

# StagePaths

RIDE & STRIDE BY BUS  
*the family way to walk*



## 555 StagePath

STAGE 1	Windermere   Brockhole	4½ miles	3 hours
STAGE 2	Brockhole   Ambleside	3 miles	2 hours
STAGE 3	Ambleside   Rydal	1½ miles	1 hour
STAGE 4	Rydal   Grasmere	2 miles	1¼ hours
STAGE 5	Grasmere   Wythburn	4¾ miles	3 hours
STAGE 6	Wythburn   Thirlspot	3¼ miles	2 hours
STAGE 7	Thirlspot   Dale Bottom	4 miles	2½ hours
STAGE 8	Dale Bottom   Keswick	3¼ miles	2 hours

**ALWAYS CHECK THE TIMETABLE** – USUALLY DISPLAYED AT EACH BUS STOP – TO CONFIRM BUS TIMES FOR THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF EACH WALK STAGE. YOU CAN ALSO PHONE **TRAVELINE 0871 200 22 33** OR VISIT **WWW.STAGECOACHBUS.COM** FOR ADVANCE PLANNING.

**INTRODUCING** the first dedicated walking route to a Lakeland bus service. Eight walk stages link the regular bus stops on the journey of the Stagecoach 555 bus between Windermere and Keswick.

Perhaps the most popular bus journey in England, certainly one of the most scenic, for you to enjoy both as a lovely visual experience and as an inspirational, health-giving walk. The walking route includes such iconic and exquisite locations as Orrest Head, Brockhole, Rydal Water, Grasmere, Dunmail Raise, Thirlmere and Castlerigg stone circle. Pure magic every step of the way, to enjoy with family and friends at any season of the year.

The two-way route description in this leaflet gives you the flexibility and freedom to walk either north or south from each intermediate bus stop. The whole walk tracking the bus largely at valley level, gaining only modest height above the road to take advantage of viewpoints, the gradients are easy, the paths firm and well-marked.

Though not proper fellwalking, nonetheless it is wise to carry a light daypack with a snack and drink, and wear comfy boots. Some measure of weather protective clothing will come to your rescue if the elements threaten to conspire by wind, rain or intense sun to spoil your 'off-bus adventure'.

Using the bus frees you to relax, walk one stage at a time, and then have fun building up the stages to complete the whole romantic 26-mile journey both on foot and scenic seat.

The walk can also be studied in greater detail with a pictorial gallery on-line by visiting [www.markrichards.info](http://www.markrichards.info) clicking on **Ride & Stride StagePaths**.

Window-gazers can reflect on the walk and mountain scenery with the aid of the 555's unique 'guide to the ride' leaflet *From A to B to SEE*.

**NOTE:** This pdf only describes the first of the eight 555 StagePath Stages.



**STAGE 1** a leisurely 3 hours, up hill, down dale

**Windermere Station > Brockhole National Park Centre**  
*Orrest Head Viewpoint and Trout Beck*

**NB:** STAGE 1 can also be walked on a footpath beside the main road.

From the bus stop beside the cycle hire cabin walk past Booths Supermarket and under its canopy to reach the road junction. With the Gateway Tourist Information Centre to the left, face right by the railway sign, towards Windermere Hotel. Carefully cross the main A591, via the traffic island. Joining the roadside footway turn left. After a some 50m spot, the 'Footpath to Orrest Head' notice, on your right, with its pointing hand. Ascend the metalled lane to a path fork. Keep with the ascending road, signed 'Windermere Way' white arrow 'Orrest Head Viewpoint'. The road winds uphill past the entrance to Orrest How to enter woodland, stick with the road. Pass a cottage with hand-crafted ironwork sales and refreshments, continue with the road, which becomes a track after a yew tree, advance into the woodland. Meeting a wall turn up right beside it, after a wall-end the path is fenced to the right. Arrive at a metal kissing-gate (with Heywood memorial stone) and enter the Orrest Head Viewpoint enclosure.

Ascend the rough steps to the bare rock summit, with seats, facing in various directions to suit the appreciative audience, and a topograph - for all the legendary view the topograph is devoid of a legend! The plinth points north-west over the head of Lake Windermere to the stirring heights above Great Langdale - the panorama is amazing. Linger a while, regain your breath and restore your belief in our wonderful world. See the vertically-tilted and cracked bare rock beneath your feet shows the effects of glacial smoothing. The place-name Orrest is a very rare instance of the Norse *orrusta* 'battle', i.e. a meeting of armies.

Head north straight on over the top, taking the left-hand fork, descending to a kissing-gate and wall-stile in the enclosure corner. Cross the wall-stile signed 'Causeway ½ mile', gently downhill, keeping the wall left, crossing a stone flag over a gill to arrive at a wall-stile onto the road. Turn right following the road to Near Orrest, where cross the high wall-stile on the left, signed 'Far Orrest'. Passing the large bank-barn go through the kissing-gate crossing the next paddock to a further kissing-gate slipping through a small open copse to a wall-stile. Traverse the damp pasture to a wall-stile. Advance with the wall now to the right to cross a ladder-stile and step over a wall-side gill. Traverse the field half-right to cross a second ladder-stile, follow the left-hand wall to a kissing-gate/gate close to Far Orrest.

Turn right to a second kissing-gate/gate. Turn left and pass on behind the farmhouse to a third kissing-gate entering a walled green lane. Do not go through the obvious gate opposite, instead follow the green lane right to a kissing-gate beside a field-gate. Keep the wall close left. Should you glance over the wall there is a fine view towards the head of Windermere; at this point you are directly above the Lakeland Horticultural Society's beautiful Holebird Gardens. Go through a new field-gate and follow the open track across the field ahead, declining to a galvanised gate onto the road. Turn left and follow the road downhill passing the entrance to Low Longmire, Fusetwaite Yeat (which is Viking for 'cow-house clearing gate') and lower down, ironically, High Longmire.

At the junction at the foot of the hill cross over and follow the roadside footway right to the bus stop (The Kirkstone Rambler 517 summer bus service) and kissing-gate. Descend the green track into the valley bottom to a hand-gate and cross two foot-bridges over Trout Beck, for one brief moment you are on an island! Ascend the sunken path to arrive at a road at the western end of Troutbeck village (some 400m right find the beautiful vernacular National Trust property Town End). Ascend the facing brick-cobbled drive beside Townfoot. This rises via a gate to become a confined bridle-path to meet a road. Turn left and as the road swings right, go straight on down with the bridle-lane. The rough-tracked way is called Wain Lane, it passes several handsome old barns, narrowing as it goes to pass the well-screened Middlerigg Tarn. Crossing a feeder gill via a stone-flag bridge the lane ventures on to meet the main road. Cross carefully and follow the cycle/footway to the north-bound bus stop.

## **Brockhole National Park Centre > Windermere Station**

### *Trout Beck and Orrest Head Viewpoint*

Carefully cross the road and walk left with the cycle/footway some 170m. Cross back over the busy road with the utmost care. Enter Wain Lane with its blue bridleway sign (and discouragement to motorcycles). This walled lane leads by a barn and over a stone flag bridge to pass Middlerigg Tarn, gaps in the wall permitting glimpses of the shy waters and the resident swans. The lane rises by several handsome old stone field barns to emerge onto a minor road. Go forward to find a bridleway signed right 'Windermere Way'. Descend the confined path via a gate and down the cobbled drive by the well-tended traditional farmhouse Townfoot. Cross straight over and down the sunken path to reach Trout Beck. A lovely spot to linger two footbridges linking across an island. Go through the had-gate and ascend the green way to a



Handsome Westmorland field-barn in Wain Lane

kissing-gate beside a bus stop (The Kirkstone Rambler service 517 summer only).

Go right with the footway to the road junction, cross and ascend this road, no verges so watch for traffic. Pass up by Fusetwaite Yeat and directly after the entrance to Low Longmire find a signposted footpath 'Far Orrest' on the right. Go through the galvanised field gate and follow the open track to a gate now progressing with a wall to the right to reach a kissing-gate/field-gate into a walled lane. Follow this down to where a footpath crosses go through the left-hand kissing-gate and turn right. After 60m arrive at a kissing-gate/gate on the right after Far Orrest farmhouse go through and the immediate kissing-gate ahead. Advance with a wall on the right to a ladder-stile, cross and maintain course to a second ladder-stile this time with a tiny gill in front. Continue to a wall-stile in the next corner and cross a damp pasture to a wall-stile into a small spinney leading through to a kissing-gate advance to the right Near Orrest, going through a kissing-gate right of a muddy farmyard entrance gate, continue passing the large sbaank barn to cross a tall wall-stile onto the road.

Turn right for 200m to cross a wall-stile beside a field-gate on the left, signed 'Windermere Way'. Orrest Head forms the horizon ahead. Follow a green track, crossing a stone flag over a gill by the wall, maintaining relative company with the right-hand wall rising up to a wall-stile in the field corner. Entering the Orrest Head enclosure following the green path flanked by bushes and bracken to the summit. Wow, what a wonderful all-round panorama. The topograph plinth points north-west over the head of Windermere into the heart of mountain Lakeland. Cross straight over the bare rock top descending the flight of steps to the kissing-gate and follow the path right. Entering a woodland watch for a left turn immediately before the walls-de path steepens. This leads onto a track which smartly becomes a metalled road. Passing a cottage faithfully descend with the winding road to meet the main road. Go left with the footway 50m and cross the busy road via the pedestrian refuge, bearing left into the railway station car park by Booths supermarket to catch your bus.