

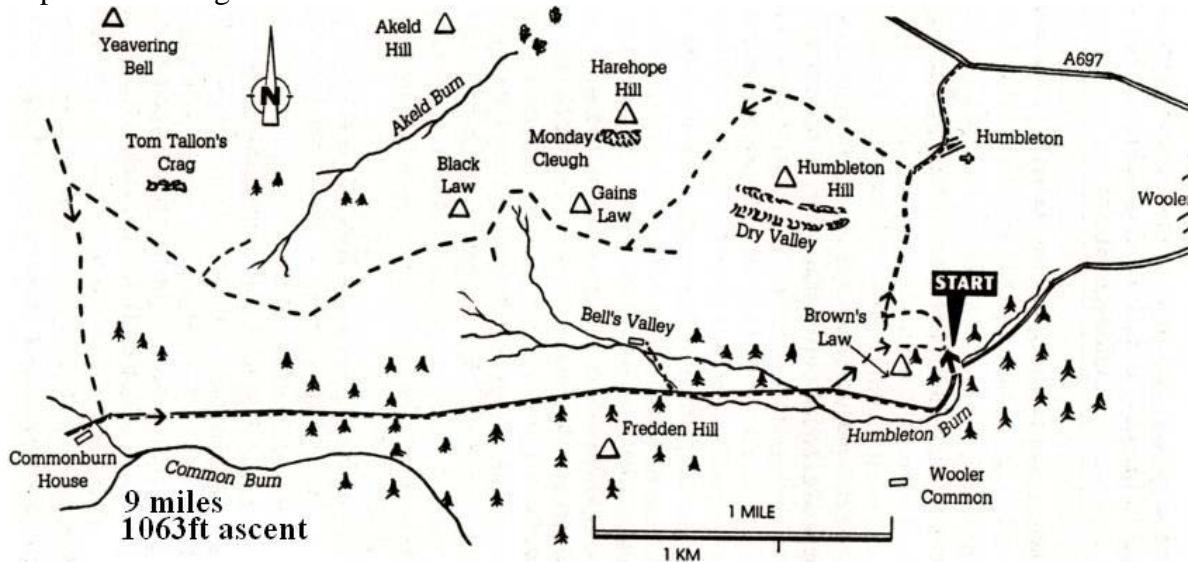
**Gateshead Civic
Walking Club
NEWS**



Humbleton Hill, Tom Tallon's Crag & Commonburn [30th January]

Rising above Milfield Plain, the heights and meltwater channels of Humbleton and Harehope lead to a high plateau, traversing above Common Burn. An ideal walk for the inquisitive and energetic, with waymarked ways revealing a basket of summits and crags. Abundant moorland wildlife, historical remains and folklore complete the enjoyment. From the car park walk north beyond the information board, crossing Humbleton Burn onto the fenced Nature Trail. After approximately 100yds/m a grass footpath left, marked 'St Cuthbert's Way', ascends between larch and Douglas fir to a perimeter wall, seats and picnic bench. Pass through the wicket gate onto a bridleway twisting west, between a series of bracken clad glacial mounds north-east of Brown's Law. At the gated crosstracks, by

sheep pens and an incongruous 'British Rail' wagon, pass through to turn right descending with a line of ageing ash to the red pantiles of High Humbleton.



Immediately left the great bulk of Humbleton Hill rears above, whilst ahead the flat fertile acres of Milfield Plain lead the gaze north-east over the moors of Weetwood and Doddington (sites of Bronze Age 'cup and ring marks').

Prior to High Humbleton, a finger post, 'Cleadsleugh 1.5 miles', directs us left, i.e. west-north-west on a gated cart track below the rock strewn upper slopes of Humbleton Hill. Don't let the views over the Milfield Plain prevent you from taking the left fork at a dual waymarked post, leaving the bridleway for an ascending footpath south-west between Humbleton and Harehope. The footpath is, in fact, a wide and initially rocky track ascending to the col between the two meltwater scarred hills. North, the rock and scree face of Monday Cleugh divides Harehope and Gains Law, whilst to the south the dry valley - Meltwater Channel - slices through the skirts of Humbleton Hill. Footpath markers continue to guide the walker to the path junction below the summit bump of Gains Law.

Turn right to pass Gains Law for a westerly 2.5 mile scenic hike to below Tom Tallon's Crag, that provides a unique taste of the total isolation of the Cheviots. The route is waymarked and good underfoot, with a couple of exceptions: a) after leaving the wall west of Black Hill and b) west and below Tom Tallon's Crag; and take care once over the stepstiled fence at the cleugh head between Gains Law and Black Law to leave the fence right, 25yds over the stile, onto a narrow trod through heather. A map is essential on this section, not so much for navigation but to identify the dozens of surrounding hills, crags and cleughs.

The dolerite outcrop known as Tom Tallon's Crag can be seen on the immediate skyline, north of the public path which leads north-west through heather and tussock to a prominent dual marker post and cairn at GR 928282. A path that focuses attention, not on the crag but on the great prehistoric walled fort astride the twin domes of Yeavinger Bell. Turn sharp left at the marked and cairned junction, to begin the trek south to Commonburn House Farm, veering left at the first fork to descend straight to the valley and farm of Common Burn. The aspect ahead is highlighted by a crescent of Cheviot's outlyers, curving east over Great Moor and Preston Hill to Broadhope Hill, Hawsen Crags and Cold Law.

The final 3.25 miles is alongside, or on the central grass strip of Commonburn Lane. A straight untrammelled way that provides nothing but ever freshening views with grouse, peewit, lark, weasel, rabbit and hare for company, as it skirts the coniferous flank of Fredden Hill to meet the gorse-clad shoulders of Coldberry Hill and Brown's Law. Here we leave the lane left for a waymarked grassy ascent of Brown's Law, and a bracken lined descent to the ladder stile into the larch of our outward path from the car park. If time and energy allow why not explore the adjoining Nature Trail.

Cautley Spout and the Calf from Sedbergh [27th February] - This 13 mile circular walk from Sedbergh gives a classic day out in the Howgill Fells.

Sedbergh lies 10 miles to the east of Kendal and nestles beneath Winder (1500ft) which Wainwright described (with perhaps a little exaggeration!) as Sedbergh's Matterhorn.

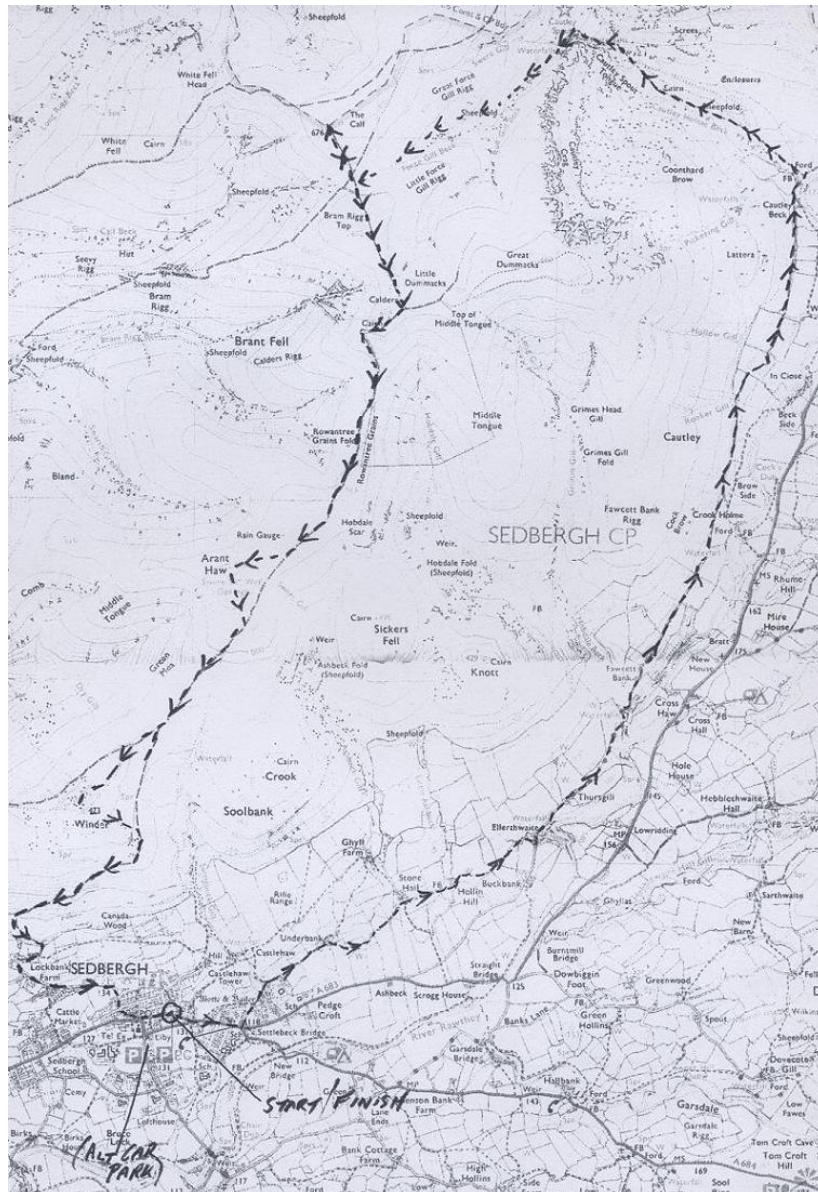
The Howgill Fells are Cumbria's hidden gem and lie within the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Although not as high as their Lake District neighbours to the west, they have a character of their own with steeper valleys than the adjacent Yorkshire Dales and are perhaps more reminiscent of the Cheviots.

The walk starts and finishes in the Joss Lane car park (alternative car park on Loftus Hill). After leaving the town centre, a footpath heads northeast across pasture, eventually leading to a clear track across the side of the fell until, after about 4 miles, Cautley Holme Beck is reached. At this point the low-levellers have the option of a diversion to the Cross Keys at Cautley, but for the more determined the route now veers northwest along the beck towards the waterfall of Cautley Spout, which although not in the same league as High Force, can still be quite impressive after a wet spell.

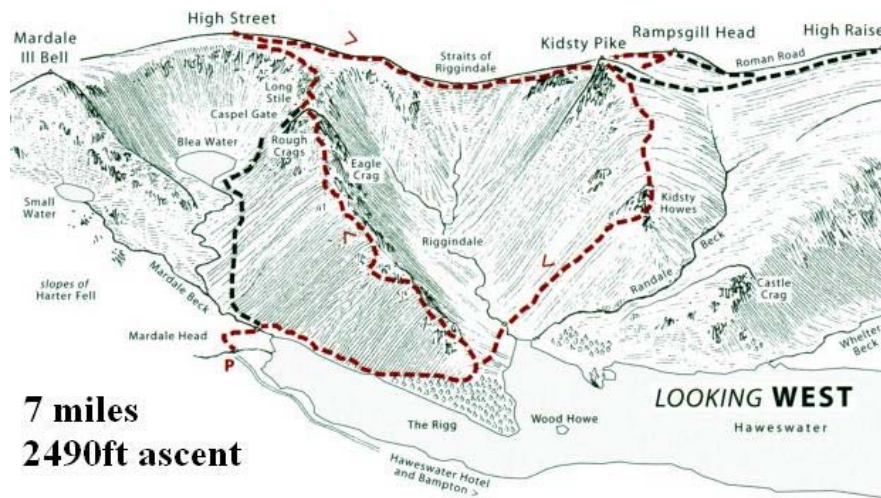
From here the easy walking ends and the steepest part of the walk begins as the route ascends alongside the Spout. Upon reaching the top some careful map and compass work is needed if the mist is down in order to reach the col below The Calf (2230ft). A short climb then leads to its summit with superb views (assuming the mist has gone) of the Lakeland Hills to the west, Great Dunn Fell and Cross Fell to the north and Whernside and Pen-y-Gent to the south.

We now retrace our route to the col and then continue south with a ridge walk taking in Calders (2200ft), Arant Haw (1996ft) and finally Winder from which Sedbergh can be seen in the valley below. A clear path now leads down to Lockbank Farm from where the road back to Sedbergh is joined.

(For those not wishing to do the full route there are many lower level alternatives, including riverside walks along the Dales Way. Anyone wanting suggestions for these should contact Mike Morrison).



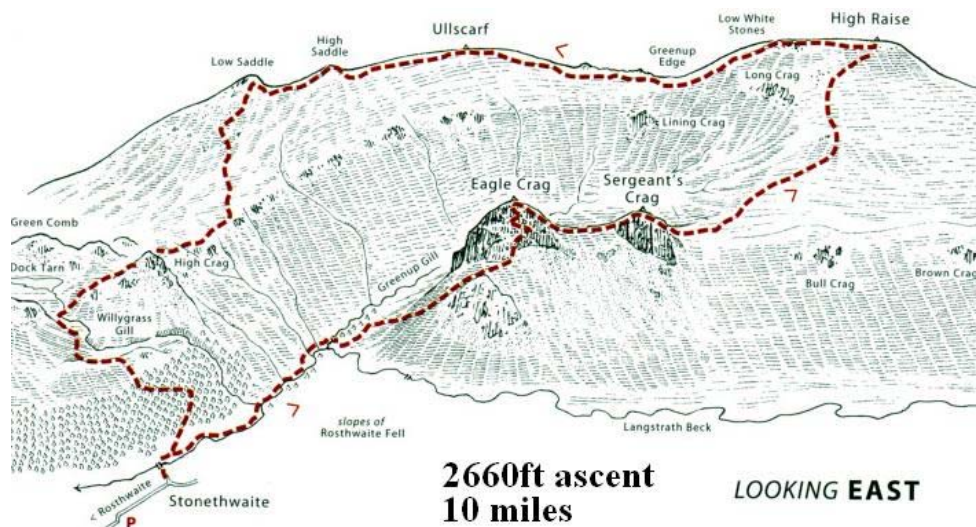
High Street, Rampsgill Head and Kidsty Pike from Mardale Head [27th March]



A sensational skyline circuit embracing the great amphitheatre of Riggindale. The route climbs the wonderfully revealing Rough Crag and Long Stile ridge onto High Street before following the ridge wall down via the Straits of Riggindale to visit the summits of Rampsgill Head and Kidsty Pike. The tour concludes in the company of Wainwright's Coast to Coast Walk down the eastern slopes of Kidsty Pike via Kidsty Howes, thereby linking back to the valley path and regaining the dale-head car park.

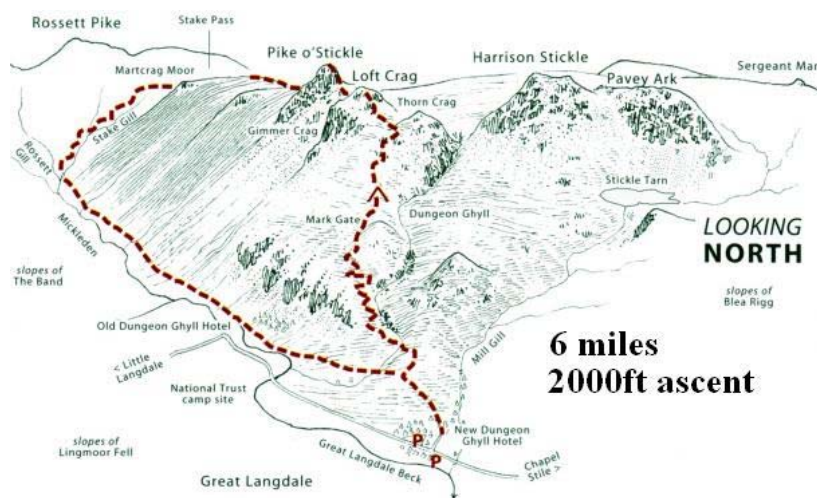
The Rough Crag ridge can be side-stepped on a path leading up by the outflow from Blea Tarn to gain the Caspel Gate saddle. From here the walk can be extended to gather up High Raise in the company of the Roman road. The walk's embrace can also easily be widened to include Mardale Ill Bell via Small Water and the Nan Bield Pass, yet the simplicity of the core tour will always win the greater favour and linger as a richly rewarding memory.

Eagle Crag, Sergeant's Crag, High Raise and Ullscarf from Stonethwaite [24th April]



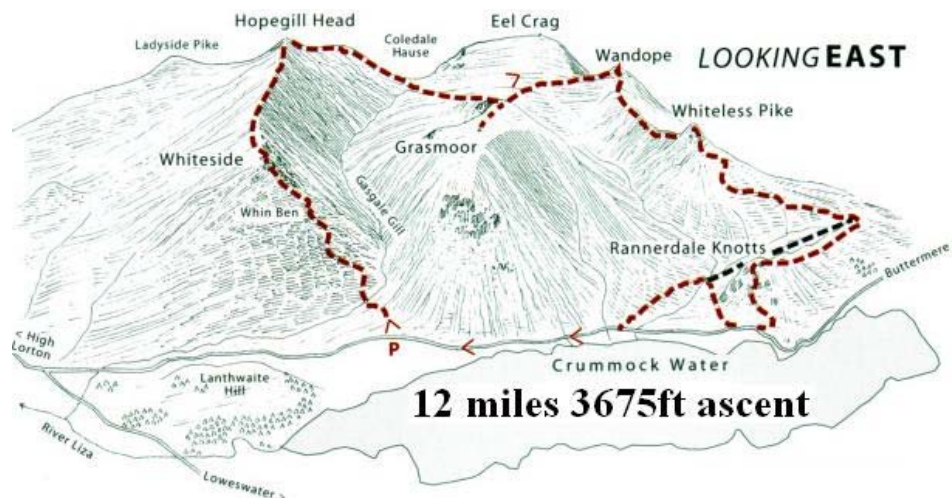
This route follows the Greenup Gill skyline, taking in the striking twin craggy heights of Eagle and Sergeant's Crag en route to the scarp edge of High Raise. Thereafter the route follows the broad ridge north over Ullscarf, the most centrally situated fell in the Lakes, before descending to Dock Tarn and the steep steps close to Willygrass Gill. For most of the walk you'll be away from the crowds, but from time to time you'll be reminded of the heavy visitor concentrations on particular paths – the Coast to Coast Walk and Cumbria Way being major influences. High Raise is inevitably a focus for walkers from three directions – Grasmere, Great Langdale and, to a lesser extent, Borrowdale. The ridge path used on this walk will be appreciated by discerning fell walkers, who will also revel in the solitude of Ullscarf.

Loft Crag and Pike o' Stickle from New Dungeon Ghyll [22nd May]



For as long as man has gazed upon the Langdale Pikes they must have been revered. While each fell is a character in its own right, together they are greater than the sum of their considerable parts. They are truly a special part of our mountain heritage; a scenic catalyst at once captivating and compelling. From that instant adoration comes a desire for a 'must-do' ascent... so why the delay? This exhilarating climb goes via Dungeon Ghyll onto Loft Crag, and culminates on the majestic rock stack summit of Pike o' Stickle. It then descends via Martcrag Moor and Langdale Combe to join Cumbria Way's steep zig-zag descent into Mickleden.

Whiteside, Hopegill Head, Grasmoor, Wandope, Whiteless Pike and Rannerdale Knotts from Lanthwaite Green [12th June]



The North-Western Fells are walkers' territory par excellence, and sleek lines predominate. Grasmoor has such a presence over Crummock Water, yet modestly contrives to play second fiddle in most views of the group. The walk leaves the open common and makes swiftly onto the steep heather-clad slopes of Whiteside. The connecting ridge to Hopegill Head merits plaudits; it is just a pity that the outlook east is hemmed in by Grasmoor's bulky presence. The summit of Hopegill Head is more like a real peak. An easy descent to Coledale Hause presages a steady climb up the edge leading to Dove Crag and the summit of Grasmoor. Switching back to the col at the head of Rannerdale Beck, the walk heads for the eastern brink top, Wandope, before tracing the ridge down via Thirdgill Head Man to climb the mini-mountain Whiteless Pike. Following the popular path towards Buttermere village the route turns right at the minor col, holding to the switchback ridge of Rannerdale Knotts, a brilliant final 'lookout point' for Crummock Water and Grasmoor's sleek massif.



6 Person Tent – The Club now has a tent which is available for hire. Please contact Graeme if you want to arrange to borrow it.