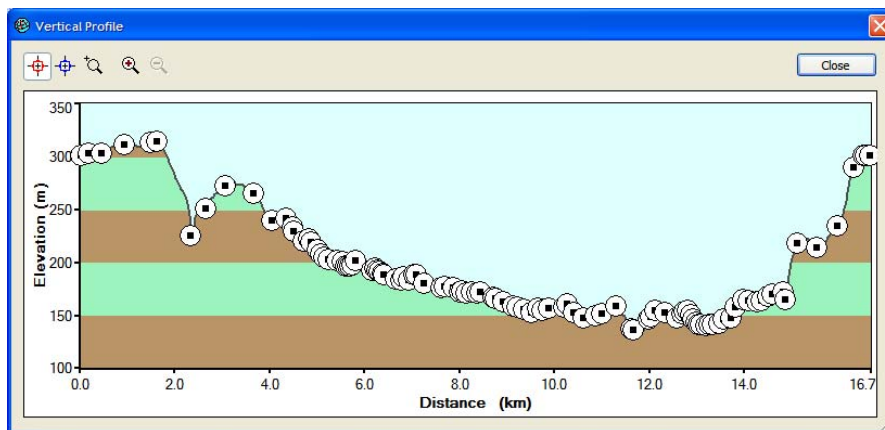


Walgrave Wild Walkers outing to the Lathkill and Bradford Dales, Sunday 22nd February 2009.



Distance covered: 17 km, with 210 m of ascent.

WWW participants:

Clare Baxter
Clare's mum, Dorothy
James Kasen
John Thompson
Maggie Saxon
Malcolm Campbell
Ruby Cole

We departed the Royal Oak car park at 8 a.m. on Sunday 22nd February, stopping to pick Ruby up on the way, arriving in Youlgreave at around 10 a.m. We set off, in dry but slightly chilly dull conditions, along Coldwell End, before descending steeply down Bankside to the River Bradford at SK 209 640.

Walking east along the south bank of the river to pass a number of fishponds stocked with fair sized Rainbow trout, we gradually ascending to SK 200 636, where we re-crossed the R. Bradford using a delightful stone bridge to ascend steeply to access a minor road and footpath leading to SK 192 645 (crossing Moor Lane [fig 1] and Long Rake) where we followed the Limestone Way across a number of meadows to a steep descent/ascent at SK 172 653 [figures 2a, 2b and 2c), then passing through a fascinating farmyard [fig 3] to proceed to the very head of the Lathkill Dale at SK 162 660 [fig 4].

The path here descends gradually through a typical limestone gorge [fig 6], passing a cave on the right from which the river now emerges (having changed course during the 19th century when the previous river bed collapsed into mine workings). In brightening conditions we followed the R. Lathkill down the gorge, which gradually opened out to form a dale [figures 7 & 8], to its confluence with the R. Bradford at SK 220 645 [fig 9, and group picture below], stopping for lunch on the way [fig 5].

Rejoining the path on the southern bank of the R. Bradford, we headed east to SK 215 640, where we re-crossed the river to ascend Mawstone Lane into Youlgreave, thankfully to find the Youth Hostel café where tea and cakes were consumed with gusto before returning to the cars, parked at SK 205 641, and departing to arrive at Walgrave around 18h30.

During our descent through the Lathkill Dale we had walked in warm sunshine through delightful water meadows and passed numerous weirs and pools [figures 7 & 8], all constructed to service the once flourishing mining industry that had at one time prospered in the dale. Numerous 'works' remain in evidence, but there have been no real efforts to preserve these for posterity. The walking was easy [fig 10], perhaps one might say slightly boring, but the company was enjoyable and the ease of walking lead to many interesting conversations as members of the group swapped around and got to know one another better. This was clearly a very popular rambling route and, feeling slightly incongruous in serious walking gear, we passed many, many small groups and large parties of ramblers 9fig 12), one numbering around 100 or so.

This was not a 'wild walk' in any sense, but it was nevertheless an enjoyable day out.

The [full route](#) can be viewed using google earth.



Pictures, in the Lathkill and Bradford Dales, taken by various members of the WWW group



Figure 1



Figure 2a



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11b and 2c



Figure 12