



**The VEC Northern Run, Sunday
4th September 2022**

**The Red and White Rose
County Circuit**

This year we have revamped our annual Northern Run to take in some of the most beautiful scenery in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Often associated in the popular imagination with Blake's "dark satanic mills" Lancashire has large swathes of spectacular countryside, and we will see the best of it, before crossing the border for a time into Yorkshire, to our furthest point at the stunning Ribbleshead Viaduct, on the famous Settle-Carlisle railway line.

The run will begin at Lancaster Services (Northbound) on the M6, meeting at 10am for an 11am departure. This is one of the oldest service stations in the UK, being part of the original Preston by-pass, when as Forton Services, its massive concrete tower became a landmark for miles around. There are adequate facilities here for anyone needing breakfast before we set off.

We will leave the services heading north for just a short while, before leaving the motorway at J33, taking the A6 south (signposted Lancaster south) and the first exit at the roundabout into Saltoke Road, signposted Trough of Bowland. After a time we then turn left into Hollins Lane, signposted for Abbeystead and the Trough of Bowland, passing under the rail bridge.

We stay on Hollins Lane until a left into Anyon Lane, signposted as above, and pass over the M6, passing the Fleece Inn, and entering the 30mph limit of Dolphinholme village, following the road round to the left. At the mini roundabout, take the right turn for Abbeystead, until we come to a T junction, where we turn right, signposted for Abbeystead, and follow Abbeystead Road into this quiet village, scene of the terrible pumping station disaster in 1984 where 8 people lost their lives and many others were severely injured.

We leave Abbeystead via a narrow single-track bridge, and commence a steep climb up a largely single track road. At the T junction, which has poor visibility, turn right, signposted trough of Bowland. We continue climbing, passing over another narrow bridge, and a cattle grid. After this point there are loose sheep on the road, so proceed with caution. We pass a gothic gatehouse, and follow a single track road into the heather-clad fells, through the Trough of Bowland itself for some distance. After another cattle grid, we begin a steep descent to Sykes Farm before ascending another steep hill, and descending again to another cattle grid, by Smelt Mill and more loose stock.

We now follow the river through Dunsop Bridge (30 mph) . At the T junction we go left for Newton and Slaidburn over the (tiny) bridge itself, this leg having taken about an hour. There is a public car park and toilet facilities on the left as we leave the village.

We now pass through Newton in Bowland (30 mph) before going the 1.5 miles to Slaidburn on the B6478 (the only numbered road so far...) Slaidburn is a picturesque stone village, with unusual houses with built-in barns, like those in rural France, and an imposing church. The Hark to the Bounty pub is one possible lunch stop, and there is a car park with toilets outside the village. We should now be about 90 minutes into the run.

We leave Slaidburn on the B6478 bound for Settle. As we do we pass over a narrow stone bridge and up a very steep hill, incorporating a near 90 degree bend to the left, best taken in first gear. We then arrive after about 30 minutes at the unfortunately-named Tosside, on the Yorkshire border. The Old Vicarage Tea Room here has won multiple awards for its food, and has good parking and views (2nd entrance on left). This is our preferred lunch stop, and we will try and book in advance if numbers permit.

After lunch, we continue on the B6478 to Long Preston, bearing left onto the A65 where we follow the railway line for a period. After the village of Mearbeck we join the A6480 at the roundabout to Settle, keeping our eyes open for the right onto the B6479 for Stainforth and Horton-in-Ribblesdale. We continue the full length of the B6479 through high moorland, being careful for loose sheep, before making a left onto the B6255 bound for Ingleton. Unless we are shrouded in mist and rain, we will shortly see the spectacular Ribbleshead Viaduct on our right, and there is a parking area. We continue to the Station Inn for refreshments and toilets.

We then continue on the B6255 past Chapel-le-Dale and the famous White Scar Caves to Ingleton. We then go right back onto the A65, and then left onto the A687 signposted Cantsfield, via Melling and Hornby, to re-join the M6 at J34 for routes home.

Please note: This event will only take place if we have sufficient interest. If you wish to join us, please confirm this to catherineandsteve@virginmedia.com. We will then email you one week before the event if we have sufficient interest for the run to take place.

Steve and Cath Cropper, North West Area Representatives.