

Allen Banks & Staward Gorge Autumn Training Run

It's that time of year again ... !



I am once again organising an Autumn training run around the National Trust natural woodlands at Allen Banks, Plankey Mill and Staward Gorge. For those that aren't familiar with it, this is one of the most beautiful and spectacular locations in Northumberland.

As you will see from these photos, we are often lucky with the weather. Fingers crossed again for this year!

This year's run will be on: -

Sunday 28 October 2018

Yes, I know it's the OMM weekend. But if you're a gnarly Mountain Marathon aficionado, the chances are this wouldn't be hard-core enough for you to want to join us anyway.

Yes, I know there is a Harrier League fixture at Gosforth the day before. But what better location for a recovery run the following day? And after an extra hour in bed too! Why not bring the family along?

Sadly, the Autumn splendour only lasts so long, and last weekend was the Langdale Horseshoe and Alwinton Show, this coming weekend is the British Fell Relays, the weekend after is the Gibside Fruit Bowl race and the NFR Championship race at Saltergate Gallows.

So by a process of elimination, it's 28th October ... or Autumn will have passed us all by!

Location and route: -

Start at 9.30 am from the Allen Banks National Trust car park (not too early for those that have to travel, and not too late for those that need to be back).

The likely route will be almost exclusively off road, on paths and trails, and will take in most of the well-known landmarks. Expect around 8 - 9 miles [13 – 14 km] involving around 1,500 ft [450 m] of ascent, split over 5 or 6 separate climbs and some general undulations, with a running time overall of around 2 hours.

As the route will be off-road, at the end of October it will be soft and muddy in places. Recommended footwear in order of preference, would therefore be: -

- Fell shoes if you have them
- Trail shoes if you don't
- Road shoes if you don't have fell or trail shoes.

(This is just advice. You can wear anything you like, as long as you can run for a couple of hours in them, don't mind sliding around a bit ... and are happy for them to look like fell shoes by the time we finish!)

The run has a social / inclusive theme, rather than being an eyeballs-out training run (but there are challenging bits for those that want to put a bit more effort into it, and even a Strava section or two for those that are really keen!).

The run is open to all, so please ...

Bring your friends ... whether in our running club, or another running club or no running club at all.

Bring your dogs (+ their leads for some sections please, as we could encounter livestock or irate farmers in places)

Bring your family, who can explore and entertain themselves with an adventure in the woods while you run

Travel: -

Allen Banks is about 10 miles west from Hexham, and is signposted left between Haydon Bridge and Bardon Mill, off the A69. Allow about 40 minutes' drive from Denton Burn if you're heading from that area.

Please try to arrive on time. I won't know who is going to come (unless you specifically tell me!) so we won't hang around beyond the start time on the off-chance that someone else might happen to arrive.

Parking is free for NT members as long as you bring your membership card to scan, but £2 (I think) for non-members, so why not share cars and save fuel and parking costs?

There is no café on-site at Allen Banks, but there are options available to adjourn afterwards for coffee and cakes somewhere should people feel that they deserve it!

If anyone has any questions you can ring me on 07939 208041 or email me on davidarmstrong215@yahoo.co.uk

I hope you can join us. More details about the location is available here: <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/allen-banks-and-staward-gorge/>