

Trip Report: Hebden Bridge**Date:** 25th October 2013**Group:** Mike A (Leader) & Lesley, Lynn, Jim G, Lynda**Route:** Hebden Bridge - Stoodley Pike - Withens Clough Reservoir - Erringden Moor - Hebden Bridge**Total Distance:** 9.6 miles**Total Ascent:** 2050 ft**Weather:** Overcast and damp turning sunny**Time:** 5 hours 15 mins

Just one car load of BUMS set off from dark, wet Bunbury on Friday morning. The prospect was of a very wet morning with an improvement after lunch so we were pleased to find Hebden Bridge damp but free of rain as we managed to navigate our way from the town centre (via the toilets) over the canal, river and railway through a wood up towards the moors.

The intention was to follow the route lifted from a guide book but so poor was the route description and so many were the paths and byways, that we decided any route would do as long as we visited the main waypoints of the route. This quickly became the obvious plan because shortly after we had emerged from the wood and crested a hill, our first objective of the day, Stoodley Pike was clear on the horizon. So instead of the convoluted route described in the book, we made a beeline along Pinnacle Lane and The Pennine Way towards the gritstone monument which towers above the moors. It was built in 1854 and stands 125ft high, commemorating the defeat of Napoleon in 1815. The original was actually built in 1815 but fell down in 1854 to be replaced by the existing monument. There are stairs leading up to a balcony which we couldn't resist. All except for Lesley, complaining it was too dark! I think she regretted missing out as this is unlikely to be repeated on next year's "classic walk" line up.

From Stoodley Pike we continued south on the Pennine Way; a typical Peak District "edge" with great views beyond Todmorden to the west. Also at this point the sky was clearing ahead and even glimpses of blue sky were appearing. We followed this track to its junction with The Calderdale Way where we turned left and descended towards Withens Clough Reservoir. Here, we encountered our first serious bog of the day but the squad made it to the reservoir with some complaining, but without any one coming to grief.

We walked around the north side of the reservoir to the dam wall where we found a sheltered lunch spot with a decent view down the valley towards Cragg Vale. The plan now was to head north back to Hebden

Bridge following the route description, but even armed with twin Satmaps and Lesley's attempts to describe the route "it's difficult to read without my glasses", it proved quite a challenge. Nevertheless, it was on the whole successful as we managed to visit all the planned waypoints in the right order!. The track across Bell House Moor and Erringden Moor, according to the guide book is "wet in places". This is the biggest under statement you could imagine. It should be rewritten "a classic Tony Quinn bogtrot", which would best describe conditions underfoot. Even Jim took a bootfull at one point.

Once off the moor, it was an easy downhill route back through Crow Nest Wood into Hebden Bridge. Ironically the leader nearly came down on the most treacherous section of the entire walk which was a footpath of slimy cobbles under the railway bridge. Just when you think it is safe..... It was a walk with plenty of interest, especially if you are interested in gritstone monuments and soggy moorland. The squad certainly seemed to enjoy their day out in "better than expected" weather and 2 hours later it got even better as we arrived at the Yew Tree for rehydration.

Mike A