

Rivington Walk

Thick Fog threatens to put a dampener on the day, but it is quickly burnt away by the determined spring sunshine, and its memory is quickly forgotten as 14 step out from the Great Barn car park into mottled woodland, the huge expanse of Anglezarke reservoir lapping the shoreline to the left, the previously muddy paths now all but dried up after a period of calm weather culminating in the best day of the week, Walking day.

As we leave the woodland behind and head into Rivington village, a delightfully located infants school nestles on our right, the newest generation running around the playground with not a care in the world. Uphill now, rocky underfoot but dry, Yarrow reservoir on our right, the sun glistening almost sparkling on the surface reflecting into our eyes, Anglezarke only just visible to the left between the trees. Watch out for the mountain bikes, descending fast enough to get the adrenalin flowing, skidding almost bouncing off the rocks, sand and grit flying from the oversized tyres, their numbers putting the dog walkers into minority for a change.

Heading North East now, uphill again, the babbling aptly named limestone brook to our left, small waterfalls breaking up the flow for our pleasure, fossils from 300 Million years ago hidden from view. Huge Conifers hiding the northern bank, a healthy deep green except near the ground level where the blue is spreading. Nearing the summit now, old lead mine workings from the 17th century fenced off for our protection, a spaniel makes the climb look easier than it is, as it races up and down the hill seemingly with boundless energy, making us all slightly green with envy. Then at last our destination is in view, the monument to the World War II Wellington bomber which crashed here in the mist in 1943. The reason unknown, only speculation exists. Views across the commanding ridge of Winter Hill are outstanding. We pause to take it all in.



Photo by Graham

Downhill now, our souls feeling refreshed. A path by the stream broken in places, care is needed. Wild daffodils standing proud in the sun, back again for another year. A flight of steps uphill and along a path through a field and we are back in Rivington Village, assembled on the green. ½ mile to go and decisions to be made. 2 cafes to choose from, we are spoilt for choice. Opinions exchanged and the decision is made. The magnificent 7 stay at the tea rooms. I hope they know the way back. But space in this café is limited and so the remaining 7, also magnificent, head back to finish the walk and lunch at the Great Barn with the Hairy Bikers.

We'll compare notes later!

Mike Ripley