



PENISTONE BOUNDARY WALK

A Brief History

Penistone is a very historic market town with settlements dating back as far as the eighth century. The town became centred around the parish church of St. John which began its life in the 12th century. The church has grown and been added to many times over the centuries, and was the birth place of Penistone Grammar School in 1392 which is one of the oldest educational establishments in the country.

Penistone and its surrounding moorlands are ideal for rearing sheep, and at that time it even had its own breed known as the 'Penistone' sheep which was particularly hardy to withstand the severe winters. Both the ram and the ewe were horned and it is from this ancient breed that the logo for the Penistone Boundary Walk has been taken.

Parish boundaries were very important, and marked the limits of land ownership. Nowadays these can be easily found from maps, but before, it was necessary for everyone to know where these boundaries were in case of dispute. An annual tradition emerged of 'Beating the Bounds' which was linked to the church as a religious ceremony known as 'Rogationtide' to pray for good crops throughout the year. The walk took place five weeks after Easter, and so that the boundaries were never forgotten young boys were beaten or bumped against boundary stones, thrown in brambles or even in the river at set points. These young men were then never likely to forget where the boundary lay.

About the Walk

Penistone town centre lies at 227 metres (747 ft) above sea level, and the boundary walk which is just over 25 kilometres (16 miles) long starts from Cubley Hall at 260 m (853 ft). The lowest point of the walk is 140 m (459 ft) at Gunthwaite, rising to 355m (1164 ft) at Hartcliffe

The route can be followed on the map, which is reproduced on this leaflet, and in combination with the way marking arrows should be easy to follow, even for the less experienced walker. Referring to Ordnance Survey - Pathfinder 715 Barnsley and Penistone, may be used as a more detailed guide. The written information can be followed to guide you through, and also to point out areas of particular interest.

The walk officially starts at Cubley Hall, and the landlord John Wigfield, a keen local walker has kindly allowed the use of their car park. A large plinth showing the walk can be found in the grounds.

The idea to create the walk came out of a need for a local route to promote as a sponsored walk to raise funds for the Penistone & District Community Minibus, which is administered by the local charity 'Penistone Three 9's'. The production of the walk was seen as an ideal community project by the charity secretary, the late, fondly-remembered Darryl Marshall, who was also the local Community Police Constable. It was decided to use it as a project with a local youth group, who were part of an Outreach Youth Project, led by Michael O'Roarke and funded by the South Yorkshire Police Authority - Community Initiatives Programme.

Once the route had been planned the youth group were responsible for marking the route with arrows, placing way-marking posts, mending and replacing stiles and building a half-way rest shelter.

A metal lapel badge is available for purchase at a small cost, for those who have completed the walk. These are available either from Cubley Hall who can be contacted via their website, www.cubleyhall.co.uk or the Town Clerk's Office in Penistone, Telephone 370088.