

# Levens & Heversham

We start from a layby just to the north of Levens bridge on the A6. To find the layby, take the A65 as far as the M6 at junction 36, then cross straight over and continue on the A590. Continue for about 3 miles, then take the exit signed A590 Grange and stay with the A590 until the exit on the left to the A6 – this comes up quite soon, so stay in the left hand lane. Follow the A6 down toward Levens Bridge – the layby is on the right just before the junction. If you are using Satnav to get there then safest address to use is the one for Levens Hall (which is next to the bridge): Levens Hall, Kendal LA8 0PD. If you prefer paper maps, the OS Grid reference is SD49608539, whilst the What-3-Words tag is **conquests.napped.hulk**

We set off by crossing the road and heading downhill toward Levens Bridge. Just beyond the bridge there is a pedestrian entrance to the deer park which takes us onto a public footpath through the private grounds. We take the path through the Deer Park and follow the river Kent upstream – it is worth knowing that there is a public footpath on each side of the Kent, and it's important to use the one on the right bank (when heading upstream). Don't be tempted to use the left hand path – it's a good walk, but there is no connection with our onward route as we leave the Deer Park.

At the end of the 1km path through the park, we arrive at a gate and exit onto a minor road. From here we head right, walking along the road for a short while – the road is generally quiet, but there is no pavement, so care is needed. After 400m, we see a footpath sign on the left hand side of the road and take the path up to what was once a section of the Lancaster canal – it's now dewatered so looks like a wide ditch, slowly being reclaimed by nature. We remain parallel to the road for another 200m, until the path takes a sharp left turn – as indeed the canal once did, and ahead of us is a hill. With a canal tunnel under: The tunnel is known as the Hincaster tunnel – the name comes from the nearby Hincaster Hall

To get the horse to the other side of the hill, the canal company provided a specific access path – which is now a public footpath. That's how we get to the other side of the tunnel – head right just before the portal and follow the path uphill, then head sharp left and follow the track over the hill, passing under a couple of bridges where a road and then the West Coast Main Line cross our route.

At the far end of the tunnel, the path continues down to a minor road where we turn right and walk south for 200m to find a road junction where we go sharp right to walk west toward Hincaster. Having passed under a railway bridge carrying the West Coast Mainline, we soon arrive at the village where we are greeted with a pleasant village green and an assortment of old houses, some cottages and others rather grand -although now divided into smaller dwellings.

As we walk through Hincaster, the road bears left to merge with another, and we follow it round until we are heading south toward Greenside. We stay on the road for a while now (perhaps 400m from the green at Hincaster) before we see a stile on the right which takes us to a path cutting the corner of a field at the edge of Greenside. We cross to a second stile which takes us onto a very quiet lane where we head right and climb for a while - If you miss that first stile, you will arrive at a T junction, and can get back on track by heading right.

We stay on this road for only 50m before we see the path exit on the left – some care is needed here, there is a farm track to a gate that looks like it ought to be the correct route – in fact the footpath is just to the left of this.

From here the view changes quite noticeably – we have exited the trees and now have great long range views over to Farleton Fell with Ingleborough visible in the distance. We now head uphill

toward the top of Heversham Head, keeping the wall to our left, and as we climb, the views just get better, until at the top, the Kent estuary and the Lakeland fells emerge. The only sensible thing to do here is sit down and have lunch whilst we drink in this stunning visual treat.

We now need to head back toward Levens bridge, and initially our route is downhill toward a gate in the drystone wall above Heversham. Once through this rather snug gate, we keep the wall at the edge of the woodland on our left and follow it down to a second gate – this one rather more comfortable, and then through the woods to a small road.

At the road we turn right and walk downhill into Leasgill where we note that many of the buildings carry name plates with the spelling Leasghyll.

Just past the Athenaeum, we see a road on the right and follow this steeply up hill for about 150m until we find a stile on the left hand side of the road. This takes us through a tree lined path north to a delightful green lane where we head left. We stay on this green lane for only 50m though before we find a clearly signed path on the right which runs below the woodland as we head across level ground toward High Barns – don't miss the views down to Levens Hall as we walk this section.

As the path approaches the farmhouse at High Barns, we see a concrete track heading down toward Levens Hall – we take this track and follow it downhill and past a number of estate workshops until we arrive at the A6 just in front of the hall – you may notice some of the topiary for which the hall is famous above the perimeter wall.

We turn right at the main road and stroll up the A6 back to our starting point.

- **Total distance 9.6 km (6.0 miles)**
- **Total ascent 205 m**
- **Easy walk**