



STORRS HALL

Ghyll Head and the fell behind Storrs



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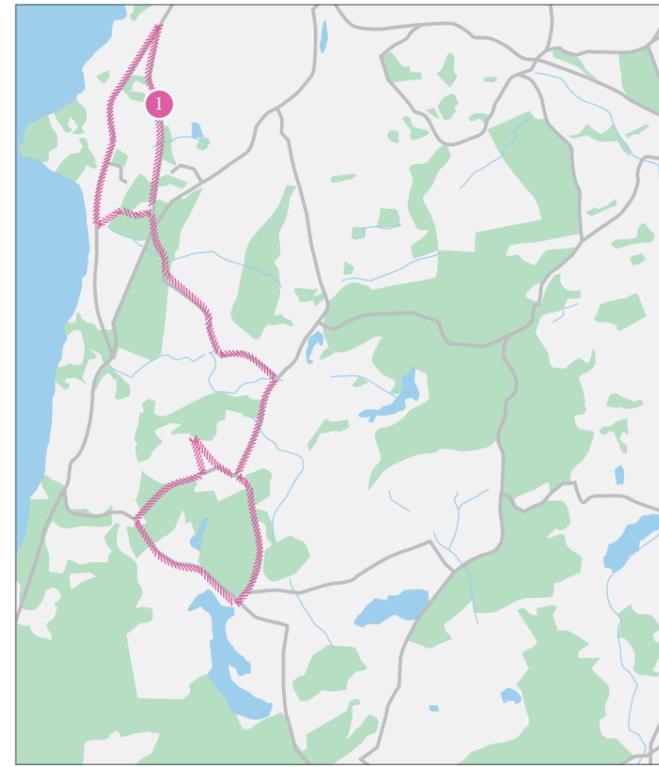
Ghyll Head and heading over towards the Winster Valley behind Storrs is like a mini Lake District in its own right. It has a great range of habitats from craggy fell top to wet woodlands and mosses, sometimes within metres of each other. It's dotted with pretty little tarns, in Spring it's Bluebell heaven, and that diversity of environments means it's packed with wildflowers and wildlife. You get both minute detail, tiny sedums and almost bonsai myrtles, the streams run with marsh marigolds, watercress and water mint – yet unexpected vistas of mountain ranges reveal themselves from viewpoints and gaps in the woodland.

We describe some of the routes, but you can pick and mix as the paths intersect in many places. You'll need waterproof footwear as you'll go through at least one stream, if not three for the Ghyll Head viewpoint.

We recommend the Ordnance Survey app, as you can download routes and not lose them if phone signals dip. You can also switch between viewing options – the aerial photo option is handy if you're just a bit confused, as it shows you the real life setting.

***The quickest access** to the hill is to follow the A592 to the right, just south of Storrs Hall, there are 2 big houses to the left, with cut laurel hedges extending either side of the 50mph limit sign. You come to Bellman landing, a wooded area to your right, and there is a turning on the opposite side of the road behind the second house which is the start of the footpath. This looks like a private drive with one gate for cars, and one small pedestrian gate; it is signposted by the LDNPA. The path winds up to meet the private road which joins the B5360 – at the moment fallen trees block the original path and the only route around them is to take the right hand side and follow the periphery of the wood around to the top and the original exit of the path, which is to the left of the black metal gate. (This will be muddy after rain so there is an alternative start point below). From here join the instructions for Ghyll Head, as all the walks except the wet weather alternative have a shared start and finish.

***The alternative** is to turn left out of the drive and follow the main road to the end of the houses next to us, take the turning on the right that seems to double back to where you've just come from – it's signposted as a private road but it is a public footpath too. This brings you the same point on the B5360 as above.



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1. GHYLL HEAD VIEWPOINT:

When you join the B5360 turn right downhill, and on the left you'll see the footpath heading off into woods, marked for Rosthwaite. There are 3 fallen trees across the path here too, but you can climb over or go around them. You emerge out into a field and follow the path along by the wall, bear right once you reach the top of the rise and the end of the wall – it's a distinct track now. This dips down and you cross your first stream before ascending to another gate. Once through this you're on open ground, follow the track and turn right at the signpost where the tracks meet. On this stretch you cross 2 streams and head up to a crossroads in the path – take the right hand path for the viewing point even though it's not marked on the post. There are a couple of rocky outcrops and dips on the way, a flatter path is to go straight on from the 'crossroads' along by the wood, and another path leads off to the right, approaching the seat from the south on a smoother path.

Duration: 1-1.5 hrs. The header photo shows part of the view – you can just see Storrs' Temple of Heroes down on the left.

Option 1a: If you'd like to add a little more distance and scenery, take in a loop of Ghyll Head woods via the lane alongside Ghyll Head Tarn, join this via the path which heads downhill towards the lake behind the viewing point seat, and turn left up the lane. You pass the scenic Ghyll Head Tarn on your right hand side, and reach a small parking area with gate on your left, which is the start of the footpath back to Ghyll Head straight ahead. There's a choice of which bit of woodland you walk through, on both sides of the fence but they start and end in the same place; the left hand side is more typical native deciduous woodland, and the right is a bit more open and rarer wet woodland – there are raised wooden sections. Returning to the crossroads again, turn right to retrace your steps back to Storrs Hall.

Option 1b: In wet weather the driest way to the viewpoint is to walk south along the A590, turning right from Storrs, to the Ghyll Head Lane, marked Cartmel Fell. Go past the houses until you reach a signposted footpath in front of 2 new stone houses on the left, marked to Bellman Ground. The path climbs up through a bit of woodland – it does run with water in heavy rain but it is mainly stony. Through the gate onto the fell top, go straight ahead and take the first path to the left which is the easiest path to the seat and big view of Windermere. Then it's a case of retracing your steps back to Storrs Hall.

2. THE DRIEST OPTION FOR THE WETTEST WEATHER:

Don't let the title put you off, this is a beautiful walk year round. At just over 8km/5 miles, this is the biggest, driest loop around the hill. Suitable for the depths of Winter and wettest weather, as most of it is along lanes and hardcore laid track. As with all the walks you can do them clockwise or anti-clockwise but we describe this one anti-clockwise.

Leave Storrs Hall and turn right/south along the main road for just under a mile to the Ghyll Head Lane turning on the left, signposted Cartmel Fell. It's the second road turning on the left after leaving the hotel. Enjoy the lake views and a couple of notable Arts & Crafts Houses on this stretch of main road, including Charles Voysey's Broad Leys. We'd advise walking on the right facing oncoming traffic, and pavement starts on the first sharp bend. The lane has a steep start through a few houses, you pass the first path to Ghyll Head on your left signposted Bellman Ground.

Remain on the lane and you pass Ghyll Head Tarn on your right – a picturesque tarn used by the Windermere Angling Association, so sadly there's no public access but it's a scenic little tarn. If you turn to look behind you there are great views of the Conistoun mountain range. The lane winds its way between the tarn and heathland – planted and restored to natural open woodland on the left, and as you pass the end of the tarn you're edged by deciduous woodlands on the right, (full of bluebells in Spring).

If you love the spectacle of massed bluebells all of the routes have swathes of them, both out in the open before the bracken grows, and in the pockets of woodland.

After just under another mile from the main road you come to a turning on your left – a concrete road accessed by a cattle grid or gate. This leads between the two Ludderburn Mosses, past Green Hill, to Podnet Tarn. (The diversion via Green Hill woods and Little Ludderburn Moss is described in another walk). This area is a site of Special Scientific Interest and you'll notice it in the details, it's teeming with wildlife, (mainly the little kind, butterflies and beetles, and native wildflowers). Podnet Tarn is another pretty little tarn - a great spot for a picnic. Late Spring it is fringed with the improbably exotic looking, but prosaically named bog bean, and almost totally covered with white water lilies. There are shoals of minnows, and many types of damsel and dragonflies. Plus a cuckoo calling.

The track after here turns from concrete to compacted gravel and leads through native deciduous woodland. You get sudden distant views of mountains, or glimpses of other inaccessible tarns in wooded hollows. It's easy to follow as this is the only track, eventually you come to a fork in the path and you can see the tiny hamlet of Winster off to the right – however keep left. As you reach the top of the first rise you could take a little detour up to Rulbutts Hill on your right, 5 minutes there and back – you get great and unexpected views to the top of Windermere, around and over to Yorkshire, identifiable by Ingleborough's distinct profile, and South out to sea with a view across Morecambe Bay.

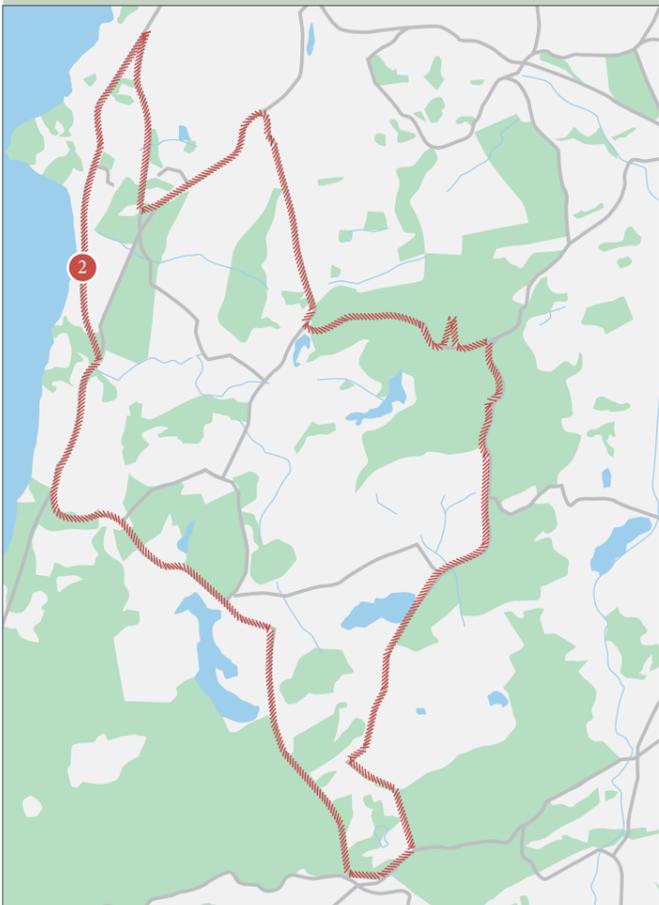
Retrace your steps to rejoin the track and follow it onwards to Rosthwaite Farm. This stretch of woodland was devastated by Storm Arwen – it's a small mercy that most of the trees were non-native evergreens. It's always a surprise how shallow tree roots are.

Once you reach the farm, and cluster of houses by another small tarn, take the concrete track right at the small horse statue, past the houses. This leads you towards Bellman Ground, with bigger lake views towards Ambleside and the central mountains as you descend the hill. Once you meet the road, the B5360, turn left, an old farmhouse on the left has a Stonehenge style porch made from local water figured limestone, a landmark so you know you're heading in the right direction.

Follow the road into woodland, and take the footpath, (also a private road), on your right. This is where you retrace your steps back to Storrs. Follow it to the end where it joins the A590 and double back on yourself to the left, to Storrs Hall, or via the bit of woodland to Bellman landing.

*A slightly shorter route for drier weather is to turn left at Rosthwaite Farm and follow the track between the ornamental tarn and the houses. You go past some hen pens and exit via a stile onto the fell top, turn right at the signposted t-junction and follow the path down through a gate, through a marshy dip and stream, then reaching the top of the rise keep the wall to your right, through the gate into woodland, down to the road, turn right, then first left, and follow the signposted path back to Storrs Hall.

You'll notice from the maps that many routes interweave, so you can pick and mix your options to create your ideal walk from the options we give you here.

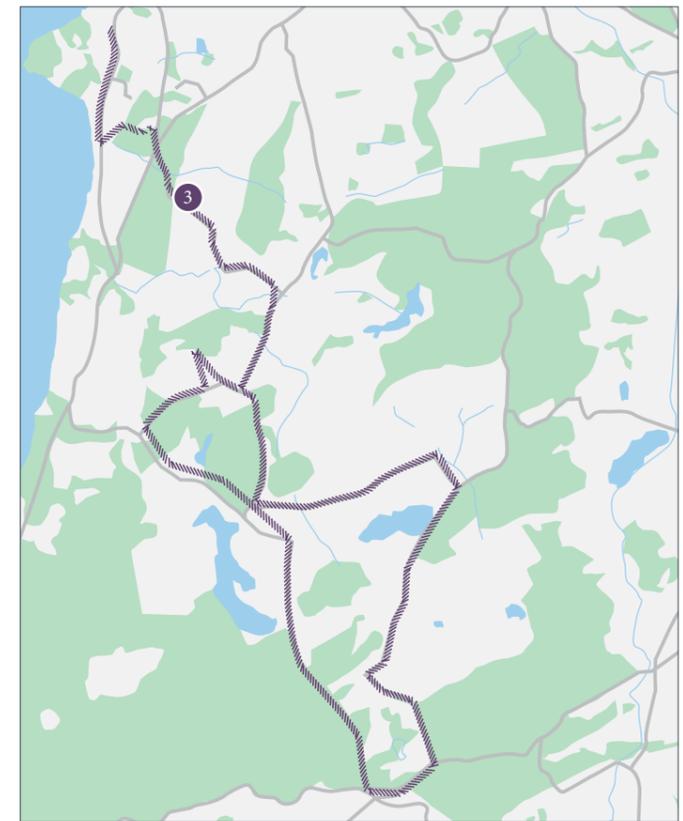


3. MOSES AND TARNs - THE MOST DIVERSE HABITAT ROUTE:

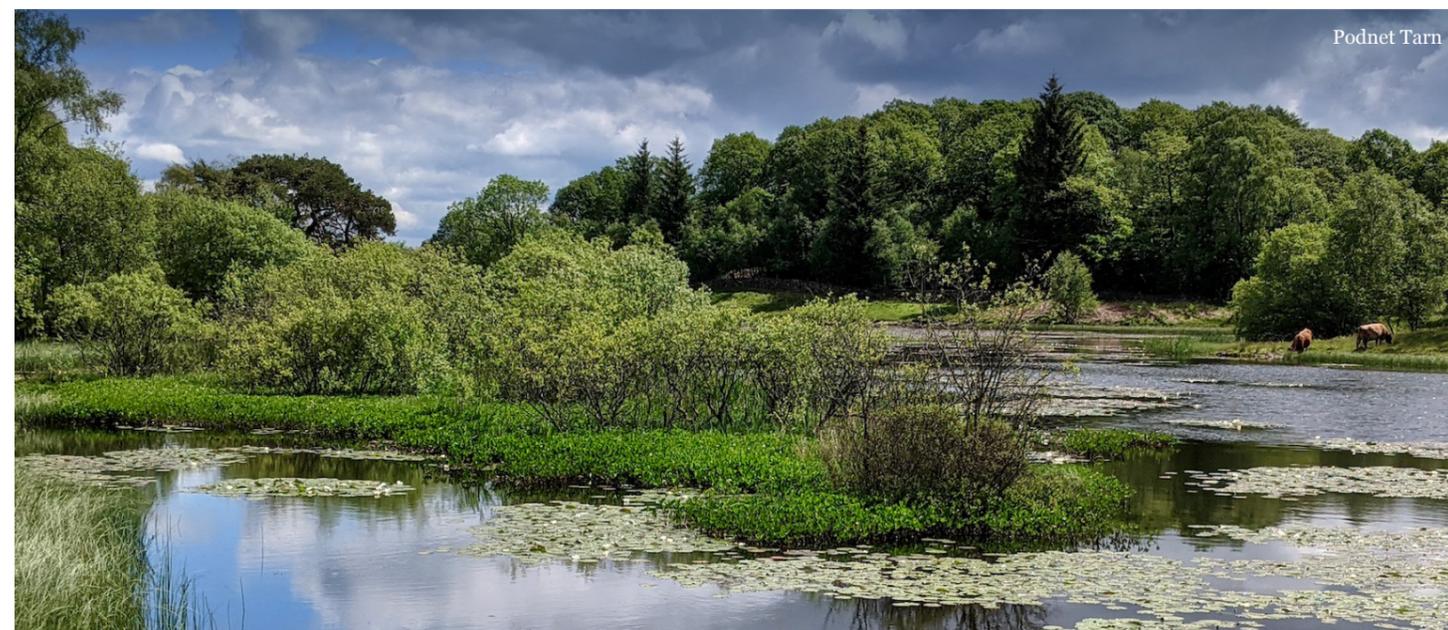
This one loops around the tarns and wet woodlands, a mix of lanes and raised wooden walkways, plus dips in the fell top where streams cross the paths. But unless you're dressed accordingly best left in Winter – although mosses and lichens come into their own then, and this ancient natural woodland is thick with both.

The wet woodlands enjoyed on this walk are unusual habitats – the LDNPA has been working to restore them to their natural best, hence the deer fencing around the boundaries. Take the path to Ghyll Head as Route 1, (it's optional at what point you take in the biggest view you'll get of Windermere, from Ghyll Head.) At the crossroads of the paths take the first footpath on the left through woodland to the East side of Ghyll Head woods - rammed with bluebells in Spring. At the end of the path, through the gate to the other side of the fence, turn immediate left and follow the path across heathland, turning right at another slight crossroads of paths, (there's a fence and small gate opposite), it's a few yards till you come to the main concrete track. Turn right here and you come to Podnet Tarn. Follow the track alongside the tarn, over the cattle grid and along by woods on your left, turn left off the track through a gate in the wall, marked Green Hill, and go straight ahead. You take a gate into woodland, and follow the fork to the right into Little Ludderburn Moss – a marshy almost overgrown tarn fringed with native trees, coated with moss and ferns, beds of reeds and bilberries as well as multitudes of other wild flowers. A raised walkway by the wall brings you to the gate into the lane.

Turn right and follow this lane to the next junction and turn right again onto the Ghyll Head Lane, signposted Bowness/Storrs. This lane has woodland on the left and Ludderburn Moss on the right. For a bit of variety follow it past Ghyll Head Tarn and turn right at the path signposted to Bellman Ground. This is also another chance to enjoy the viewing point at the top of Ghyll Head, before following the main track back towards Rosthwaite farm, turning left at the signposted t-junction before the farm, and retracing your steps to Storrs Hall.

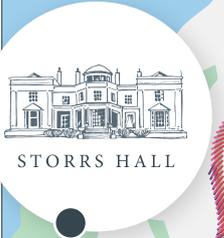


Bog Bean



Podnet Tarn

MAP ROUTES



STORRS HALL

BELLMAN LANDING

B5360

BELLMAN GROUND

BELLMAN COTTAGE

SCOUT HILL

RULBUTS HILL

ROSTHWITE FARM

GHYLL HEAD VIEWPOINT

BLACK BECK

GHYLL HEAD

WINSTER HOUSE

A592

PODNET TARN

GHYLL HEAD TARN

LUDDERBURN

SMITHY HILL

GREEN HILL

COTE HILL

LITTLE LUDDERBURN MOSS

KEY

- Route 1: Ghyll Head viewpoint
- Route 2: The driest option for the wettest weather
- Route 3: Moses and Tarns - The most diverse habitat route