

**Trip Report: The Lake District**

**Date:** 13th August 2016

**Group:** Mike H (leader) Lynne and Tony, Selina and Mike with Debbie and Helen in tow, Dave and Ali, Debbie and Richard (guest)

**Route:** Langdale Pikes

**Total Distance:** 5.8 miles

**Total Ascent:** 3300 ft

After an early departure and a relatively traffic free M6 we arrived at the national trust car park in the Langdales in good time, although Debbie and Richard made a slight detour of Mickledore having missed the car park entrance - easily done as it poorly signposted. The forecast for the day was "light rain showers in the morning" - what an understatement! I am becoming infamous for organising wet walks - this walk continued the theme.

Leaving the car park involves an immediate ascent with no long slog to get to the mountains. As we ascended along a path heading directly to Loft Crag, our first summit, the rain became incessant with a significant drop in temperature. The group queried whether we were still in an English summer - but we were in Cumbria! The dome shaped summit of Pike of Stickle kept disappearing in a shroud of low cloud as we climbed higher. When we reached the col near Loft Crag we had a group discussion as the original plan needed to be reassessed due to the conditions. The walk across the plateau to High Raise with almost no visibility was abandoned and we decided to climb the summits around the Pikes instead.

As we scrambled to the summit of Pike of Stickle the cloud cover began to clear giving a view across to Windermere and the Coniston fells. Cloud still covered the fells to the north and east and even the nearby Crinkles and Bowfell were only temporarily visible. We then climbed to the top of Harrison Stickle and the cloud began to clear even more giving us a great view down the Langdale valley. Lingmoor Fell on the other side of the valley appeared bright purple as sunlight brought out the colour of the heather.

We had lunch with a great view of Stickle Tarn below us and watched a group climb Pavey Ark via Jacks Rake. This group told me later it was like climbing a waterfall. We then followed the path which goes from Harrison Stickle to the top of Pavey Ark - a much easier scramble than the Rake. Descending down from Pavey Ark proved a bit of a challenge. The OS map shows a clear path and the GPS showed that we were right on the path but the descent involved demanding bush-whacking along the side of Bright Beck as no path existed. The group did well to get down without

slipping in the difficult terrain and without getting wet as we crossed the Beck which was swollen with the mornings rain. Thanks go to Richard (and Spot) for finding a route down.

From here we walked along the banks of the Tarn to Stickle Ghyll. As we descended the path we had to cross the swollen waters of the Ghyll which was achieved with no mishaps. We followed the path down to the car park with the sun on our backs - a very different feeling compared to driving rain experienced earlier in the day.

Well done to everyone - challenging conditions but well worth it as the weather improved as we walked the summits.

Mike H