

Kirkby Lonsdale and Casterton Circular

We start from Kirkby Lonsdale. The path we initially take is at the corner of the free car park to the east of the A683 opposite Devil's Bridge, very close to the junction of the A65 and the A683. But you could just as easily park anywhere in Kirkby and stroll to the same starting point – with the added bonus of seeing more of this ever-popular town. The grid reference for the car park is SD61777821, whilst the what-3-words tag is **bolt.huts.partner**. If you are using Satnav to get to the start, then try Devil's Bridge Kirby Lonsdale, or Bentinck Drive as an address.

Once at the car park, we start off by finding the track that leaves the road where the access road through the parking area turns sharp right – the lane is in the left hand corner. We head up there for just a short distance until we see a stile on the left leading us into a caravan park. We take the path straight ahead aiming for a clear gap in the caravans, and then bear slightly to the right passing the reception area for the site, and as we walk past, it's worth taking a moment to read some of the information boards which give descriptions of wildlife that can be seen in the area.

We are now on the access road through the site, and we follow it round to the left before noting an exit on our right which takes us onto an enclosed track, called Laitha Lane, where we head left.

About 250m after joining Laitha Lane, it bears right and then 50m later comes to a junction. Laitha Lane continues to our left – and forms part of our return route, but for now, we head right following a public bridleway sign for High Casterton.

What had been a rough track soon becomes a decent metalled surface, and we follow the obvious route through large houses to the centre of High Casterton, where we meet a T Junction – next to the appropriately named Corner House. We now head right, and immediately see another junction. We ignore Chapelhouse Lane (on the right) – this goes back to the A65 – and follow the traditional cast iron signage for Settle and Cowan Bridge.

We follow the road round to the left, and then have a good view of a railway bridge that once carried the railway over the road. The railway in question was of course the Ingleton Branch of the North Western Railway.

Just beyond the railway bridge, there is a lane on the right which passes some stables – there is footpath along here which heads to Bindloss Farm – and then Fellfoot Lane; that had been an intended part of the day's route, but as you can see from the pictures in the gallery, local flooding made this an unwise route. However, if you are walking in better weather than we were and wish to extend the walk a little, this is an option.

So, beyond the bridge, we continue with the road and climb up to a junction where we meet another minor road known as Wandales Lane, to head left. We immediately note that Wandales Lane is arrow straight and are not surprised to note that the OS map identifies this as a Roman Road.

After just 300m on Wandales Lane, we arrive at a crossroads where we turn sharp right to head toward the fells. We are now on the single track road that leads to Bull Pot farm where Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club have a bunkhouse. 300m up the lane, we meet another crossroads where the rough track referred to as Fellfoot Lane crosses the metalled road approach on. The lane to the right is where you would arrive if you took the Bindloss farm option, and we now head left along Fellfoot

Lane where we immediately meet the first of four Andy Goldsworthy installations collectively referred to as the Drove Folds.

It is worth looking to the right as we progress down Fellfoot Lane – over on the fellside is a stone circle, which depending on weather conditions may be visible – in fact seeing it from here or the paths higher up the fell are your only option, as sadly there is not permitted right of way to the circle.

We stay with Fellfoot Lane for about 600m and then look for a waymarked path on the left which takes us down to Langthwaite – this is just a little further than the springs within wrought iron Victorian railings that make good landmark on our left.

Our path now stays to the right of the drystone wall, rising a little at first then heading steeply downhill to a farm at Langthwaite, and then continues via a good quality single track road back to Wandales Lane (the Roman road). Once we arrive at Wandales Lane we cross and head directly to a railway bridge – very similar to the one earlier in the walk, where the road continues into Casterton, passing Casterton School.

Also worth noting is the Holy Trinity church – built between 1831 and 1833, the current church boasts stained glass windows and wall paintings of remarkable quality.

From the church, we head south along a quiet lane that runs parallel to the busy A683 and follow the road south until we get to a crossroads at Colliers Lane. Clearly this name indicates that coal was dug at some time, and according to the Lancaster Archaeological and Historic Society, mining took place from the reign of Charles I through to closure in 1850.

At the bottom of Colliers Load, we meet the A683, and turn left, walking on the road for a mere 20m until we leave on the left as if to enter the golf course, but as we turn in, we see Laitha Lane on our right and follow this back toward Kirkby.

As we progress down Laitha Lane, we soon arrive at the point where we exited the caravan park in the outbound journey, and we could of course take this route back to the start. On the day of our walk, we were aware of how slippery the bank down the caravan park to the stile had been and so opted for a safer route: We continued along Laitha Lane for a further 100m and then at a cross roads turned right – this is the lane that exits the car park, where the walk ends.

- **Total distance 8.1 km (5.0 miles)**
- **Total ascent 164 m**
- **Easy walk**