

Open Access Walks



Cumbria
County Council

Greystoke Estate

Route Information

Distance 13.2 kilometres (8.2 miles)

Ascent 246 metres (807 feet)

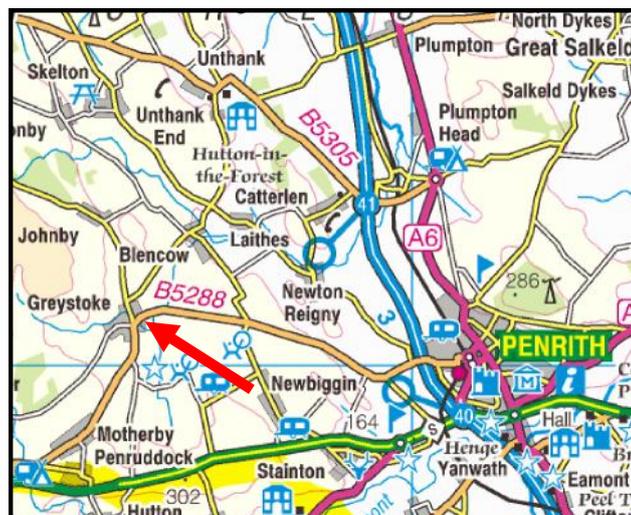
Time needed 4 hours (approx)

Start point

Greystoke Village. Parking is available in the Swimming Pool car park, to the east of the village on the B5288 (NY 440 307).

Public Transport

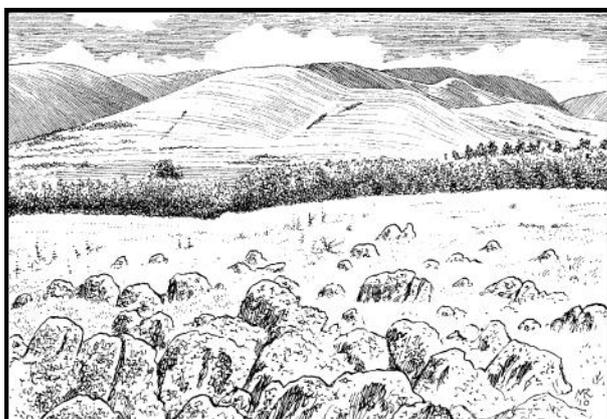
Greystoke is served by bus routes 105, X5 and 888 (limited service)



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DOGS ARE NOT PERMITTED on the Greystoke Estate permissive path network that the route in this leaflet uses to reach Access Land. Should you wish to take your dog onto the Access Land, please use the permissive path from the Larches Car Park to the north.

Your rights on open access land can sometimes be restricted for nature conservation, land management or public safety reasons. To avoid disappointment, please visit www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk to get the latest information, before you set out.



Great Mell Fell from the limestone pavement on Berrier Hill

A vibrant tone of grey permeates through this walk, derived from the underlying 'bones' of carboniferous limestone. This distinctly non-Lakeland rock crops up variously and offers many surprises in this eight-mile loop on the doorstep of the National Park.

Leave the car park and head for the centre of the village to pass through the archway and into the grounds of Greystoke Castle.

The Open Access land featured on this walk is reached via an extensive network of formally agreed permissive footpaths within a Natural England Higher Level Stewardship Scheme. Offering stunning views of the Northern Lake District, and across the Eden Valley, these paths give an insight into the wealth of wildlife and historical features on this modern working farm.

Continue along the drive and immediately after crossing a stone bridge the drive forks.

Ahead one may catch a glimpse of Greystoke Castle, an imposing neo-Elizabethan mansion, the main part being of mid-Victorian construction. There is a medieval pele tower, lurking to the right at the rear; William Lord Greystoke was given licence to crenellate the tower in 1353. The great house has been in the Howard family line, the Dukes of Norfolk, since 'Adam was a lad'.

Swing right via the cattle-grid and hand-gate, following the open track through the parkland. It curves left, crosses another cattle-grid and enters a fenced lane.

Where the track branches three ways, stride straight on through the Home Farm complex.

From the gate beyond the barns, pass a pond: originally dammed to provide hydraulic power to run a sawmill in the barns.

You'll question the gate, looks an unlikely position, one can hardly drive a tractor into the pond! However, water is extracted via this access to rinse out slurry tanks.

As the track forks, swing left to go through a gate. Keep with the track, fenced to the left, via another gate and, passing an old Dutch barn, keep forward as again the track forks. Pass by three further gates below the young plantation of Old Nab Wood, to come by sheep pens and barns, known to estate shepherds, with tongues-in-cheek, as the Sheep Hospital!



Limestone Pavement on Berrier Hill

Follow on due west via a gate with the gently rising fence to your left. Short of the next intervening fence, and after the triangular enclosure on the left, go through the gate left.

Traverse the open pasture SSW towards two forlorn trees, marking the location of a long abandoned medieval settlement of which traces can be seen near the fence. Continue in a NW direction to find a gate in the wall, to the right of a small woodland enclosure.

Entering Open Access land, hence the signboard, one may simply bear right by the deep limestone sink hollow to a gate, a matter of 100m. But you are recommended to take the opportunity to wander left, parallel with the wall, to locate and examine a compact area of limestone pavement

some 100m square. Bear right to crest Berrier Hill, it is a handsome outlook on the company of fells crowding by Blencathra, this alone makes it attractive.



'Bonsai' Hawthorn on Gillcambon

After savouring the view, head across to the previously mentioned gate. Traverse the next enclosure on a long diagonal NNW, aiming for the plantation tip. The rough grazing has both sheep trods and quad tracks to ease your progress. Nearing the far end find a thorn bush akin to a bonsai tree beside a low outcrop.

Short of the plantation corner, find a gate in the fence giving access to the next wild wet pasture. Bear left, the best going is not quite beside the forestry, with tough grass, and marshy moments, but nothing to impede the determined rover. Light birch growth surrounds the great pool of Gillcambon Tarn: be careful where you tread in this vicinity.



Gillcambon Tarn

The tarn was constructed to provide a water supply for the estate. The dam has long since breached, hence the outer pool bristling with tree stumps: a quiet haven for geese. Curve round the west side of the tarn gaining a small outcrop, in late summer adorned with blooming heather.

Venture on to the succeeding outcrop, and then cross a shallow ditch to join a quad track leading left towards a third low outcrop. Step onto it, passing a post with a small blue and white plaque, and then leave the outcrop by veering half-left in an ENE direction. The first six strides are more akin spongy wading, but this is soon overcome and the apparent marsh provides almost entirely dry walking. Follow a quad track until a green turf path cuts transversely, slipping between limestone sink hollows. Follow this right to reach a gate and Open Access signboard. After the gate, keep the fence close left; it bounds the disused Parkhouse Quarry.

Come to a gate and open track emerging from the old quarry compound. Take this track right, threading through the breach in the low limestone scarp to reach the limestone boundary wall. Follow the track to a junction, take the right-angle open track threading back through a low element in the scarp, this curves left and advances to a gate.



Summerground Crags

Go through, notice the walled enclosure left; this is a now disused, man-made watering hole for farm stock – one of three on the estate.

The waymark post shows two permissive path options. Keep ahead on the rising scarp edge to join and accompany the fence.

Though before you do, make a moment to divert down right to inspect an old lime-kiln. The platform on top looks like a gun emplacement. If you look at the fenced kiln mouth you will see a notice 'Armageddon Exercise 23' – rather appropriate but 'fear not, the end is not nigh'. It relates to an army-style corporate team building exercise that used to be held on the estate, and included a ropeway reminiscent of Tarzan. Calling to mind Greystoke's fictional link with 'Tarzan of the Apes'!

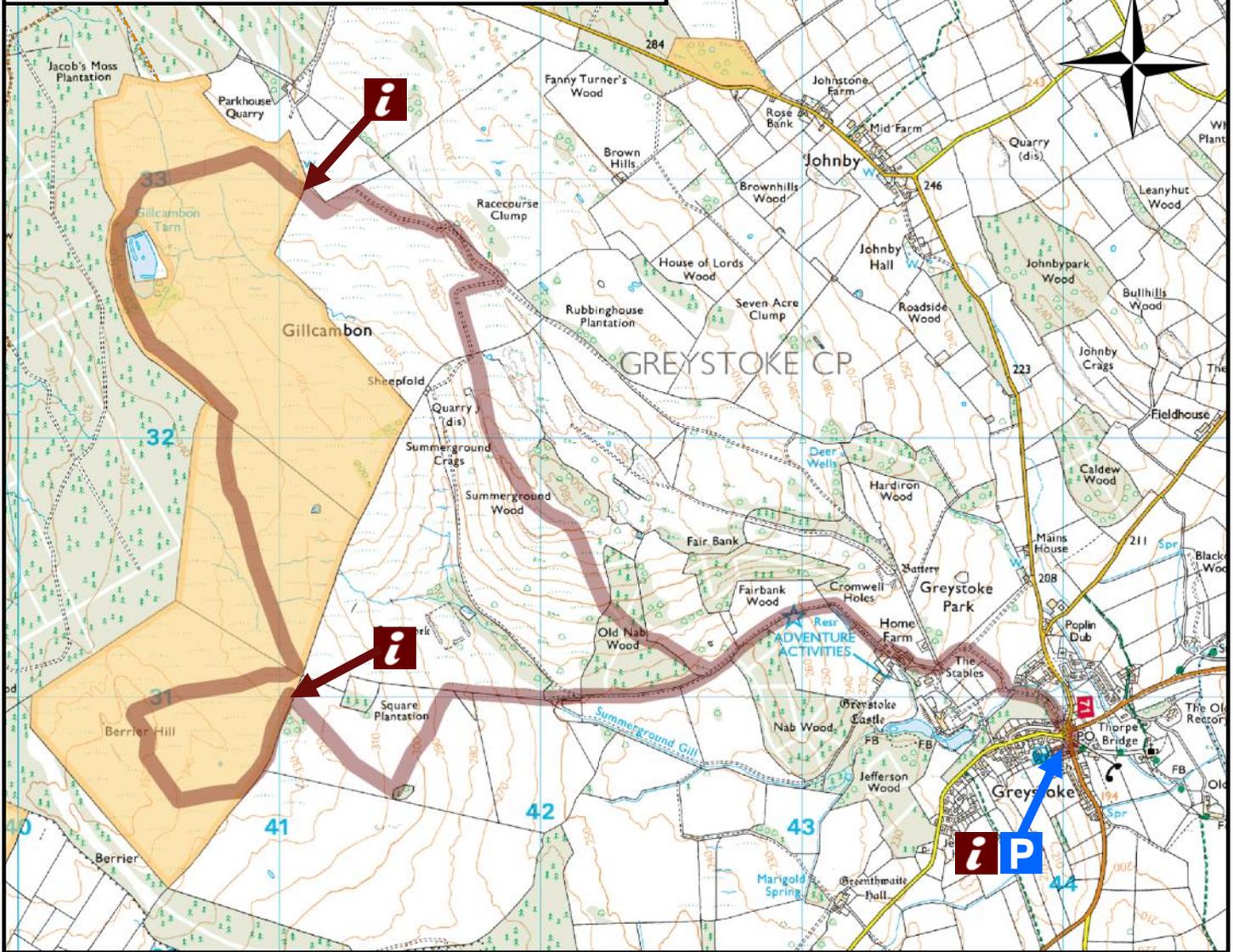
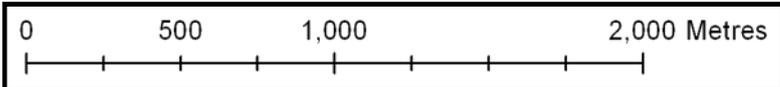
Enjoy the springy turf on the top of the scarp and, as this drifts off the strict crest, notice the line of hoary boundary stones pointing towards the limestone cliff, they may betray the line of a field division many hundreds of years old.



View southwards from The Nab

Once at the far end of the scarp shelf admire the great views over Greystoke to the Pennines and south to the distant Westmorland plateau, and nearer the fells rising above Ullswater.

Bear off down the pasture slope with the wall left, coming to a galvanised gate/cattle-grid part way down. During spring and summer the path may be diverted right, down the slope through the two open mature oak coppices to join the track at the Sheep Hospital. By the end of August the permissive footpath re-opens so walkers will be able to go through the plantation and down the track in Old Nab Wood, slipping out at a corresponding gate then down the track to reunite with the outward track at the old Dutch barn, from where we retrace our route through Holme Farm to the Village



-  Parking Place
-  Access Information
-  Access Land
-  Line of Route

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