

6.10 Hindscarth 5 and 6

Images from the walk to the waymarker tree.



From the bridge over Newlands Beck, see the Lower Pan Holes (at centre) immediately above the large spoil heap, with the Upper Pan Holes (higher to the left). Both sites retain the trees originally indicated by Wainwright.



At Lower Pan Holes, the declining old rowan figuratively sketched by AW – like a benign guardian of the mine entrance – is now quickly deteriorating, but still a valuable provider within the landscape.



Now almost defoliated, scant live growth remains – the majority of the crown is dead, with delaminated bark and decaying wood. Once crowning the adit with flower, foliage and fruit the rowan is now decrepit. It seems that, over time, increasing weight and leverage gradually prised the tree from its tenuous hold on the rock edge, leaving its roots dislocated and unable to derive sufficient essential nutrient and water. The rowan's last remaining gift is its broken frame; its hulk loaded with essential macro/micro-nutrients slowly releasing into the soil and rock substrate (to be utilised by other plants) or provide enriched habitat for fungi, invertebrates and microfauna (accelerating the nutrient recycling process and further improving soil health).



At Upper Pan Holes the two trees – rowan, of course – are instantly recognisable, though now bigger and broader. The dark cleft shelters a simple fellside garden, with a young sapling rowan growing strongly, ready to play its part in the shifting hierarchy of the mountain's vegetation.



The rowans AW noted in 1964 are characterful, high above the valley and facing the long sweeping ridgeline of Maiden Moor stretching south to High Spy. In 2064 there will (most probably) be three wild trees marking the Upper Pan Holes, all at different life stages, contributing to the constantly changing fell.