

A happy new year to all our readers

Ramblings

Trafford Ramblers Newsletter

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Lockdown bumper issue



The
Supreme
Leader



always
Dubbins
his boots

Confident
Leader



I know ex-
actly where
we are

A leader



It will be
just over
the top of
this hillock

What have we been up to in Lockdown

During lockdown one I planned to move our website to a new bigger free one available under the Ramblers umbrella. Nine months later and no progress!

Lockdown two and the first Newsletter, Ramblings.

Lockdown three, see lockdown two.

Richard

Nothing like a new Apple watch in conjunction with a new Apple phone to stay motivated when walking in the same area day after day!

Andy

I needed a craft for the dark winter evenings. So not having picked up knitting needles since I made a jumper for my little brother's teddy, I am knitting again. Also inspired by Elaine's beautiful knitting.

Thanks again.

Vicky

In April I revisited the art of calligraphy after fifty plus years. I found the discipline both relaxing and therapeutic, especially being in partial isolation. I am interested in studying and playing music and for this present incarceration have bought a violin****!! God help the neighbours. Plus point it might scare covid into submission!

Terry

During the first lockdown, limited to our local area, I found a map of the area and highlighted all the open spaces and green paths, and used this to work out different routes which avoided traffic and pavements as much as possible. I couple of the parks I had never visited before. It was interesting to see how these green spaces could be linked up to make a decent walk.

Rosie

At the start of lockdown (...which one though!) I thought that living near access to the Bridgewater Canal we had a ready made exercise area very nearby. Unfortunately it seems that every other resident of Timperley, Sale, Altrincham and all surrounding areas had the same idea! The towpath closely resembled a human motorway - solo walkers, speed walkers, families with numerous children, joggers and cyclists were all represented plus passing narrow boats and canoeists. Needless to say we soon decided to avoid the canal completely. This meant that we spent lots of time walking the streets and footpaths of Timperley.

One positive outcome has been that we have discovered several local parks which we didn't even know existed - Navigation Park, Woodheys Park, Brookfield Park etc etc.

Giving us new off road routes around Timperley, Altrincham and Sale. Once takeaway coffee became available we also found some really good coffee stops en route.

Despite lockdown my weekly walking mileage probably hasn't changed very much. Instead if one or two longer walks per week I'm doing the same distance by taking shorter walks most days. The main difference being that it's not easy to find any hills to climb in Trafford. The lack of ascents will definitely become apparent when the Peak District opens up again.

Despite the Saturday Strolls being suspended Lesley and I have been busy. We've investigated several new routes for when walks can resume. Some are in areas we haven't visited before, others are new walks from our regular start points. Mindful of keeping as local as possible the new routes are all within Trafford....and in the main they avoid the Bridgewater Canal!

Sheila

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The Pennine Way for Softies – Ha!

For those of you desperately in search of adventure to compensate for the forced limitations of the last year, there is a ready-made one almost on your doorstep: The Pennine Way, 268 glorious miles along the backbone of England, covering some of her finest scenery from Edale in Derbyshire to Kirk Yetholm, just over the border in Scotland. But make no mistake, if you're a softie like me, a few home comforts along the way can make the difference between failure and success.

Boastful, rugged types who completed the trail in twelve days in 1978 when they were 16 (ie my partner, Jonathan – otherwise known as GOM*) take great delight in regaling you with the horrors of fording gigantic mud-baths, trudging through driving rain for days on end and desperately pitching tents on the edge of precipices in howling gales. Old-school, I say! Just book yourself a self-guided, 19-day itinerary with a reputable travel company and you can avoid such pitfalls.



Upper Teesdale



Across the Eden Valley from summit of
Cross Fell

In my opinion, there's no better incentive to while away the miles than the promise of a decent shower, a glass or two of prosecco and a comfy bed at the end of a long, hard trek. These days, all hotels/guesthouses provide hair dryers and don't forget that luggage transfer can be included. No one needs to lug heavy backpacks anymore unless you're under 18 and completing your Duke of Edinburgh. In your sixties, where's the fun in that?

Now, at this point I have to confess to a couple of minor white lies. The first is that it really isn't the easiest venture. Sorry! There's no escaping the fact that it's a long way and there are rather a lot of high (sometimes very high) hills.

40K ft of ascent and descent to be more exact. The second is that when GOM and I completed this in May 2019, we were particularly lucky – 15 days of largely splendid sunshine bookended by 2 days of rain at either end but even then, only one completed in a downpour.

'So, why bother?' you ask. Well, where do I start! Here are a few of my highlights:

Beauty – The sheer joy-inducing wonder of some of the landscapes eg the primrose-lined banks of Swaledale, Malham Cove and Tarn, Hadrian's Wall from Walltown to Housesteads, the utter exuberance of the River Tees, and as for Upper Teesdale – what an unexpected delight! Even in driving rain, the remote Cheviots exude grandeur.

Freedom and Solitude – A reminder that even on our over-crowded isle, we have awe-inspiring places with hardly a soul to be seen: the vast bowl of impressive High Cup Nick; the highest point of the walk at Cross Fell with wonderful views over the green and gentle Eden Valley; the lonely, sweeping grace of Northumberland beyond the Wall.

Interesting Towns and Villages (sometimes with welcome refreshments!) - Heptonstall near Hebden Bridge; The Fox and Hounds in Cotharstone, off-route but great comfort food in a welcoming bar: red-sandstoned Dufton and charming Garrigill in Cumbria: friendly Bellingham, a throwback to the 1950s.

Fellow Travellers – Passing chats with others on the route are frequent. Most people, whatever their age, are happy to share a few minutes to exchange experiences/observations. Some you even have a pint with at the end of the day when your accommodations coincide.



Hadrian's Wall

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Wildlife – The breeding season in all its glory especially over Baldersdale: skylarks, golden plover, drumming snipe. Numerous plaintive curlews and chicks on open moorland, roe deer in the South Tyne Valley, rabbits (unfortunately mostly dead of haemorrhagic disease) everywhere in the Yorkshire Dales.

Achievements – Climbing the limestone steps of the southern end of Pen-y-Ghent was like scaling the fortress of Minas Tirith (for fans of Lord of the Rings) - this after already walking ten miles in 30 degrees C! The sense of accomplishment as you sign your name in the book at The Border Hotel and receive your complimentary half-pints. As I don't drink beer, GOM was rewarded with a pint while I had to pay for my aforementioned fizz. As further compensation for a job well done, food at the restaurant there is top notch, especially the range of desserts!



Teesdale

Obviously, each person's experience will be different but I hope aspects of mine will have whetted your appetite, although to be fair I feel I have to inform you of some of the hardships as well:

Those days – 3 at least - when you've geared yourself up for walking 18 miles and the actuality is three miles longer because you're walking accommodation-to-accommodation rather than just the route. I warn you, these days CAN BE TOUGH! I recommend a sense of humour 'though sadly mine is often missing.

Those days when you're doing so well and then the last three miles consist of 2.5 vertical uphill and .5 down. Why didn't someone just bulldoze a horizontal short-cut! (Keld and Malham – be warned!)

A certain B&B in Bellingham. Advertised as '4* Luxury', but actually your grandma's spare bedroom untouched since the 1970s. Not funny after a 21-mile day. Reader, I cried.



Kirk Yetholm

Finally, I'll pass on what I consider important. If you are planning to do the route, there's a wealth of information available in various guidebooks which you should definitely follow but my list of essentials is relatively short:

Practise, practise, practise beforehand. You need to know you can walk 15-mile days back-to-back. Days 1-4 are 16, 13, 15, 16 miles; there's no gentle lead-in here!

Map-reading skills (not necessarily your own!)

Electrolyte tablets dissolved in your camelback or in a separate waterbottle, especially if the weather is hot. Dehydration isn't fun as I found to my cost!

Two pairs of boots.

Copious amounts of ibuprofen in gel and tablet form. (Other brands are available)

Oh, and one final, final thing – It's fun! Enjoy!

*Grumpy Old-ish Man

Pat Perciuch



High Cup Nick

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A cautionary tale

An elephant never forgets

(or that may be a bad analogy and more trouble for me)

One day, after deciding to go out for a walk, myself and Elaine parked up, off the Woodhead Pass at a point just beyond the Woodhead Reservoir. We chose to take a route up the opposite side of the valley following the Near Black Clough stream.

The route up was not that clear so it was necessary to criss-cross the stream to make the ascent. Reaching a point where it required us, to yet again cross the stream, I went ahead and pointed out the stones in the stream Elaine needed to step on. I was holding Elaine's hand to keep her balanced as she stepped out. Suddenly I noticed a better stone for her to reach for and tried to guide her that way.

Elaine was mid stride going one way and with me pulling the other. She ended up in between, knee deep in the water.

Absolutely fuming I swear if she hadn't got out of the water as fast as she did, it would have started to boil,

Elaine still has a complete lack of trust in my ability to help her cross over flowing water, never lets me forget what happened and loves telling others, despite this being more than forty-five years ago and before we were married!

Well, you can't say she wasn't warned. And now you have too.

Phil C.

Rambling, Whats your Emergency

Edited version From the Ramblers Website search for [Care on the Hill](#) for the full version

Take a mobile phone out with you and leave it switched on. A 999 or 112 call is a "cross-network" call that seeks out all network signals.

You can now register your mobile phone number with the 999 Emergency Services for SMS text messaging which may connect when voice connection is not possible.

If you are on a road then dial 999 or 112 and ask for the Ambulance. In any other situation ask for the Police. They will arrange the necessary backup with Ambulance; Air-ambulance; Coastguard or S&R Helicopter; the nearest Mountain Rescue Team.

A grid reference will always be helpful! What3words* location is also very useful to have. Most smart phones automatically send a location when the emergency number is dialled, but do not rely on this.

Keep the remainder of your party together! And follow the instructions the emergency service gives you. The biggest risk to everyone is getting cold, particularly anyone injured.

It is in situations like the above that the survival bag; 1st aid kit; the extra chocolate bar; and that old pair of gloves and hat in the bottom of the rucksack come in handy. Putting the waterproof jacket on (even if it isn't raining) can keep a winter's chill at bay while waiting for help.

*[what3words](#) is also available to download to your smartphone. This APP gives every 3m x 3m square a three word name. This APP (providing you have a phone/3G or 4G signal) will give a quick and accurate location to the emergency services who use this software

There's a very useful "First Aid" APP at the [St John's Ambulance](#) website that you can download to your smartphone.

Richard Longbottom

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Ramsbottom Explorer

The map on this page shows the route I was planning to walk on the 14 January. Starting from Nuttall Park and walking along the river Irwell and above the East Lancs Railway to Brookbottoms towards Summerseat. Then turning up Robinhood road and then along Holcombe Brook upto the A676 (cross with care) to the Hare and Hounds which you pass on the right. You continue up Holcombe Brook into Reddisher woods eventually turning right and steeply up hill to a track. Turn right along the track and then turn uphill again to Peel tower.



From here you can carry on around Harcles Hill to the Pilgrims cross and then along the perimeter of the danger zone. This can be very wet and is exposed. The alternative shown on the map is along a descending track from Peel tower and along to eventually descend through a wooded trail, cross a road, and eventually under the railway and turning right before the river and along a footpath by the river. This enters a small estate. At the road cross the bridge and then turn right along a track and footpath, cross fields and into a short industrial part of Ramsbottom. Turn right at the road if you want to go into the village, or left then right along the track back to the car park.



Highlights

Peel Tower 1852 Memorial for Robert Peel

Pilgrims Stone 1901. Original one 1176

East Lancs Railway. The Flying Scotsman returns over Easter 2021

River Irwell

Approximate length 8–9miles 12-14 k

Height gain 400m 1300ft

2/2

Richard L

Answers to the Christmas Quiz

- | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Nine | 8. Norway | 14. December 26. Boxing day |
| 2. 1957 | 9. Robins | 15. Eight |
| 3. Oliver Cromwell | 10. Traditionally this was the day to open the Christmas box which was an alms box in church | 16. Midwinter |
| 4. 9 Ladies dancing | 11. Rudolph | 17. Good Luck |
| 5. 1223 | 12. A bell from Santa's sleigh | 18. Mistletoe |
| 6. Jack Calcott Horseley 1843 | 13. Charles Dickens | 19. Twice |
| 7. Old word for winter festival, dating back to Viking times | | 20. Winter Wonderland |

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS. Richard