

## INTRODUCTION

Walking the Cumbria Way is an exhilarating journey through an enticing mix of Cumbria's natural splendour and intriguing heritage. It is a walk of contrasting landscapes and changing character, including many peaceful parts of the wonderful Lake District. Its completion will give you a real sense of achievement. Both in historic Carlisle and Ulverston there is much to appreciate, with plenty of other tempting distractions and diversions once you are underway.

There is the challenge of crossing some high and more exposed ground but, overall, the trail follows low level terrain through a series of valleys. There is a choice of conveniently located overnight accommodation, so it is ideal for those seeking a rewarding, yet flexible walking holiday that is not dauntingly strenuous or difficult.

The route of the Cumbria Way was originally devised by the Lake District area of the Ramblers Association in the mid 1970s. If you should come across any problems whilst walking the trail, please bring them to the attention of: The Ramblers Association, 2nd Floor, Camelford House, 87-90 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TW.

Tel: 020 7339 8500, Fax: 020 7339 8501.

E-mail: [ramblers@london.ramblers.org.uk](mailto:ramblers@london.ramblers.org.uk) [www.ramblers.org.uk](http://www.ramblers.org.uk)

## Direction, distance and diversions

The trail can be followed in either direction, but most people tend to start in Ulverston hoping to walk with the wind at their backs - although this cannot always be guaranteed.

The Cumbria Way is about 70 miles/113 km long. Typically it takes five or six days to complete the journey, covering an average distance of about 14 miles / 22.5 km a day. This guide breaks the trail down into five sections:

Ulverston to Coniston (15 miles / 24 km)

Coniston to Great Langdale (11 miles / 17.5 km)

Great Langdale to Keswick (15 miles / 24 km)

Keswick to Caldbeck (14 miles / 22.5 km)

Caldbeck to Carlisle (15 miles / 24 km)

Distractions and diversions along the trail - for example, spending more time in Coniston and at Brantwood contemplating the life and work of John Ruskin - a major 19th century artist and philosopher, or lingering in Borrowdale to savour the delightful scenery - will, of course, add to your journey time. The information given on the map-based sections of this guide suggests other possible distractions and diversions.

## Maps and books

Although the paths and tracks that make up the Cumbria Way are mostly well defined in themselves, a detailed map showing the route of the trail is highly recommended. The OS Explorer 1:25,000 scale maps (nos OL4, OL5, OL6, OL7 and 315) clearly show the entire route of the Cumbria Way in plenty of detail.

Harvey's The Cumbria Way waterproof strip map (1:40,000) also shows the whole trail on a single sheet with useful additional information.

The following guidebooks are also available:

The Cumbria Way by Anthony Burton (Arum Press 1999)

The Cumbria Way by Philip Dubock (Midway Publishing 2000)

The Cumbria Way & Allerdale Ramble

by Jim Watson (Cicerone Press 1997)

The Cumbria Way by John Trevelyan (Dalesman Publishing - Revised 2002)

Currently available maps and guidebooks can be purchased by mail order from Ulverston Tourist Information Centre - see Booking Accommodation section below for contact details.

## Booking accommodation

The Cumbria Way is generally well served by a variety of accommodation on or close to the trail. However, it is always advisable to book your accommodation in advance, especially if your holiday coincides with any of the bank or school holiday dates.

Ulverston, Coniston, Keswick and Carlisle Tourist Information Centres (TIC) can send you a list of the many inspected places to stay along the route and can also book accommodation for you at a small charge.

Ulverston TIC, Coronation Hall, County Square, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 7LZ.

Tel: 01229 587120. Fax: 01229 582626

E-mail: [ulverstontic@southlakeland.gov.uk](mailto:ulverstontic@southlakeland.gov.uk)

Coniston TIC, Ruskin Avenue, Coniston, Cumbria LA21 8EH

Tel: 015394 41533. Fax: 015394 41802

E-mail: [conistontic@lake-district.gov.uk](mailto:conistontic@lake-district.gov.uk)

Keswick TIC, Moot Hall, Market Square, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 5JR.

Tel: 017687 72645. Fax: 017687 75043

E-mail: [keswicktic@lake-district.gov.uk](mailto:keswicktic@lake-district.gov.uk)

Carlisle TIC, Old Town Hall, Greenmarket, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 8JA.

Tel: 01228 625600. Fax: 01228 625604

E-mail: [tourism@carlisle-city.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@carlisle-city.gov.uk)

## Youth Hostels

There are YHA Hostels at Arnside (a short train ride from Ulverston), Coniston, Elterwater, Borrowdale, Keswick, Skiddaw House, Carrock Fell (about 2.75 miles / 4.5 km east of the trail at High Brow) and Carlisle. These can all be booked in advance by calling the YHA's Booking Bureau on 0870 241 2314. For more information on YHA and Hostels on the Cumbria Way look at YHA's website: [www.yha.org.uk](http://www.yha.org.uk).

The Camping Bams at Dinah Hoggus (nr Rothwaite), Catbells (nr Keswick) and Hudscals (nr Caldbeck) are bookable through the Lakeland Bams Booking Office at Keswick TIC. Details of independent hostels and bunkhouses are normally available from the TICs listed above.

## Travel Information

Bus - National Express (tel: 0870 580 8080; website: [www.gobycoach.com](http://www.gobycoach.com)) coaches to Barrow-in-Furness stop in Ulverston. National Express coaches also go to Kendal from many parts of the country with connecting local buses to Barrow-in-Furness via Ulverston about six times a day (excluding Sundays). Carlisle is also well served by National Express coaches.

For timetable information on all bus, train and boat services to and within Cumbria, telephone the county's traveline on 0870 608 2608 (lines open 07.00-20.00 seven days a week; all calls charged at the national rate).

Train - Ulverston is on the Furness Line between Lancaster and Barrow-in-Furness, with trains every few hours. There is a direct service to Manchester Airport. Carlisle is on the West Coast Main Line and has good connections to all parts of the country.

For timetable and fares information call the National Rail Enquiry Service on 08457 48 49 50 or visit [www.railtrack.co.uk](http://www.railtrack.co.uk). To book by telephone call 0870 60 66 007 or try [www.thetrainline.com](http://www.thetrainline.com)

## Walking festivals and events

Ulverston has festivals and events throughout the year, including an annual Walking Festival in the spring. Guided walks and other events are often arranged along the trail. Contact Tourist Information Centres for more details.

## Baggage carrying services

Baggage carrying services are available through independent companies. Contact Tourist Information Centres for more details.

## Holiday packages

A list of companies offering guided and self-guiding walking holiday packages for the Cumbria Way is available from the TICs listed above.

A large print version of this leaflet can be made available from Ulverston Tourist Information Centre (see above for contact details).