

An hour after leaving Kielder Dam we were back in civilisation again- phone signals had pinged back, and we were turning off the A6079 at Chollerford onto the beautiful B6318, the road that skirts Hadrian's Wall. The weather was still incredible, a heavy frost on the moors left the ground sparkling, yet the sky was this fabulous shade of winter Blue. The ultimate winters day. A few miles along we passed signs for the Temple of Mithras, so we pulled in for a quick look.

Temple of Mithras, Carrawburgh

It was a fascinating insight into the early Roman Pagan religions, and seeing the Roman inscriptions was really amazing.

We carried along the B6318 occasionally catching glimpses of Hadrian's Wall, before turning off at The Milecastle, following signposts for half a mile for our campsite, **Herding Hill Farm**. This was a last minute booking, the temperatures had plummeted and we decided it was important for us to have electric hook up. Nearby Hadrian's Wall Campsite were full so we emailed Herding Hill and they responded very quickly to tell us we were most welcome. The campsite has to be one of the best we've stayed on. Yes, it

comes at a price tag, we paid £58 for two nights- one of the highest we've paid for a UK campsite- however, it was absolutely fabulous. The pitches were large, and we had the campsite to ourselves actually! The amenities block, well, they won "Loo of the year" last year, and I can see why. It was clean and luxurious- Radio 2 was playing through the speakers all the time, the showers were HUGE with endless piping hot water, there was a SAUNA!!, two cubicles with baths in in the ladies, a drying room, hand sanitiser next to the Elsan Point- wow I can go on. Location wise, second to none, we were about a mile's walk to a fab section of wall at Cawfield's including a Milecastle. We were a mile from Haltwhistle, and had miles of footpaths from our door. A bit of a splash out for us, but just

what we needed to thaw out our cold bones!



Bluebell the Motorhome parked on her “Super Pitch” at Herding Hill Farm

After a quick bowl of soup, we threw on our walking boots and in a style similar to the Roman Army, marched down to Hadrian’s Wall at Cawfields just in time to catch the last winter rays of the day.



Hadrian’s Wall at Cawfields



Sunset at Hadrian’s Wall

 *Looking down over the Milecastle*



Drone Pic



Drone Pic

That evening we were treated to a fabulous night sky, so I took full advantage of the empty campsite, doing some serious star/moon gazing using my new telescope. We were treated to a fantastic view of the crescent moon, viewing the craters and even the sea of tranquility. We also were able to view Venus and Mars alongside the moon. Wonderful stuff!

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Tuesday arrived and sadly the weather was a bit dull and overcast, so we took full advantage of a lie in, even indulging in Breakfast in Bed! We decided to take short walk down to Haltwhistle to get some supplies, so using a map the campsite provided us with, we took a short but picturesque path over some fields and down a steep gorge into Halthwhistle. There wasn't an awful lot to see in the "Centre of Britain", and all the pubs were sadly closed, despite the sun being well over the yardarm. We treated ourselves to a sausage roll from the butchers, which ended up being worth the walk alone- quite simply the best we've ever had! and a bargain at 90p each!!!

Supplies purchased, we took the return path to Cawfields which was a beautiful riverside

path next to Haltwhistle Burn, with steep gorge surrounding us. On reaching the Milecastle Inn, we decided to stop for a quick pint, it's always nice to sample the local ale on our trips. Sadly, despite the pub being EMPTY, stone floors in the bar area and us saying we would like food, we were denied access with Jazz, so had to settle for a pint whilst sat outside in the FREEZING COLD! Don't get me wrong, I'm not one of those annoying "my dog has to come everywhere with me" people, however a pub that is situated half a mile off a major walking route, not allowing dogs..... to me seems like there are just turning away business- especially when there is no one in there!!

Wednesday dawned and we awoke to

another corker of a day weather wise. Sadly it was time to head south, we had work commitments at home on Thursday evening. We had a look at the map trying to decide where to have our final night of the tour before settling upon the city of Durham. Campsite located and booked, we made an early start, waving a reluctant goodbye to our slice of heaven on Hadrian's Wall.



We made a stop at Steel Rigg car park on Hadrian's Wall, about 5 miles down from the campsite. We took a fairly strenuous 1 mile walk right beside the wall, which was rather hilly and caused us to be out of breath for most of the walk, our destination was Sycamore Gap, a lone sycamore tree in a dip that

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has become one of the most photographed spot in Northumbria. It also features in Robin Hood Prince of Thieves. The walk was stunning, we saw more stretches of fantastically preserved wall, and Sycamore Gap itself was stunning, it really was worth the walk. As we had had an early start, we were treated to the whole place to ourselves. I made use of playing with my drone, but sadly my SLR decided to pack up, so all photos are iPhone from now on!



The walk was invigorating to say the least and our return to Bluebell was much quicker.

We carried on towards Housesteads Roman Fort and made use of our National Trust Membership. Again, we really enjoyed our visit - amazing to see the underfloor heating systems still in place 2000 years later! I may or may not of sent my Drone up for a sneaky picture. I'll let you decide... ☐



After a quick lunch in the van, we hit the road to Durham. An hour later and we were pulling onto our Caravan Club CL right next to the river in Durham. The site was at Durham Amateur Rowing Club, and cost £12.50 per night, with electric. It was only a five minute walk along the river to the City centre, and we managed to get into the centre just before sunset. We had a quick look

round the cathedral, which was beautiful, before making our way to some dog friendly pubs, thanks to our Dog Friendly Pub app!

Durham Amateur Rowing Club CL £12.50 pn

Durham Cathedral

The Court Inn, Durham, my favourite pub, it had 120 gins to try- and was Dog friendly. My fave was the Durham Cask Aged Gin, devine!!

Our whistlestop tour of Durham was the perfect end to our week in Northumberland. We had a brilliant time, and can't believe that we have taken this long to visit!

In total we travelled just short of 800 miles, spending around £300 including fuel and site fees. Would we go again? Absolutely.

Until Next Time

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