

Louise Smalley Challenge Walk 2021

Daisy Flower Walk.

Route 3

Hodthorpe – Belph - Creswell Crag (6.5miles)

Notes about this section!

- A)** Belph is a rural hamlet comprised of small clusters of buildings amidst an expanse of agricultural land. The conservation area encompasses the earliest settlement area; a nucleus of buildings centred around Mill Wood Lane; and smaller groupings of buildings known as Penny Green which developed primarily from the nineteenth century onwards; and Water Lane the old Whitwell to Welbeck road which forms a link between the two areas. A large proportion of the land and buildings in Belph are in the ownership of the Welbeck Estates.
- B)** Creswell Crag in North Derbyshire is a limestone gorge honeycombed with caves and smaller fissures. Stone tools and remains of animals found in the caves by archaeologists provide evidence for a fascinating story of life during the last Ice Age between 50,000 and 10,000 years ago. Further evidence came to light in 2003 with the discovery of Britain's only known Ice Age rock art, the Northern most cave art in Europe. It is also home to the biggest concentration of 'witches' marks' found in British caves. "Apotropaic" marks were scribed into the cave surface as they were thought to keep evil spirits coming from the underworld. Hundreds of these protective marks, believed to be from the 17th and 18th Centuries, were discovered in 2018. As a result of its unique features, Creswell Crag has been designated as a site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It has also been put forward as a potential World Heritage Site.
- C)** Before Creswell village was built around the colliery in the late 19th century, there were only farms around the entrance to the Crag. The local Anglo Saxon villages were Whitwell, Elmtun and Thorpe (Salvin). Creswell was the name of the farm nearest to the colliery site, and so a drop-off point for materials used in the building of the colliery. At that time Creswell Crag was known locally as Whitwell Crag. The stream running through the Crag marks the County boundary of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and the Parish boundary of Whitwell.
- 1.** Turn left out of the Community Centre car park and walk along the pavement, cross over at the war memorial and carry on uphill up Hanger Hill. Reach the road junction and turn left immediately before the shop of Rosemary Handley. Pass Thorpe's Builders then turn right to walk along Mill Lane. At the end of this dead-end street look to the right-hand corner and proceed down the narrow footpath as indicated by the metal footpath sign.

- 2.** This opens out into a large field. **Take the obvious footpath going directly ahead of you heading downhill.** Come to the railway line **cross over with great care** via the wooden stiles. **Cross over a small area of grass** and then over another stile. **Continue ahead on another public footpath.** There will be a new housing development on your right. When the building site fencing on your right turns away to the right you will find a wooden stile to cross over into the next field. **Continue diagonally to your right** to walk with the hedge on your right. Beware the frisky horses! Head towards a gap in the horse fencing. **Continue straight ahead** towards a wooden stile. Converted farm buildings will be to your left. Ignore the first driveway on your left but continue to the farm lane and then **turn left.**
- 3.** Head towards the farm buildings. Pass a wooden stable on your right and **continue towards the entrance of Hodthorpe Livery Stables.** Don't walk into the farmyard but **turn right immediately before their gate** as indicated by the roundel arrow on the gate post. Take the stile then **proceed along the narrow path with buildings on your left.** Pass over another stile and **continue along the path** enclosed by hedges & fences. Cross another stile onto a farm lane.
- 4.** Here **turn right and walk down Ratcliffe Lane to the road.** When you reach the road **turn right and walk past the sewage works.** At the black & white bollards on the left-hand side of the road, **turn off the road and walk down the driveway to Hall Leys Farm,** which is a public footpath.
- 5.** As you approach the farm **take the path as it turns away to the left across the fields.** At the end of the first field **pass through a gap in the hedge then follow the obvious path** across a field towards another gap in a hedge. **Cross another field to a small wooden footbridge that brings you to the road.**
- 6.** **Cross the road and walk directly ahead into the hamlet of Belph. History Label "A".** Shortly you reach a T junction of lanes. **Turn right.** After 50m or so the tarmac ends and you are walking with a stream on your right. **After approx. 100m pass through a V gap stile on the left. Walk straight ahead** so that you are going slightly uphill.
- 7.** Keep on this path as it bends to the left and right and then to the right again. You will now be walking with tall hedge on the left and post & wire fence on your right. As you approach a metal farm gate, **turn to your left and go through the wooden pedestrian gate. Cross the road with care. Then proceed directly ahead down the wide grassy track.**
- 8.** Follow this green lane for all its length until you are approaching the busy A60 road. **At the main road pass through a gap to the side of a large gate, turn right** and walk along the narrow pavement. Pass the stone property on your right then **turn right to walk along the track.** This track is heading towards Creswell Craggs. **History Label "B "**
- 9.** Follow the track until you come to a metal barrier. Pass by this barrier and **continue ahead into the car park area.** Notice the memorial to WW2 air crew on your right. Head towards the visitor centre. You pass through the car park until you reach the "Centre Buildings". **Pass the centre on your left** and 30 metres beyond the buildings **take the path veering to**

the left and downhill. Continue with tall trees either side. Ignore the turn off to the left and continue as path rises into the limestone gorge of Creswell Crags. **At the top of the slope turn left so that the lake is on your right.** Follow the path so that you keep the lake to your right with the cliffs and caves of the gorge on your left.

- 10.** As the lake comes to an end pass through a gate, **turn right and then soon left to walk out of the gorge.** Pass a metal horse gate and onto a tarmac road with pavement on the left. Pass Crags Cottage and meet the junction with the main road. **History Label "C".**
- 11.** **Here cross the road and turn right.** Walk up the grass verge for about 100m. **Turn left** into the entrance towards the Coloured Cob Stables. After about 40m **turn right to walk up the path;** this is "Tommy Moors Lane" The path gently rises. As you reach the top of the hill **turn left as the path almost doubles back for a short distance and then turns 90 degrees right.**
- 12.** Walk through trees with post & wire fence on the right. **Pass a stile or gap** and soon you will be walking with trees on your right and open fields on your left. **Pass over a stone stile and continue straight** on with trees on your left.
- 13.** At the end of this field you reach a bench (just before rail line). At this point **turn right. Pass through a metal A frame barrier and go up some steps. Continue uphill.** At the top of the slope there is metal palisade fencing on your left. Here the path turns left. Now there is a junction of paths where you **turn right to walk with post & wire fences on either side.**
- 14.** Come to a chicane and gates that takes you over the quarry haul road. **Pass through these gates and continue along the path** with fences either side. Path rises and then descends to a kissing gate. **Pass through and continue straight on** with post & wire fence on your right.
- 15.** Pass, but do not cross over, the stone railway bridge on your right. **Shortly after the path bends round to the left. Continue with trees on either side.** The path ahead will fork. **Take the left-hand fork** and shortly walk up a short steep slope. The path will fork again. **Take the right-hand fork** and proceed into trees and to a stile.
- 16.** **Cross the stile and then a short stretch of path down to the road.** Southfield Lane. **Cross the road and turn right then immediately left to walk down Middle Field Gate Drive.** Reach the road junction to Station Road. **Cross over and turn left onto the pavement.** Continue along this road past the Holmefield Arms and continue to the junction. **Cross over and turn left and into the Community Centre checkpoint via the gardens.**