

fix the fells Langdale Estate's “our man at the top”

The year started with snow and ended in snow, with a few floods and some hot weather in between.

The life of a footpath worker can be a hugely varied job, but the rewards and sense of achievement could match any job out there.

This year has seen the Eastern valleys team complete two major projects, reinstating stepping stones at Harrison Combe and repairing old pitching up the left side of Stickle Ghyll.

Major footpath work can't start until late March or April, due to inclement weather and dark evenings. When the clocks go forward the teams work the hours of a five-day week in four days (starting at 7:20 and finishing at 5:15). This gives the team more time on the fells during the day, as sometimes it can take up to one and a half hours to reach the work site. Working four day weeks also give the teams' limbs a bit of a rest (which we all appreciate).

Both projects were split over two days during the week. Monday and Tuesday at Harrison Combe, Wednesday and Thursday Stickle Ghyll.

Harrison Combe



Before works

We had hoped for a dry spell to start the Harrison job (due to much of the work being through peat) however working in one of the wettest places in the UK we weren't that lucky.

Work progressed well and the job was completed in less than the time allowed. As shown in the picture, the work carried out has made a huge improvement to the path.

At the end of every project we landscape the area that we have been working in to try and stop it looking like a building site. The path and surrounding area are also grass seeded to help the regeneration of grass. This picture was taken only a few months after the path had been completed; it shows how quickly the grass grows back.



After works

Stickle Ghyll

The Stickle ghyll project was a much larger job and was only finished in late October. There was some 200 metres of pitching and over 15 drains to put into the path. Considering that each team member does on average 1.5 - 3 metres of pitching per day, depending on the terrain, it is easy to see why each job can take up to 7 months to complete!

Much of the lower section of path was through bed rock. This adds extra time onto the job, as it's extremely hard to pitch on top of bed rock or, as in some cases, carve a way through the rock.



It was good to get the path finished and complete a nice circular route from the car park up the left hand side of the ghyll, up to the tarn and then back down the right hand side. This will take a lot of pressure off the right hand path and hopefully stop any further erosion.



Without help and support from organisations such as the Langdale estates, these projects would not be completed to such a high standard. So a big thank you has to go out and we hope you enjoy the paths that you, as donors have helped to build.