

Storth & Arnside

We start on the B5282 at Sandside – this is between Milnthorpe and Arnside. Assuming you are travelling from the Milnthorpe direction follow signs for Arnside until you enter Sandside, then look for the Storth road on your left but stay on the road to Arnside – now called Park Road, and in about 200m you will see parking at the right hand side of the road. If you meet a sharp left turn over a railway bridge, you have gone too far. If you are using Satnav, then a combination of B5282, Park Road or the postcode LA7 7PH should work. If you are using a paper map then the grid reference is SD47388052, and what-3-words tag **query.shower.digitally** will pinpoint the exact location.

From the parking place, we set out uphill, in the direction of Arnside – so the estuary should be on your right. The walk initially follows the road – which has no pavement, so some care is needed, but very soon, we see a way marker for a path on the left hand side of the road. This takes us onto the track bed of the disused railway line where we turn left and head back toward Milnthorpe.

We follow the railbed for a while, passing under an arched brick-built bridge running at an angle over the railway – this is known locally as the Skew bridge for obvious reasons. We soon arrive at the back of the Ship Inn, where this section of the path ends. We turn right here and pick up a small road which runs Northeast, parallel to the coast road that we arrived on, and soon arrive at the B5282.

We cross here – with the path continuing on the far side, again on the rail bed – at least initially. Not far down the clear remains of the railway route we see a small gate on the left. This takes us down onto the shore where the path continues at the side of the Kent Estuary. We follow the side of the estuary northeast, enjoying views across the sands to the Lakeland fells for a while until we meet the point where the river Bela enters the Kent estuary.

We now follow the Bela upstream – with the river on our left, passing a small weir with an arched bridge ahead of us. This carries the B5282 over the Bela.

When we arrive at the road, we find a stile which takes us onto the pavement, and from there a road into the grounds of the Dallam Tower Estate becomes visible. We follow this road for a while now past the front of the Grade I listed country house. The road continues past the house, and before long we see a footpath crossing the road. We take the route on the right which heads uphill and through a field. This is signposted for Haverbrack. At the top corner of the field there is stile onto a minor road.

We continue on a small lane directly opposite the stile. This takes us past three or four buildings as we contour around the base of the woodland at Haverbrack. The lane takes a right turn before long, and as we follow it round we find a finger post offering us a choice of directions. We take the route signed for Cockshot Lane, which goes up into the woodland via a stile / gate combination.

The path through the woods is clear, but there are a number of smaller side routes (official or otherwise) that we need to ignore. We are following way markers on posts driven into the ground at this point, and soon find an additional fingerpost where we follow the arrow to “public Road”.

When we arrive at the road (Cockshot Lane) we turn right and head uphill for a little while, looking out for a path on the left signposted for Hazelslack.

Keep an eye open for a curious steel plaque way marker on the right of the path – we need to take the path for the Fairy Steps. The steps are in fact a narrow passage between two sheer rock faces via a flight of natural stone stairs. From the bottom of the steps – we now head downhill and westward through Underlaid Wood.

As we take the path down through the woods we arrive at a curious zig-zag section through a deep crevice in the rock. Care is needed here if the limestone is wet. Beyond here the path is straight, with signs of further crevicing in the limestone visible on both sides of the path.

The path soon exits the woodland and heads straight down toward buildings at Hazelslack Farm, where we find a minor road. We take the route opposite, through the farm and then to the left of the spectacular ruins of Hazelslack Tower. Beyond the tower we see a path exiting the road on the left, into fields used for caravans in the summer season. We head to the far right hand corner of the field where we have a choice of two routes: We keep to the right and head over a field to find a stile onto a minor road. Directly opposite the path continues over another stile, and we now head across the rather boggy Arnside Moss. The path is generally clear, but some diversions to find solid ground may be required in wet weather. If in doubt the general direction is westward.

At the far end of the field is a drainage ditch (“black dyke”) which we cross at a footbridge before wading through mud for a while until we cross the railway and arrive at a metalled track which takes us up to the road at Arnside.

At the road we turn right and follow the road down to the railway station, where we cross the line using the footbridge. Beyond the station the track crosses the Kent estuary on the famous viaduct, although the gentle curve of the track means that the viaduct is not as apparent here as you might have hoped.

From the station we head to the shoreline and follow it round to the right, staying on the shoreside path all the way back to the parking place where we started.

- **Total distance 12.0 km (7.4 miles)**
- **Total ascent 183 m**
- **Easy walk**