Skiddaw Group Structures in Wythop Woods

Leader: John Rodgers 3 July 2019



The group enjoying evening sunshine above Wythop Woods

This was an evening excursion based on the information given in Phil Davies' recently published book "Geology in the Lake District National Park". His Geosite N4 section, entitled 'The secrets of Wythop Woods Tectonic features and intrusions in the Kirkstile Formation', provided a most useful guide to interesting exposures in Wythop Woods and the open fellside to the west.

The group of 18 met at 6pm at the Woodend Brow car park (NY 218 275) and then shared transport along the old disused road, stopping after about 400m to examine a road cutting section which displayed both folding and faulting in the sandstone and siltstone beds. We then drove further along the road and left vehicles at Beck Wythop before taking the bridleway for c. 300m to another well-exposed section on the west side of the path (NY 213 287). Here members were invited to find a variety of features in the highly contorted bedding, including small faults, quartz veins and a prominent thrust plane. After spending about 30 minutes discussing this section we continued on the track up to the edge of the woods and then roughly westward across open fields to the disused quarry just west of Lowthwaite Side (NY 204 293). The quarry was probably worked for the hard andesite that forms a sill in the lower part, overlain by about a metre of Kirkstile Formation sediments. A small dip-slip fault can be traced in the outcrop clearly displacing the boundary between the two rock types, with a slickensided surface indicating the movement direction.

There is another locality in this area described in Phil Davies' book but on this occasion there was insufficient time to reach it. The group retraced their steps back to the vehicles, noting en route a variety of large erratic boulders (mainly volcanics from the Borrowdale Volcanic Group to the south) and the fine views across Bassenthwaite to Skiddaw on a warm, dry and sunny evening.

References:

Davies, T. P., (2018) *Geology in the Lake District National Park.* Otley Steps