

# Long Distance Walkers' Association

## SUSSEX GROUP

<http://www.ldwasussex.org.uk/>



*28 April  
Magnificent specimens (the  
bluebells!) on the second of  
two loops near Robertsbridge*

*12 May  
The South Downs Marathon  
train climbs away from the  
start in East Dean*



## NEWSLETTER

# July 2019

## 1. Sussex Group Committee, July 2019

Chairman:	Trevor Beeston
Treasurer:	Jane Bates
Secretary:	Paul Collis
Events Organiser:	Chris Baines-Holmes
Walks Organiser:	Jane Bates
Compliance Officer:	Chris Coates
Webmaster:	David Hodge
Newsletter Editor:	David Weatherley
Member:	Anthony Mitchell
Member:	Chris Kennedy

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## 2. Challenge Events

### Recent Events

#### The South Downs Marathon. 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019

*The Numbers:* 166 entered, 127 started and 123 finished. The no-show rate was 23.5%. Entries increased from 143 last year but fell short of the 180 entry limit.

*SiEntries:* For the first time the Group used the company SiEntries to manage all aspects of on-line entry, for which they charge a small proportion of the entry fee. SiEntries is now used by many LDWA groups and proved satisfactory. Additionally a form-based entry system is provided by the Group – 7 people entered by this method.

*The Weather:* A near perfect spring day, warm in the sun but with a chilly easterly breeze. Conditions underfoot were dry.

*The Route:* Three minor changes this year: (1) The start now avoids the narrow footpath and gate out of East Dean village, a source of much congestion in the past; (2) At Rathfinny the service road from the boreholes was used, avoiding the steep, chalky and potentially dangerous if wet hill further on; (3) the final approach to the finish at East Dean avoided the tarmac roads of the 'housing estate' - this last change might have involved participants unknowingly crossing private property and will be rerouted for the next SDM.

Additionally, a temporary diversion was used at Firle to avoid a Horse Fair taking place in Firle Place.

*Conclusion:* The recovery of the number of entrants is heartening and supports the belief that the main reason that the 2018 event was under-subscribed was the proximity of the Cinque Ports 100 later in May. The high no-show rate this year is, as far as I know, consistent with similar LDWA events.

The service provided at East Dean and each of the checkpoints was greatly appreciated by all who took part. The strength of this event is the hard work and dedication of the marshals, both beforehand and on the day. It was good to see some new faces among those helping - my thanks to all of them and, of course, to all those who took part.

*Chris Baines-Holmes, Events Organiser*



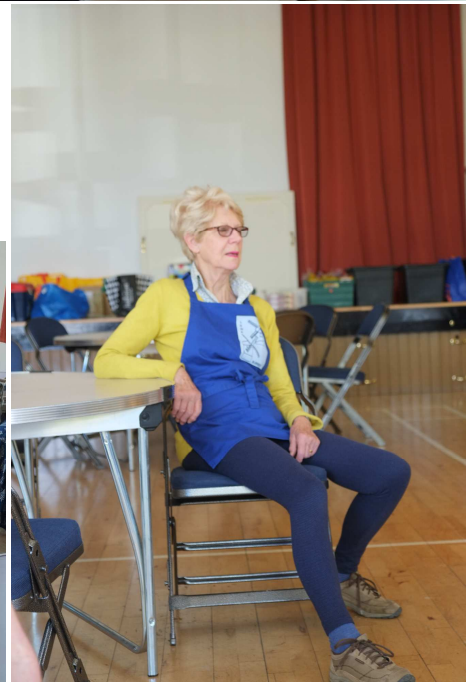
*Some enjoy a leisurely day in the sunshine ...*



**SDM  
2019**



*... whilst others toil away indoors ...*



## Forthcoming Events

Coming soon ...

### The Sussex Stride, 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019



... our Group's component of the KSS Triple Challenge ...

The *Stride* challenge is to complete 51 miles in 20 hours on a route taking in some of the best scenery in the glorious Sussex Downs. The start and finish will be at Longhill School, Rottingdean, and there will be checkpoints at Offham, Glynde, Alfriston, East Dean, Litlington, Norton and Southease.

**Marshals are still needed at the Event HQ at Longhill School and at a number of checkpoints.**  
Please let me know if you are willing to help on the day and, if so, at what time and for how long you could be available: [chrisbainesholmes@gmail.com](mailto:chrisbainesholmes@gmail.com) or 01273 772076 or 07977810964.

If you would like more details of The Stride, or if you wish to enter, please see the [SiEntries](#) website or the 'Events' page of the [Sussex Group](#) website. There will be a marshals' walk of the whole route on 31<sup>st</sup> August

*Chris Baines-Holmes, Events Organiser*

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### 3. Group Social Walks - 2019 programme

Date	Walk	Start	Miles	No.
12/01	First of the year	Firle	12	23
27/01	Jerome's literal appearance	Billingshurst	18	10
09/02	Wander from Washington	Washington	19	12
23/02	Walk and AGM	Milton Street	10	16
09/03	Pett circular	Pett	17	17
23/03	The Secret Sisters	East Dean	21	27
13/04	From the top - take 2	Ditchling	22	16
28/04	One loop or two?	Robertsbridge	11/18	17/12
12/05	<i>LDWA South Downs Marathon</i>			
25/05	Wadhurst loops	Wadhurst	20	18
08/06	Low Weald and Downs	North Chailey	21	12
22/06	Arundel and the Downs	Kithurst Hill	20	9
06/07	Three Cups full?	Burwash	20	8
20/07	Long Man stride ( <i>joint walk with Kent Group</i> )	East Dean	22	9
03/08	Waldron circular	Waldron	18	
17/08	Back to Beckley	Westfield	20	
07/09	Harbour and Heights	Seaford	20	
21/09	<i>LDWA Sussex Stride</i>			
28/09	Tunbridge Wells half circular	Hawkenbury	20	
12/10	Maresfield Meander	Maresfield	20	
26/10	Sussex Border Path 8 on 1	West Hoathly	18	
09/11	Around Arundel	Arundel	20	
23/11	Rye circular	Rye	15	
08/12	Christmas Rodmell circular	Rodmell	14	

**Late changes are sometimes necessary. Please check the [website](#) to confirm details**

## 4. Miscellany

### The Jay Chou factor



*Longing for a cup of coffee?*

Whatever the time of year, and in all except the most dire weather, a stroll along the top of the Seven Sisters is likely to reveal young Asian visitors relishing the views and taking photographs of each other and of themselves - 'selfies'. It is often said that they are language students attending courses in Eastbourne and who are attracted to the Sisters because of the association of the number seven with good luck in some Asian countries, but articles in the national press reveal the likely reason for a recent substantial influx

is the release of a music video featuring Jay Chou, a 40-year-old Taiwanese pop star, film idol and judge on the Chinese version of *The Voice* (whatever that might be). Chou visited East Sussex to make a video for his latest hit *What's Wrong?*, described as '*a romantic song that features an extended metaphor about love being like a cup of coffee*' (yes, really!). Various clips show the artist walking down the road from Beachy Head towards Birling Gap, strolling across the cliff top and, at one stage, gazing enigmatically out to sea against the backdrop of Beachy Head and its lighthouse. It is said that the video has been viewed more than 13 million times on YouTube and readers enamoured of Taiwanese love songs might wish to visit [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcdscWaat\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcdscWaat_w) to savour it.

Members of the Friston and East Dean cricket club are hoping to benefit from the large number of Chou fans who visit the Sisters to worship the turf on which their idol has stood, in the course of which the majority plod past the cricket ground on their way to and from the bus stop in East Dean. The club is seeking to raise a substantial sum of money to have the wicket re-laid 1 chain (i.e. 22 yards for dinosaurs like me, 20.116 metres for the younger generation) further from the boundary at a point where it borders a newly-built housing development in which the residents appear not to like being bombarded by cricket balls. On match days Chou devotees passing by the ground are being offered the opportunity to take selfies posed with the cricket team in return for a £50 donation to the wicket fund.

All this makes our South Downs Marathon seem rather good value for money since on the appointed Sunday in May, for an outlay £40 less than that levied by the cricket club, each of the visiting fans could traverse a mile or so of the Sisters and then continue another 27 miles, pausing occasionally at a checkpoint to ingest Bourbon Cream biscuits washed down with orange squash diluted to homeopathic medicinal strength. There would be no additional charge for selfies posed with Sussex Group marshals. Each of the visitors would have the opportunity to take home treasured memories of the celebratory end-of-walk traditional English fare of beans on toast, together with a certificate and badge surely having rarity value in his or her home town. There must be a business opportunity for us here somewhere. Please contact a member of the Sussex Group committee if you wish to be considered for a future Marketing Manager role.

But, returning to the romantic song, what's all this about love being like a cup of coffee? Available to purchase from Starbucks for around £3? Available in various forms: regular, medium or large ... normal or skinny ... sit in or take away?? *Hmmm*. I still don't quite get it.

## The busiest grid square

The 'Jay Chou factor' must make the Beachy Head area a contender for the most popular destination for walkers in the UK. Indeed it might, but that distinction goes to the square kilometre within which lies SH609544, the summit of Snowdon, at least for those who carry a mobile device on which is installed Ordnance Survey mapping app.

Staff at the OS have analysed data generated by users of its app as they walked, ran or cycled a total of 304,712 routes around various parts of Britain. The analysis of walks during the period show that, in addition to Snowdon being top of the pops:

- The most popular county was Cumbria and the most popular starting point was the Peak District village of Edale;
- The busiest month was May, with December the least busy despite a boost from Boxing Day walks;
- The average length of a walk logged by the app was around 10 miles;
- Nearly 4,000 'walkers' strolled half a mile or less;
- The area in which fewest routes were logged is the Isle of Lewis: wild and unspoiled by the works of man, but with a strongly Presbyterian way of life that lessens the scope for a celebratory pint or gin & tonic at the end of a walk!

A cursory analysis of data for our 80 social walks since the beginning of 2016 shows that:

- The most popular area chosen by walk leaders moved eastwards towards the central South Downs and Wealden parts of East Sussex;
- The most popular time of year was the springtime, typically late March and early April, whilst the introduction of the 'first of the year' outing on the South Downs provided a substantial spike in numbers of members venturing out in January;
- The average length of a walk was 18.6 miles;
- No walker strolled half a mile or less, save to visit a nearby loo prior to the start of a walk, and the shortest outing was 11 miles for those choosing to walk half of one of the figure-of-eight routes;
- West Sussex was the area least visited.

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### *'Lunch stop at L'escargot (formerly the Hare and Ferret) after 12 miles. Dress code smart casual'*

A good starting point when sitting down to plan a social walk is to identify somewhere suitable for the lunchtime stop. Ideally the chosen location will have a pub for those who wish to enjoy baguette and chips together with a stoup of ale, a teashop for those who don't, and somewhere close by where those with a picnic lunch are able to relax. It is becoming ever more difficult to find such locations, principally because of the reasons highlighted in *Economies of Ale*, a recent publication from the Office of National Statistics. An ONS analysis shows that approximately 23% of the pubs in the UK ceased trading in the period 2008 to 2018, a reduction from nearly 50,000 to around 39,000, and that smaller premises were those most affected. The gradual demise of the traditional pub is a well-known story that for many years has been charted by organisations such as CAMRA, with recent contributory factors that include the smoking ban, the financial crisis and, more recently, increases in labour and business costs: rates, rents and beer duty. Yet data gathered by the ONS show that during the same 2008 to 2018 period,



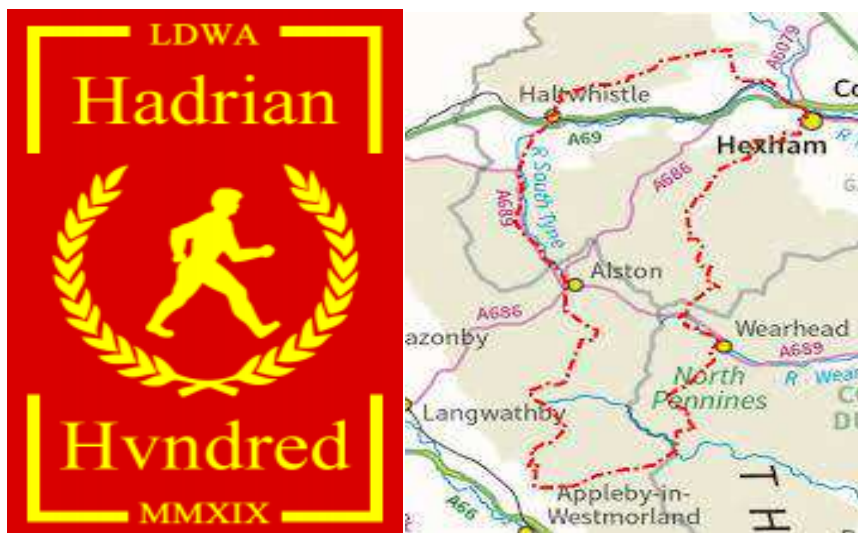
*The former White Hart, Cripps Corner*

despite the reduction in the number of premises, the total turnover of the UK licensed trade as a whole remained relatively constant: this the ONS attributed to the consolidation of larger pubs and bars, together with increasing focus on catering for customers seeking ever more sophisticated menus.

We are fortunate to live in an area in which, despite closures, we have a selection of pubs where walkers are welcomed although in some parts of the Weald the metamorphosis of traditional hostelry to 'gastro pub' has reduced the number of options for lunchtime arrangements. Additionally the popularity of the weekend family 'roast with all the trimmings' lunch - and its profitability to the licensed trade - can make it difficult to arrange a one-hour Sunday lunch stop for a group whose numbers can only be confirmed during the morning of the walk. Despite all this our walk leaders have not yet had to resort to planning routes such as those occasionally advertised by the London Group ('A Wetherspoons whammy' (July 2017), 'The ultimate Wetherspoons tour' (July 2018), 'An extended Wetherspoons odyssey' (December 2018)). And, thankfully, the Sussex Group is still some way from requiring its members to turn up for a Sunday walk dressed in a manner suitable for lunch in a posh place with carpet and table cloths.

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### The Hadrian Hundred



*The challenge - 101.5 miles, 13840ft cumulative ascent, 48hr time limit*

The annual LDWA 100 is never easy, but the 2019 event was an especially stern test, notably during the first night when bad weather set in and local mountain rescue teams were called out to locate some entrants who were lost in thick cloud and driving rain atop Cross Fell, at 2930ft the highest point in the Pennine range, and to recover others who were suffering from hypothermia. Of no surprise was the unusually high retirement rate for the event of 38%.

Congratulations to each of the eleven Sussex Group members who took part, and especially to the four who completed the route within the allotted time: Liz Davies, Sammy Dawkins, Manfred Engler and David Giles

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## 5. 'Your Walk'

### LeJog: an end to the End-to-End

*Our intrepid webmaster has been walking the 'End-to-End', the much-attempted and oft-abandoned Lands End to John O'Groats traverse of around 900 miles between the extreme southerly and northerly points of mainland Britain. David's progress has been charted in recent newsletters and here he reports on the final stage of his 'LeJog' adventure.*



*Lands End, 2011*



*John O'Groats, 2018*

June 2019. Back up to Scotland to finish the final bits I had missed. Now I can finally say I have walked all the way from Lands End to John O'Groats.

I took the sleeper from Euston to Inverness, then a 4 hour train journey to Wick. The next week was spent filling in sections between Dornoch and Wick, staying in Wick and using the bus to go down and up. The Stagecoach app with 2 weekly tickets on it saved a lot of bother when using the buses.

I had intended to use the John O'Groats Trail all the way, but on the Sunday I attempted the cliff section from Whaligoe Steps to Wick. It was hard going, as not walked very much, and very rough on the ankles, so after that I only used the Trail up to Helmsdale where it is fairly flat. At Whaligoe there are 365 steps from the cliff top down to the sea. The fish wives used to carry baskets of herring up these steps from a tiny harbour below, and the men would carry the crabs. The café is worth a visit.

Walking the road north of Helmsdale was not too bad. There is no path so if I saw a large lorry or bus coming towards me I stepped on to the grass verge and stopped. Drivers of cars seemed very used to walkers and in the main gave me a wide berth. If I heard vehicles coming up behind and there were vehicles coming towards me, I also stepped onto the verge. The traffic was fairly light during the day.

On the last day I met a retired couple who had started at Lyme Regis in Dorset on January 1<sup>st</sup> and were walking the coast clockwise around England, Wales and Scotland. When I met them they were 30 miles south of Wick. Home by Christmas perhaps? I also met someone who rushed across his garden calling to me - it was a warm day so he handed me a cold can of cola. Good people everywhere.

Whilst on the train back from Wick I met a cyclist who had had 2 punctures during his LeJog ride, one in England somewhere and the other 8 miles from the end. He could find no-one with a bowl of water so had to pump up the tyre, cycle half a mile, and repeat this all the way on the last 8 miles to John O'Groats.



### My LeJog calendar

*I set out from Land's End in 2011 but my LeJog adventure began the previous year when, with my brother, I walked the section from Fort William to Inverness along the Great Glen Way.*

2010	Fort William - Inverness	Great Glen Way	
2011	Lands End - Bath	South West Coast Path, Macmillan Way	
2012	Sections missed in 2011		Limited time due to being an Olympics Volunteer
2013	Bath - Hebden Bridge	Cotswold Way, Heart of England Way, Staffordshire Way, Limestone Way, Tissington Trail, Pennine Bridleway	
2014	Hebden Bridge - Annan	Pennine Bridleway, Settle to Carlisle Way	
2015	Annan - Milngavie	Annandale Way, roads, Clyde Walkway	
2016	Milngavie - Fort William Inverness - Dunbeath Wick - John O'Groats	West Highland Way John O'Groats Trail Road	
2017	Church door - altar	Centre aisle	My daughter's wedding!
2018	Tyndrum - Kingshouse	West Highland Way	Section missed in 2016
2019	Dornoch - Wick	John O'Groats Trail, roads	Sections missed in 2016

*Am I glad I did it?*

Yes!

*Would I have liked to do it all in one go?*

Yes, but it would have required about 3 months away from home and 3 times as much money in one year.

*Any other thoughts?*

Yes. If you have a go, **good luck!**

*David Hodge*

### A journey along the Yorkshire Wolds Way



*The Yorkshire Wolds Way*

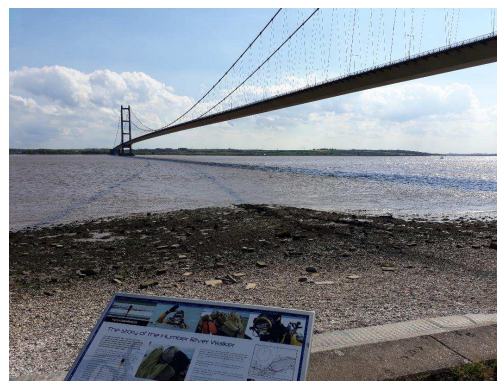
Back in 2007, I stood at the marker stone in Filey celebrating the end of my journey along the Cleveland Way. I had just completed the 110 mile route of ever changing countryside including a fantastic section south along the Yorkshire coast. But what's this? The same marker stone also had the letters making the words "Wolds Way" engraved on it and a fingerpost nearby pointing west with the words "Hessle 79 miles". At that time I had very little knowledge of the Wolds Way or even where Hessle was but maybe one day it would feature.

12 years on and another 26 long distance paths later, I stood at a similar marker stone in Hessle and a fingerpost with the words "Filey 79 miles".

Yes, I had finally got around to "doing" the Yorkshire Wolds Way.

I had done my research and had mentioned my plan to several people, all of which had said they had known someone who had walked it but had not actually done it themselves. They were kind enough to say that it was supposed to be lovely walk. I had read that *'the Yorkshire Wolds offer a peaceful setting for a walking holiday away from it all. With rolling countryside and far reaching views, the trail follows good paths and tracks over higher ground, dipping in and out of the dry valleys which were carved into this landscape after the Ice Age, and which give the area its unique appearance'*. I concluded that this year's long distance walk wouldn't perhaps have the dramatic and changing landscapes that the Cleveland Way and other paths offer and would also not provide the same physical challenges. However, it was a National Trail after all and I didn't know this part of Yorkshire at all. It should be a very interesting 5 days.

Four of us set out from the marker stone situated at the Humber Estuary. The route follows the foreshore under the Humber Bridge in a westerly direction. The tide was out so it seemed the right decision to follow the "low tide route". This, however, turned out to be a poor choice. The receding water had left the brown mud of the Humber sticky and soft so that it fully covered our boots. On a week that turned out to be sunny and dry the boots looked as if they had just done the Winter Tanners Challenge during a particularly wet period!



Heading inland the first conurbation is the picturesque village of Welton. Our first significant rest break would be much further on at South Cave where we would seek out the pub. For those walking in shorter sections this could well be the end of the first day but our destination would be North Newbold which is just off the trail. Unfortunately we were not actually staying in the village. No accommodation to suit. It would have to be a taxi from the pub in Newbold to the nearby market town of Beverley. The word taxi appears on the face of it to be a inoffensive word. However, any mention of this word inside the pub drew gasps of air through teeth and lips *"...you will be lucky, they're absolutely useless around here mate"*. However, the helpful landlord did then provide a list of mobile telephone numbers for us to try. Unsuccessful with the first *"...when do you want it for? ... I'm doing my holiday shopping in Hull at the moment"*. No better with the second number but it was the third that proved more fruitful and after 45 minutes, to our relief, a taxi arrived.

After being dropped off back on the trail at North Newbold the following morning, the very well waymarked route took us across an extensive patchwork of fields that stretched for miles. Wheat, barley, flowering rape.....barley, wheat, flowering rape. Similar to the previous day really but the sun was shining bright and it all felt good. Today's highlights would be the tea and tea cake at the Wolds cafe on the busy A614 and the rather attractive Londesbrough Park estate not long after. All this was on the way to Pocklington for our second night's stay. Off route we were guided via a golf course and local footways into the centre of Pocklington by a retired teacher who had lived in the small town for over 40 years – so it can't be too bad!

Day three would be around 17.5 miles. Our finishing point was planned to be in the middle of nowhere and a taxi would again be required to take us to the town of Malton. Given the experience of two days earlier, we gave notice to a taxi firm of our intentions with an approximate time we thought we might get to a suitable pick up point. Setting off from Pocklington the trail takes some higher ground passing above the village of Millington then skirting below the village of Huggate. No time to make a diversion to the pub in Huggate which is around  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from the route. The map suggested that the next village of Fridaythorpe may be able to provide refreshments and hopefully a pub. The very busy A166 runs through Fridaythorpe. The village looked as if it had seen much better times in the past. It felt sad. We then spotted what we hoped we would not – a boarded up "Farmers Arms". The only place to replenish our resources would turn out be the convenience shop at the local petrol filling station. Now to find somewhere to sit. Suddenly and just around the corner we found an oasis. The village green with seats and tables and a pond full of ducks, their chicks and hundreds of goldfish. Thixendale is the next village on the trail about 4 miles on and it looked as if there was pub there which might not have

closed down. Like the Trail we had experienced to this point, the patchwork of fields sown with arable crops. Much of the Trail follows around fields either on grass footpaths or more firmer bridleways. However, from time-to-time this arable landscape is scattered with attractive undulating pasture very similar to our own chalk South Downs. On occasions we would be walking along the bottom of curving valleys with steep sloping sides. On the section to Thixendale I thought I was back on a route in the eastern South Downs between Lewes and Eastbourne such was the similarity between the two.

We finally reached the pub in Thixendale only to find in the window a sign saying that it opened at 6pm. What's the point of that we asked ourselves?! Approaching the location where we hoped to be picked up by the taxi we entered the grounds of the deserted village of Wharram Percy. Now under the jurisdiction of English Heritage, it is thought the village was founded in the 9th or 10th century, flourished between the 12th and early 14th centuries, then deserted by the early 16th. The ruined church is the last standing medieval building. From here we reached the road at Wharram Le Street and phoned the taxi to confirm that we had reached the agreed pick-up point. The taxi arrived in ten minutes.

Day 4 would be another 17 miles or so. For the last couple of days we had been travelling generally in a northerly direction. After climbing a steep gradient out of character with this Trail to a so-called "Sculpture Park", the trail turned east. This would provide the best views of the walk so far, looking from higher ground over the Vale of Pickering towards the North York Moors National Park. This was the fourth consecutive day of sunshine and the visibility was good. There would be nowhere to stop on route so we ploughed on to our accommodation for the night which would be the only pub in the village of Ganton. The advantage with it being the only place in town is that it provides the opportunity to exchange thoughts with other walkers doing the Trail.

The final day would be a little shorter and we set off in good time. The Trail takes a slow climb passing RAF Staxton Wold before eventually you can spot the castle at Scarborough in the distance. Just before Filey lies the village of Muston. We arrived at 12.25pm, ideal for a quick lunchtime drink. We couldn't believe it but a written sign in the door stated that the opening time was 1 pm. Just as we turned away the door opened and a voice said "*if you just want a drink you can come in*". Music to our ears and we very gladly accepted the invitation.



Shortly after leaving Muston we caught the first glimpse of the coast and the cliffs at Flamborough Head in particular. The trail took a route through the middle of Filey but it wouldn't finish until we had turned left towards Filey Brigg to reach the point and the marker stone where I had stood 12 years earlier. It had been a very pleasant, reasonably easy 5 days walk in great weather but I was slightly envious of the group of lads standing next to us that were celebrating their particular achievement of completing the riches of the Cleveland Way.

Trevor Beeston

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*"Well - how did it go?"*

*In the previous edition of the newsletter Jane Bates described her preparations for tackling the 630 mile South West Coast Path - a post-retirement treat. Here we learn how she fared.*

"Well - how did it go?" - this is the first question that I am asked after my South West Coast Path trip. It soon expands into more questions:

**Did you finish?** Quick answer - YES, but not in the intended single hit! I started from Minehead in early June 2018 with a rough plan of completing by the time the schools break up. I was doing very

well until just after Lands End when some loose gravel on a nice flat bit of path acted as ball bearings and I twisted my knee. Nothing too serious that 2 months rest did not sort out, but that was the end for 2018. In hindsight it was a suitable finish point for the first stage, as the 'going west' section of the Path was completed. I went back in late May 2019 and completed the 'going east' half on 30 June!



7 June 2018



29 June 2018

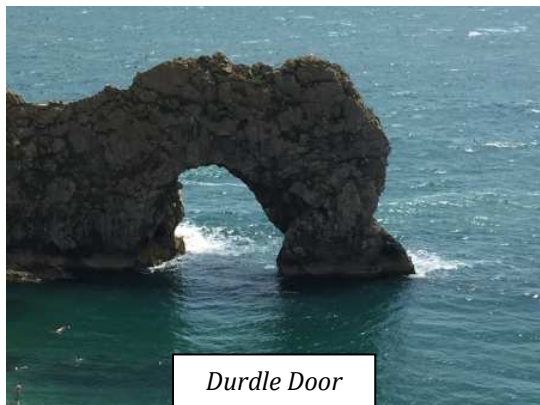


30 June 2019

**How was it?** It is a stunning walk. I had thought that constantly walking along the coast 'keeping the sea to the right' could end up boring but the scenery constantly changes. My personal favourite section was North Devon as this is the most remote and has the wildest scenery. The Lizard peninsula was another highlight and the Path has a final flourish with the South Dorset Jurassic Coast.



North Devon coast



Durdle Door

June 2018 was hot, hot – probably the hottest summer since the fabled one of 1978. Walking started earlier and earlier in the day and it was essential to find somewhere in the shade to hole up for the middle of the day. I found another use for a buff – soaked in a stream and then put round the neck it really helps to cool you down, but a pity it only took 30 mins to dry out. June 2019 was one of the wettest on record but down in the South West I escaped the worst of it, and the flexibility of not having a fixed schedule meant that I just did not walk on wet days.

**Where did you stay?** 2018 started with 2 weeks in 2 separate cottages, but the downside was that it soon became a long way to travel at start and end of each day – moving once a week is not enough. Then came 10 days of backpacking - very flexible as where to stay, and I was very lucky with sunny dry weather. However even when packing very light the weight is noticeable, especially on the hills.



The pack

Throughout this year's section Roger and I used our campervan: this was perfect, flexible in where to stay, economical by avoiding the need always to eat in pubs, needing to carry only a daypack - and no wet tent when it rained! The key to success was my non-walking husband who chauffeured

me to the start and from the end of each day.

**Did you walk every day and how far did you walk each day?** Out of the total 8 weeks I probably did not walk on only 2 or 3 rainy days. Mileages varied between 6 (almost a rest day) to 18 (too far!), but mostly about 12 miles, as the route is very, very hilly. A set of 200 steps is not uncommon, and the total ascent on the whole Path is 4 times that of Everest.

**Would you recommend?** A definite YES to doing it in one hit. There is a very special feeling to life simplifying down to just walking each day with no predetermined schedule. If any of you have walked the Camino, they would call it surrendering to the path. If that is not possible, I would still recommend the traditional week at a time approach. It would then be a very different walk but the scenery would make it worthwhile. Probably the hills would be more painful this way as each week you have to regain your hill fitness, while I found them relatively easy, just going slowly and not looking up.

**What are your key memories?**



... and the relaxed rhythm of walking every day, the days and places merging into a ribbon of memory ...



*Jane Bates*



*During the AGM on 23<sup>rd</sup> February Shirley Greenwood handed on her Treasurer role but retained her famous smile ....*



*... whilst a Sussex Group member got to grips with a modest snack*

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***Thank you to those who have provided material for this edition. Contributions from the wider Sussex Group membership would be very welcome for inclusion in future editions.***