

Barbon Beck & Brownthwaite

We start at the Village Hall in Barbon, where there is convenient parking – this is chargeable, and works on an “honesty box” principle. The team at the Village Hall do great work, so please support them with a suitably generous donation.

Barbon is easy to find – take the A683 from Kirby Lonsdale toward Sedbergh and then follow the signs after Casterton. The Village Hall is right in the centre of the village and is easy to find. If you are using Satnav to get there then the address is New Road, Barbon LA6 2LL, the what-3-words tag is **sprayed.sprinter.selling**, or if you are using the OS map then the grid reference is SD62778230.

From the car park, we head right along New Road for a short distance to a metalled lane on the left heading toward a cluster of houses at Town End. We follow this lane down to the end where we find a footpath sign directing us to the left of a house and to a gate where we cross what was once the rail bed for the Ingleton Branch of the North Western Railway. Having crossed the course of the old railway we find ourselves in the well-tended grounds of a large pink house and head diagonally across the grounds in a South easterly direction to find a stile onto a minor road. The path continues via another stile on the opposite side (sign posted “Fell Garth”) and we then follow that path through a narrow gap behind a patch of woodland to a working farm at Low Bank House.

As we come through the gate into the farm, we need to head left to find the track that takes us round into the well-manicured grounds of Whelprigg Hall, where a path heads south through the grounds – the route should be clearly visible, but if in doubt we are aiming to keep the house a little to our left, so that we arrive at the access road without trespassing. From here we see a stile which gives access to a south bound path through four fields until we arrive at Fell Garth and a minor road.

Once again, we simply cross the road and continue with the path on the far side to head south across a field, to find a gate. Beyond this we find a choice of paths – with roundels on a post to indicate their direction. In practice, the roundels only act as a source of confusion – simply go through the gap in the wall ahead and then follow the drystone wall on your right toward Hole House – easily identified by its tennis court.

We continue south, passing a second house (Langthwaite), which is also to our right, and when we arrive at the access lane to the house, we take a small left-then-right dog-leg to continue with the path still heading south through four more fields, and eventually bearing slightly to the left and uphill toward a green lane that runs around the contours at the base of Barbon Low Fell. Not surprisingly then, this is called Fellfoot Lane

Once we reach the lane, we head right – to arrive at a minor road. Our route continues to the left along the road and steeply uphill for a little while. As ever, take particular care when road walking, but expect very little traffic on this road as it is not a through route. After no more than 500m on the road we arrive at a lane on the left similar to Fellfoot Lane. We take this track and head steeply uphill for a while – don’t forget to take the opportunity to look back and enjoy the views down the Lune Valley and out to Morecambe Bay.

Also of note on this stretch of the walk is an ancient stone circle, usually referred to as Casterton Stone Circle – it is visible in the fields to the left of the lane. Unfortunately, there is no direct access to the site on public footpaths – and we are not on open access land at that point. At the top of the lane, we pass through a gate and then turn right to continue toward Brownthwaite – we are heading northeast now, and after about 400m have the cairn at the peak of Brownthwaite clearly in view to our left. A short diversion to the cairn is well worth making if the weather is clear, as the views are

fabulous, but the cloud was so low when the group made this trip that we opted to press on toward Bullpot.

We have done most of the climbing now, and the route around Brownthwaite largely follows the contours, eventually arriving back at the road we left earlier - we go left and follow the road right to the end – which is Bullpot.

At the end of the metalled road, we have Bullpot Farm on our right, and a rough lane on our left – we take the lane and start to head back toward Barbon, initially between drystone walls, and then after a gate on open moorland. The direction of the path is clear, but erosion is a constant problem here and you may need to wander a little way away from the track on the OS map to find secure footing. Before long though, the path improves and turns to the right heading toward a waterfall – which will be spectacular after heavy rain and almost un-noticeable after prolonged drought.

From here the path continues down to the metalled road which runs between Barbon and Dent, where we turn right to walk along the road in the direction of Dent for a short while. We cross a stone road bridge and then as the road bears right see a wooden footbridge over the Barbon Beck on our left. We turn sharp left and follow the path on the right hand bank of Barbon Beck for a while.

This takes us through well managed woodland that belongs to the Barbon Manor estate – the paths are wide and clear and where they intersect with estate tracks that are not open to the public there is clear signage.

After following the path through the woodland for about 1km, we arrive at a slight rise to a twisting metalled road, where we see “Armco” barriers on the corners, painted with black and white stripes – this is because the section of road is used for motor racing as part of the famous Barbon hill climb.

The route down through the estate grounds toward the church at Barbon is clear – we don’t walk directly down the road used for the racing - rather we cut diagonally across with the church as landmark.

We soon arrive at another stone bridge over Barbon Beck, after which it’s just a short stroll to St Bartholomew’s, where we admire the lychgate and the simple but very attractive church.

We now head right, and downhill back to the centre of Barbon – notice on the left as we walk down the hill a development of modern bungalows. This is the site of the old railway station.

Our final landmark for the day is the war memorial – we turn left here and walk back to the Village Hall where the walk ends.

- **Total distance 13.3 km (8.2 miles)**
- **Total ascent 385 m**
- **Moderate walk**