

Bouth

Our starting point is a layby adjacent to the Rusland Pool Hotel on the A590. Finding the hotel should be easy, and the layby is right next to it, but note that it's safer to enter the layby from the end furthest from the hotel. Satnav users can use the postcode for the Hotel: LA12 8AA, whilst the What-3-Words tag **juices.apes.sedative** will get you there. If paper maps are your preference, the grid reference is SD33008451.

From the layby we head East past the front of the hotel and pick up a footpath separated from the busy A590 by a hedge. This takes us along the edge of a field toward the small river, known as Rusland Pool, and take a sharp left turn to head upstream along one of the Greenwood Trails

We follow the trail through flat and open pasture to the west of the Pool until we see the track enter woodland between stone walls. We head gently uphill, to emerge onto the road into Bouth where we keep the village green on our left and head out West toward Old Hall Farm, which we find on our right.

At the farm, we turn right and head up the lane to enter woodland on a track that starts to rise quite steeply. There is soon a fork in the path, with a smaller route available on the edge of the woods at the right. Ignore this – its part of our return route - so for now keep on the larger track and head into the woodlands.

The woods are not large, and we soon find ourselves exiting onto more open land heading Northwest toward Colton, still on a clear track. Our track now winds round to the left and meets another track also coming through the woods and heading toward the church at Colton.

Our path heads off opposite the church – in effect we head along the contour lines part way up the valley sides whilst the road from Colton to Oxen Park sits in the valley bottom. Staying a little higher gives us great views West over to Sales Bank Wood, as well as being traffic free. As we follow our path along the contours, the road rises slowly, and eventually we meet it, and turn right to follow the road into Oxen Park.

As we enter the village, we take a left between the whitewashed cottages and follow the road round to the reading Rooms, and just beyond those, we find a signpost (Stock Farm 1 ½ miles) to a track leaving the road on the right. This is our route over toward Whitestock Hall.

The path heads Northeast giving us a good view of the woodland in front of Whitestock Hall. There are in fact two pieces of woodland separated by a chase. The woods to the left are called Heald Brow, and those to the right Paddock Heald. The path rises now and joins a track where we turn right. This is occasionally used by 4 x 4 drivers, but we only stay on this lane for a short while – a public footpath leaves the lane on the right and heads over meadows with a hill known as Lone Riggs on the right.

We soon find ourselves at the end of the ridge at Lone Rigg, and this secluded spot is a good place for lunch. From here we press on Northeast through the edge of Paddock Heald and then downhill toward, but not as far as, Whitestock Hall.

We soon arrive at a small road where we turn right, and walk until we meet a Y-junction where we take the left hand fork which leads us round to farm buildings at Hulleter. As we approach the farm, we enjoy good views North over Hulleter Moss and Rusland Moss National Nature Reserve.

The track continues through the farm and heads out to the South, where we find another forked junction. We take left again, following a sign for Hay Bridge, this takes us round to the left and then down to a stream which we cross.

We walk up through a small area of woodland and follow the track as it curves sharply right to head into Hay Bridge Nature reserve along a public road.

Not long after we have passed the second tarn, we see a path leaving the road on the right. This is signposted to Moss Wood (1/2 mile) and this takes us up a steepish hill before ascending to a ford over small stream.

From the stream we follow the line of a drystone wall over to a minor road adjacent to Moss Wood.

We turn left along the road and follow it for a while, until we see a signpost on the right to a public Byway to Colton. We don't follow it far though; in fact we turn off on the left along a smaller footpath almost immediately. This takes us along the edge of Moss Wood down to Old Hall farm which we passed much earlier in the walk.

When we get to the farm, we do not retrace our earlier route – instead we turn right and pass the farm heading toward Ashes Intake. This is accessed via a footpath leaving the road on the left not long after the farm. The path heads across a field and then down to a stream where we have a choice of routes.

The obvious route is straight ahead through Ashes Intake to find our path along Rusland Pool. However, at the time of our walk this was impassable due to storm damage, and so we took a right turn to walk up through the wood back to the Causeway at Bouth.

From there we turn right and then almost immediately leave the road on the right down the lane, reversing our steps from the start of the walk to return to the cars.

The detour means that the distance for the whole walk just tips over our threshold for a challenging walk. Despite this the walk is generally moderate, and there are no steep or difficult climbs

- **Total distance 15.8 km (9.8 miles)**
- **Total Ascent 665 m**
- **Challenging walk**