



WALKING A DALES HIGH WAY IN WINTER! - TGO challenge.

Friends of A Dales High Way

eNewsletter No 9 Autumn 2022

Friends of A Dales High Way

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Welcome to our 2022 newsletter which I hope you enjoy.



It's been great to see so many walkers returning to the trail this year and very good news for the businesses along the way.

Long distance walkers who rely on B&Bs, campsites, pubs, cafes and village shops are a lifeline for many small communities.

Protection of the landscape and habitats along the route is very dear to my heart and we are sorry to hear about the proposed closure of Malham Tarn Field Studies Centre which has done so much to educate people about the Dales environment.

On a happier note I was delighted to attend a recent event put on by Moors for the Future which is working to restore blanket bog on Ilkley Moor by planting sphagnum moss and blocking gullies to raise the water table. A healthy moorland improves biodiversity, reduces flood risk and stores carbon from the atmosphere – Win, Win, Win.

We will be writing more about this and other important habitats along A Dales High Way in future newsletters. In the meantime you can learn more about the project by listening to the Moors for the Future podcast here:

[Katy Thorpe & Jody Vallance – Peatland Restoration Project on Ilkley Moor by Settee Seminars \(anchor.fm\)](#)

- Julia Pearson (Chair of the Friends)

News updates

Glovershaw Beck

Further repairs to the eco-revetment at Glovershaw Beck, near the start of the trail, were carried out earlier this year, after another slight collapse of the banking over winter. Looks good!



Dales High Way Ultra

This year's Dales High Way Ultra produced some outstanding performances - and a number of new records, including beating the Fastest Known Time by 50 minutes!

The race start was staggered from 6 am to 9 am, with Paul Haigh taking an early lead in the field, which he maintained to the end. Paul finished in a remarkable time of just 19 hours 39 minutes. It looked like that

might be it, but then just as dawn broke Matthew Kennedy appeared at the top of Boroughgate in Appleby. His later start meant he was neck-and-neck with Paul. In the end he pipped Paul's new record by just 2 minutes!

Last year's all-round winner, Daniel Hendrickson, also broke the old record, completing the 90-mile Dales High Way in just 19 hours



51 minutes. He went on to finish the Dales High Way Plus (an extra knee-crunching loop around High Cup Nick adding another 14 miles) in a new record time of 24 hours and five minutes to become overall winner of the event for the second year running!

Bev Holmes became the first woman veteran over 50 (FV50) to complete the main 90-mile route, coming in with a time of 26 hours 8 minutes, alongside Andrew Clitheroe. Ultra running legend Sharon Gayter became the first FV50 to complete the 104 mile event, in a time of 31 hours 48 minutes.

There were many other personal records set. Even those who had to drop out before the finish enjoyed the challenge. Grant Smalley said "I'm not bothered about medals, T-shirts and all that jazz. It's great yeah, but I run to have fun. I had so much fun. I might be a little gutted, but I'm experienced enough now to not let it beat me down. To say it was tough was an understatement. To say it was a tremendous course, is equally so. Absolutely beautiful. Of what I saw, pound for pound it's the toughest course I've ever done. It's also my favourite."

Picture shows Paul Haigh leaving check-point 1 at Addingham, run by the Friends of A Dales High Way.

Malham Field Study centre Closes

A famous residential field studies centre in one of the most remote locations in the county is set to close.



The Field Studies Council, which has run a centre at Malham Tarn for more than 70 years and has been used by thousands of school students and adult learners, said it had made the difficult decision to close this autumn.

Ian Wainwright, the FSC's commercial director, said: "This has not been an easy decision for the charity. We have had a very long association with this iconic location, but like all charities, we have to ensure that our finances are in good health."

Tarn House, a former Georgian fishing lodge on the shores of Britain's highest limestone lake in the Yorkshire Dales, is owned by the National Trust, and it is thought that the spiralling costs of maintaining the site has played a big part in the decision.

Tony Grogan of the *Friends of A Dales High Way* said "I have fond memories of an intensive, practical residential course on local geology in 2009, which proved invaluable when it came to compiling the geology material for *A Dales High Way Companion*."

Julia Pearson, chair of the Friends who compiled the wildlife sections for the *Companion*, is also a big fan.

She said "I was shocked to hear the news about Malham Tarn FSC. There must be thousands of people with great memories of natural history studies there. When I first attended a residential in 1985, newly arrived in Yorkshire, it was a brilliant introduction to the area and inspired an interest that has stayed with me to this day."

"It's a loss for environmental education in our region and very sad for all the staff and the people who would have benefitted from a visit in the future."

New waymark post for Trench Wood



A working party from *the Friends of A Dales High Way* met last Autumn to put up a new waymark post near the start of the trail in Trench Wood.

Bradford Council Countryside Service supplied the post, the permission and the loan of the tools,

Julia Pearson, Chair of the Friends, provided the experience and expertise, making sure they did it right. Chris Grogan supplied the cake.

The Countryside Service have recently resurfaced the bridleway that takes A Dales High Way into the woods, along with some other popular paths that link lower Baildon up to the top of Shipley Glen.

They suggested that a waymark post be installed at a fork, where the bridleway takes a sharp left turn downhill, whilst the Dales High Way continues straight on along path that gently works it's way up to the Glen top.

Where is this?

Can you guess where this famous place on the Dales High Way is from the air? (Answer on page 17).



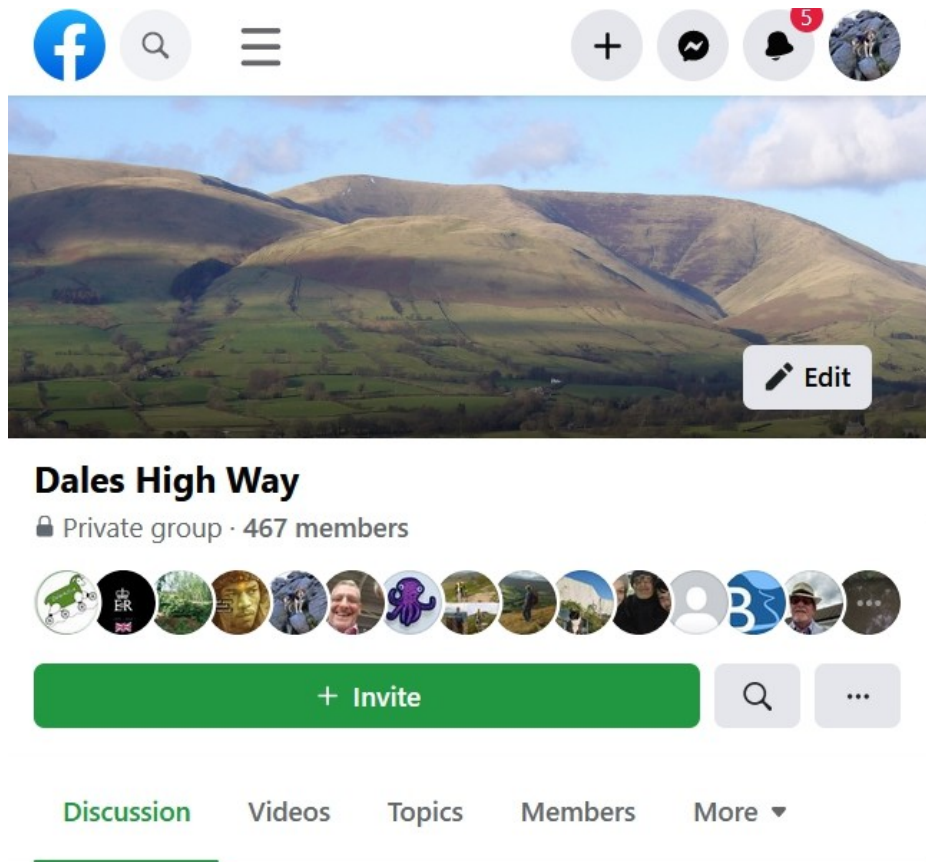
Hint: if you are hardy you might want to cool off by taking a plunge.

Dales High Way walkers - Please take note:

If you are running late on your walk, or have stopped for a cheeky pint, do ring your B&B or hotel to reassure them that you are on your way - they will be worrying that you are lost or injured. If you are very late, especially if it is after dark, they may report you missing. Adding your

accommodation providers to your phone contact list before you set off will make things easier. If you do find yourself in difficulties, ring 999 and ask for the Police, then Mountain Rescue.

New way to share your Dales High Way experiences.



A new private Facebook group has been set up which allows members to ask questions and share their thoughts, plans and experiences with other walkers. It's called Dales High Way and you can join it at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/192887526101571/>

Dales High Way 2022 - Footpath Notes

We've completed a survey of all the route this year.

Generally the path is in quite good condition with no major problems - but there are a few missing waymarks, which we are working with each authority to have replaced.

Looking at each authority's area in turn:-

Bradford Met District: We've started updating a few weathered and tarnished waymarks, e.g. Shipley Glen and Burley Moor. A nice helpful waymark post just past Willy Hall's Spout, Ilkley, has gone missing, which we hope to replace.

North Yorkshire County Council - this is just a small area, mainly around Skipton and Settle. There are a couple of missing waymarks to replace.

Yorkshire Dales National Park: We've lost some waymarks, particularly where new fingerposts and gates have been installed. We are working on having them replaced. There are a couple of fingerposts down just beyond Stainforth.

The National Park has clarified its policy with regard to long-distance route waymarks and National Trails: "*where long distance routes follow the same alignment as a National Trail (ie The Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway)*

they will normally only be waymarked where they join and leave." This makes sense, but means we've lost a couple of waymarks on new National Trail fingerposts along the Pennine Bridleway Settle Loop, though the trail here is easy to follow.



Thanks to the rangers for the Western Dales Area, who have taken responsibility for the Westmorland Dales extension to the National Park, we have a couple of new, very useful waymarks around Ravenstonedale Moor (see the article "*The Rocky Road over Ravenstonedale Moor*" at the end of the newsletter).



Cumbria County Council, soon to be replaced by the Westmorland and Furness Council: Just a few waymarks on the path from Hoff to Appleby, all ok.

A note on waymarking A Dales High Way

A Dales High Way mainly follows existing public footpaths and bridleways and is generally well-waymarked accordingly, especially as much of it lies with the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Walkers should certainly not expect to see a waymark on every stile and gate along the way. Specific Dales High Way waymarks are placed where the route leaves roads, at major junctions, and at other places to help avoid confusion. They also provide reassurance to walkers along the way. There is minimal specific waymarking in the Yorkshire Dales and no waymarking across the high fells.

Waymarking is intended to aid route finding and to help promote the route. However, walkers will not be able to follow the route by using waymarks alone - a good guidebook or map are essential. A Dales High Way is a tough route and successful navigation is part of the challenge.

HIGHS AND LOWS

Can you still enjoy a long-distance walk in winter? It all depends on the weather, argues *James Forrest* as he recalls a recent attempt on the 90-mile Dales High Way

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLA HARDY AND JAMES FORREST

"THIS IS UTTERLY ATROCIOUS," moans Nic, my girlfriend, desperately bracing herself against wave after wave of horizontal rain. A vicious wind whips over the ridge and an ominous clag envelopes our world in a disorientating whiteout. Misery and dread linger in the air. This might be The Calf, but the weather is a raging bull – beefy and muscular, all snarling nostrils, raking hooves and piercing eyes, ready to charge horns-first against anything or anyone in its way. Can we nimbly weave and dodge, matador-like, around



[left] Hiking between Saltaire and Skipton on day one [right] At Winterburn Reservoir on day two [far right] Descending north off Ingleborough with views towards Wharfedale



this rampant beast, or will we be tossed in the air like a rag doll? "At least no-one can accuse us of being fair-weather hikers," I reply to Nic, half-in jest, half attempting to lift our spirits. "And that's what we came here to achieve...sort of." We stop momentarily at The Calf's 676m summit trig, cowering in the lee of the concrete plinth, desperately seeking a brief respite from the incessant wind. Raindrops drip depressingly off my hood's visor and Nic's backpack cover flaps wildly and noisily. I check the map on my phone and spot an escape route out of this horror show in the high Howgills. "We need to get off the tops," I shout to Nic, my voice masked by the roaring gusts. "Let's take this path north-east and drop into Bowderdale."

BEATING HIBERNATION

It's day four of our 90-mile walk of the Dales High Way from Saltaire to Appleby-in-Westmorland, a self-imposed experiment in whether it's possible to enjoy a long-distance, multi-day hike in winter. Nic and I have always loved long-distance walking, often filling our springs and summers with blissful weeks of 'bagging' ■

April's edition of **TGO - The Great Outdoors** magazine - carried a lengthy feature on walking the trail in the depths of winter.

James Forrest and his girlfriend Nic Hardy set out on "a self-imposed experiment on whether it's possible to enjoy a long-distance, multi-day hike in winter."

What they got was raging, wet and windy weather; wild camping through the back-end of Storm Bara. Five tough days walking, but they survived!

"There is something magical about hiking in Yorkshire - a nostalgic charm and wholesome authenticity that's difficult to pinpoint or define, but permeates every inch of 'God's own county'" James concludes.

"Shall we do another winter long-distance hike this year?" asks Nic, hesitantly, as if unsure of her own thoughts on the matter. "Sure" I reply, "but let's check the forecast very carefully first."



Dales High Way

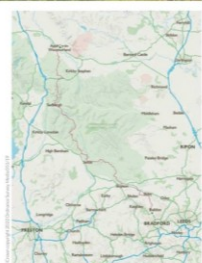
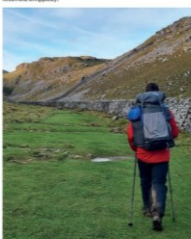
the Royal Oak in Settle," says Nic, smiling. "Best decision we ever made to book that room last minute, rather than wild camping in the forested area."

Getting into our stride, other highlights roll off the tongue. According to the distinctly prissy summit of Shipley Hill (a 107m Marilyn near Skipton), marvelling at the lumpy, lumpy limestone outcroppings of the Scar and Tarns of Settle, and watching trains speed across the majestic Ribbleshead Viaduct are my choices. In the hot, Nic adds unexpectedly bringing me our friend Dave on the banks of Wharfedale, the friendliness of our Ashby host David in Skipton, that feeling of euphoria when the sun finally shows after two hours of grey drizzle, and subtly negotiating the icy stepping stones leading to the summit Ingleborough (726m). Nic doesn't sound happier, but perhaps more tired, said.

"It hasn't been all bad, really - despite some horrific moments - and I'll save only for the time to recall the good times, I reckon."

Nic sums up, in reference to the 'type' tree (a useful at the time, assuming its attempts) we've encountered over the past four days. I consider her appraisal, as the rain continues to hammer the roof of our tent and wind buffets its poorly-pegged-up sides, and decide I concur. There is something magical about hiking in Yorkshire - a nostalgic charm and wholesome authenticity that's difficult to pinpoint or define, but permeates every inch of 'God's Own County'. "Shall we do another winter long-distance hike this year?" asks Nic, hesitantly, as if unsure of her own thoughts on the matter. "Sure," I reply. "but let's check the forecast very carefully first."

[above] The weather finally came good as we hiked to Millburn Cove [below] Between Millburn and Settle, right happy to have reached the finish line in Appleby!



YOUR WAY OR THE DALES' HIGH WAY	
Distance	90 miles / 145km
Ascent	Up to 400m / 14,700ft
Duration	4 days
Start	Settle - by the Three Lanes outside Victoria Hall on Victoria Road
Finish	Appleby in Westmoreland - Mount Hall, at the foot of the town
Common Stages	Day 1: Skipton to Skipton, 18 miles / 29km Day 2: Skipton to Settle, 19 miles / 31km Day 3: Settle to Chapel to Dale, 14 miles / 22km Day 4: Chapel to Dale to Settle, 15 miles / 24km Day 5: Settle to Appleby, 15 miles / 24km Day 6: Appleby to Settle, 15 miles / 24km Day 7: Settle to Skipton, 18 miles / 29km
Maps	Ordnance Survey Landranger (1:50,000) P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6
Guides	A Dales High Way Guide by Tony & Chris Craggs
Website	daleshighway.co.uk
Transport	Settle and Appleby are accessible by train, with connections to other towns and cities
Accommodation	Private B&Bs, B&Bs, hotels and campsites are available along the route

See *Adventurer Nics'* blog of the walk at:
<https://www.komoot.com/collection/1379453/hiking-a-dales-high-way-in-winter>

The Rocky Road over Ravenstonedale Moor



Most walkers greet the final 13-mile section of **A Dales High Way** - from Newbiggin-on-Lune to Appleby-in-Westmorland - as a winding-down finale, though the trek across Ravenstonedale and Tarn Moors, and the climb over the Orton Fells demands a modest exertion.

The route over Ravenstonedale Moor follows a right of way - a "Byway Open to All Traffic" (or BOAT). So walkers should not be surprised to meet the occasional convoy of off-road adventurers heroically tackling the tough landscape in their rugged 4x4s.

This bit of trail is today happily shared by Dales High Way walkers and Coast to Coasters, yet 20 years ago this right of way did not exist and the only way to cross Ravenstonedale Moor (other than the circuitous zigzagging route along the road) was to trespass.

It wasn't until the late 1960s that rights of way began to appear routinely on OS maps. The 1949 *National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act* required local parish councils to mark up established rights of way on a draft "definitive map". It was a slow process with some councils engaging more than others.

Previous maps had shown the track as a "footpath", though an Enclosure map of 1769 showed it as a highway labelled "Mereslack

Road". Orton Parish Council added it to their section as a "footpath" in 1976, but Ravenstonedale Parish Council ignored it completely.

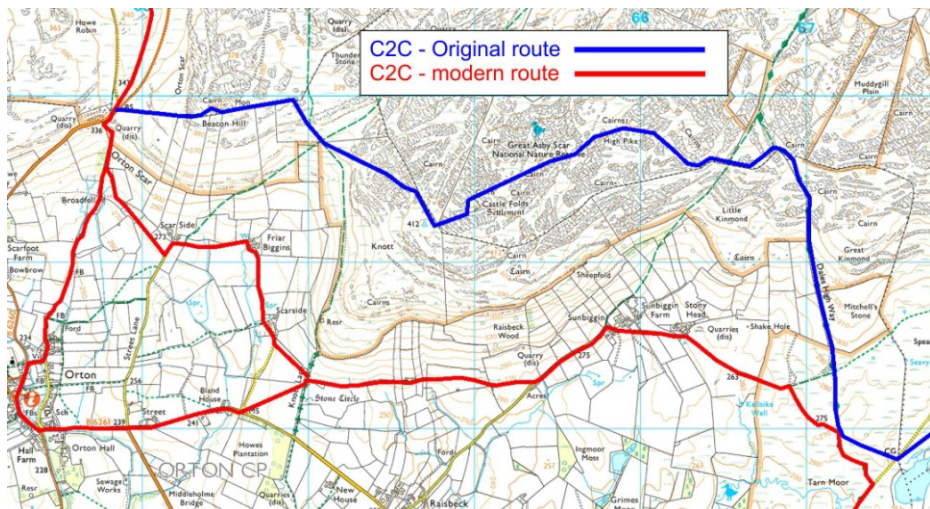


1984 Pathfinder 607 OS map

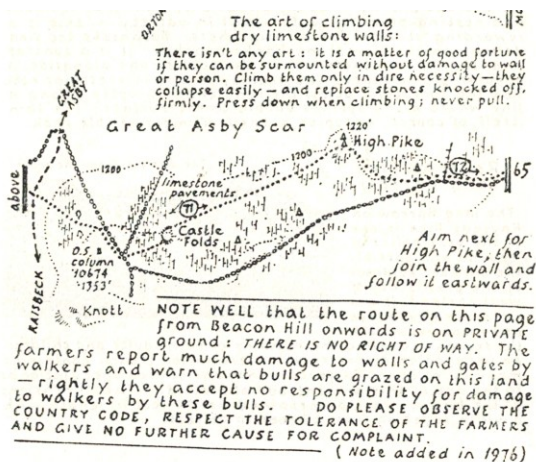
Thus, when OS maps began to appear showing the green-dashed "rights of way", the Ravenstonedale Moor track was not included.

In the early 1970s, when Alfred Wainwright first plotted his Coast to Coast Walk from Shap to Kirkby Stephen (a long section at 20 miles), he wasn't too worried about the niceties of "rights of way" - he even including tips on "the art of climbing dry limestone walls". Consequently his original route across Great Asby Scar and Ravenstonedale Moor led to major problems with landowners.

As his guidebook, first published in 1973, proved popular and led to ever increasing numbers of walkers, his publishers were soon faced with demands for changes.



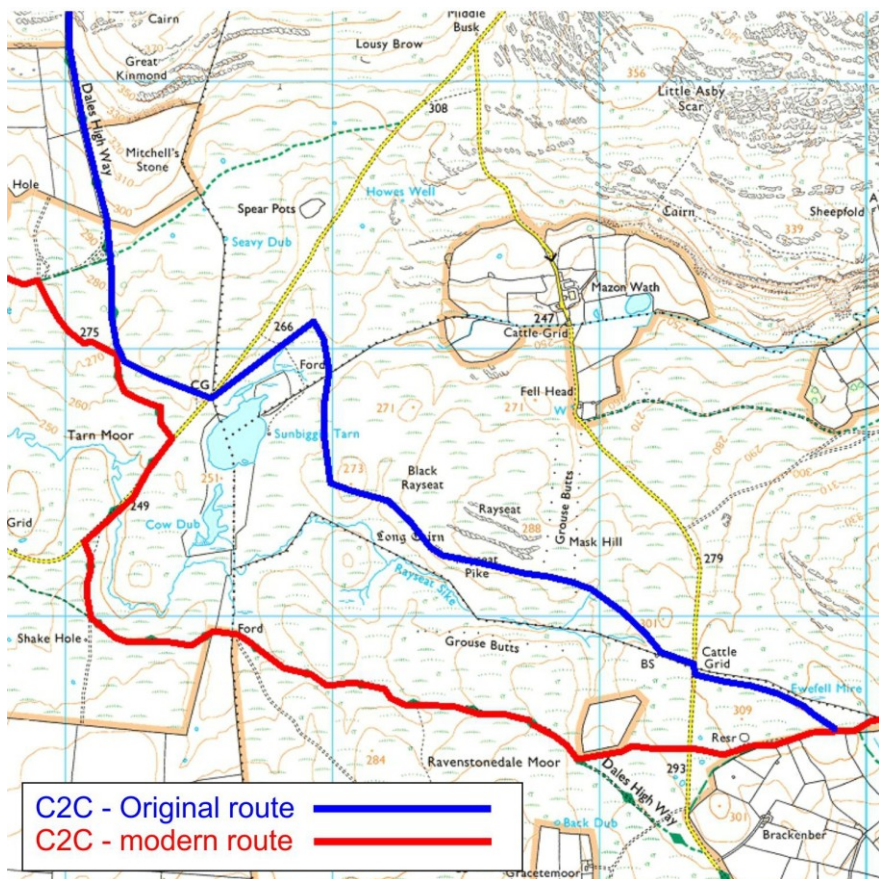
Reprints from 1976, by his section on Great Asby Scar, included the addition: " *NOTE WELL that the route on this page from Beacon Hill onwards is on private ground. THERE IS NO RIGHT OF WAY. The farmers report much damage to walls and gates by walkers and warn that bulls are grazed on this land - rightly they accept no responsibility for damage to walkers by these bulls. DO PLEASE OBSERVE THE COUNTRY CODE, RESPECT THE TOLERANCE OF THE FARMERS AND GIVE NO FURTHER CASUE FOR COMPLAINT*".



But to no avail. By 1981 the route had been changed, now leading down through Orton and on to Sunbiggin Tarn: "The original route led past the Beacon Hill monument and over farmland and limestone terrain where there is no public right of way for two miles. Some walkers have abused the

tolerance of the farmers by camping, damaging walls etc., and permission has been withdrawn." The change added 2 miles to the walk.

Following Wainwright's death in 1991, a "revised edition" of his guidebook was published in 1994. Now the original route across Ravenstonedale Moor, via Rayseat Pike, was also dropped entirely. *"Rayseat Pike is a feature which appears on Wainwright's original route, but this was not on a public right of way and the route has now been revised."* Walkers were directed to follow the road from Sunbiggin Tarn north to the junction, then south towards Newbiggin, adding another mile to the walk.



Meanwhile Cumbria County Council began to look again at the status of the track over Ravenstonedale Moor. Orton Parish Council wanted a "bridleway", Ravenstonedale a "footpath". In July 2002 County Council officers recommended a "Byway Open to All Traffic" - the reference to vehicular use in the 18th century document being the deciding factor. This was rejected by parish councillors on all sides, and so in November 2003 a 2-day public inquiry was held in Newbiggin-on-Lune.

The Inspector Robin Shercliff declared the whole route to be a "**BOAT - Byway Open to All Traffic**", and by January 2004 the dust had settled and the decision confirmed.

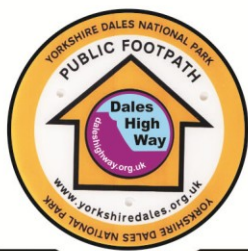


A Second Edition of Wainwright's *Coast to Coast Walk*, revised by Chris Jesty, was published in 2010, showing the new modern route over Ravenstonedale Moor.

Ironically, the *Countryside & Rights of Way Act* of 2000 which introduced the "Right to Roam" led to much of Ravenstonedale Moor and beyond being designated "Open Access Land": most of Wainwright's original route was now legally open to walkers!

Perhaps Wainwright was just ahead of his time.

Puzzle answer: White Wells, near Ilkley. Modern day visitors can still use the plunge bath. New Year's Day is the most popular day for this activity, with usually over a hundred plungers throughout.



For regular news about A Dales High Way go to our website:

daleshighway.org.uk