

## **Greenmount April 2018**

### **Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> April**

I spent much of the day helping with housework, mostly on my knees, scrubbing the kitchen and hall floors.

Matthew and Carrie and Carrie's parents, Bob and Marie came for an Easter Sunday meal, making seven in all, with Rachel. We had roast lamb with mint sauce, parsnips, peas, carrots, roast potatoes, cauliflower cheese, broccoli and garlic. There was fresh fruit (strawberries and raspberries) with pouring cream, ice cream or yoghurt and cheese and biscuits to follow, finishing off with Green and Black's miniature chocolates. Everything was organic, except the wine.

After that and when our guests had departed, we had a relaxing evening.

### **Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April**

We were at the Old School before 9 a.m. to help out at the Antiques and Collector's Fair. I helped Frank with the records, CDs and DVDs and Jenny was in the main hall on the kitchenware stall.

Mike was already there to help when I arrived and Frank's wife, Gwen, recovering from a knee operation and making excellent progress, also called in.

Jenny and I left about 4 p.m. as the Fair ended.

The weather had turned quite wet and wintery in the morning, after a short dry spell and the rain was very heavy in the evening. It was only the day before that I had been reflecting on breakfasting outside in the warm sunshine in April a couple of years previous. The prospect this year seemed very far away, with us still being in the icy grip of winter at this late stage.

### **Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April**

I went to the Incredible Edible plot at 10 a.m. to discuss the positioning of a new sign. Having poured with rain the previous evening and overnight, we had encountered a brief dry period so, while it was very wet underfoot, it was not a bad morning.

Donna was already there and Dave came just as I arrived.

The large board to hold the sign has been lying on the raised beds for several weeks and it was a case of making holes for the posts, for which Dave had brought some tools even though this was not supposed to be a hands-on meeting.

Shortly after we had met, Alistair arrived with the sign and Bob happened to be passing and engaged Alistair in conversation while we three started measuring and deciding

where to place the sign.

It was immediately apparent that the sign was too large for the board supplied and it emerged that, rather than having the board made to fit the sign (or vice versa) the board had been donated, being surplus to requirements. We decided to make our own board to fit the sign and Bob said he had a use for the old board and would arrange to take it away.

Dave commenced making the holes, which immediately filled up with water. Such is the state of the land around where we live, having a water table close to the surface. Nonetheless, he succeeded in making two holes into solid ground and went away with a shopping list of items for making the new board. Donna placed the sign in the shed until we had the board in situ.

I came home just as it was starting to rain again and spent the day working on the computer on various bits and pieces while Jenny spent the morning with Lorna, visiting Gwen and the afternoon ironing, not her favourite pastime.

A few days previously, I had confirmation that the transfer of the village web site domain name management to Zen, our web site hosting provider, was complete.

I received an E-mail to say that my own web domain name was in the transfer process and I would receive an E-mail that day asking me to enter the code to confirm the transfer to Zen. No such luck. I informed Zen and said I would continue to monitor my E-mails.

### **Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> April**

Alistair came round about 10:30 to discuss the village web site. The plan was for him to look round for someone else to manage it. I needed to free up some time to do other things.

After Alistair had left, Jenny and I made a brief trip to Winfields in Haslingden to see what they had in stock as regards waterproof gear, since we needed a new outfit each before we went on holiday on the 25<sup>th</sup>. They did have a couple of interesting items at very reasonable prices but we decided to check out the Boundary Mill store at the end of the M65. It was too late in the afternoon to go there today, so we came home for a late lunch and decided to go the following day.

### **Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> April**

What a waste of time the trip to Boundary Mill was. They had less stock than Winfields. The one useful item we purchased at a good price was an Oxo Good Grips pizza cutter. The saving did not cover the fuel cost, though.

After lunch at home, I was back on the computer and I finished the documentation of the web site for Alistair. I printed it off and started checking it, making a few corrections on paper.

I dealt with all my E-mail and discovered that the key message regarding the transfer of my web site domain name to Zen had been sent to the domain management at Easily and it should have come to me. I sent the Easily (don't be fooled by the name) domain management team a message asking them to forward the message to me.

I dealt with all the TV recordings for the past couple of days and updated this blog, finally hitting the hay about 11:30 p.m.

### **Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> April**

On our way out to shop for groceries, as we usually did on Fridays, we called at Millets outdoor shop in Bury. We found the Berghaus waterproof jackets we wanted, thanks to a very helpful young lady called Grace.

We had a straightforward and somewhat memorable day out grocery shopping at Unicorn and Waitrose, where, at the latter, Jenny used a voucher for a gluten-free sandwich for lunch, there actually being some in the take-away sandwich cabinet. She said it was very nice, too.

What stores needed to do was to stock more gluten-free sandwiches and salads (it went beyond my comprehension how a salad could contain gluten) and to publish the fact that gluten-free foods can be eaten by anyone. By doing so, they would be less likely to be left with unsold food. After all, for example, a lot of people eat cornflakes and corn does not contain any gluten. It can't actually be certified as gluten-free unless it has been kept away from foodstuffs containing gluten and packed in a gluten-free environment but it does serve as an example of foods that do not contain gluten and people eat without knowing or caring about the fact. What's more, the body does not need gluten. I was convinced that gluten was a substance that, over the years, caused many people a lot of digestive problems and it needed to be avoided.

The journey home was slow going round the M60 even with the school holidays.

I spent the evening putting in the TV recordings for the coming week as usual.

### **Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> April**

I wasn't feeling at all well, with a major internal problem, I suspected, relating to my hiatus hernia and acid reflux. It didn't stop us spending the morning helping out at the Collector's Fair at the Old School though.

I spent a relaxing afternoon on the computer applying three significant updates to the village web site amongst other administrative work.

### **Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> April**

I was still not well and we did not attempt the first car boot sale of the season. In any case, a misty and foggy start to the day had been forecast, although we didn't see it, not rising until 11 a.m.

Jenny and Rachel went off to Bury and I went out to pick up all the twigs off the large grassy area on the side of the house. I would normally do this before mowing the grass for the first cut of the season. This year the grass was being cut by private contractors, thanks to the work of the local community, the Friends of Huntfold (the name of our estate). We had successfully obtained a lease of all the green areas for 99 years and contracted with a private company to maintain them after Bury Council decided it couldn't afford to continue doing so and offered the land for sale, this being later rescinded to accommodate our proposal for maintenance.

After the ladies returned home and we had lunch, I repaired a couple of lamps for Jenny, one for the car boot and one we use in the house.

I also ascertained the type of button battery required for one of Jenny's watches.

I finally got down to the computer and carried on with some more administrative work, including dealing with E-mails and generally tidying up.

One major outstanding issue was the difficulty in transferring my Networking Consultancy domain registration from Easily to Zen, having made no recent progress and the renewal being due on Tuesday.

### **Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> April**

We spent much of the day boxing up and labelling the car booty that was in the conservatory and storing it in the dining room, the plan being to finish cleaning the conservatory with all the clutter out of the way.

I salvaged a couple of items, an old Sony DVD player with phono out connections from the car booty and a 6-way USB hub from the rubbish.

The former I installed in the hi-fi cabinet under the TV in the lounge to use as a CD player, hooked up to the hi-fi system. The new Sony player would play CDs but only had an optical out connection for sound and my hi-fi system wasn't that modern.

The USB hub I hooked up to Jenny's laptop and it worked perfectly.

### **Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> April**

We did not make it out of bed until late morning because neither of us felt very well. I trimmed my hair while Jenny had her shower and I followed her into the shower.

After breakfast I worked on the computer. My domain name registration with Easily expired today and there was no word from anyone about the transfer of management to Zen. It was a complete shambles.

We went out to deliver the latest issue of the village magazine, the Greenmount Voice to the residents on our round and shortly after returning my discomfort worsened. It was clear my hiatus hernia was causing some severe problems and by teatime I found it

necessary to take a second 20mg of Losec.

Meanwhile, I worked on an update to the village web site dealing with Activities at the Old School.

I finalised the village web site documentation and sent a copy to Alistair.

### **Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> April**

I started to feel a little better, thank goodness. I was beginning to think my prospect of reaching a ton was well out of reach.

I spent most of the morning and the early part of the afternoon dealing with the domain transfers to Zen. The first task was to update the Domain Name Server entry for the village web site at Zen, having received advice for the support team there to replicate the configuration of the existing entry at the old provider, LCN. I finished that and let Alistair, our village chairman, know just in case he discovered problems with either or both of the web site and E-mail.

I then turned my attention to my domain name and Easily. Since my E-mails had been ignored, I decided to telephone them and the first challenge was to find the contact number. As far as I could make out, that only appeared on the log in page of their new web portal. None of the other pages appeared to contain any navigation menu or any contact details whatsoever. I thought that was pretty neat for an IT company.

After almost half an hour hanging on the telephone listening to something that appeared to be music, in the loosest sense of the word, I managed to speak to a young lady. To my surprise, she was extremely pleasant and very helpful. She E-mailed me a form to change the domain registration details, so that E-mails would come to me, without incurring a sixty-day lock on the domain transfer. The only snag was that I had to obtain Matthew's signature as he was the current domain owner and he wouldn't be home until the evening. Still, it was a step closer to achieving the transfer, the domain registration with Easily having expired the day previous.

My next job was to update this blog and to deal with the TV recordings from the last couple of days.

I went down to see Matthew and Carrie in the early evening to obtain Matthew's signature, scanned in the signed document and sent it back from whence it came.

### **Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> April**

We went grocery shopping a day early, starting with a visit to Go Outdoors in Manchester, where we found a pair of Berghaus waterproof trousers each and obtained a reasonable discount by purchasing a discount card for £5 which was valid for a year.

We squeezed in a shop at Sainbury's store in Sale between Unicorn and Waitrose and purchased a gluten-free sandwich each for lunch at the latter.

Over the past few days, I had the pleasure of completing my NHS bowel screening kit and I dropped the envelope into the post box at Waitrose a few minutes before the Post Office van arrived to collect the mail. My motion was in motion so to speak.

The journey back was as painful as usual and we made it home for about 5 p.m.

There was no word from Easily about my domain transfer. Now there's a surprise.

### **Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> April**

I went to help Dave Archer put up the new sign at the Incredible Edible plot at 10:00 a.m. That took less time than I expected and I came home to do a little work on the computer while trying to contact Easily.

After hanging on the telephone waiting for someone at Easily to answer for about half an hour while sorting a few things out on the computer, Mike called in to discuss the BT telephone and broadband contract at Greenmount Old School. I had suggested to Mike that we went for a new bundle. I went through the costs with Mike and we agreed. So far so good.

I started an online chat with BT and explained what we wanted to do. There the plan disintegrated. I was advised that the bundle I had chosen was only available to new customers. So much for privatisation. There ensued a long discussion which I had to break off to go to the D-CaFF dementia café session.

The D-CaFF featured the Sing-Along band and, with a song sheet, we all sang some well known, old songs to the music, interspersed with humorous poems in Lancashire dialect. It was one of the best sessions I had attended.

I started an update to the village web site.

### **Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> April**

I spent most of the day cleaning the second part of the conservatory.

I managed to prepare most of the rest of the update to the village web site.

### **Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> April**

I was back in the conservatory, this time cleaning the area occupied by my desk. That involved dismantling the tower computer system, storing all the bits in the dining area, emptying my desk and storing the contents in the dining area and then moving my solid-oak desk, which weighed a ton, so I could clean the roof panes above the desk, the windows behind it and the floor under it.

When the floor had dried, I moved the desk back, leaving room to walk behind it and put the computer processor back on the floor at the side of the desk. The room behind the desk gave me access to reconnect all the cables at the back of the computer and I had

everything back in place and the computer working by about 6 p.m.

There were a few outstanding issues, which were not new. First, only one of the two network connections worked, which wasn't really a problem. Second, there was a PCI device that wasn't working and I suspected it was a modem but the Windows 7 Device Manager didn't tell me what make or model it was. Obviously, it needed the drivers. Third, there were some USB ports on the Dell screen and I couldn't figure out how to make them work.

I had left the desk contents on the dining-room table until I had pushed the desk back into position and levelled it. That was a job for the morning.

While I was waiting for the floor to dry, I managed to finish off the village web site update and publish the changes. I also ran some tests to confirm that the changes to the Domain Name Server at Zen I had made last Wednesday, which normally took about 48 hours to propagate round the globe, were working in respect of the web site and E-mail.

### **Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> April**

During breakfast, I called Easily and eventually spoke to a very nice lady on the help desk who was, again, very helpful. She advised me that the necessary changes to my domain registration had been made on the 13<sup>th</sup> and I thanked her. I checked the mail in Matthew's inbox and found the E-mail from Easily confirming the update. I let Zen know and soon received a request for confirmation, to which I responded.

I had a look at the tower computer system in the conservatory and discovered that I didn't have the proper drivers for the Dell monitor so I downloaded those, updated the driver and downloaded the user manual. As a result I was able to bring the USB ports on the monitor into use by cabling the inbuilt hub up to the computer and I used one of these for the webcam for which I had removed the cable in order to connect the hub. That solved one of the outstanding problems.

I also established that the PCI card I thought was a modem wasn't one and pushed the desk back into its usual place.

By the time I had done all that, it was time to leave for the afternoon tea and beetle drive at Falshaw's Farm café, being held as a fund-raiser for our village dementia café, D-CaFF, to build a disabled toilet at the Cricket Club where the dementia café was held.

Jenny and I had a very nice, gluten-free lunch comprising sandwiches and cakes with some very nice tea.

When we came home, I dealt with the rest of the E-mails regarding the domain transfer, which was subsequently completed and I updated the domain configuration at Zen. I also received confirmation that the registration was finally in my name. All being well, that was finally all done and dusted.

It was too late and we were too full to continue with the conservatory so I spent the rest of the afternoon dealing with the revision of my web site.

## **Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> April**

I had a morning Dementia Awareness session with Joani at the Skipton Building Society in Bury and came home for lunch.

Jenny went off to the hair salon in the village and I resumed work in the conservatory as she returned home, pushing the desk back into position. After lunch, Jenny helped me put the desk contents back inside the cupboards and that ended a fairly productive day.

## **Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> April**

We were back in the conservatory. Jenny suggested moving the desk up a little and putting the filing cabinet between the desk and the house wall, where the computer currently stood, instead of leaving it on the opposite side of the conservatory where it blocked the view and the light. I thought that would be a good idea, particularly since I could put the computer on top of the filing cabinet and also make room for the printer/scanner instead of it occupying space on my desktop.

I pulled out the filing cabinet, cleaned it, moved up the desk, put the filing cabinet in its new position and put the computer and the printer/scanner on top of the filing cabinet as planned. I also put the TV aerial booster on top of the filing cabinet, behind the printer/scanner, along with the receivers for the Skype handset and the wireless mouse/keyboard, creating yet more free space on my desktop.

The amount of free space that created seemed incredible and the conservatory was looking much more hospitable.

I finished off cleaning the PVC and the last two panes of poly-carbonate roofing and scrubbed the rest of the floor. When that had dried, I tidied up for the day.

All that was left to do was to clean the door into the kitchen and the patio doors into the dining room, which was scheduled for the morning, although I was running out of PVC cleaning spray and I ordered two more bottles from a supplier on Amazon. The delivery was not due until the 26<sup>th</sup> April at the earliest, the day after we were going on holiday.

After tea, I went to the village meeting at the Old School, where I had a chat with a young lady who was a reporter for the Bury Times, taking a keen interest in our community group, amongst others.

## **Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> April**

I resumed the conservatory cleaning, turning my attention to the kitchen door. Having run out of PVC cleaner, I cleaned the glass in the patio doors to the dining room and left the PVC for another day.

I should have gone outside to do some gardening since it was such a nice day but I couldn't find the motivation so, instead, we sorted through some pictures and frames left in the kitchen from the conservatory reorganisation.

After that, I worked on various bits and pieces on the computer.

### **Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> April**

We went grocery shopping. Since we were going on holiday on the 25<sup>th</sup>, we decided to do a small shop at Prestwich.

We started off with a visit to Millets in Bury for some new walking socks, purchasing two pairs each.

We called at Asda at Pilsworth for a few items, Jenny trying a pair of men's camouflage trousers since they didn't have any women's camouflage trousers. She found a pair that fitted but the leg was too long and they didn't have the shorter pair in stock.

A brief visit to Village Greens at Prestwich was followed by a longer one at Tesco where we would have had lunch had Costa Coffee had any gluten-free sandwiches. We decided to manage without and to come home for lunch, calling at bargain Booze in Tottington for some wine.

After lunch, I updated the accounts and then opened my bowel screening letter. The result showed my lower, internal bits were normal. I couldn't vouch for the rest of me, though.

I put in the TV recordings for the week and then turned my attention to a rather large update to the village web site. Having completed a good part of the update, I finally managed to fall into bed just after midnight.

### **Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> April**

I spent the day in the garden in the lovely, warm sunshine. I cut the grass on the back lawn for the first time this season, trimmed the edges, tidied up the borders, the cat's latrine and, with Jenny's help, the blackberry bush.

I also cut the grass at the front before tidying up, having a good wash and relaxing before tea. I would have liked to have done more but I was a little tired and I didn't want to be late for the roast duck we were having.

While I was gardening, the postman arrived with the PVC cleaner I had ordered from Amazon. That was quick and amaz(ing), I thought.

I checked my E-mails, as I normally do in an evening, if not before and found one from Premiere Inns about my holiday reservation in Bridlington. There was a small sentence stating that on-site parking was available at £5 per 24 hours. There was no mention of a charge on the web site when I made a booking (but see the entry for Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> April).

### **Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

Things seemed to be going downhill rapidly. My broadband router was not accessing the Internet and having established the problem was not at my end, I searched high and low for the BT fault number. Rachel found the phone book for me and I located the BT fault reporting number on page VII.

There was a quick response to my call and I spoke with a very helpful chap. After a brief chat and a few tests, it was established that my fixed broadband IP address had been allocated to someone else. This had arisen from the initial allocation of two static IP addresses by mistake and, while I was told I had the first address, my records at BT seemed to show I had the second one.

The temporary solution was for me to use a variable IP address until the following day as BT had no technical chap available over the week end, not even on-call.

This was typical of the decline in service and standards in these times of worshipping the false god of finance. Were I much younger, I would seriously be considering leaving this country to its inevitable fate and starting a new life, probably in New Zealand.

I decided to scan more documents into my web site (the revised version still under construction) and, having made a complete mess of that, had to rescan the three documents.

Joan and Alistair Waddell called to look at the food mixers Jenny had in her car boot. Joan wanted a mixer and a desk fan for their son, Russell. Unfortunately, our mixers were not suitable and Jenny said she thought there was a hand mixer in the jumble at the Old School. She said she would see what she could find and pop round with it.

I took a break to go to the Old School with Jenny. I needed a power supply for my IP camera and found one in my spares I keep there. Jenny found two hand mixers and a fan for Joan. We brought them home and Jenny checked the mixers worked.

I had had enough of scanning and continued the work of revising my web site, working on the picture gallery. I made a complete mess of that as well. I gave up for a while and then went back to it and put it all right. Having spent all day on the computer, I had made very little progress and I was not best pleased.

### **Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April**

After chasing up BT and making sure someone was addressing my problem, I went outside to work on the front garden, cutting the hedge and tidying up the edges.

I was first interrupted by a call from a chap called Mike at BT who, to cut a long story short, wanted to change my fixed IP address to the alternative one I was allocated in error. I politely pointed out the implications and that it would incur costs which I would pass on to BT. Mike went away to think about it and eventually came back with a message saying he was reinstating my original IP address and it should be ready for the end of the day.

Meanwhile, I was engaged in conversation with a neighbour, putting the world to rights,

not that we could achieve a great deal in an hour or so.

Having trimmed the hedge and all but the last half of the lawn edge along the front of the house, I put away my tools and came in for lunch, intending to resume work afterwards.

As we finished lunch, Gwen called round and came in for a cup of tea and a chat while I dealt with my E-mails, including a correction to a document on the village web site.

After Gwen left, we went out, first to deliver the electrical items to Joan Waddell and second to collect the cat's thyroid gel from the vet in Bury. On the way home, we called at Summerseat Garden Centre for a birthday card for Wilf, Jenny's brother.

While at the garden centre, I received a message from Mike at BT to say he had reinstated my IP address and I tested it when I came home. Needless to say it didn't work and I resumed the back up approach. I sent a message to Mike to let him know and then contacted BT to complain. It was confirmed Mike was back on the case. There was no further word to say it had been fixed. What a shambles.

It was cold and I lit a fire to warm up the house before tea.

## **Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> April**

It was a fair, but cool and damp morning. I checked my fixed IP Internet connection and it connected but there was no Internet access. I returned to the temporary arrangement and tried to call Mike at BT. The call was rejected. I sent him a message.

A short while later, Mike replied, most apologetically, saying he had forgotten one last procedure to fix the problem and that he was now done. I thanked him and tried my normal connection again. This time I had Internet access but it was very slow. Powering the router and the PC off and on again fixed that.

I went out to finish trimming the edge of the front lawn and I removed the larger weeds from the block paving. I started removing the dandelions from the back lawn (it would have been easier the other way round) and as I was doing that, my sister, Barbara, telephoned. She was having problems with Skype and the speed of her Internet connection.

Sitting on the bench outside, we chatted for a while and I came in when it started to rain, resuming the conversation in the lounge.

After that, the monsoon arrived and Jenny and I spent the rest of the day preparing for our holiday.

It was another cool evening, requiring a fire.

## **Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> April**

We set off for Bridlington about 11 a.m. and took our time, since the drive was less than three hours and we were not allowed to check in the hotel before 2 p.m.

Following the RAC route instructions, we arrived at the Premier Inn, Bridlington a few minutes before 2 p.m., having stopped in a lay-by on the way for lunch and having taken the scenic route to approach Bridlington, as in the RAC instructions.

The young lady on reception was most helpful and took me through the steps to use the machine to obtain our room key cards after I had explained I had checked-in online the previous day. Not only that but she came out with me to the car park ticket machine to help me obtain my parking ticket and she explained that having paid my £5, that covered me for the week and she printed me a guest ticket to place on the car dash board along with the parking ticket. I asked if that allowed me to come and go as I pleased and she said I could.

A further, pleasant surprise was that I could use a voucher printed with my car parking ticket to redeem the £5 against a meal in the hotel's restaurant, a Cookhouse and Pub.

The young lady also offered to upgrade my wireless connection if it wasn't fast enough for me. I had read that was at extra cost but she didn't mention a charge. As it later turned out, the standard connection speed was adequate for my needs.

We spent what was left of the first day pottering about the town, finding out what was where and we walked a good way down the promenade and back. The flat coast and beach to the south spread out for miles before us and petered out on the horizon. I could not make out any sign of Hornsea to the south and I later realised, from the map, that it was some twenty miles away. It was certainly too far for Jenny to walk from Hornsea to Bridlington in one attempt and working out the logistics of breaking the walk up was going to be a challenge. We had obtained some bus timetables from Tourist Information but busses were few and far between and the route veered away from the coast, as did the train line.

We came back to eat in the restaurant before retiring for the evening. We hadn't booked so we had to wait about forty minutes for a table and we had a drink in the bar.

We had a really pleasant and very helpful waitress who went to great pains to check everything Jenny ordered was free from gluten-containing ingredients and we had a really nice meal, so much so that we decided to eat there the following evening, having found no other decent-looking restaurant in Bridlington thus far. They did have a Wetherspoon pub and we had found those to be hit and miss. We thought we might try it one evening. The plan on retiring was to watch a recorded TV programme from the selection I had brought with me but the HDMI connection to the TV did not work. I didn't know whether that was a problem with my cable or with the wall-socket cabled to the wall-mounted TV in the room. We decided to go to bed, since we had had a long day and it was about 10 p.m.

### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April**

We had breakfast in the hotel's pub. I expected that to be £8 each. In fact it was a little cheaper and rightly so since we were having a light breakfast. It was a case of help

yourself to the buffet and you could have as much as you wanted. The lady who took our pre-payment also sorted out some gluten-free bread for Jenny, which she very kindly placed on some foil and toasted under the grill to avoid any cross-contamination in the toaster.

I have to say, I was really impressed with the level of good service, even if it came at a slightly higher cost than one might expect elsewhere.

Having considered all the options and the weather, I decided we would tackle Flamborough Head. Wearing our new waterproof gear and toting my rucksack, we headed up the coast and onto the track round the south side of the headland, the intention being to walk to North Landing, before the last bus back to Bridlington at 18:20 p.m.

It was going on for lunchtime before we reached our first exit point, Dane's Dyke. Had I ignored the very helpful signs on the various posts and consulted the map, we would have descended to the beach, crossed the flowing water and continued on our way to Flamborough Head lighthouse.

As it was, I took the advice of the signs and followed the woodland trail, ending up in the car park, taking advantage of the facilities there.

Jenny decided she did not want to continue, so we took the exit track to Flamborough village where we found a decent café called Copperfields. We had lunch and then caught the bus back to Bridlington.

As we approached the train station, the driver prepared to leave the bus, waiting for an exchange driver. We decided to alight and walk back to the hotel, through the town centre, visiting one or two shops.

At the hotel, we unloaded the rucksack and other equipment we did not need and walked down to the promenade, just in front of the hotel, to sit and relax. After a short while, Jenny suggested a walk on the beach and we walked a good mile or so, climbed the steps to the top of the cliff and walked back along the top to the hotel, adding another couple of miles to our total for the day.

We came back to our room to relax before dining in the restaurant, having booked a table for 7:30 p.m. earlier. We had another very nice meal and the restaurant manager who seated us remembered Jenny required a gluten-free menu and brought us one. After the meal, our waitress, Jeni, said we could keep the menu for future reference.

My only criticism was that Jeni seemed to be somewhat preoccupied, although she did make us feel welcome and people do have "off" days.

I do have two maxims. The first is that if you don't like the job you are doing, you shouldn't be doing it. You should find something else that you like doing. If you don't like working at all, you should seek professional help. The second is that if you are going to do a job, you should do it to the best of your ability at all times. If your best isn't good enough, it's your manager's fault for appointing you in the first place and your manager should be sacked for bad judgement. Whether you are sacked or not depends on how you respond to advice, guidance and training.

## **Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> April**

The weather forecast was not good and we decided to explore the old town, a mile or so inland. There was a shop, Clock Craft, where clocks were repaired and bought and sold, with a showroom and we headed for that initially. We did not find a suitable clock for the dining room but there was an impressive display of many types of clock for sale, along with barometers and other such items.

We went to visit Bridlington Priory Church. What an impressive, old church that was. There was a most unusual tapestry display of the church's history, comprising twelve (most fitting, I thought) intricately designed and painstakingly made pictures, with text. I took several pictures, including the tapestries and we visited the gift shop.

I asked the lady in the shop if she knew of a suitable establishment for lunch. She recommended the Bull and Sun a short walk away. Jenny had a jacket potato filled with prawns and Marie-rose sauce, after the lady who served us had checked it was free of gluten, with a side-salad. I ordered a BLT brown baguette which came with a side salad, coleslaw and "small chips". When it arrived, there was a good helping of chips and I wished I had waved those in favour of more salad. It was all very nice, though. We also had a pot of tea for two.

After lunch, we backtracked a few paces and visited The Bayle. This was a strange building with a large arch through the middle. It was, at the time of writing, used as a museum and well worth a visit. Entry to this and the church was free and we made purchases at the former and gave a donation to the latter.

A very nice, kind gentleman at The Bayle came out to show us the point where the waste from the toilet, part way up the spiral staircase entrance, fell to the floor. He told us that, as a child, he had played round The Bayle with friends and had climbed up inside this "long-drop". Fortunately, it was then no longer in use. He said that had he known then what it was, he wouldn't have done so and who can blame him?

The gentleman also pointed us towards the smallest (Baptist) chapel in Yorkshire, just down the lane by the side of The Bayle.

We made our way back to the hotel as it started to rain and had to stop to put on our waterproofs. We called in the restaurant to book a table for an evening meal and came up to our room for a rest about 4:15 p.m. Needless to say, the rain and mist did not improve.

## **Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> April**

After the heavy, prolonged rain the previous day, we decided not to walk the coast path. Instead we headed for Flamborough Head lighthouse and arrived in good time for the start of the guided tours at noon. We pottered round taking a few photographs and looking at the coast in both directions, arriving at the lighthouse too late for the first tour and I went on the second one, at about 12:30, while Jenny waited in the reception area. Jenny did not like the idea of climbing all the steps.

The guided tour was most informative and the extent of the coastal and seaward views from the top of the lighthouse was 24 miles. Although a little hazy, Easington to the south, just above the Humber estuary and Filey Brigg and the Scarborough South Bay headland to the north were visible.

We lunched in the café there and then made our way to have a look at North Landing. Apart from the café there, there wasn't much to see and we left for the RSPB sanctuary at Bempton Cliffs. There we signed up as RSPB members, had a potter round the shop and walked down to the observation platforms to view the seabirds. Unfortunately, we did not see anything particularly spectacular and it was very cold in the strong northerly wind.

We came back to our room and planned our following day, nipping out to locate the bus station for the morning.

Then it was a case of resting until our tea at 8 p.m.

### **Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> April**

What an interesting day. I had decided that, since there were no busses to Flamborough on a Sunday, we would abandon our walk round the Head and have a go at the walk from Hornsea to Bridlington, some twenty miles or so. The plan was to do it in stages and I had identified several points where we could break off the walk and catch the bus back. The best laid plans of mice and men, etc.

My day didn't start well, with more than just a touch of the runs and stomach pains. I felt better once I was in the fresh air and we made the bus station in good time for the 10:45 to Hornsea, arriving on the sea front at about noon. The journey had been most interesting, as the bus diverted off the coast road to service holiday parks and such right on the cliff edge and I thought if we could reach one of those, it would make life easier. I was wrong.

The first surprise was that there was no path along the top of the cliffs leaving Hornsea, not that the cliffs were very high and that, coupled with their composition being mostly sand and soft soil, had resulted in them collapsing onto the beach and being worn away by the sea. For the most part, static caravans had been placed on land that was now right at the edge of the cliff and what land there was between the caravan and the cliff top had been fenced off.

We resigned ourselves to walking along the beach. Fortunately the tide was out, although it was on its way in again and moving swiftly. Moreover, it was clear that the tide came well up to the cliffs.

So our walk was a race against time on two fronts. First, we had to make sure we were not cut off by the tide. Second we had to find a suitable exit point from the beach, such that we were able to catch the only bus back. That was more difficult than one would expect, having all the caravan parks on the cliffs.

It appeared all the exit points had been worn away along with the cliffs. After about two hours, we came across a beach access to one of the holiday camps and, with the encroaching tide and not knowing where the next exit would be, we decided to take it.

The path led to Skirlington Holiday Park and a most welcoming sign saying it was private property and for the use of park residents only. There was a fenced off path along the cliff top heading north before the sign so we assumed it did not apply to that and took it. It led onto a cliff-top path along the seaward side of the Out Leys golf course. We carried along that and it took us onto rough ground along the cliffs on the seaward side of a field. The path dropped down to an open drain, by which there was beach access.

We could have followed the path, across the drain and round the front of a house that had land fenced off all the way to the cliff edge. I thought that would have brought us out on a road that led into Skipsea, our target for the bus back.

Instead, we followed the advice of some people on the beach and took the path by the side of the drain, which was a newly devised woodland walk and which brought us to Moo's Café on the main road.

We went into the café, intending to purchase a pot of tea and possibly a snack, having had no lunch and to ask where the nearest bust stop was for our return journey, bus stops being few and far between. The place was crowded and expensive so we left and walked down the main road to Skipsea, hoping to find some tea rooms or such and, more importantly, a bus stop.

In fact, we found two bus stops. As for tea rooms, there were none. There was not even a village shop. The post office was closed, as one would expect on a Sunday and, believe it or not, the village pub's kitchen was closed, though no reason was given on the sign.

We spent an hour and a half in the bitterly cold northerly wind with overcast skies waiting for the bus back to Bridlington. Once seated at the back of the bus, it still seemed a little chilly and Jenny eventually spotted an open window, so I closed it and we both started to thaw out.

We arrived at Bridlington bus station and hobbled back to the hotel where we made ourselves a nice warming cup of tea and rested before showering and having tea.

So in summary, if you're as daft as me and want to walk from Hornsea to Bridlington, I suggest you do a reconnaissance by car to see where your public-access beach exits are, check and double-check the bus timetable if you are relying on busses for your outward and return journeys because there are not many busses that run on the coast road between the two towns and, most importantly, check the tide times. This walk is best done with a receding tide to allow maximum time. Do not be fooled into thinking that because the bus goes to the cliff edge at the holiday camps you can exit the beach at those points. That would be too easy. In most cases, the road itself stopped abruptly where it had collapsed and, without sea defences, it was only going to get worse. Even if you do have beach access, it may not be for public use, so if you are not a campsite resident or visitor and you are caught by the tide, presumably park officials will stand and watch you drown.

Check this web site picture gallery to see if we resumed this walk at a later date.

## **Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> April**

It was quite a windy day so we went to Scarborough on the bus. We had a choice of two busses and the bus we took was the earlier but slower one of the two because it called at many of the caravan and holiday home sites on the way.

We generally potted round, visiting several charity shops. The tea rooms we visited the last time we were in Scarborough, Nomad, had disappeared and we settled for another one that was reasonable and good but not as good as Nomad was.

The tide was coming in as we were reaching our departure time and the sea was spectacular, spraying over the sea wall in several places.

We caught the same bus back and I took note of where it called for possible start and end points if and when we resumed our walk northwards from Bridlington to Filey.