

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



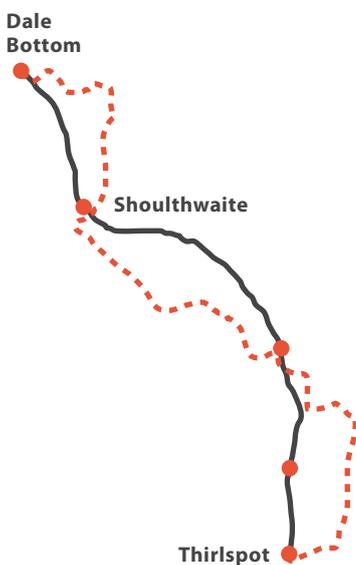
STAGE 7

NORTHBOUND

Thirlspot > Dale Bottom

one brief climb, otherwise largely level going, allow two hours

The StagePath starts by climbing back above the intake wall to visit the wild waters of Fisherplace Gill, before descending with the Sticks Pass brideway to cross St John's Beck, then wandering on firm tracks by Shoulthwaite Moss and the old road under High Rigg.



Pass the King's Head Hotel bar door, go through a hand-gate with bridleway sign at the end of the building to enter Thirlspot Farm's gated farmyard (somewhat cryptic – 'Thirlspot' means 'the giant's hole'). Exit via the gate to the right of the three static caravans, ascending the pasture to a gate and cross Thirlmere Leat. A short rough stony pasture leads to a gate in the intake wall, thereafter ascend the pitched path to a path junction where the wall levels. Turn left, footpath signed 'Stanah, Sticks Pass'. Follow the clear path above the wall duly dipping to cross a gated footbridge over

Fisherplace Beck. There are two massive waterfalls above, well worth climbing up to gain a close-up view of the action. Contour forward as directed by the waymark soon coming alongside the intake wall. The path descends lining up with the Sticks Pass bridle-path at a signpost. Do not go through the hand-gate directly below, instead keep right by the wall to cross Stanah Gill by an old bridge. Bear left down to a stile/gate over the Thirlmere Leat, at this point the leat had to be bored through a massive bedrock bluff. Descend the pasture and cross the ladder-stile onto the farm lane leading down by Thirlmere Community Hall and adjacent car park.

From the cottages turn right, along the road, pass the redundant timber building, originally a youth hostel. After some 250m find a footpath signposted from a hand-gate, enter the valley pasture and follow the left-hand wall towards the main road. Cross the wall-stile and climb the steps up the embankment. Turn right and follow the verge, pass a request bus stop then carefully cross the main road. Turn left with the signed 'Public road round the lake' leading past a caravan park at Bridge End Farm.

Immediately after the toilet block on the left, go through the double gates right into the farmyard, footpath sign 'Smaithwaite'. Keep to the track by the large barns, bearing down right to a hand-gate, now with a wall left descend to cross St John's Beck, the outflow of Thirlmere Reservoir, via a sequence of three footbridges. Notice the water flow monitoring station left. Keep the fence, then wall, to the left, in rising to a gate. Proceed along a green-way via a gateway, then via a gate into the farmyard at Smaithwaite (which means 'the small clearing'). Pass on between the white barn, date-stone 1692 and the 'new-build' footings to a gate at the right of a second barn. Follow the open track to a hand-gate onto the road.



Castle Rock of Triermain from Smaithwaite

Turn right for 60m then go left along the forest access track - United Utilities blue permissive path signboard. The track runs level along the edge of Shoulthwaite Moss, via a kissing-gate coming into the forest edge. Watch for the fork where the forest track begins to rise, keep to the low path leading to a kissing-gate into the farmyard at Shoulthwaite Farm. Pass on between the barns (notice the humorous 'string weather station' on the barn) and swing right from the caravan park along the access lane to meet the main road (request bus stop).

With the utmost care cross straight over via the wall-stile beside Shoulthwaite Beck bridge, cross the brief meadow to a further wall-stile into the old road lane. Turn right for 50m, then left via the hand-gate with its advice for dog owners. Spot the old stone-arched Rough How Bridge ahead, walled off and totally redundant. Keep left to the gate as the track forks beside the right-hand fence. The ensuing green way becomes an undulating path beneath the bank leading to a hand-gate/stile then alongside the level wall to join a track becoming a road passing Brownrigg Farm (cottage) and Shaw Bank. On coming to a T-junction turn left with the gated road, passing Broadstones and winding on to pass by Dalebottom caravan park to the main road. Go right along the verge to the bus stop.