

Carnforth

The Lancaster Canal at Carnforth gently weaving this way and that under a sky where promised showers have not been delivered, a boat moored up, bicycles tied to it awaiting eager riders not yet surfaced, life in the slow lane. Two Anglers just arriving, too late for “the early bird catches the worm” slot. A dog called Rupert, looks like a bear, stops for a pat and a chat. A narrow boat chugging along at its top speed of 5mph, occupants smiling and waving at the tenacious 10, some in T-shirts, others in shorts, some with rucksacks and some with coats, many with hats and boots, none with gloves, but all a bit special, a motley crew, this u3a Walking Group.

The iconic 150 year old Victorian Capernwray viaduct, recently refurbished to its former glory, transporting the Carnforth to Settle railway line over the river Keer, looking slightly out of place in the middle of this field of grass with only trees for company, beneath one of the arches something circular - identification pending. A banana break forced upon us by popular demand then stiles of various shapes and sizes prove awkward for some and provide entertainment for others, one built into a high stone wall, a



Photo by Graham

bit of a squeeze, then midges, hundreds and thousands of them, the Keer to our left takes the blame, Pine Lake to our right just visible through the trees, Wooden Cabins time shared along the park boundary, partially obscuring a better view. A signpost: watch out for Brown Trout, Dippers, Otters and Kingfishers; Barn Owls and Bats. We would be so lucky!

Nestling on the eastern margin of the prominent limestone outcrop of Warton Crag, famous for its rare butterflies and the regular nesting site for Peregrine Falcons, Warton, a small village with a big history, the leftovers of the 14th century Warton Old Rectory currently hosted by English Heritage and available to view, but no metal detecting, camping or use of drones, you’ve been warned! A kissing gate, so no drama here, to Warton Mires Nature reserve and the appearance of a trio of white doves and a flight of swallows more than completes our experience.

The Carnforth Heritage Centre appropriately sited between the tracks at Carnforth railway station, or is it Milford Junction? David Lean thought so in 1945. Stacks of old suitcases given a new lease of life furnishing the platform. Inside the Café, decoration 1940s style, only the prices have been updated. Our Brief Encounter isn’t brief at all after a delay in the kitchen, leaves on the stove perhaps?

Mike