



near Watermillock, Penrith,
Cumbria, CA11

TRAIL
Walking

GRADE
Moderate

DISTANCE
4.5 miles (7km)

TIME
1 hour 30 minutes to 3 hours

OS MAP
**Landranger 90,
Explorer OL5**

Contact

017684 82067
ullswater@nationaltrust.org.uk

Facilities

**National
Trust**

nationaltrust.org.uk/walks

Ullswater, Aira Force and Gowbarrow walk

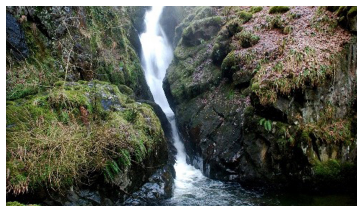
Follow in the footsteps of the early Victorian explorers and discover why Aira Force inspired poets such as William Wordsworth. Head towards the thunderous roar of the waterfalls, before emerging from the confines of the gorge to enjoy expansive views over Ullswater from the summit of Gowbarrow.



Terrain

The walk is on well-surfaced paths but beyond the Glade the path becomes narrower with steep drops and several flights of steps to negotiate. Once out onto the open fell, the path is clear but can be muddy in places and partially obscured by bracken. Dogs are welcome but on leads as area is grazed, please take your dog waste home.

Things to see



Aira Force

The most famous of the Lake District waterfalls, Aira Force drops an impressive 65ft (20m) and is surrounded by pretty woodland. This is the place where Wordsworth was inspired to write many of his poems. Look out for the rainbow that appears when the conditions are right.

Gowbarrow trig point

Impressive views all around can be enjoyed from the trig point at the summit of Gowbarrow Fell. It was on the west side of the fell in 1802 that Dorothy Wordsworth noticed wild daffodils growing. Her observations later inspired her brother William to write his famous poem, Daffodils.

Gowbarrow Park

Gowbarrow Park was once home to a large herd of deer, and evidence of old shooting boxes and stalkers huts can still be seen today. The deer have since been replaced by low numbers of hardy, traditional sheep such as Herdwick, to assist us in restoring heather and tree cover to the fell. Judging by the purple haze in summer, it appears to be working.



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Start/end

Start: Aira Force National Trust
car park, grid ref: NY400200
End: Aira Force National Trust
car park, grid ref: NY400200

How to get there

By bike: National Cycle
Network Route 71 passes
within 2 miles (3.2km). The
A592 is undulating, narrow and
can be busy during the summer
months

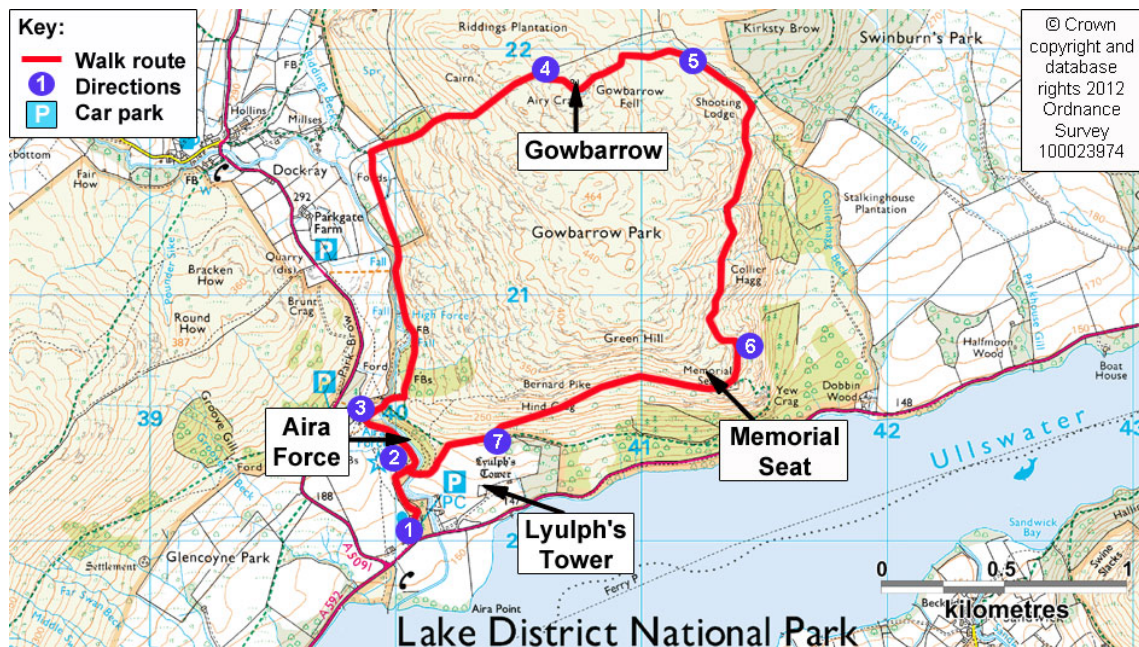
By bus: 108 Penrith to
Patterdale bus (reduced winter
service). 208 seasonal service
from Keswick

By train: Penrith station 10
miles (16km) away with a direct
bus service

By car: From the M6 to the
A66, then A592 Ullswater.
Just before the junction with
the A5091 is the car park.
From Kewstic the A66 towards
Penrith then the A5091 at
Troutbeck and follow this to
A592, turn left at bottom and
car park is approx 218 yards
(200m) on the left

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1. Take the arched gate out of the top end of the car park, go through a metal gate, follow the path and head through a gateway in the wall into a grassy area known as the Glade.
2. Take the left hand path through the arboretum and follow the path up to a little wooden gate on your left (which has superb views out over Ullswater to the left.) Don't go through the gate but follow the path to the right, drop down a long steep flight of steps to the viewing platform at the base of the waterfall. Continue over the bridge and climb the steep steps on the left.
3. At the top of these steps bear left to the upper bridge for a view down Aira Force. Rejoin the main path and walk up stream keeping the river on your left as you go. Keep going till the path takes you through a gap in the wall and then through a gate onto open farmland.
4. Before you get to the next gate in the wall ahead turn right up the field and take the permissive path to the fell gate. Keeping the wall on your left continue up the fellside on a good stone pitched path maintained by the Fix The Fells project, a good opportunity for a breather as you take in the views.
5. Once the path flattens out and bears away from the wall follow the path up to the trig point on the summit of Gowbarrow, from here you have fine views all round. Look south to Place Fell and Red Screes over to Kirkstone, with the bulk of Helvellyn beyond. Blencathra, Bannerdale and Carrock Fell can be seen to the north west, with the Pennines to the north east. Martindale and High Street are to the south east.
6. On leaving the summit continue along the path keeping parallel with the wall on your left. Follow the path down, bearing right until you reach the ruin of an old shooting lodge. Keeping right, continue up and around the eastern flank of Gowbarrow.
7. From here a good path takes you to the brow and down to an obvious cairn over a fence stile, to the superb vantage point up the head of the lake from the point marked on the map as Memorial Seat. Go back over the stile and bear left staying on the path down towards the woodlands.
8. At the bottom of the slope you will see across the field a building known as Lyulph's Tower (private), this was built as a hunting lodge by the Howard family in the 18th century. It was designed to look like a grand castle from the lake - from the land it appears a little more modest. Just before the woodland take the left hand fork then through a gate to rejoin the footpath bearing left back to the Glade and car park.