

Wray Castle to the Ferry

A gentle stroll of no more than 1½ hours along paths and tracks by the quiet western shore of Windermere, or detour for Claife ridge and the walk becomes 2½ hours with magnificent views and varied, easy to follow, forest paths.



Introduction

Every day from Easter until the end of October, a launch service departs hourly from Waterhead to Brockhole starting at 9.45am, with the last boat at 4.45pm. This will drop you, by request, at Wray Castle, all you have to do now is walk either the low level or high level path to Ferry House and the crossing to Bowness where a Steamer or Sightseeing Cruiser will return you to Waterhead. If you start the day from Lakeside or Bowness change boats at Waterhead but don't forget, - ask to get off at Wray Castle. The three boat trips are all included with the discounted 'Walkers Ticket'.

When you step off the little jetty at Wray, you need to take the path left to follow the lake shore. However if you wish to visit the castle first, it is only a few minutes detour along the path leading away from the lake. Details of the castle can be found on page 40. Retrace your steps to commence the walk.

1. Follow the lakeside path past the black painted wooden boathouse. The woods are full of birdlife and it is difficult to imagine you are beside the busiest lake as you wander in such a peaceful environment. The path is well defined and, when you reach the end of the wood, cross the stile to a field and follow it down to the water's edge. As you make your way around the bay you will see two small stone boathouses. After passing the first, move towards the gate on the right, to avoid swampy ground, and turn left onto a well defined track passing through Claife Estate. After approximately 20 minutes the track meets a road, but don't worry - it is unsurfaced as it is the policy of the National Trust, who own this land, to discourage motorists and keep it peaceful and quiet. After passing the white house "Belle Grange", you may continue along this track beside the lake for about an hour until you reach the ferry and don't forget to catch the traditional launch service to Bowness as its included in your ticket and the car ferry isn't.
2. If you would like to walk the Claife Ridge, take the roughly paved bridleway signposted "Latterbarrow, Hawkshead and Near Sawrey". Five hundred years ago this bridleway was linked by ferry to Millerground across the lake and was the trading route from Hawkshead to Kendal (Windermere as a village did not exist). Climb steadily through mature deciduous woodland for approximately ten minutes and, where the path forks, go left following "Public Footpath - Far Sawrey". You are now faced with a further twenty minutes unrelenting climb until the path levels and meets more open ground. Now you can enjoy the views across the lake, Troutbeck on the left, Windermere village and beyond Belle Isle, Bowness and the boat landings.
3. These woods are home to many species of wild birds, some rarely seen in populated areas are numerous in the quietness of the mixed woodlands on this side of Windermere. Deer, both red and fallow, roam freely over large areas of these woodlands, look for evidence of their passing, you will be lucky to see the animals themselves.
4. The path continues on this high level for approximately ten minutes and then turns away from the lake into a dense spruce plantation, and then left as it meets another path and this is POST 4 on the white trail. Carry straight on and then read on from [Paragraph 5 from Walk No 5](#).