

**5** This wood is Beckmickle Ing - owned and managed by the Woodland Trust (a Friends of the Lake District grant helped them to buy this wood). 'Ing' is a Norse word for flat land by a river. Head down the path to the River Kent. In spring the ground is covered by wild daffodils. The alder trees here are happy to have 'wet feet', as the low levels are often flooded



Wild Daffodils

when the river is in spate. Follow the permissive path with the river on your right until you reach a wooden bridge over a stream. Beyond the bridge the path veers left to join another footpath where you turn right to follow the river again. As you reach the end of the wood a wooden stile brings you out on to a track. Turn right here, cross the river bridge and turn right to join the footpath on the far side.

**6** You are now on 'The Dales Way' long distance footpath from Ilkley to Bowness. Follow this well signed path along the River Kent back to the main road leading into Staveley. Look out for dippers on the river and an occasional kingfisher. The wood you pass through on your return is Stony Grubbing Wood and has a magnificent carpet of bluebells in late spring.

Further reference on the following websites:

Friends of the Lake District	<a href="http://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk">www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk</a>
Reserve Guide (Cumbria Wildlife Trust) 2007	<a href="http://www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk">www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk</a>
Lake District National Park Authority	<a href="http://www.lake-district.gov.uk">www.lake-district.gov.uk</a>
The Woodland Trust	<a href="http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk">www.woodland-trust.org.uk</a>
The Wood Education Programme Trust	<a href="http://www.woodeducation.org.uk">www.woodeducation.org.uk</a>
Staveley & District History Society	<a href="http://www.sdhs.org.uk">www.sdhs.org.uk</a>

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Staveley  
& District  
History  
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This leaflet is based upon a walk developed from an original idea of John Berry a FLD Volunteer.

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DISTRICT

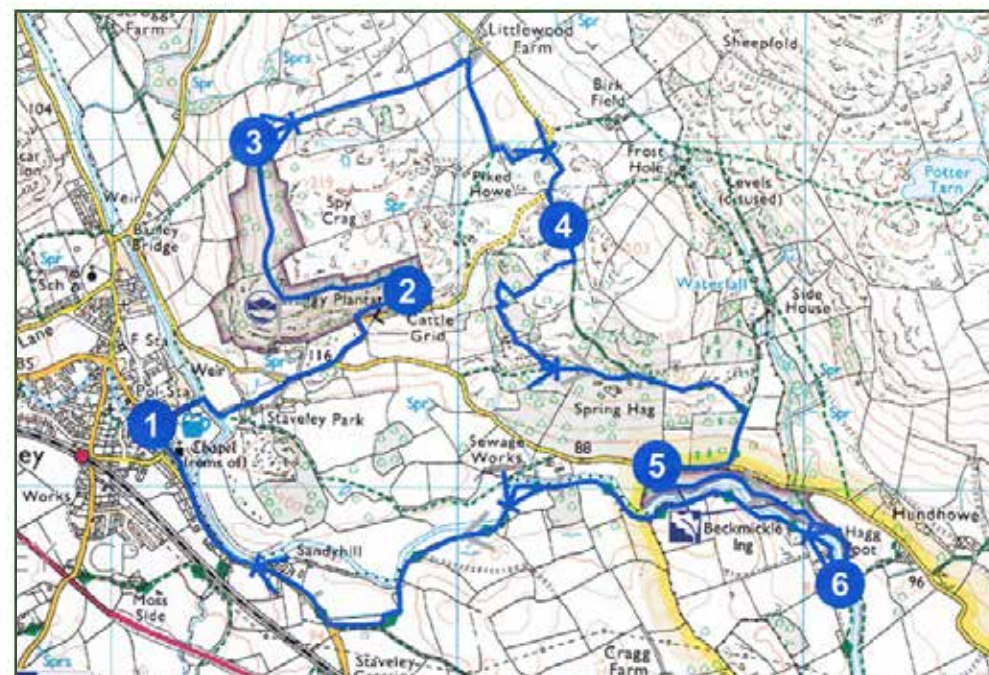
# STAVELEY WOODLANDS WALK

Distance: 5.3 miles (8.6km)

Time: 2.5 hours

Grade: Moderate (walking boots required)

Height: 306 metres of ascent (1004 feet)



**1** Leave Staveley by the footpath alongside the 'Duke William' on Main Street. Cross the River Kent and turn right. Follow the river and then bear left along the wall. Pass through another gate and metal kissing gate on to a farm road. Cross to the kissing gate opposite to the right of the barn. Follow the path uphill. Turn right when you reach the road, and after 100 metres fork left up the hill. You will see the gate into Craggy Wood straight ahead.

Craggy is in fact four sets of woodland. 'Craggy Wood' itself to the east, 'Birkhag Wood' to the north, 'Whinney Close Wood' to the west and the smaller 'Blacks Wood' on the slopes below Birkhag. All (apart for a few metres around the former Mill Manager's house) are in the ownership and management of the Lake District National Park Authority.



Notice under the beech trees little ground vegetation grows due to the lack of sunlight and nutrients. Going right follow the path up a series of zig-zags and steps. As you



approach the end of the wood, the path turns uphill through more zig-zags and steps to the top corner of the wood. This section of the wood has straighter larch trees planted originally as a cash crop.



**2** At the top of the rise the path turns to the left and follows the high part of the wood. Pause at the bench with an excellent view northwards to the Kentmere fells. Further along this path you will see two stone pillars to your left; these are relics of the survey for the construction of the Thirlmere Aqueduct which passes underground through the wood. You then come to pass through a gap in a dry stone wall. Pause here and look at the difference between the woodland you have just come through and

into Birkhag wood, originally planted for coppicing, which is full of oak and hazel. You finally emerge from this wood over a stone stile to meet a footpath coming up from Barley Bridge, Staveley.

**3** You will see a ladder stile in the wall but go through the wall gap to the right. Through this the footpath gradually climbs and you'll see the ladder stile ahead. Cross the ladder stile and aim for the next one at the top of the field. You are now at the top of the climb and from the middle of the field there is, in clear weather, a splendid view back to the Kentmere fells, and beyond to the back of Scafell and Conistone high peaks. The rocky summit to your immediate right in the adjacent field is called Spy Crag.

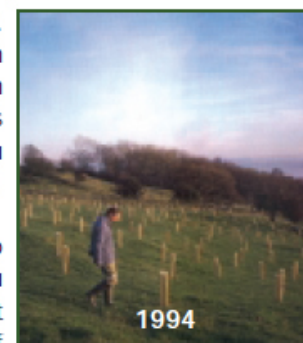


Over the next stile you will have a wall on your left and, as you go downhill there is a glimpse of Kendal to the right. The next stile is in the left hand corner of the field, and once over it you will be walking with the wall on your right. The footpath leads down to Littlewood Farm and the hill above is Potter Fell (395m).

Just before the farm buildings turn sharp right through a gate, continuing towards a gate to the right of a line of ash trees. Upon reaching the farm track turn left along the track passing High Field Wood copse until you meet another road; here turn right up over a small summit from which you will see a gate across the road. Through the gate, turn immediately left up a bridleway to the next gate that leads into a walled track.

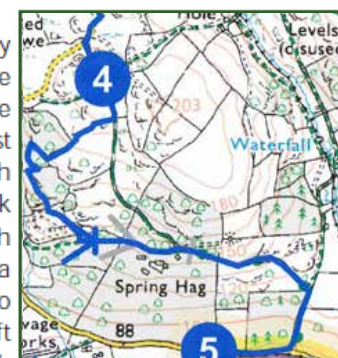
**4** After about 100 metres you will see a tall gate on the right with a permissive path sign on it. This is Mike's Wood, owned by Friends of the Lake District. We bought this land in 1993 to create a new native woodland to celebrate Mike Houston's work for the Friends. You can see what can be achieved in 15 years converting open pasture to

strong healthy woodland (right). Follow this permissive path down, pausing at the wooden bench for good views towards the River Kent estuary, until you reach a gap in a dry stone wall.



Bear right through the wall gap and after just a few yards you will see a white arrow on a post pointing you left. This is part of the permissive path through the woods owned by Cumbria Wildlife Trust. This wood is known as High Wood and is managed to maintain as natural a wood as possible. Broken branches and fallen trees create good 'dead wood' habitat for wildlife. Descend and turn left where signposted. You will shortly pass through a metal gate with sandstone gateposts - this marks the route of the Thirlmere Aqueduct. The gates were originally intended to permit staff to carry out their inspection duties (now done by helicopter!). Just before the gate is one of a number of explanatory panels about the trees and wildlife found in the woods.

This next part of the wood (Grubbing Spring) is privately owned, but access is allowed via a path through to the next wood known as Dorothy Farrer's Spring Wood Nature Reserve after a previous owner. Cumbria Wildlife Trust manage this wood to benefit woodland wildlife. The path beyond the gate divides - if you want to shorten your walk



Hazel coppice

you can take the right hand path which leads directly down to a field adjoining the road back to Staveley. Otherwise, take the left hand path, which leads uphill, and then descends to a tall gate into another wood maintained by Cumbria Wildlife Trust. This is Ann Beddard's Wood with much larger trees and ground plants - in the spring the smell of wild garlic hits you. Turn left to follow the footpath.

A large gate now leads you into Spring Hag Wood - again privately owned - and keeping to the right fork (where an unofficial path goes off to the left) you join a road from a private house on the right. Following the road veering right, pause before the road gate to see the charcoal pitstead on your left (an unusually flat piece of ground). Here the charcoal burners would build their stacks in the eighteenth century.

The walk follows the lane down, with some hornbeam trees on your right. These are most unusual this far north, but perhaps less so in the future as temperatures rise? At the bottom of the hill you reach a 'T' junction with the minor road from Staveley to Bowston. Turn right towards Staveley until you reach an entrance to the wood on your left.