

## Ambleside - Keswick - Ullswater drive

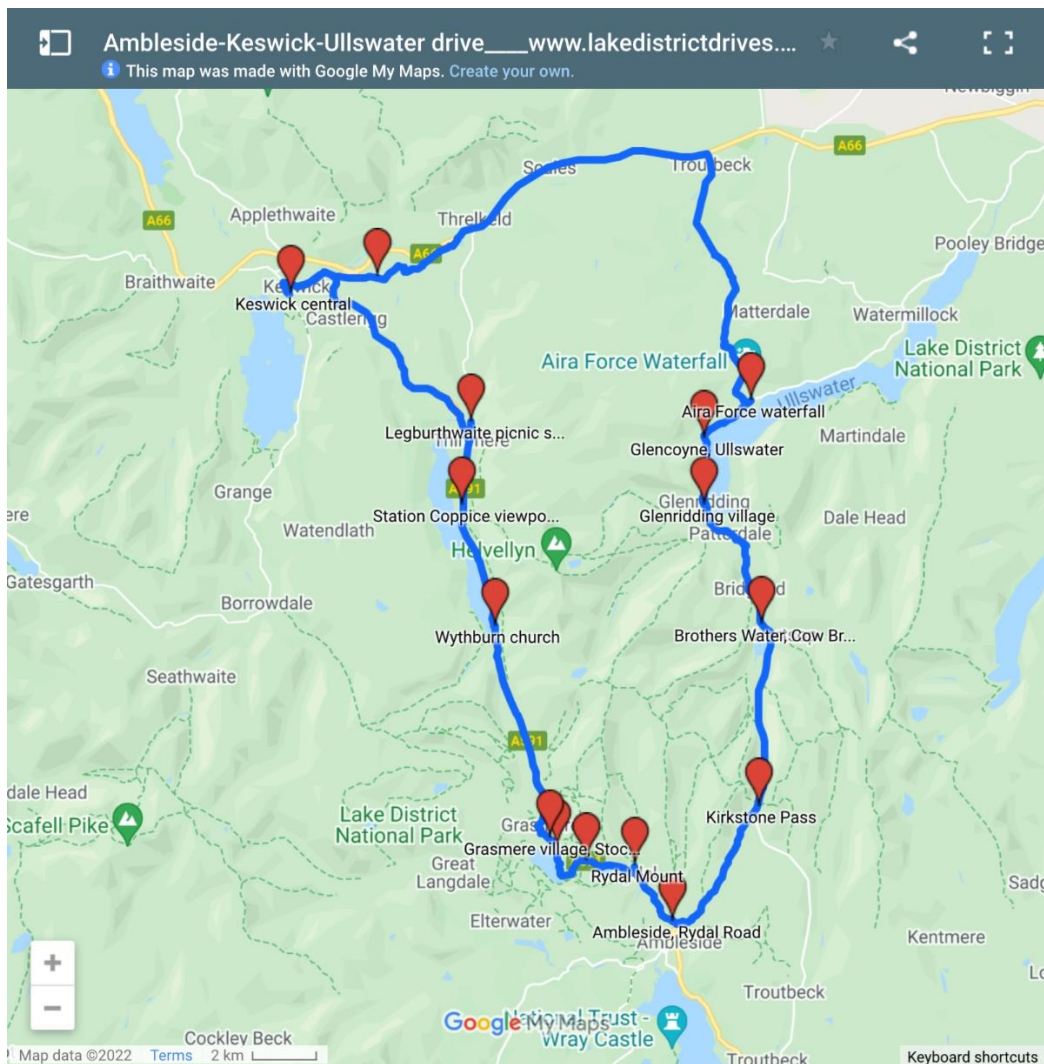


A drive along the main Lake District artery from Ambleside to Keswick, which then returns via Ullswater and Kirkstone Pass. Several lakes are visited and there is a Wordsworth theme including a number of locations associated with the famous poet.



Ullswater from Park Brow

### Route Map



### Summary of main attractions on route (click on name for detail)

Distance	Attraction	Car Park Coordinates
0 miles	<a href="#">Ambleside</a>	N 54.43406, W 2.96411
1.3 miles	<a href="#">Rydal Mount</a>	N 54.44873, W 2.98172
2.5 miles	<a href="#">White Moss Common</a>	N 54.44993, W 3.00340
3.7 miles	<a href="#">Dove Cottage</a>	N 54.45370, W 3.01670
4.0 miles	<a href="#">Grasmere Village</a>	N 54.45608, W 3.02015
8.3 miles	<a href="#">Wythburn Church</a>	N 54.51208, W 3.04471
10.8 miles	<a href="#">Station Coppice viewpoint</a>	N 54.54360, W 3.05935
12.6 miles	<a href="#">Legburthwaite picnic site</a>	N 54.56584, W 3.05555
18.8 miles	<a href="#">Keswick</a>	N 54.59936, W 3.13758
20.9 miles	<a href="#">Castlerigg Stone Circle</a>	N 54.60376, W 3.09811
33.4 miles	<a href="#">Aira Force</a>	N 54.57142, W 2.92862
34.7 miles	<a href="#">Glencoyne, Ullswater</a>	N 54.56140, W 2.94969
36.0 miles	<a href="#">Glenridding</a>	N 54.54397, W 2.94965
39.2 miles	<a href="#">Brothers Water</a>	N 54.51243, W 2.92396
42.9 miles	<a href="#">Kirkstone Pass</a>	N 54.46445, W 2.92542
45.9 miles	<a href="#">Ambleside</a>	N 54.43406, W 2.96411

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## The Drive

**Distance: 0 miles**

**Location: Ambleside, Rydal Road car park**

**Coordinates: N 54.43406, W 2.96411**

Ambleside is an attractive and popular town in the central Lake District with plenty of attractions for visitors. The town occupies a scenic and commanding location at the head of Windermere lake, with good road connections making it a great base for exploring the area. One of the most famous sights is [Bridge House](#), a quirky National Trust property spanning Stock Ghyll adjacent to the car park. The nearby [Armitt Museum](#) is small but has some interesting local history. The town has plenty of tourist shops, outdoor specialists, cafes, restaurants, pubs and the popular [Hayes Garden World](#). Behind [St Mary's Church](#) and its magnificent spire is Rothay Park which provides some nice open space and play areas next to the River Rothay and Stock Ghyll. A short uphill walk follows Stock Ghyll upstream of the town to Stock Ghyll Force which is an impressive waterfall in a woodland setting on the slopes of Wansfell. The car park is pay and display with toilet facilities.



Bridge House, Ambleside

Approx 1km south from the town centre is the Waterhead area on Windermere lake where you can take a [Windermere cruise](#) to Bowness or Lakeside. There have been public cruises on Windermere since 1845 and they played a significant part in the development of Ambleside as a tourist centre, bringing Victorian

tourists from the railway stations at Windermere town and Lakeside. Other attractions in Waterhead include the attractive Borrans Park overlooking the lake and the adjacent [Roman Fort](#).

### Travelling:

Turn left out of Rydal Road car park on the A591 towards Keswick. Ambleside is soon left behind and open country beckons as you follow the River Rothay valley. The first open fields on the right are Rydal Park where local events are sometimes held. This includes the famous [Ambleside Sports](#) event which is held annually on the last Thursday in July and where you can see many different local sporting events and traditions such as fell running and hound trailing, plus the unique sport of Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling. The fells above Rydal Park form part of the Fairfield Horseshoe, an epic mountain walk, and across the valley to the left is the popular Loughrigg Fell. You soon meet the attractive River Rothay on the left and enter Rydal village. Take the minor right turn opposite Rydal Lodge, this is a dead end private road leading to Rydal Mount car park which is at the top of the hill on the left.



Rydal Mount

**Distance: 1.3 miles**

**Location: Rydal Mount and Gardens**

**Coordinates: N 54.44873, W 2.98172**

[Rydal Mount](#) is where the famous poet William Wordsworth lived from 1813 till his death in 1850 and where he wrote many of his poems. The impressive house, which dates to the 16th century, is now owned by descendants of Wordsworth and retains the feel of a lived-in family home with a selection of the family's prized possessions and portraits. It has been enlarged over the intervening centuries, including by Wordsworth himself.

Wordsworth was also a keen landscape gardener and the beautiful 5-acre garden remains very much as he designed it, consisting of fell-side terraces, rock pools and an ancient mound. There are some wonderful views of surrounding hills and nearby Rydal Water. You can take an excellent guided tour of the house then wonder around other parts and the gardens yourself. There is a charge for access to the house and gardens with an adjacent tea room for refreshments and parking is free for visitors. Open daily, except Fridays, from February to December. Closed January. Admission fee applies, tea room, toilets and parking also available.

A short distance back down the access lane is the historic [Rydal Hall](#) which is now a Christian conference centre with its own parking. You are free to wonder around the lovely gardens (donation box included) and there is a cafe, open daily all year. Further down the lane is [St Mary's Church](#) which has a pleasant churchyard and behind that is Dora's field which was owned by the Wordsworth's and is a mass of daffodils and then bluebells in the spring.

### Travelling:

Return to the A591 and turn right to continue through Rydal village. Pass the [Glen Rothay Hotel and Badger Bar](#) on the right where you can actually see badgers in the gardens and on the local [webcam](#). Just beyond there, Rydal Water appears on the left. One of the smallest Lake District lakes it is in a wonderful location surrounded by mountains. There is a popular and relatively easy 3 mile walk around the lake and you might well see walkers on the opposite side with Loughrigg Fell rising above them. Just beyond Rydal Water, turn left to White Moss Common car park.

**Distance: 2.5 miles**

**Location: White Moss Common car park**

**Coordinates: N 54.44993, W 3.00340**

White Moss Common is the attractive area of woodland and meadow between Grasmere lake and Rydal Water in a place that really epitomises the Lake District, surrounded by lakes and mountains in all directions! The picturesque River Rothay runs for around 1km through a narrow valley between the two lakes, with various footpaths allowing you to explore the area and visit the lakes.



White Moss Common

A good level footpath leads from the car park and very soon meets an open area of meadow next to the river with a couple of benches and nearby toilets. From there, [Grasmere lake](#) is the easiest to get to if you follow the river upstream for around 800m to a footbridge over the river and a lovely shingle beach with stunning views northwards across the lake and surrounding mountains. [Rydal Water](#) can be reached on a rougher path over the footbridge near the toilets and up through the woods before descending left to the open lakeshore, around 1km distant.

There is a charge for parking with nearby toilets but no other facilities. There is further car parking nearby.

### Travelling:

Turn left out of the car park and continue along the A591. Shortly, there is another car park for White Moss Common on the right. The road then meanders through a short wooded section with the River Rothay on the left, before Grasmere lake appears on the left. A little bigger than Rydal Water but quite similar in appearances, surrounded by high mountains in the central Lake District. You can see how this beautiful area gave so much inspiration to Wordsworth in his written work. The road follows the tree-lined shore for a short distance before entering Grasmere village but there isn't anywhere safe to stop on the road. Dove Cottage car park is then a short distance on the right, opposite the imposing [Daffodil Hotel](#).



Dove Cottage

**Distance: 3.7 miles**

**Location: Dove Cottage and Wordsworth Museum**

**Coordinates: N 54.45370, W 3.01670**

[Dove Cottage](#) is where William Wordsworth lived from 1799 until 1808 after he first settled back in the Lake District, aged 29. Wordsworth was obviously besotted with Grasmere and his new home at Dove Cottage, describing it as “the loveliest spot that man hath ever found”. However, the cosy cottage soon became quite cramped after Wordsworth married his childhood sweetheart Mary Hutchinson in 1802 and proceeded to have the first 3 of their 5 children in 1803, 1804

& 1806. By 1808 the Wordsworth's realised they needed a bigger home and moved to nearby Allan Bank which is now a National Trust property you can also visit.

You can take a guided tour of Dove Cottage which is just behind the car park. Wordsworth wrote many of his greatest poems whilst living here and you get a fascinating insight into the family's lives as you take a guided tour of the house which is presented as it would have been over 200 years ago. Outside the house are the attractive fellside gardens and woodland which have also been restored to resemble those created by the Wordsworths.

Admission to Dove Cottage also includes entry to the recently refurbished Wordsworth Museum nearby. This fascinating place contains a wealth of information and artefacts relating to the Romantic movement and the artists involved, including handwritten literature from the time.

Also nearby is a café for refreshments. There is a charge for entering the house, garden and museum which are open Tuesday to Saturday all year, except early January when closed. Additional charge for parking.

#### **Travelling:**

Turn right out of Dove Cottage car park on the A591. After approx 150m, turn left at the mini-roundabout towards Grasmere village centre. Stock Lane car park is 200m on the right.

**Distance: 4.0 miles**

**Location: Grasmere Village, Stock Lane car park**

**Coordinates: N 54.45608, W 3.02015**

Grasmere is a picturesque and popular tourist village, on the shores of Grasmere lake and surrounded by high mountains in the very centre of the National Park. It was originally made famous by William Wordsworth who lived at a number of properties in the area and is buried at [St Oswald's Church](#) in the village alongside his wife Mary, sister Dorothy and 3 of his children. You can visit the graves and also wonder through the adjacent Wordsworth garden by the River Rothay which meanders past the village. Just outside the village on a small hill overlooking the lake is the imposing [Allan Bank](#) where Wordsworth lived for a short time from 1808 to 1811. This is now a National Trust property and although mostly bare inside is still worth a visit along with the adjacent gardens.



Grasmere village

Back in the village, adjacent to the church is the renowned [Grasmere Gingerbread shop](#), housed in the attractive old village school building which dates from 1630. Wordsworth taught at the school for a short time in 1812. The various other shops within the village are mostly tourist orientated and there are numerous cafes, restaurants and pubs. It is a popular centre for climbing mountains and there are some nice short [walks](#) alongside the river and to the lake where rowing boats can be hired.

The last Sunday in August brings the [Grasmere Sports](#) event to the adjacent fields. An annual event since 1868. Similar to Ambleside Sports event, you can see a host of local sporting events and activities, including fell running where humans race each other up and down the local fells, and hound trailing where dogs race each other along a scented trail across the fells. You can also see the unique local sport of Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling where competitors attempt to unbalance each other dressed in the traditional white long johns, white vest and colourful trunks.

The pay and display car park also has toilet facilities.

#### **Travelling:**

Turn right out of the car park to travel through the village of Grasmere. Beyond the village, meet a T junction and turn left on the A591 towards Keswick. Ahead to the left is Helm Crag and from this point you can see why the peak is often called 'The Lion and the Lamb' due to the appearance of the rocks at the southern end of the top. Soon pass [The Traveller's Rest Inn](#) on the right and beyond this the ascent up Dunmail Raise begins, a steady climb on a good wide road. The summit of the road is at 238m and if you want a reduced walk up Fairfield or Helvellyn mountains this is a good place to start from.

Once over the road summit, Thirlmere Reservoir can soon be seen in the distance. The picturesque reservoir and forest surroundings are all owned by the local water supply company, United Utilities, and they have provided a number of car parks, picnic areas and walks around the reservoir. [Thirlmere information boards](#) can be found in each car park.

As you approach the reservoir, a minor road on the left will take you along the peaceful western shore road which has a number of different car parks and later rejoins the A591, but the drive described continues on the A591 approx 0.3 miles to take a minor turn for Wythburn car park on the right.



Wythburn Church

**Distance: 8.3 miles**

**Location: Wythburn Church**

**Coordinates: N 54.51208, W 3.04471**

Thirlmere Reservoir was formed after the dam at the northern end was built between 1890 and 1894. The main purpose was to supply water to Manchester which had a booming population and industry at that time. Although around 90 miles away, an underground aqueduct was built which takes water by gravity all the way to Manchester, an incredible feat of Victorian engineering. The reservoir now supplies over 10% of the drinking water used in the north

west of England and is almost 4 miles long with a usable capacity of around 30 billion litres.

The old Wythburn village was mostly flooded when the dam was built and [Wythburn Church](#) is one of the few remaining buildings. An historic Lakeland church built in 1640, rebuilt 1740 and extended in 1872. The pretty church and garden are normally open and are good for some peace and solitude despite the nearby main road. There are a couple of local forest walks and a very strenuous footpath up Helvellyn mountain starting from here. At 950m altitude, Helvellyn is the third highest mountain in the Lake District and although not far away in a straight line, the climb from here should not be underestimated. You can't actually see the reservoir from here due to trees but it's not far away and you will soon see it as you continue the drive.

The car park is United Utilities pay and display with no facilities. There are toilet facilities at the next stop. The parking ticket is valid for all United Utilities car parks around the reservoir.

### **Travelling:**

Leave the car park and turn right on the main A591 which continues along the picturesque shore of Thirlmere Reservoir. This road was devastated by Storm Desmond in December 2015, much of the road and surrounding drainage had to be rebuilt and the road was closed for several months. After almost 1 mile a small castle-like building with tower battlements can be seen on the lakeshore and this is where water is abstracted to be sent on its way towards Manchester for water supply. The slopes to the right are very steep all the way to the top of Helvellyn. The road continues along the lake for another 1.5 miles before Station Coppice car park is reached on the left.

**Distance: 10.8 miles**

**Location: Station Coppice car park and viewpoint**

**Coordinates: N 54.54360, W 3.05935**

This car park provides pleasant views across Thirlmere and, in the opposite direction, steeply up towards the summit of Helvellyn. There is a good short [footpath](#) to a better viewpoint above the car park and another leading down to the lake which continues along the shore. The car park is pay and display with no facilities.



Station Coppice Viewpoint

Slightly back along the road on the opposite side is Swirls pay and display car park which is United Utilities with a couple of picnic tables and toilet facilities. There is a short forest walk and another very strenuous footpath up Helvellyn also starting from here.

### **Travelling:**

Continue along the A591 towards Keswick and there are some lovely views down the valley of St John's in the Vale and of Blencathra mountain in the distance. Soon pass [The Kings Head Hotel](#) on the right and shortly after this take the right turn which is the B5322, St John's in the Vale road. After approx 0.4 miles, Legburthwaite car park is on the left.



Legburthwaite picnic site

**Distance: 12.6 miles**

**Location: Legburthwaite picnic site**

**Coordinates: N 54.56584, W 3.05555**

Legburthwaite is a picturesque and peaceful picnic area adjacent to St John's Beck with a few picnic tables on the grass in-between trees. The river comes out of Thirlmere reservoir and is usually shallow and clear, ideal for a paddle. A rough path follows it upstream for a short distance, within the boundaries of the picnic site. Over the road, the site is overlooked by the imposing Castle Rock which is popular for rock climbing.

This is also a good place to park if you want to visit the impressive Thirlmere dam which is about 0.6 miles away, mostly level walking on minor roads. Leave the car park on the footpath towards the picnic area and turn left along the lane which then heads straight across the A591, where you need to take care, and follows the minor road past High Bridge End Farm and on towards the dam. You can walk on the road along the top of the dam which is currently closed to vehicles and the views are excellent, looking up the reservoir and towards the surrounding wooded hills. A magnificent plaque half way along the dam gives names of those involved in the project which was completed in 1894. Ahead you can see the imposing Raven Crag overlooking the dam and on the opposite shore is another fabulous hill and viewpoint at Great How Wood. There are strenuous footpaths up both hills if you are feeling energetic.

The car park at Legburthwaite is United Utilities pay and display with toilet facilities.

### **Travelling:**

Leave the car park and turn right to retrace your steps on the B5322. At the T junction with the main A591, turn right towards Keswick. The road soon becomes dual carriageway, following a picturesque valley, before returning to single carriageway and climbing to a small summit to give great views ahead towards Skiddaw mountain, Bassenthwaite Lake and Derwent Water. The road then descends and enters Keswick

outskirts before it becomes the A5271 and runs alongside the River Greta towards the town centre. Soon the road heads away from the river and after a couple of sharp bends there is a mini-roundabout where you turn left on the B5289. Follow this for approx 0.3 miles until you reach Keswick Central car park on the left.



Keswick town centre

**Distance: 18.8 miles**

**Location: Keswick, Central car park**

**Coordinates: N 54.59936, W 3.13758**

Keswick is a popular and pretty tourist town nestled between Derwent Water and Skiddaw mountain. It has long been the main hub for the northern Lake District and boomed when the railway line from Penrith and west Cumbria was completed in 1864, bringing Victorian tourists to Keswick station. You can still see the station today in the northern town but the railway line was closed in 1972. The old railway line is now a popular cycle and walking path alongside the River Greta towards Threlkeld to the east.

An important part of Keswick's heritage is pencil making and you can visit the interesting [Pencil Museum](#) where you will learn all about historic graphite mining in nearby Borrowdale and the growth of pencil making in Keswick through the 19th century. Pencil manufacture moved to nearby Workington in 2008 but the museum remains and you can also see one of the largest colour pencils in the world at almost 26 feet long! Other interesting attractions in the town include [Keswick Museum](#) and [The Puzzling Place](#). There are abundant shops, outdoor specialists, cafes, pubs and restaurants around the town as well as some lovely parks. In the town centre is the pedestrianised market place where you might find the market in full swing. In the centre of that is the prominent old Moot Hall which now houses the Tourist Information Centre. Over the River Greta from the town centre, you will find the attractive Fitz Park with its vast open grassy areas next to the river where you can escape the crowds.

A 10 minute walk from the town centre is the lakeside area on Derwent Water which is always popular and you can explore the lake, either by boat or the fabulous 10 mile [footpath](#) which circuits the lake. The



Keswick lakeside

[Keswick Launch](#) cruise is a wonderful way to take in the lake and its surroundings. There are regular boats (less in winter) which stop here and at several beauty spots around the lake. It is definitely worth walking the short distance to [Friar's Crag](#) which offers beautiful views up the lake. Crow Park, opposite Lakeside car park, has a lovely open setting next to the lake where you can watch the boats come and go, again with great views. Between Crow Park and the town centre is Hope Park which has delightful landscaped grounds and miniature golf. There is a cafe, toilet facilities and the popular [Theatre by the Lake](#) which has its own facilities.

Central car park is very close to the town centre. The lake is less than 10 minute walk but if you want to drive closer to the lake you can park at Lakeside car park which is a little further along the Borrowdale road and turn right at the next mini-roundabout. Central and Lakeside car parks are pay and display.



### Travelling:

You first retrace your steps to leave Keswick. Turn right out of the car park on the B5289, then right at the mini-roundabout to pass through the town centre again on the A5271. The road soon meets the River Greta on the left and follows that before it climbs away from the river and you shortly turn left towards M6 and A66. After only 50m, turn right towards Castlerigg Stone Circle which is a further 0.7 miles uphill on the right.

**Distance: 20.9 miles**

**Location: Castlerigg Stone Circle**

**Coordinates: N 54.60376, W 3.09811**

[Castlerigg stone circle](#) is one of the oldest, most famous and most impressive prehistoric stone circles in the country. It is believed the 38 stones were brought to this elevated place by Neolithic farming communities around 4500 years ago. Quite how they got here and their purpose remain something of a mystery, but it would have been an important meeting place for the scattered Neolithic communities, possibly as a trading place, a religious centre or an astronomical observatory.



Castlerigg Stone Circle

The high open setting certainly enhances the experience, with fantastic 360 degree panoramic views over the northern Lake District, including many notable mountains such as Helvellyn, Skiddaw and Blencathra.

It became a popular tourist attraction in Victorian times but some visitors would chip bits of rock away for souvenirs. This resulted in a campaign for its protection and it became one of the earliest ancient scheduled monuments in the country in 1882. Later, it was acquired by the National Trust and now remains a popular attraction where you can wonder inbetween the stones and soak up the wonderful atmosphere.

Pedestrian access is adjacent to the nearby minor road on the right. There is free parking on the roadside and free entry but no other facilities.

### Travelling:

From the stone circle, continue eastwards along the minor road, passing [Keswick Climbing Wall](#). After approx 0.6 miles there is a T junction where you turn right and after a further 0.3 miles is another T junction where you turn right again. There are some good views ahead towards Blencathra mountain and right towards St John's in the Vale valley. In just under 1 mile the minor road descends to cross the River Greta where there is some roadside parking and a good woodland walk following the river downstream along the old railway line back towards Keswick. Beyond this the road joins the main A66 at a T junction and you turn right towards Penrith. You soon pass the village of Threlkeld on the left and its interesting [Mining Museum](#) nearby on the right. Continue beneath the lofty heights of Blencathra mountain to the left and on through pleasant countryside.

After approx 5 miles, turn right on the A5091 towards Ullswater. Immediately pass the [Troutbeck Inn](#) on the left and continue along the pleasant upland road for another 3.8 miles, through Matterdale End village and past the historic [Matterdale Church](#), to Dockray village and [The Royal Hotel](#) on the right. Matterdale is a picturesque valley that remains relatively peaceful and unspoilt. Approx 0.4 miles beyond Dockray on the right is High Cascades National Trust pay and display car park which gives access to the attractive High Cascades waterfalls nearby. Beyond this, the road descends towards Ullswater and after another 0.4 miles on the left is Park Brow National Trust pay and display car park which gives access to Aira Force waterfall. For the main Aira Force car park, continue to descend with some fabulous views up Ullswater before

reaching a T junction with the A592 Ullswater shore road. Turn left and Aira Force car park is almost immediately on the left.



Aira Force waterfall

**Distance: 33.4 miles**  
**Location: Aira Force waterfall**  
**Coordinates: N 54.57142, W 2.92862**

[Aira Force](#) is probably the most famous waterfall in the Lake District and at 65ft high, one of the tallest. From the car park there are various [trails](#) leading up through attractive woodland to the waterfall viewing areas and beyond. The views from the bridges at the top and bottom of the main waterfall are impressive, especially after heavy rain. The main waterfall walk is about 1 mile return with some steep and uneven sections. It is also well known for red squirrels and you might see one in the woods if you are lucky.

Back across the road, you can walk down to the nearby lakeshore and shingle beach with fabulous views up the lake. Ullswater is the second biggest lake in the Lake District and one of the most scenic, especially towards the southern end where it is surrounded by high mountains. The lake drains into the River Eamont at the northern end which eventually joins the River Eden heading towards Carlisle. The adjacent pier is served by [Ullswater Steamers](#) in season and you can take a boat to Glenridding at the southern end of the lake from here.

If you are feeling fit, longer walks head through Gowbarrow Park and to the top of Gowbarrow Fell, a popular peak with superb views across the lake. There is a tea room, picnic tables and toilet facilities around the car park. The car park is National Trust pay and display. Free entry to waterfalls.

### Travelling:

Leave Aira Force car park and turn right on the A592 towards Glenridding. The scenic road follows the tree-lined shore of Ullswater with glimpses of the lake and the surrounding mountains. After approx 0.9 miles on the left is a small free layby which gives easy access to a lovely bit of lakeshore. There is a rough grassy area amongst trees and a shingle beach with fantastic views up the lake towards the mountains. In spring the wooded area is full of daffodils. Just beyond this is the large Glencoyne car park on the right.

**Distance: 34.7 miles**  
**Location: Glencoyne, Ullswater**  
**Coordinates: N 54.56140, W 2.94969**

Glencoyne Bay provides a scenic lakeshore area with narrow shingle beaches next to the road and wonderful views across the lake. You can follow the good footpath in either direction adjacent to the road if you want to explore nearby shoreline. Behind the car park, the wonderful Glencoyne valley heads inland from the lake and you can explore it on foot on the [Glencoyne Farm trail](#).



Daffodils at Glencoyne

This area around Glencoyne Bay is well known for its fabulous golden daffodils in the spring and it is these which, on a visit in 1802, inspired Wordsworth to write the famous poem 'Daffodils'. Although the initial inspiration possibly came from his sister Dorothy who had

noted the spectacle in her journal and it was a few years later when William penned the poem, first published 1807. Many people will recognise the first verse;

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

The main car park is National Trust pay and display. Facilities in nearby Glenridding.

### Travelling:

Leave Glencoyne car park and turn right on the A592. It can be difficult to negotiate the narrow lakeshore road given the fabulous views but there are a few places where you can stop and admire the scenery. After approx 1 mile, enter Glenridding village. Pass 'The Inn on the Lake' on the left and take the first right turn just beyond. The village car park is straight ahead.



Glenridding village

**Distance: 36.0 miles**

**Location: Glenridding Village car park**

**Coordinates: N 54.54397, W 2.94965**

Glenridding is a small village in a fabulous setting between Ullswater lake and the high mountains behind. It is a popular tourist centre nowadays with some wonderful lake and mountain walks, but historically the village grew up as an important centre for lead mining. The village has some attractive grassy areas with picnic tables and benches adjacent to Glenridding Beck. There are a few small gift shops, tea rooms and bars around the village, including [The Inn on the Lake](#) with great views over the lake. The village car park is

pay and display with toilets and an Information centre.

The old Greenside lead mine is in the hills above Glenridding, about a mile upstream if you follow Glenridding Beck. The village boomed as the mine produced vast amounts of lead and silver from around 1825 till its closure in 1961. There are significant remnants of the workings still visible with big spoil heaps across the mountain side and some of the old processing and smelting buildings, one of which is now Helvellyn Youth Hostel. Much of the mine area is now designated as a scheduled ancient monument, although the stability of the spoil heaps has been an ongoing concern.



Glenridding lakeside

A short walk or drive from the village leads to the shores of Ullswater lake. A car park is also available at Glenridding pier. This is a picturesque parkland area with a large expanse of open grass, shingle beaches and benches next to the lake. The impressive scenery makes this a wonderful setting and it is well worth taking a boat trip on the lake to fully appreciate the beauty of the area. [Ullswater Steamers](#) operate from the adjacent pier, with a reduced service out of season, and they call at Aira Force, Howtown and Pooley Bridge down the lake. The pier car park is pay and display with a small cafe and toilet facilities in the Steamers building. Across the grass from the

pier, adjacent to the lake and the main road, is [St Patrick's Boat Landing](#) where you can hire boats and there is a small cafe.

### Travelling:

Leave the village car park via the one way system and turn right, back on the A592. You soon pass the access road to Glenridding Pier on the left, with St Patrick's Boat Landing a little further on. As you leave the village behind, there's a last glimpse of Ullswater on the left before entering the adjacent village of Patterdale. Fabulous scenery is the main attraction in Patterdale, but there's also [St Patrick's Church](#) on the right, then [Patterdale Hotel](#) on the right which has a good looking beer garden. Just beyond that the road squeezes past the White Lion pub on the left. Beyond the village, you follow the very picturesque Goldrill Beck valley, surrounded by mountains, for approx 2 miles until you reach a small car park on the right adjacent to Cow Bridge.

**Distance: 39.2 miles**

**Location: Cow Bridge car park and Brothers Water**

**Coordinates: N 54.51243, W 2.92396**

This car park gives easy access to Brothers Water which is a 5 minute level [walk](#) along the footpath following Goldrill Beck. Brothers Water is the smallest of the official 16 Lake District lakes but it probably has one of the best settings, surrounded by high mountains and wonderful scenery. The footpath takes you to the shingle shores where you can picnic and paddle or just enjoy the scenery. The footpath continues along the western lakeshore, through ancient woodland and beyond to the historic Hartsop Hall, which is now a farmhouse, and beyond that to the Brotherswater Inn at the nearby [campsite](#). Despite the proximity of the main road, the lake remains relatively peaceful and is a great place to enjoy some real Lake District.



Brothers Water

The car park is free but has no facilities.

### Travelling:

Turn right out of the car park to continue along the A592 which soon follows the eastern shore of Brothers Water and gives some magnificent views of the surrounding mountains. Shortly after the lake on the right is the [Brotherswater Inn](#). Beyond this you soon begin to see the full extent of the climb up Kirkstone Pass ahead. Although quite steep and twisty, it is a relatively good and wide road, normally quite easy in a car. As you get close to the summit, Red Pit car park on the right gives wonderful views back towards Brothers Water. Looking in the opposite direction to the road summit skyline, to the right of the road is a large standing stone. This is the Kirk Stone which the pass is named after. 'Kirk' being a Scottish word for church and the stone is said to resemble a church from a distance. Continue driving a short distance to Kirkstone Pass car park, just beyond the road summit on the right.



Kirkstone Pass towards Brothers Water

**Distance: 42.9 miles**  
**Location: Kirkstone Pass**  
**Coordinates: N 54.46445, W 2.92542**

At an altitude of 454m, Kirkstone Pass summit is the highest point you can take a car to in the Lake District and there are spectacular views of the surrounding mountains and towards Windermere. There are good walks from here up nearby mountains, made easier by the high starting point. The adjacent [Kirkstone Pass Inn](#) is the highest pub in Cumbria and the beer garden certainly makes the most of the views. Apart from the pub there are no other facilities at the summit. Large rough car park with donation box.

### Travelling:

In a straight line, Ambleside is not far away but requires a lot of descent. The shortest route leaves the A592 just beyond the summit car park on the right. This road is known as 'The Struggle' due to its long and steep gradients which affected historic transport much more than it affects modern cars. The road is a little narrow and steep in places but well contained within stone walls and not too difficult to drive. There are also good views towards Windermere ahead and Wansfell mountain to the left. You can avoid 'The Struggle' by staying on the A592 all the way to the mini-roundabout at Troutbeck and returning to Ambleside along the A591 Windermere shore road. If you take 'The Struggle' road it continues for almost 3 miles and eventually arrives in Ambleside at the mini-roundabout adjacent to Rydal Road car park.

**Distance: 45.9 miles**  
**Location: Ambleside, Rydal Road car park**  
**Coordinates: N 54.43406, W 2.96411**

Return to start point.



Kirkstone Pass summit

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