

## **Trip Report: The Longendale Edges**

**Date:** 18th January 2015

**Group:** Colin (Leader), Mike H (assistant leader), Ann, Neil, Caitlin, Lesley, Ian, Brian plus Mirek and Dave (new BUMS) and 4 mutts (Nicki, Roxie, Molly and Candy)

**Route:** Crowden Youth Hostel on A628 taking in Wildboar Clough, Clough Edge, (a very short part of Pennine way) Bramah Edge then onto Ogden Clough then back over the Rhodeswood Reservoir

**Total Distance:** 12 miles

**Total Ascent:** Unknown

**Weather:** Pretty wet!!

**Time:** 6 hours

This was the first of BUMS "Year of the classics" to commemorate our 10 years stomping up the hills.

This year the leaders don't choose the walks (we merely organise and lead them and carry the shelter!) whereas the "Classics committee" nominates the walks.

So I stepped forward as Mr J Grant esq was unavailable due to his far east pub crawl and it seems this walk was his idea! I say this as personally (and I accept I am by no means one of the most savvy of hikers) had never heard of this particular "classic" and as you read on perhaps you may agree there may be a case to have it re-graded?

Anyway, a positive was that it was not too far to drive to the start which is useful for a January plod and after a series of late call offs due to a bout of lurgy doing it's rounds which took out Jim W, Amanda M (or Amanda 2 as she seems to have been tagged) and also Mike A. As Jim W was the only person who had actually walked this route (or ran it?) it was a pity he didn't make it as his navigation skills would have been very helpful. There was also a wimp out from (wannabe Bum of the Year) Frank and finally, most disappointing of all, was a late no show from the Quinns due to some domestic distraction.

When Jim G gave me my assignment he kindly also gave me both a map with the route clearly marked out plus a book with the route detail. As a diligent leader, knowing rain was forecast, I duly laminated said map and instructions and arranged for the GPX route to be sent to Mr Hiscock to plug into his GPS which proved a master stroke as my initial prep on the walk indicated there was a distinct lack of paths! How right I was!

Anyway 3 cars descended on the car park next to Crowden Youth Hostel at the designated time and we made a bit of a stuttering start as we tried to follow Jim's path from the car park for Mike to announce it was

closed. So we trudged along the road whilst the leader fretted that he thought he had left his nicely laminated route instructions back in the car (this proved a senior moment as they eventually turned up). Another senior moment followed quickly as co-leader Mike started taking us down a path which was in opposite direction to where we were supposed to be going. Caitlin, our youngest walker astutely noted this could be a very long day!

More consternation would follow as we approached a gate stating "no dogs" which after much debate we ignored and plodded on. Very soon Jim's route took us to another gate with a more forceful sign stating "Guard dogs on patrol". After consulting the route instruction this time we realised Jim's route took us to certain death from the rabid dogs, but the correct route was uphill from here and we flogged to the top of the edge.

By this time it was pouring down and we stopped for coffee by a stream by Shining Clough out of the wind (but not the rain).

We then followed the edge with some opportunities for Ian and Mike to try to get themselves on next years BUMS calendar as they posed on the rocks. Soon however, we ran out of the feint path and we were forced to bushwhack across the scrub and poor Molly really didn't like it and Mirek came to the rescue to carry her.

Along the way we had a couple of sighting of white mountain hares (or one hare that was following us?) and at one stage it popped up right beside us. Roxie then took chase and disappeared into the sunset in a vane attempt to catch it.

The next challenge came as we had to find a way across Torside Clough and this time the route required us to simply scramble up a waterfall! Easy! Candy didn't like it much and Dave got very wet coaxing Candy up the waterfall! Mirek loved it!

We then found ourselves on a path! Wow! It was the Pennine way where we saw the first humans of the day! We stopped for lunch and taking stock we realised there was zero chance of us completing the advertised route before darkness and planned a short cut back to the car. We then walked along the Pennine way for a very short time before we realised we had been on a path for a few minutes and the route description called for us to divert (bushwhack) to another "path" that absolutely didn't exist. We then had to carry the dogs across a few fences that didn't exist in the route description either and after flogging through further pathless terrain (which was definitely the correct routing as thankfully our hero Mike continued to confirm we were on the correct course!) we finally found ourselves on the Longdendale trail path, yes a path, and the rain

abetted and all was well with the world again as we headed back to the car back across the reservoir.

The total distance with our shortcut was same as the advertised route so something wasn't quite right? Our Chairman described it as just about the worst walk she had ever been on but I'm sure that was not the case. It was actually quite a fun day out and although it was pretty tough walking through driving rain without the benefit of a path the beer at the Yew Tree tasted that much better. The only remaining consternation was Mirek ordering a cup of tea. This must be against BUMS constitution. We should check!

Colin