

THE TEESDALE WAY – SECTION 1 (PRE-PUBLICATION INSTRUCTIONS)

Distance: 14.5 km/9 miles

Start & Finish: Dufton, Cumbria (CP) (NY689249) to Cauldron Snout, County Durham (Birkdale Bridge) (NY814287)

Elevation: 190 m/593 m/466 m/276 m

Terrain: Continuous and strenuous climb for 6 km after leaving Dufton then mainly descending over moorland and upland pastures

Surface: Firm initially then rocky and potentially boggy/very boggy on trails, tracks, roads and footpaths

Exposure: Very exposed to potentially severe weather conditions for the entire journey

Navigation: Navigation in good conditions is generally distinct but with indistinct sections that can be challenging in poor visibility. Way-marking is for the Pennine Way although this should not be relied upon (a map and compass and the ability to use them is essential). Intermittent cairns and marker stones are a further aid to navigation (OS Explorer OL31)

Facilities: Dufton []; Forest-in-Teesdale []; Langdon Beck [].

Comments: This part of the route is way-marked for England's oldest long-distance route – The Pennine Way and crosses between Cumbria and County Durham. It is well signed and the trail is clearly defined in most places. At times however, particularly on the open moor, it can be indistinct for short sections and in poor weather – where visibility is reduced – it can be difficult to follow. The only sensible solution, irrespective of the conditions, is to carry a map and compass and to be confident in using them. The trail is very rocky approaching the top of High Cup Nick and thick-soled boots are recommended for walkers. After High Cup Nick, the trail south of Maize Beck is the one described here for now. The trail to the north avoided the possibility of having to cross a potentially flooded Maize Beck before the bridge was in place. For the time being, the more intrepid might decide to take it upon themselves to navigate the northern route to visit Maize Beck Scar, a limestone feature well worth seeing. The descent to Birkdale is by way of an unsympathetic track (uncomfortable for running). There are no facilities at Cauldron Snout so you will need to be self-sufficient for the entire journey. Car-parking is 2.5 km along the road from the bridge, overlooking the reservoir.

Directions: From the CP in Dufton, turn R on the road and continue, slightly uphill, out of the village. At the bottom of a steep dip in the road, turn L onto the road way-marked 'Pennine Way to High Cup Nick 3.5 miles'. Continue uphill for 3.5 km, first on a road then on a track, past Bow Hall (A) and around Peeping Hill until it ends at a gate leading into a small, stone-walled sheepfold (B). Use the walker's gate 20 m to the L then bear R through what is a disused quarry and continue between two small hills, past a cairn and up the slope to another cairn at the top of the hill. Beyond this cairn the route lies across open fell, generally heading towards and alongside High Cup Gill which is visible in the distance on a clear day (in good weather the rocky trail is generally discernible, however in poor weather or reduced visibility it is possible to lose the trail in places and it might be necessary to resort to a map and even a compass to navigate accurately and safely). Continue on an increasingly rocky trail through an area of scree (the trail splits at this point but merges again shortly afterwards) following intermittent cairns and marker stones upwards and towards High Cup Nick. The trail eventually tops out in a very rocky section at Strands Beck above High Cup Gill then heads back down towards it. At the bottom, the trail splits: for the southern route, bear R and continue alongside the gill, eventually descending to a flatter, boggy section at the 'Nick' (C). Climb the short slope opposite and bear L, following some marker stones, onto a close-cropped, grassy trail. Continue on the trail away from High Cup Gill for 1.5 km to the FB over Maize Beck. Cross the bridge, turn R and follow the beck downstream for 0.5 km on an intermittent trail. Bear L uphill on the trail (where the beck bends away to the R) and continue 0.5 km to the intersection with an access track. Bear R and continue on the track (or alongside it) for 2 km eventually descending past Moss Shop (E) to Grain Beck. Ford the beck or cross it via the FB and continue through the gate then through Birkdale Farm (F) and follow the road 1.5 km to the finish of this section at Birkdale Bridge.

