

555 StagePath

RIDE & STRIDE BY BUS

the family way to walk

ALWAYS CHECK THE TIMETABLE - USUALLY DISPLAYED AT EACH BUS STOP – TO CONFIRM BUS TIMES FOR THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF EACH WALK STAGE.

The StagePath in the leaflet has been carefully researched and described for clarity in route finding. The maps on the other hand are very basic, as there is no substitute for carrying and referring to the correct Ordnance Survey Explorer Map, acquire OL7, OL5 and OL4 &/or the Harvey Lake District Outdoor Atlas.

Line - Journey of the 555 bus service
Dashes - the route of the StagePath
Dots - Request and Timetabled bus stop



Helm Crag from Dunmail Raise with our bus to the fore

STAGE 5

NORTHBOUND

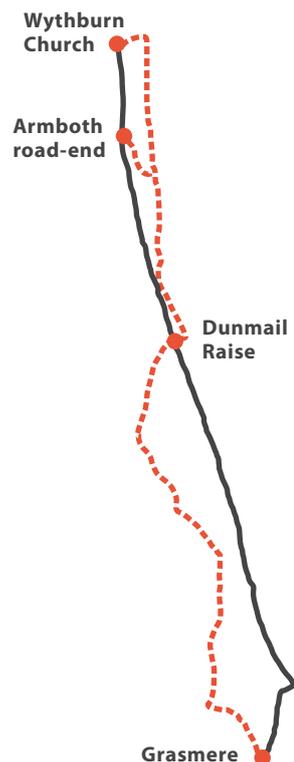
Grasmere > Wythburn

three hours of comparatively wilder country walking

Quiet back road to the entrance of Ghyll Foot. After the entrance to Greenburn Dale you are almost fell-walking on the climb over the shoulder of Steel Fell to reach the top of Dunmail Raise. An easy descent via the cascading Birkside Gill gains entry onto a fine forest track running on well above the road with marvellous views over Thirlmere.

From Sam Read's Bookshop walk north along Easedale Road passing the entrance to Butharlyp Howe Youth Hostel and Glenthorne Quaker Guest House. Slip through the hand-gate left, follow the fenced footpath adjacent to the roadside hedge, emerging at a further hand-gate cross Goody Bridge. Turn right at the next road junction (brown sign Thorney How YH 400yds). Follow this quiet by-road, a real contrast with the A591 heading north over Dunmail Raise across the valley; thankfully it makes little impact here. Pass the active farmyard of Underhelm, and then descend towards Low Mill Bridge. Go left immediately prior to the bridge at the road junction, advancing by Ghyllfoot cottages to where a private drive meets the road.

Bear up this gravel track beside tree-screened Helmside, then via two cattle grid hand-gates. Pass by two cottages at Turn Howe (date plaque 1577) to reach the fell-gate, at this point entering Greenburn Dale (National Trust sign). Ignoring the inviting green track leading into the wild dale beside the wall, veer right up the grass path, the start of the south ridge of Steel Fell. The StagePath has no such overarching ambition, but for walkers with a head for heights the full ascent and summit ridge traverse may be undertaken. Crossing by Dead Pike and descending the corresponding



steep grassy north ridge to Steel End Farm to reach the Armboth Road-end bus stop. StagePaths are tailored for country walkers not mountain trekkers. Nonetheless, it is necessary to ascend the path, that beats back the bracken, up through the fell enclosures to reach a kissing-gate/gate in the in-take wall. Climb on, only a matter of sixty strides, to a pace or two short of a clump of rushes. Find a sheep path branching right, through bracken; this comes alongside the top of the intake wall and contours beyond where this wall swings downhill. The sheep path duly eases downhill and, coming close to an obvious pile of rocks, veers downhill more purposefully over Cotra, a marshy hollow, thankfully not too soft. Upon joining a green tractor track, turn left after skirting glacial moraine, cross a minor ford. Bear down right along the minor track to ford Raise Beck. Continue left with the wet track to reach a gate in the fence, thereby arriving beside the roadside barrier. Turn right and carefully cross to the lay-by (and request bus stops).

At hand the Achille Ratti climbers club hut, and a now rare 1950s AA call box, indeed it is a Grade II listed building - motorists have no need to feel stranded there is always the 555! Crossing the light fence-stile go left, parallel to the road fence coming level with the ancient Dunmail Raise cairn, traditionally associated with Dunmail, the last king of Cumberland. Go through the hand-gate in the wall; bear half-right to cross the footbridge over Raise Beck, re-aligned to boost water catchment into Thirlmere. Turn left at the wall corner with the permitted footpath sign; follow the clear path running on north, parallel and above the enclosure wall. Continue up, under the small plantation, to cross the two footbridges spanning the foot of Birkside Gill. The gill is renowned for its marvellous waterfalls, it is tempting to view them by detouring up the fellside. Proceed onto the forestry track via a hand-gate, a left turn leads down to the southbound bus stop at the Armboth road-end. The northbound bus stop is reached by following the forestry track ahead, with numerous delightful elevated views over the upper reaches of Thirlmere. The path from Wythburn Church crosses the track at a gate, descend left via the cobbled way entering the car park behind the church by hand-gate. Follow the access roadway left to the Grasmere-bound bus stop.