

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 6

NORTHBOUND

Wythburn > Thirlspot

three hours of comparatively wilder country walking

Thirlmere's surroundings have been radically improved over the last year with strategic tree felling restoring the intrinsic wild mountain demeanour of the valley. Centre-stage, the formerly sombre mere has become less the reservoir, more a Lakeland lake. The StagePath leads on as forest track, forest trail and firm fellside path.

From Armbboth road-end (northbound bus): follow the forest track leading south directly opposite the bus stop, this links up with the path from Dunmail Raise, with the blue signboard directing to 'Swirls'.

Thirlmere and Ullscarf from the forest track

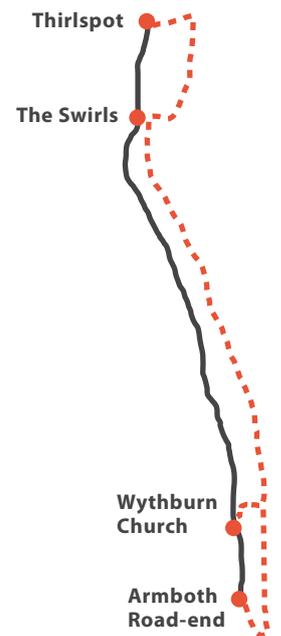


From Wythburn Church track-end (southbound bus): follow the access track-way leading to the car park behind the church and pass on via the hand-gate up the cobbled bridle-path in the forest to meet the forest track (see text above). Turn left accompanying the newly surfaced track, quickly crossing Comb and Whelpside Gills to the double footbridge crossings of Mines Gill (Whelpside refers to the historic 'high breeding ground of wolves'). From the ensuing kissing-gate the bridleway becomes a cobbled forest path, that winds through the tangle of conifers slowing progress.



Ultimately the path comes down via a man-made rock step onto a forest track, sign 'Thirlmere, Swirls'. Head on north up this track, duly descending into The Swirl car park via a kissing-gate (request bus stops left). Go through the car park, cross the footbridge signed 'Helvellyn, Stanah, Sticks'. Continue via the 'Helvellyn' sign to a kissing-gate in a wall, rising a few yards to a fork follow the 'public footpath Sticks Pass, Stanah'.

The man-made path gently angles up the rough fellside, with retaining stones giving a firm footing. Cross a small footbridge and come alongside an intake wall. Where this dips down contour on with the made-path with handsome views towards the tree-shrouded Great How, and in the distance an impressive view of Blencathra through St John's in the Vale. Coming to a wall encounter a path junction, bear down left signed 'Thirlspot Farm'. The sloping pitched path leads to a gate and then a gated crossing of the Thirlmere leat, gathering the waters of a string of streams north from Castle Rock that would otherwise have missed the reservoir catchment. Head down to a gate and gill, crossing left of the static caravans to pass through the farmyard by gates, bear right to a hand-gate beside the farmhouse, continue along in front of the King's Head Hotel, Thirlspot to reach the corresponding bus stops.



Approaching Thirlspot from the high intake wall path