Access to the Northern Dales

Many arts and craftspeople live and work in the two Dales, finding inspiration in a unique environment.

A tour of the Dales could begin in the busy little market town of Hawes, home of Wensleydale Cheese and a number of different craft workshops (Swaledale Outhwaite’s Ropemakers and The Wensleydale Pottery) as well as the Dales Museum which celebrates traditional and contemporary craft work in the area.

From Hawes follow the valley to Hardraw, home of the highest waterfall in England and the only Felt workshop/gallery in the Dales, Arrathorne where you can find the Andrea Hunter’s ‘Focus on Felt’.

Leaving Hardraw the road climbs up and over Buttertubs Pass. An exhilarating drive with its spectacular view across Swaledale brings you to the charming village of Muker, with Swaledale Woollens and The Old School Shop and Cafe.

Follow the road beside the River Swale through Gunnerside, known in lead mining days as the Needle of the Dales and through Low Row to the village of Reeth and the fascinating community of craftspeople in the Reeth Dales Centre, off Silver Street. Here you will find The Nutmeg Company, Michael Kusz Sculptures, and The Thrashing Barn. Within the village of Reeth you will also find the gallery of Scenescapes containing stunning landscape photography (see pics 1, 2 & 3) and Reece.

On to Leyburn, another bustling market town where you can visit Emma Sedman’s Gallery and

The Wensleydale Longwool Sheep Shop. You can travel on the Wensleydale Railway up to Redmire or down to Finghall, Bedale and Leeming Bar. Nearby is Aultbooth where you can find the sheer Wensleydale Shop and Cafe and the historic castles - Bolton and Middleham - ancient guardians of Wensleydale.

Drive west along the A684 through Wensley with its stately church and visit White Rose Candles. A few miles further on, the B6160 leads to the picturesque village of West Burton with its hidden waterfall, extensive Green and, of course, The Cat Pottery.

Continue west to the nearby renowned Aysgarth Falls and the National Park Centre. Devotees of James Herriot’s ‘All creatures great and small’ will want to visit Askrigg where much of the television series was filmed. On your way back to Hawes why not visit the Butler Gallery and enjoy the work of many local artists and craftspeople.

By the time you have returned to Hawes you will not only have enjoyed some of the most splendid scenery in Yorkshire, locations for such films as Ivanhoe and Robin Hood, but you will have met some of the most innovative artists and craftspeople in the country.