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Walking Guide

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6 easy walks to follow around Grasmere



- 1** **Grasmere Lake**
3.5 miles - Allow 2 - 2.5 hours
- 2** **Alcock Tarn**
3.5 miles - Allow 2 - 2.5 hours
- 3** **Easedale Tarn**
4.5 miles - Allow 3 - 3.5 hours

- 4** **Elterwater**
6 miles - Allow 3.5 - 4 hours
- 5** **Rydal Water**
5 miles - Allow 3 hours
- 6** **Helm Crag**
7.5 Miles - Allow 4.5 hours

GRASMERE



WALK ONE:

Grasmere Lake

DISTANCE: 3.5 MILES • ALLOW 2 - 2.5 HOURS

One of Lakeland's Classic Walks – A circular tour around the shoreline of a tranquil lake, set in the heart of a beautiful valley. Suitable for all weather conditions.

With the main entrance gate to St Oswalds Parish Church on your right, walk along the road for 50 yards, then turn first left on to a lane and pass Grasmere Garden Centre Village car park entrance. From here, proceed straight ahead, towards Langdale and Coniston and follow the lane for 3/4 mile, to reach a cottage on your left, with a letter box embedded in the outside wall (opposite a turn to a private driveway).

Continue along the lane for a further 175 yards, to go through a gate in the left-hand roadside wall. Go through either gate and descend to link up with the head of a broad, stony footpath. Follow this path downhill for 200 yards, to reach the water's edge of Grasmere Lake.

Turn right and follow the shoreline footpath for 3/4 mile, to arrive at a small weir, close by a wooden footbridge, spanning the outflow from the lake.

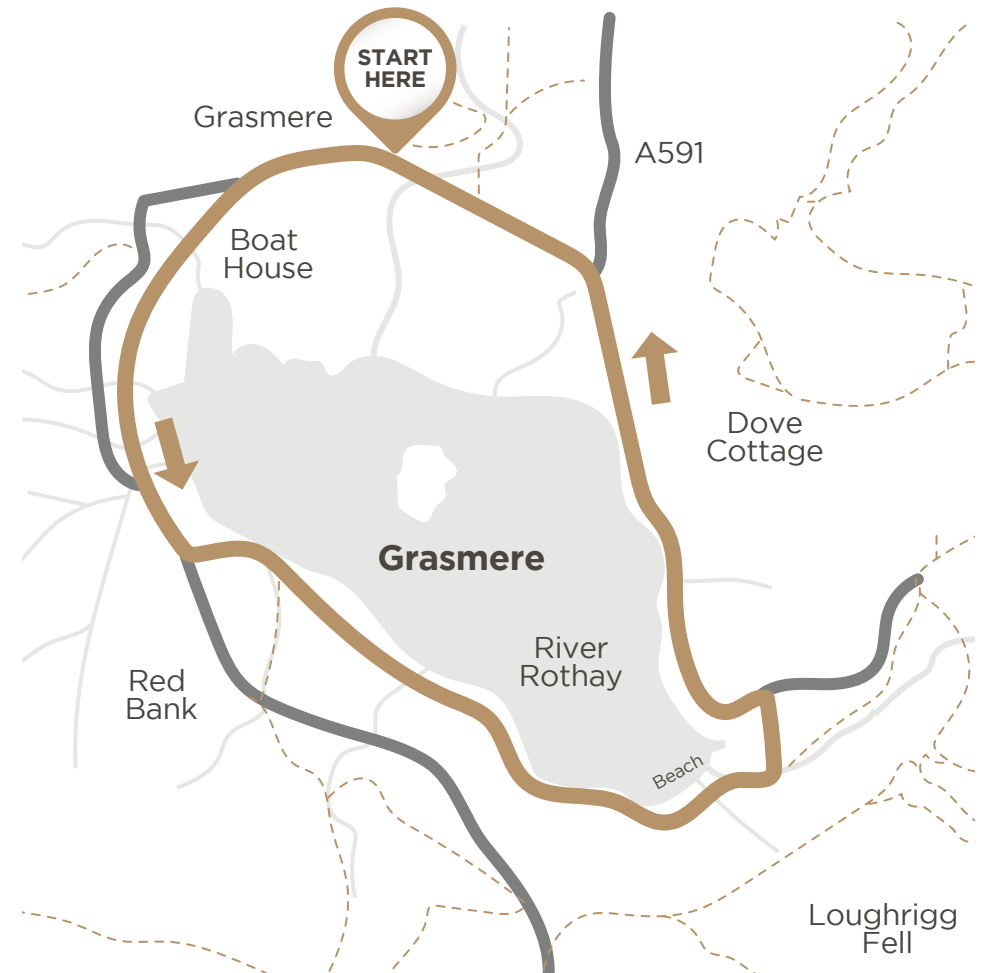
Pass by the footbridge and with the River Rothay on your left, follow the well defined path for 1/3 mile, to

reach a second footbridge (also on your left).

Cross over this footbridge. On the opposite bank, bear right to follow the broad footpath ahead for a maximum of 150 yards, then (by a crook in the river on your right), turn left onto another footpath. Ascend the few steps to link up with Keswick/Ambleside road, opposite White Moss car park. Cross over the road, enter the car park and turn left. Proceed for a distance of 60 yards straight ahead up the lane in front of you.

Ascend this lane (bordered by woodland), to arrive at a three-way junction after 1/2 mile, next to How Top Farm on your left.

Turn left and descend the lane, to re-join the Ambleside/Keswick road at the foot of the hill. Go straight across onto Stock Lane, to return to the start of the walk in the centre of Grasmere.



WALK TWO:

Alcock Tarn

DISTANCE: 3.5 MILES • ALLOW 2 - 2.5 HOURS

A steep but rewarding climb, with stunning views across the whole Grasmere Valley, set amidst a seemingly never ending vista of lakes and mountains.

With the St Oswald's Parish Church on your left, cross the bridge over the River Rothay and walk along the roadside footpath for 1/3 mile, to reach the main Keswick/ Ambleside road. Go straight across, onto the lane directly opposite, to pass by Dove Cottage on your left after 100 yards.

Gradually ascend this lane for 1/4 mile, to arrive at How Top Farm on your right (just opposite a small, reed-filled pond on your left). Bear left, signposted (no through road for motors) and (path to Alcock Tarn & Rydal), then after 150 yards of steep ascent, turn left onto a stony track, signposted (Alcock Tarn). Proceed for 175 yards, to locate a Y-Junction and National Trust sign (Brancenfall).

Proceed ahead to pass through the metal gate. Follow the track between the trees and after 300 yards go through a second field gate. After a further 200 yards of ascent at a junction of paths bear right uphill. From here, continue uphill and follow the very steep and well-defined stony track, as it winds

its way up the fell-side (passing through a gate part way along with an 'Alcock Tarn' plaque) for just over 1/2 mile (with fabulous views behind you throughout the whole ascent), to eventually arrive at the high pinnacle of Grey Crag (the rocky pinnacle to your right).

Skirt to the left of Grey Crag, and before too long the route levels out. Continue in approximately the same direction, to aim for a gap in the stone wall 125 yards away. Follow the grassy path straight ahead for a further 150 yards, to finally arrive at Alcock Tarn.

With the Tarn on your right, follow the footpath to reach the far end of this stretch of water and ignore the gateway, set in the wall on your left, to instead pass through the metal gate 30 yards further on. Link up with the left-hand wall and follow the footpath for 250 yards.

From here, the route steeply descends. Gradually make your way down the fell-side (with care), following the well-used stony

footpath, to arrive at a wooden footbridge after 1/2 mile, close by a house on your left.

Cross over Greenhead Gill and once on the opposite side, turn left through a wooden gate. With the beck now on your left, descend the tarmaced track in front of you, to link up with a lane 250 yards further

down. Turn left and this lane will terminate at the Ambleside/Keswick road, next to the Swan Hotel.

Cross over the main road and join the lane directly opposite, to return to the centre of Grasmere – turn left onto College Road by the village green to return to the start point at the church.



WALK THREE:

Easedale Tarn

DISTANCE: 4.5 MILES • ALLOW 3 - 3.5 HOURS

With plenty of stone bridges for trolls to hide under, waterfalls plunging into pools, and a mountain tarn surrounded by an amphitheatre of fells, this walk is truly spectacular.*

Standing with your back to the front of the hotel, turn right and proceed up College Street (one way road).

At the cross roads go straight across this road junction onto the lane directly opposite, to pass by a sign (footpath to Easedale Tarn). Ascend the lane for a couple of hundred yards and then, 50 yards beyond the car park for Glenthorne Guest House (on your left) pass through the gate in the wall onto the permissive path and turn right to walk parallel to the road for a short way before re-emerging onto the road to reach a road bridge (Goody Bridge) with Easedale Beck flowing underneath.

Continue ahead and after 100 yards, pass by Good Bridge Farm on your left, 200 yards further on, locate a narrow footbridge on your left, just opposite a cottage on your right (Oak Lodge). Cross over Easedale Beck and proceed through the trees for 75 yards, to pass through a metal gate. With the beck now on your right, follow the footpath straight ahead for 600 yards, to reach a gate

across the route. (ignore the gate and footpath sign on your left hand side part way along).

On the opposite side of this gate, the path forks. Bear left signposted (Public Bridleway) and proceed across the centre of rough pastureland on a well defined footpath. A short distance further on, the path begins its strenuous ascent, alongside the spectacular waterfalls on your right, to finally culminate 1.5 miles further up, at the awe-inspiring panorama of Easedale Tarn, set in one of Lakeland's most dramatic locations. Due west is the impressive rocky Slapstone Edge whilst to the south west is Blea Crag. To the north is Greathead Crag.

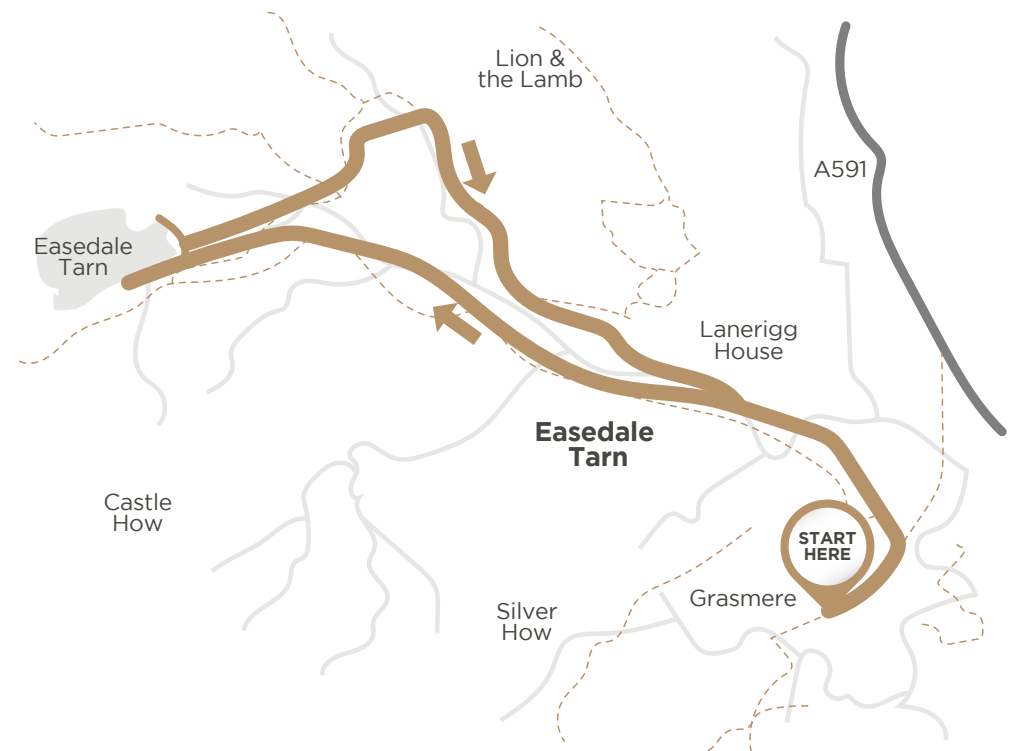
Upon reaching the tarn, it is suggested by the author that you return to Grasmere by the way you ascended. The descent on the opposite side of the falls is not considered a suitable alternative, as it initially necessitates a treacherous crossing of the stepping stones just below the outflow of the tarn, and

secondly, the route passes through a deep and broad expanse of marshy area at the base of Cockly Crag.

However, you may wish to circumnavigate the tarn which is possible via a permissive path.

Cross the stepping stones with great care and bear left round the tarn to eventually reach the main path on the south side of the tarn allowing you to return towards the main descent.

* www.thelakedistrict.org



WALK FOUR:

Elterwater

DISTANCE: 6 MILES • ALLOW 3.5 - 4 HOURS

A walk of two valleys – follow the scenic route, which links Grasmere with the very picturesque village of Elterwater, nestled at the foot of the Langdales.

With the main entrance gate to St Oswald's Parish Church on your right, walk along the road for 50 yards, then turn first right onto a lane and pass Grasmere Garden Centre Village car park entrance. From here, proceed straight ahead, towards (Langdale and Coniston) and follow this lane for 3/4 mile, to reach a cottage on your left, with letter box embedded in the outside wall (opposite a turn to a private driveway).

Bear right (off the lane), onto the driveway which is a hard-surfaced track, signposted (Great Langdale, Loughrigg Terrace, YHA). Ascend the slope for 200 yards, to reach a point where the route alters to a stony footpath. Continue uphill to locate gate on your right after 1/4 mile, displaying a sign (Nicholas Wood). 65 yards further on, pass by a metal gate on your left, to arrive at 2 small wooden gates, with a 5 yard stretch of wall between them.

Go through the left-hand gate and immediately cross over small beck. Proceed parallel to the left-hand wall and after 3/4 mile of steep, but scenic ascent, the well-defined path leads to a gate across the route. Continue straight ahead and after

a short distance the footpath levels out – at the four way junction of paths go straight ahead. The path steeply descends to link up with the Grasmere/Chapel Stile lane.

Turn right and descend the hill for just under 1/4 mile, to reach a lane on your left. Turn left here and this lane will eventually terminate at a set of crossroads with the Skelwith Bridge/Chapel Stile road. Go straight across, to arrive at a junction in the centre of Elterwater, with the Britannia Inn over on your right.

Turn left at this junction and follow the lane (which passes the Judy Boyes Gallery) and the soon across Elterwater Common), to join onto the Chapel Stile/Skelwith Bridge road. Turn right, along the road for 400 yards, then turn first left onto a narrow lane (directly opposite a house on your right). Gradually ascend for just under 1/2 mile (passing by a turning on your right after 350 yards), to arrive at a T-junction with another lane.

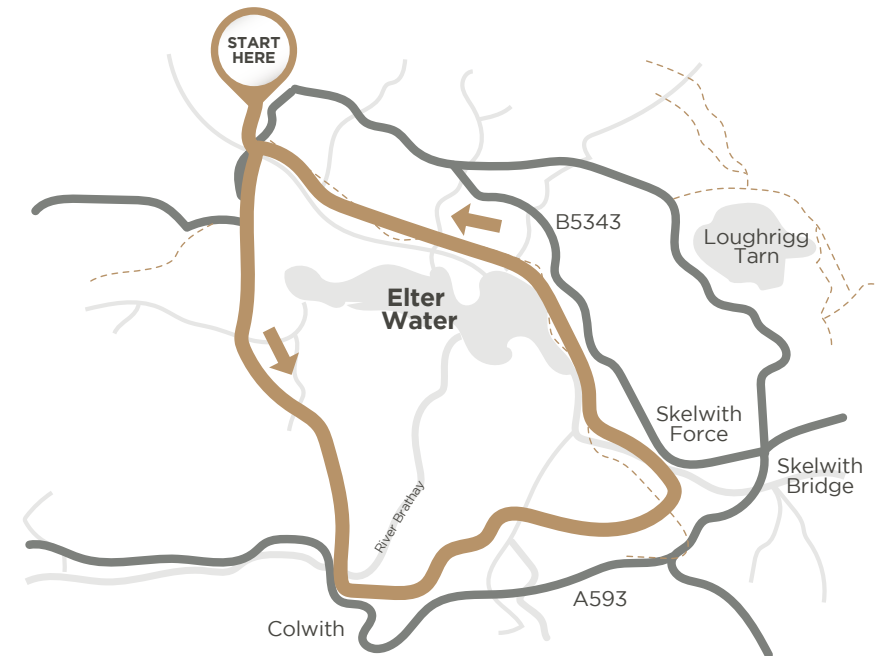
Turn left (High Close 3/4 : Grasmere 2) and follow this lane for just over 1/2 mile, to locate a lane on your left. Turn right at this point, and

pass through a large wooden gate, signposted (Public Bridleway Loughrigg Terrace, Rydal) & (Deer Bolts Wood). Proceed along a broad, stony footpath for 250 yards, to reach an inverted Y-junction. Continue straight on for a further 100 yards, and go through a metal gate. On the opposite side of this gate, descend towards a flat footbridge (seen 30 yards away), across a small beck.

From here (with the magnificent panorama across the whole of Grasmere valley down to your left) descend this popular footpath for 1/2 mile before reaching a T- junction of paths immediately in front of a stone

wall (200 yards before reaching the wall the path forks – keep to the left hand route). At the stone wall turn left and continue downhill on a narrow path, to aim for a wooden footbridge (seen in the valley below), spanning the outflow from Grasmere Lake.

Cross over the bridge and turn sharp left. After 100 yards ignore the path heading right and follow the winding footpath through this lightly wooded area, to join onto the Keswick/Ambleside road. Turn left and follow the roadside footpath by the side of the lake, to return to the start of the walk in the centre of Grasmere.



WALK FIVE:

Rydal Water

DISTANCE: 5 MILES • ALLOW 3 HOURS

A captivating walk, with unsurpassed views across Grasmere and Rydal Water. Two of Lakeland's most picturesque lakes.

With St Oswalds Parish Church on your left, cross the bridge over the River Rothay and walk along the roadside footpath for 1/3 mile, to reach the main Keswick/Ambleside road. Go straight across, onto the lane directly opposite, to pass by Dove Cottage to your left after 100 yards.

Gradually ascend this lane for 1 1/4 mile, to arrive at How Top Farm on your right (just opposite a small, vegetation-clogged pond on your left) Bear left, signposted (no through road for motors) and (path to Rydal). The hill in front of you is steep, but will level out after 300 yards.

With the rocky terrain of White Moss over to your right, proceed along here for 1/4 mile, to reach a point where the lane abruptly alters into a wide, stony footpath. Continue ahead, and (passing through numerous gates along the route) follow this footpath for 1 mile, to eventually arrive at a T-junction with a lane, next to Hart Head Barn on your left.

Turn right and passing by Rydal Mount on your right, descend the

lane, to join onto the Ambleside/Grasmere road at the foot of the hill. Cross over the road and turn right. Walk along the roadside footpath for a maximum of 125 yards, then bear left, signposted (public footpath) and descend to a wooden footbridge across the River Rothay. On the opposite bank, follow the stony footpath (to the right in the direction of Rydal Water, parallel to the river) for 250 yards to pass through a gate leading into Rydal Woods.

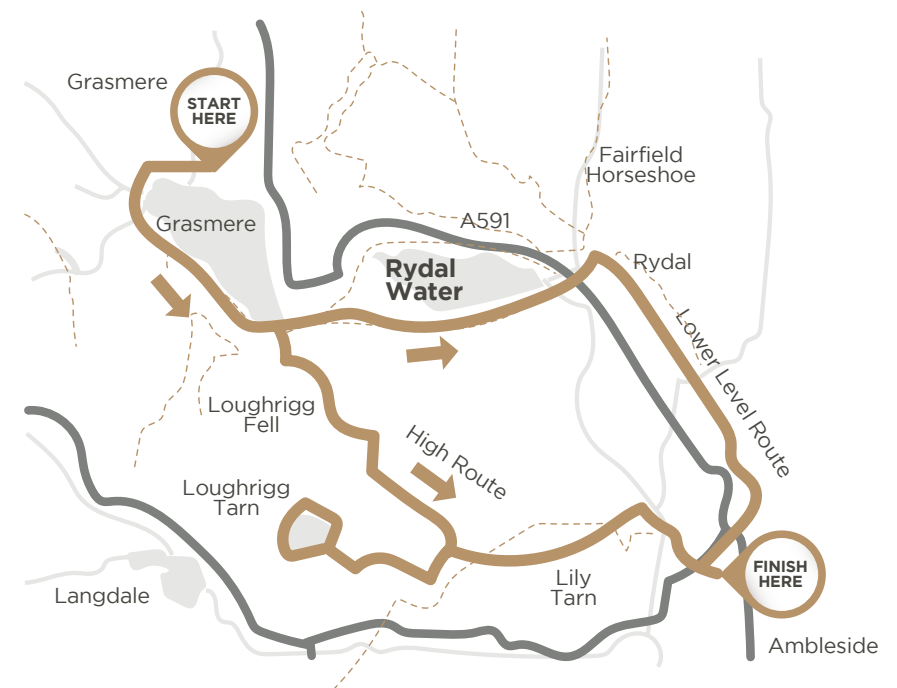
Proceed between the trees and after 300 yards, exit these woods via a swing-gate set in a stone boundary wall. On the opposite side of this gate, the path forks. Bear right and walk along the water's edge or 1/4 mile – note, if water levels are high there is a point where the main path becomes impassable where the path skirts a rock at the water's edge – however it is still possible to avoid this problem with a short 'up and over' diversion to the left for a few dozen yards.

Soon after you will reach a point where the path bears left away from the lake. Continue along the well-defined path, to locate a derelict

barn after 1/4 mile, situated just behind the right-hand wall. From here, the route steeply ascends for 150 yards to arrive at a junction of paths on the crest of a ridge. Keeping the stone wall on your right, descend a narrow footpath towards Grasmere Lake, seen in the valley below. At the foot of the slope, pass by a wooden footbridge on your right, spanning the River Rothay.

With the lake on your right, walk along the shoreline for just over 3/4 mile, to reach a point where the path abruptly turns sharp left away from the water's edge.

Follow the path uphill for 200 yards, then ascend the path to link up with a lane. Turn right and follow this lane, to return to the start of the walk in the centre of Grasmere.



Helm Crag

DISTANCE: 7.5 MILES • ALLOW 4.5 HOURS

This is a longer version of the direct route up Helm Crag from Grasmere, taking in the extra Wainwright summits of Gibson Knott and Calf Crag in a satisfying circular walk around Far Easedale. Helm Crag is highly visible from Grasmere and as a result is a popular Wainwright walk.*

This walk starts at the Broadgate car park on the northern edge of Grasmere Village. The car park is at grid reference NY 338 077.

From Grasmere village head north up Easedale Lane which has signposts to Easedale Tarn and Youth Hostels.

Pass the Butharlyp Howe Youth Hostel on the right then round a bend to a small hamlet of B&Bs, lakeland cottages and a housing estate on the right. Here a footpath is provided as an alternative to the dangerous road.

The road crosses Goody Bridge over the Easedale Beck. Keep on the road passing a minor road on the right then round a bend to the right.

When you reach the Steel Bridge footbridge that takes the path to Easedale Tarn ignore it and continue along the road following the signs to Helm Crag Path.

Head through a gate then follow the tarmac road as it bends left then

crosses a field towards a house. The tarmac road reaches another building and then heads right up a rough rocky bridleway.

The bridleway heads up hill and then bends left, eventually reaching a junction where the Helm Crag Path is signposted to the right. Head up this path until it reaches an open area below the old quarry.

Follow the quarry path now as it zig zags up hill through the old quarry. There are a few cairns to help navigation. The path is obvious and eventually climbs up on to the shoulder of Helm Crag with great views.

From Helm Crag head north along the ridge along often boggy and sometimes rocky ground. The route, like most ridge walks, is straight forward and you will soon reach a summit cairn on the highest point of Gibson Knott. From Gibson Knott head north to north west along the ridge again on an obvious route which gets very boggy in places. The path clings to the side of the

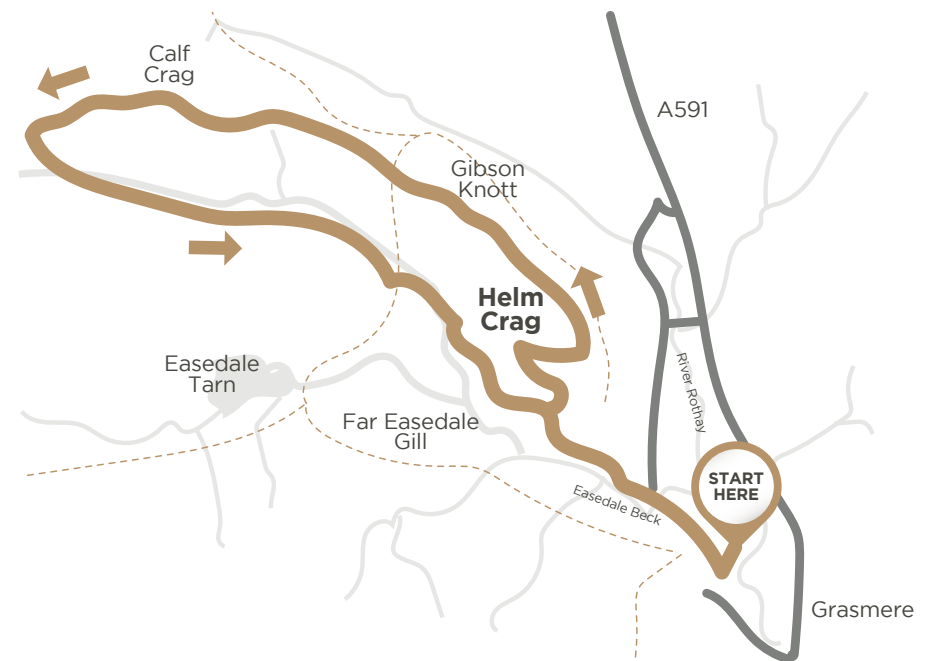
valley then passes over Pike of Carrs before reaching Calf Crag. The summit of Calf Crag has a rocky cairn and small tarn.

Head west then south westerly off Calf Crag. After just 300m you pass a tarn on the right then continue another 200m to reach a path junction with stone cairns that marks the top of the bridleway descent in to Far Easedale.

Follow the path heading south east into the wild Far Easedale Gill valley. The path follows the Gill and passes a few waterfalls. The ridge you have just walked looms above your left shoulder.

Continue on along the bridleway by the same route down Easedale Road back to Grasmere passing Steel Bridge and Goody Bridge.

* www.mudandrout.com





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