



# Spring Newsletter

*April - June 2015*

Welcome to the fifth **TeamWalking** quarterly newsletter

## NEWS

### Summer Walking Weekender filling up...

#### **Yorkshire Dales 26th - 28th June 2015**

Based from the beautiful village of Kettlewell in the heart of Upper Wharfedale, this will be a weekend to remember with vast open fells, sweeping valleys, hidden waterfalls, hay meadows and miles of glorious open moorland, not to mention some of the best pubs in England!

**ONLY 8 PLACES LEFT** (as of 13/4/15)

- Based from great country pubs
- Meet like-minded people
- Explore further with knowledgeable guides - history, fauna and flora
- Choice of walks each day, each led by a Mountain Leader
- Pub Quiz and evening pub entertainment
- Sponsored by Black Sheep Brewery!

<http://www.walkingweekenders.co.uk>



## Map Skills - your passport to freedom

Here is an article Mark Reid wrote for [UKHillwalking.com](http://UKHillwalking.com)

There are 137,000 miles of Rights of Way in England and Wales, not to mention over three million acres of Open Access Land; this Access Land is designated areas of mountain, moor, heath, downland and common land where you can walk freely away from paths and tracks. There's a lifetime of exploration just waiting on your doorstep. These paths are your routes to freedom, to savour fantastic views, reach hidden waterfalls, explore ancient remains, stride out across the hills and spend uninterrupted time with your friends and family out in the fresh air surrounded by beautiful landscapes.

But people often say to me that they lack confidence to explore further, are worried about getting 'lost' and are unsure about where they can legally walk, and so they stick to paths they know and the more popular routes. This is where a map comes in, and I am talking paper maps that you can unfold, crease, write on and use to plan. Taking time to understand a map and how it relates to the landscape will help you overcome these barriers and open up a whole new world - it is your passport to freedom.

### What is a map?

Well, there are maps for many different things, from wealth and health to lifestyles and landscapes. The maps I am interested in are the amazingly detailed landscape maps of the British Isles produced by the two market leaders: Ordnance Survey and Harvey. These maps are two-dimensional representations of the landscape, produced to a specific scale, usually 1:25k, 1:40k or 1:50k. An important point to note is that the map is just a scale plan of the landscape, but it is not the landscape. Just like when you go out to a restaurant for a meal, the menu is not your dinner!

I am often asked about GPS units as a quick and easy answer to these navigation problems; most mobile phones now have integrated GPS and mapping. You simply press a button and it tells you where you are. A GPS can be a useful navigation tool, but you still need map and outdoor skills. I don't have a GPS and I rely solely on traditional methods, as in my opinion a map and compass are better. A GPS spoon-feeds you information, which you then assume to be true. Learning map and compass skills allows you to design your own spoon and feed yourself! How often have you programmed your Sat Nav in your car and then, after driving for a while, realised that you actually do not know where you are and are being told where to turn. The fundamentals of good navigation are always knowing where you are, where you want to go next and how to get there safely. It is about being engaged with the environment around you, and relating that to the map, and vice versa. Unlike the small screen on your phone or GPS, you can unfold a map to reveal not only your chosen route in its entirety but ALL potential routes, not to mention the surrounding landscape.

### Using your map

Ordnance Survey maps are works of art; amazingly detailed, intricate and accurate. So accurate in fact that a small gully on the side of a remote hillside in the Cairngorms or on Kinder Scout will show up as small 'v' shapes on the contour lines on your map. Maps show you many things: where you can legally walk (Rights of Way and Access Land), visible features on the ground (from walls and fences to buildings and pubs), the landform (contours) and natural features (water, woodland, vegetation and rock outcrops). Symbols are used to easily identify certain features. It is worth taking time to learn these symbols. The map can also help you work out which way to walk, as the vertical blue grid lines on the maps are printed so that they are aligned to north (known as Grid North) so all you have to do is match these vertical grid lines with the north needle on your

compass (Magnetic North) and then the map and landscape correlate. Amazing! You can also accurately work out distance and timings, as each grid square is 1km, irrespective of scale. And it takes on average 15 minutes to walk 1km on the flat. You can use this map to plan a safe and enjoyable route, with an accurate total distance, timings, directions, terrain, slopes, hazards to avoid, features along the way and possible escape routes.

### Navigation Strategies

Once you understand maps, you then need to apply those map skills to the landscape to move from one point to another. This is where navigation skills come in, where you logically breakdown the information on the map into a strategy that includes direction (which way is it), distance (how far is it), detail (what am I going to pass) and destination (how will I know I have got there) - this strategy is known as the four D's! In addition to map and navigation skills, you also need to be get to grips with weather, clothing and gear, terrain plus much more. It is an art form.

I believe that our brains are hard-wired to function in the natural environment; after all, historically as a species we have spent almost our entire time on this planet in the natural environment, fully engaged with the various eco-systems and the passage of the seasons. Research shows we have an innate connection with the natural world - just think about how a beautiful sunrise makes you feel. Recently, the Nobel Prize for physiology and medicine was awarded to scientists who discovered the brain's inner 'mapping' system. They discovered 'place' cells within the brain that form a mental map of where we are, and also 'grid' cells that help the brain judge distance and navigate. I believe that map reading and navigation skills are simply building on our prehistoric survival instincts, of how we found our way to food and back to shelter. This may explain why it feels so satisfying when you navigate successfully across the hills; and why it feels so daunting if you get misplaced!

So, next time you are outdoors on a walk, map in hand, take a moment to think about how they created such an amazingly detailed map, and that by using it you are simply tapping into hard-wired prehistoric brain functions - our brains and bodies are designed to navigate our way across the hills.

### © Mark Reid

*Mark has spent the last 18 years walking the paths and tracks of the North of England and have clocked up over 14,000 miles of footpaths since 1997, whilst researching and writing 17 books including The Inn Way series. He has also taken out over 4,500 people walking in the Yorkshire Dales, Lake District and beyond since 2007, and have gained various walking awards, including Mountain Leader. Each year, he teaches hundreds of people how to read maps and navigate, and frequently sees people have 'eureka' moments on the hillside when they realise the potential of maps.*

For more information about Mark Reid's courses visit: [www.teamwalking.co.uk](http://www.teamwalking.co.uk)



## PHOTOS OF THE SEASON - Winter 2015



February 2015

*Winter Walking, Langdale Pikes (left)*

February 2015

*NNAS Gold Training, Howgill Fells (right)*



March 2015

*NNAS Silver award, Grinton, Swaledale (left)*

March 2015

*Map Reading course, Kettlewell, Yorkshire Dales (right)*



# Upcoming Dates - April - June 2015

Please see website for availability.

## 17th - 19th April 2015

NNAS 'Straight to Silver' award - *Kettlewell, Yorkshire Dales*

## 18th & 19th April 2015

NNAS Silver award - *Kettlewell, Yorkshire Dales*

## 22nd April 2015

Map Reading course - *Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire*

## 25th - 27th April 2015

NNAS 'Straight to Silver' award - *Malham, Yorkshire Dales*

## 29th April 2015

Map Reading course - *Grassington, Yorkshire Dales*

## 8th - 10th May 2015

NNAS 'Straight to Silver' award - *Reeth, Yorkshire Dales*

## 9th & 10th May 2015

NNAS Silver award - *Reeth, Yorkshire Dales*

## 13th May 2015

Map Reading course - *Malham, Yorkshire Dales*

## 15th May 2015

Mountain Walk - *Scafell Pike, Lake District*

## 16th & 17th May 2015

Mountain Skills course - *Borrowdale, Lake District*

## 20th May 2015

Map Reading course - *Marsden Moor, South Pennines*

## 30th May 2015

Map Reading course - *Reeth, Yorkshire Dales*

## 31st May 2015

Yorkshire Three Peaks - *Ribblehead*

## 10th June 2015

Map Reading course - *Kettlewell, Yorkshire Dales*

## 12th June 2015

Mountain Walk - *Mallerstang Edge, Yorkshire Dales*

## 13th / 14th June 2015

Wild Camping expedition - *Grasmere, Lake District*

## 17th June 2015

Map Reading course - *Malham Tarn, Yorkshire Dales*

## 24th June 2015

Map Reading course - *Aysgarth Falls, Yorkshire Dales*

## 26th - 28th June 2015

Walking Weekender - *Yorkshire Dales*

[www.teamwalking.co.uk](http://www.teamwalking.co.uk)

Mark Reid, 2015