

Step Out at SWFC

The Wednesday Walk on Thursdays



10 – Damflask and Oaks Lane – 2.6 miles (Grade 1)

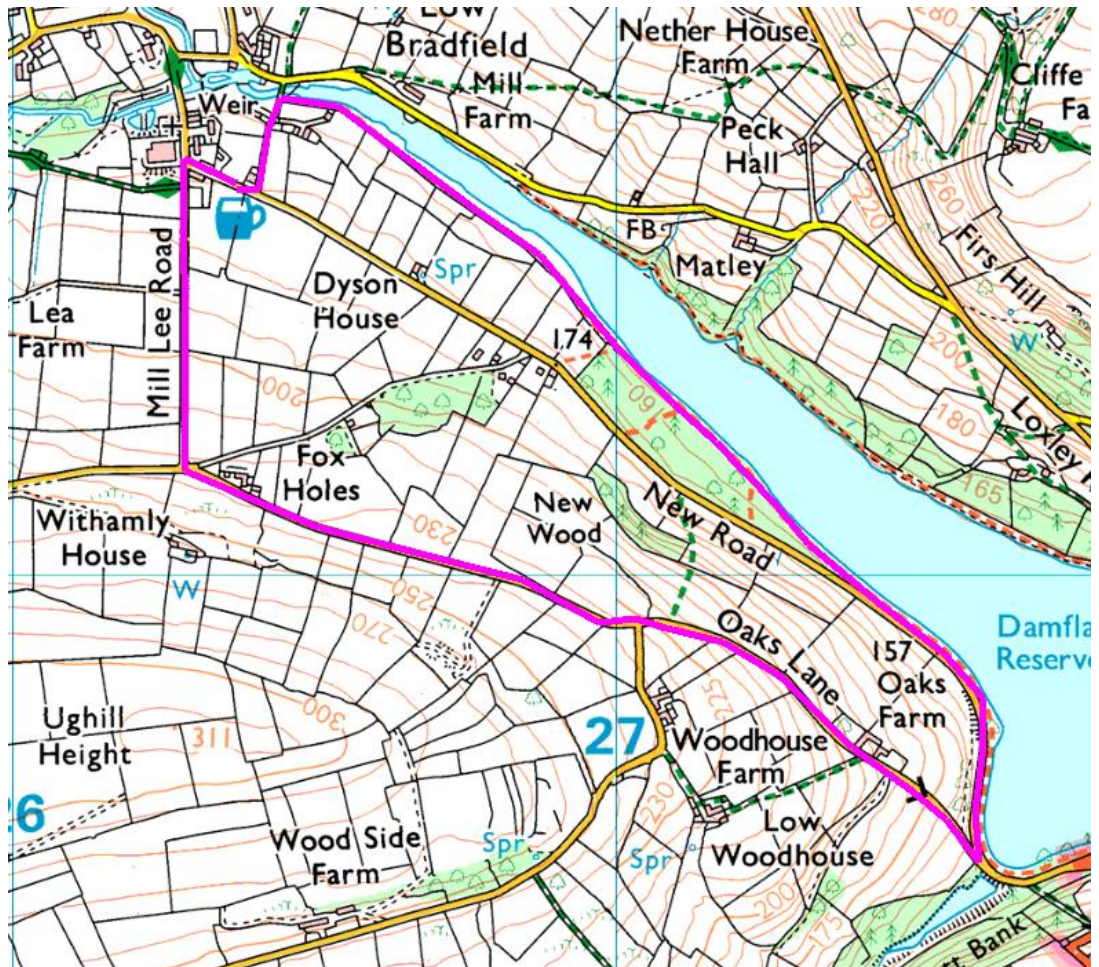
A road / lakeside walk this week since the ground is still very wet. The walk is mainly on tarmac and hard gravel paths but the lakeside path may be muddy in places. Some climbing, all in the first half of the walk, but nothing steep, no stiles or steps. This was planned as an 'Health Walk' alternative to the Christmas walk in 2018 to keep Sue happy, but we didn't do it.

Starting point: Junction of Oaks Lane and New Road, Damflask.

Clockwise

Very easy route to describe. Walk up Oaks Lane as far as Fox Holes, turn right down Mill Lee Road, right at the Plough onto New Road, left down the footpath (School Lane) and right just before the bridge, then follow the path back to the start!

School Lane may be slippery, so an alternative is to go through the village and come back over the bridge – but the last time we were round there, the bridge itself was flooded, so the choice is yours...



Risks

- A lot of road walking; Oaks Lane and Mill Lee Road are usually very quiet, but watch out for cars and bikes.
- No stiles or steps. Most paths are good, but some may be wet. Boots recommended.

Damflask: The reservoir is named after a village that stood near to where the reservoir embankment is now situated. Most of the village was destroyed in the great flood and never rebuilt as plans were already in hand to build the reservoir, although no work had commenced. The village comprised of a Paper Mill, Wire Mill, Corn Mill, Barrell Inn, Blacksmith's Shop, and a collection of farm and dwelling houses. A two arch bridge was rebuilt after the flood for access across the valley, this was last seen in the 1950s when the reservoir was drained



for maintenance work and was said to be in a very good state despite its years under water!

Low Bradfield: The village probably grew up as a farming community where Agden Beck and Dale Dike meet to form the River Loxley. Indeed, the name Bradfield first appeared as 'Bradesfeld' in 1188 and means a 'broad stretch of open countryside'. Today the name is used to refer generally to the two settlements of High and Low Bradfield, and the civil parish of Bradfield is the largest in England, covering over 50 square miles.

Fox Holes Farm: It is not known why Foxholes Farm was built with castellated walls; it may have been to complement the church on the opposite side of the valley, but it can probably best be described as a 'folly'.

Water Works Filter Station: Built in 1913 and extended in 1954 to purify water from the Strines, Dale Dike and Agden reservoirs. In 1930 it had the first telephone installed in Bradfield. The premises closed in 1994 following the completion of the new Water Treatment Works in the Loxley Valley.

The Plough Inn: This was originally a farmhouse before being converted to an inn in the mid c19th. The archway was used to take cattle into the auction yard at the rear of the building, but was blocked in during the 1960's.

School Lane: Although no trace remains today, the original Low Bradfield School, built around 1706, stood near here. The building was completely destroyed in the flood in 1864 but Mr. Nicholls, the headmaster, and his family managed to escape to higher ground by running up the steps opposite the end of the bridge.