kettlewell was particular enjoyable with very good views across the valley in the sunshine. Accommodation in Hubberholme. . . .we had evening meal in The George which was fine, but you have to be careful with their opening hours. Single night stays are not possible over weekends, must be a minimum of two.

Sunday. Left Hubberholme after a visit to the church in sunshine. After walking past Oughtershaw we carried on to Nethergill farm where we found tea and coffee in the adjacent barn with an honesty box!
The weather then deteriorated . . .wet and windy and boggy. . . .the walk along the road up to the Station Inn, although only 1 mile seemed like 2, in the wind – and uphill. Next day, the owner, without prompting offered us a lift to the start of the Dales Way at Gearstones in the wind and rain. We accepted.

Monday. Across Gayle Moor it was quite boggy in places. Missed coffee at the Sportsman’s Inn. Closed Mondays. . . .the last mile into Dent was difficult with the path very narrow, slippery and muddy.the footpath from Brackensgill up to the main road was very wet with a 3 inch deep river. The B and B in Sedbergh was excellent. . . .the evening meal in the local pub good choice and not too expensive.

Tuesday. . . the weather had improved with some sunshine. . . . a diversion because of the level of the ford at Low Branthwaite. [*Crosdale Beck.*] Welcomed at the B and B in Burneside with tea and cake which was very welcome. . . . transport arranged to and from the local pub.

Wednesday. A pleasant walk by the river to Staveleycups of tea at Hagg End Farm [*no longer available.*].on to Bowness in sunshine. 2pm.
After tea etc we caught the train home from Windermere.

N and J F.

My wife and I walked the Dales Way 12th to the 19th September. This was my wife’s first long walk. We worked out our daily mileage and booked the accommodation ourselves, all of which was very good. Our luggage was carried by one of the baggage handlers with no problem.

The first 4 days were mainly fine but breezy. From Cam Houses we decided to try the Pennine Bridleway to Newby Head then round to Wold Fell and down Artengill. This was a very good track, much better underfoot than via Gearstones.
Overnight the heavens opened and babbling brooks became raging torrents. We had to leave the riverside paths and take to the roads. Falling in would have been fatal.

At the Lune Viaduct, footings and timber were there for a new bridge over Crosdale Beck but we had to detour due to the state of the beck.

Crossing the M6 at Lambrigg Head, the local farmer had been excavating around his cottage and dumped soil and rubble in the field on the Dales Way path. After the rain it was like the Somme, very muddy and difficult to manage.

At Grayrigg Foot we had to detour down the farm access road to avoid knee deep mud. A party of Dales Way walkers followed us down 5 minutes later and got a bollocking for trespassing. In Patton, tired, wet and muddy, a warm welcome, a hot bath and good food ended the day.

Final days walk from Staveley gave us a lovely sunny day with good views back to the Howgills and forward to the Lakes. Shortly after lunch we are having our photos taken on the Dales Way seat. A lovely feeling. Brilliant finish to our efforts.

M A and his cousin.

My cousin and I set out mid September from Leeds aiming for Bowness. Thanks to the well marked way and Colin Speakmans "Dales Way. The complete Guide." We barely needed to use the OS maps. The whole adventure was very enjoyable with the high standard of en route accommodation and the friendly welcome therein, being a notable feature

Arriving at Bowness, a great feeling of satisfaction and with realisation that we had had experiences that would bear repeating.

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Four different reports. The common thread is that once you cross the M6 cattle bridge into Lambrigg Head and then on to Grayrigg Foot, difficulties will be encountered unlike those on your journey so far.

Dealing with walkers comments.

The first letter is the most disturbing and my custom is to identify the problem, contact the relevant Access Officer or Ranger who then reports back as to the action they have or will take. But before I can report the problem to them I need to know exactly where it is, preferably with a grid reference. I can usually guess the location however "woods north of Sedbergh" is too vague to get action. As of 18th January YDNPA still do not know where the "strong smelling chemicals" were.

At Lambrigg Head, the "trailer blocking the path" was confirmed by an email from a fellow walker who was there on the same date. I asked him to send me a sketch as to the **exact** position, which he did i.e. the track leading down from the cattle bridge. I passed this on to CCC. *[There is also a track off the farm road leading to Holme Park farm, which has also been blocked in the past.]*

I recognised the entrance to Holme Park farm, this was confirmed by CCC.

At Thursgill Farm the electric fence has been put there before as a temporary measure when the field is being grazed, but there is usually a crossing point according to CCC.

Green Head farm is well known for the mud problem.

Black Moss Tarn is a notorious place to stray off the track. I asked Donald Holiday, our man in the lakes, to walk the route and replace any missing way marks. He reported back week ending 13th January that the waymarks were both still in place, with photographs. [See Newsletter No 39 Spring 2011 Page 9 Black Moss Tarn]

The walker had sent a copy of the letter direct to CCC and they sent me a copy. I did not contact the writer for further information, but did ask the Access Officer on 5th January as to what progress had been made, so I could report it in this Newsletter.

He confirmed that the route through Lambrigg was clear when inspected but prone for materials being deposited. There is a new owner adjacent to Lambrigg Head wishing to upgrade the stile, and other improvements.

The electric fence has now been removed.

A drainage scheme to be discussed for Green Head farm and a meeting to take place with Green Head and Grayrigg Foot owners for discussion, with DWA in attendance.

The chemical issue was within the YDNPA and he “believed it has been resolved.”

All of the above was then passed on to the writer of the original letter.

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The new bridge at Crosdale Beck was completed in October by a team of Yorkshire Dale National Park Rangers and Dales volunteers. A date had been set to start the construction in September, but heavy rain meant that the raw material could not be moved across the fields to the site – much to the disappointment of the volunteers who had had the date in their diaries for months.

The Dales Way Association will be at the official opening in Spring, maybe incorporating a walk. Watch our web page for further information.

YDNPA

The annual liaison meeting between the Dales Way Association and the Yorkshire Dales National Parks Association took place at Colvend, Grassington on 4th October 2011. The National Park had 7 members in attendance, the DWA had 4.

The Authority's budget cuts were outlined by Alan Hulme, Head of Ranger Services. Extra duties and responsibilities had been passed to the Rangers and Access Officers but the maintenance of the Dales Way footpath was not under threat. The Dales Way Association promised financial help in certain circumstances.

Cumbria.

5 Kissing Gates and a Timber Step Stile had been funded by a donation from Kendal Ramblers and a local Sedbergh resident. The new Bridge at Crosdale Beck, was funded by the DWA and the Ramblers Association.

Ribblesdale / 3 Peaks area.

A number of trees had blown down within the Cam forest, several of which were overhanging the path. These have been cleared and improvements to the path which had deteriorated, to be arranged. An additional sign to direct walkers up the hill to Cam High Road is required to prevent walkers taking the forestry road in error.

Upper Wharfedale.

Various works to infrastructure have been carried out.

Kettlewell. Surfacing over tree roots was washed out in winter floods also the section before the wall was subject to flooding. New approach to this section of path is now proposed, with maybe a flagged section nearest the river.

The Cowside track, above Deepdale Bridge is nearing completion. Topsoil has been rotavated and seeded between the stones to enable the track to green up.

Met with Kettlewell Parish Council to discuss "on road" signage through Kettlewell.

Lower Wharfedale.

Work carried out on surfacing, drainage, repairs, replacements on tracks, gates, ramps and decking within the area.

General.

National Trust to be approached re a possible creation agreement for a route from Oughtershaw to Beckermonds.

10000 leaflets have been printed to promote the Dales Way. The Association have offered a donation to make improvements to the leaflet to include link route changes, replacing the map and other minor adjustments.

A four year block of data was produced showing the footfall along the Dales Way footpath. Annual totals; 2007 **4154**. 2008 **3789**. 2009 **3971**. 2010 **3726**.

Waymarking in Kettlewell and Milnthrop, agreed to be difficult, to be looked at.

Opening ceremony for Crosdale Beck to take place in the spring. Plaque to be affixed indicating that the Dales Way Association had donated.

Date of next meeting. 2nd October 2012. 10.30am Colvend.

ride2stride – the Settle-Carlisle Walking Festival

ride2stride is a festival of walks, talks and music along the fabulous Settle-Carlisle railway line.

It's a week long celebration of the wonderful landscape and culture of the western Dales and Eden Valley.

The festival is made up of lots of events and activities and things will be happening along the length of the line. Walks will be led from stations by experienced walk leaders. Speakers will share their local knowledge and love of the area, and the pubs will be buzzing with music and song.

ride2stride runs from May 1st to May 7th and is for everyone who loves the Yorkshire Dales. Whether you travel to an event by train, live along the line or book your holiday to take advantage of the festival, we're sure you'll have a great time.

There are a few events, which may be of particular interest to DWA members:

DWA chairman Colin Speakman helps kick off the festival with an easy 7.5 miles circular walk from Settle Station, **Limestone and Scars** - to Feizor and Giggleswick Scar across the Craven limestone. Tuesday, May 1st, meet at Settle Station at 09.50.

Colin also helps round off the festival with a talk looking at the close links between **Railways and Ramblers**, and how railways have encouraged rambling as a popular countryside activity, with examples of some wonderful railways, from the Settle-Carlisle to examples in other parts of England, Wales, France, Germany, Austria and Hungary. Monday, May 7, 14.00. St John's Church Hall, Settle. £5.00.

Dentdale Waterfalls & Wild Flowers – FoSCL walk leaders John Disney and Chris Wright follow a section of the Dales Way from Dent Station down through Dentdale, helping you identify early May wildflowers of the Dales. Returning from Dent on the service bus to Dent station at 17.00 (additional fare payable). Meet at Dent Station, Saturday May 5th at 12.12.

A taste of A Dales High Way – join DWA committee member Chris Grogan for a moderate 8.5 mile walk from Malham to Settle via Janet's Foss, Gordale Scar, Malham Cove and Attermire Scar

Meet at Settle station on Sunday, May 6th at 10.10 to catch the Dalesbus from Settle to Malham (10.30 - additional fare payable) for the start of the walk. Finish with plenty of time for refreshments before the last train at 18.19.

The walks are free and don't require pre-booking. For more information see www.ride2stride.org.uk

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Any comments relating to the Dales Way Association or the Dales Way footpath are welcome. PO Box 1065, Bradford, BD1 9JY. Or Info@dalesway.org.uk

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Why should I become a member of the Dales Way Association?

Membership of the Dales Way Association is open to those who have walked or plan to walk the Dales Way, or who simply care about its future.

Membership gives you each year a free copy of the Dales Way Handbook and two Newsletters. The Handbook is essential reading to bring you up to date information on accommodation, refreshments, transport and related facilities for walkers along the way.

The Newsletters bring you current information, walkers reports and conditions along the footpath. You can report any problems experienced on your walk with the knowledge that they will be addressed with the appropriate authority and rectified.

Most importantly your subscription enables the Association to pursue its objectives to ensure that the Dales Way Long Distance Footpath and appropriate link paths, are properly maintained and way marked, and examine opportunities for improving the route either by means of footpath creations or diversions.

The funds allow financial support to be provided to the various authorities along the route for essential improvements e.g. bridges, finger posts etc making the Dales Way a safe and enjoyable experience.

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Dales Way Association.

Application for Membership.

The present Annual Subscription is £6 for individuals and £8 for family membership.

Cheques to Dales Way Association please. Allow 14 days for processing.

The Dales Way Association PO Box 1065 Bradford BD1 9JY

Name; Address;

Town; Post Code.....

Telephone; E mail.....

I would like to become a member of the Dales Way Association and enclose;

Annual subscription. Individual; £6.00

Annual subscription. Family; £8.00

DVD "A taste of the Dales Way" £3.99

Donation;

Total. _____

Signed.....

Date.....

