

Trip Report: The South Pennines

Date: Saturday 11th November 2017

Group: Jim G (Leader) Mike H, Steve, Sarah, Lesley, Mike A, Gerry, Jeff, Dave, Ali, Tony, Lynn, Riley (dog)

Route: White Hill & Piethorne Clough-The Reservoir Walk

Total Distance: 12.7 miles

Total Ascent: 2024 ft.

Weather: Dry & Sunny, a bit cold later on

A leisurely 8am start from Bunbury, 3 cars in case of a possible Arrowsmith bailout (that didn't happen, well done Mike). An uneventful drive to the full-service Visitor centre car park at Hollingsworth Lake, where we meet up with Ali & Dave.

The route starts on the tarmac, some mutterings, through the village of Rakewood to pass beneath the M62, we are to see various views and sounds of the motorway throughout the day, a few more mutterings. We head off up the Pennine Bridleway before branching off left for the steady, if slightly boggy, climb up to the radio mast at the top of Windy Hill. A brief coffee stop is taken here, after a few more mutterings.

We now join the southbound Pennine Way, a clear route to the trig point on top of White Hill (466m). Much discussion about the origins of the hill's name, the trig point has been desecrated with white gloss paint. Some photo posing, alas too late for the Bums 2017 Calendar (Lelsey is now taking orders, although she usually gives them!)

Crossing White Hill, we drop down onto the National Trust's Marsden Moor Estate. The manor of Marsden originally belonged to the Crown and was part of the Honour of Pontefract, granted to William the Conqueror in 1067. Continuing down to the A640, more tarmac mutterings, we make our way to our first reservoir of the day, Readycon Dean, we cross its dam and lunch is taken on a nice grassy bank, basking in the winter sunshine.

We continue down to the A672, mutterings have died out (well you can't hear them if you stay far enough in front). We cross the road and stop to admire an impressive memorial stone to a late Landlord of the nearby Ram's Head Inn, before dropping down to our second reservoir of the day, Piethorne. We then follow a track, running south, that takes us past our third and fourth reservoirs, Kitcliffe and Ogden. We stop to admire some fine old houses on the banks of Ogden reservoir, our eagle-eyed ornithologist Jeff, spots a pair of Great Crested Grebes.

We cross the dam and climb up to Tunshill Lane, taking a very boggy and muddy track back down under the M62, across the Rugby playing fields and then to the Visitor centre car park.

An uneventful drive back, sees us in the Dysart at 4.30pm for rehydration. We are met by Gillian, Shirley and Debbie for a nice couple of pints of Timothy Taylor's Bolt Maker, well I think they had Gin & Wine

Jim G