

*Guinear & District Footpaths & Bridleways
Association*

Saturday 16th January 2016

Our first walk of the year and this afternoon it's dry with glimpses of sun. We meet at Kehelland 1.5m NW of Camborne and before moving off George explains the village is on the old "churchway" from Gwithian to Camborne Church - Kehelland derives from the Cornish kelli "grove or copse" and hellan "old enclosure or encampment". The one remaining Chapel is quite recent - built 1981.

Our group of seventeen head through the village, NE, passed both old and modern houses, customary friendly-barking dogs and folk. The road is very narrow with views SE over Treswithian Downs and N towards North Cliffs although we cannot see the sea. This is a former heavily mined and tin streaming works region and since closing farming has taken over with many of the farms and villages having names reflecting the area's history.

The metalled road ends then footpaths and bridleways take us on a circuitous route round the contours and remaining comfortably flat. Crossing the Camborne/Coombe road we head down a narrow, well-marked path, passed the Sewerage Works, continuing down until we reach another partly metalled bridleway and turn NW. Below us on the right, over wooded scrubland is down to the Red River Valley, although we'll reach it further downstream near Coombe, where we join and cross over the road again, pausing to take in the views, the river and some dogs agilely catching a Frisbee thrown by "January caravaners!".

So we head SW along the Red River Valley and Nature Reserve - several patches of puddles'n'mud easily navigated. Halfway along this stretch we briefly turn off to look at a lake (well, large pond!), which is well served by steps and bridges. Five minutes and little sign of nature activity so we return to the main path on our way towards the hamlet of Menadarva where we have to use the stepping stones to navigate a tributary stream to reach the road - safe and fun!

We don't go up to the old farmhouse, believed to be the home of the Mertherderwa Family who also paid for stone crosses marking the "churchway", but pause for a while and George explains the name - Menadarva, Cornish Merther Derwa, grave of St Derwa, a legendary Saint who along with others from Ireland came ashore in West Cornwall around 450AD. Part of the farmhouse has some 16th century windows, thought to be part of the Tudor homestead.

The last part of our walk is up Hillside, a long hill taking us to Kehelland village and we take our time, stopping to chat to a couple of friendly donkeys - and photograph them! Altogether a lovely afternoon's walk for mid-January.

Next Walk Saturday 13th February 2016 - Detail will be emailed well beforehand.

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