

Bull Beck and Annas Ghyll

Introduction



This short and relatively easy walk makes a great choice when the days are short, or the weather changeable. Most of the route is over tracks, and the sections that are over fields are reasonably well drained – although this will always be a “boots” walk

We start at Bull Beck Car park and follow the old railway line down to Caton. Here we head into the village centre and then out again on the Brookhouse Road before picking up a footpath over the fields toward (but not as far as) Gresgarth Hall. From here we head uphill and over the ridge to pick up a green lane

leading down to the Littledale Road.

A short section on very quiet lanes at Moorgarth / Moorside takes us up the quarry road to the oddly named No Fret Farm, where we take left onto the track to Annas Ghyll. From here. It's a short trip over fields back to Caton, and via a few residential streets and a further field crossing, back to the car park

- Total distance 8.5km (5.3 miles)
- Total ascent 228m
- Easy walk

The Walk

Bull Beck car park, currently free of charge, is a great place to start a walk, and one that the Bentham Footpath Group have used a number of times. It tends to be busy at weekends, particularly in the summer, so an early start or “off season” walking might be a good strategy.



The car park is well signposted on the left of the A683 as you approach Caton from the Bentham direction. Sat Nav users should find that LA2 9JN locates it.



From the car park, we cross the A683 to pick up The Lune Millennium Park path - a smooth, hard surfaced path which covers a distance of 10km (6 miles) from Lancaster to Caton. The path follows the course of a disused railway and so is relatively level. We are heading toward Lancaster at this stage, and as the path is mixed use, expect to come across cyclists – so

some care and consideration is needed.

As for so many small towns – Caton did once have a functional railway, and indeed it's own station - located near Ball Lane and Station Road. The line and station opened in November 1849, being built by the "Little" North Western Railway. The route was initially constructed as single track - which is why the Millennium Park Path is relatively narrow – as is the bridge over the Bull Beck just before Station Road. Other parts of the line were converted to double running by the Midland railway at a later date.

The station was closed in May 1961 (i.e., prior to the “Beeching” cuts) though the line remained in use until closure to passengers in 1966 between Wennington and Morecambe. Freight services finished in 1967 and the track was subsequently dismantled. The line has since been converted into the Millennium Park, which includes the two old railway viaducts across the River Lune at Crook o' Lune.



The station house survives as a private residence, whilst the old goods shed is now a church.

We follow the Millennium Park path toward Lancaster, crossing the Bull Beck on a simple Girder Bridge. Soon after we arrive at Station Road where we turn left and head back into Caton, where we cross the A683 and head out on Brookhouse Road, passing the Station Hotel.



We follow the road for a short while, crossing Artle Beck at a very attractive stone bridge with an unusual “arched” bed, and from here we continue round toward Brookhouse until we see the White Painted Bull Inn ahead of us.

We now look out for the Brookhouse Methodist Church on our right and take the path immediately after the church which after takes us into St Annes Close – at the end of this is a continuation of the path into open fields.

The path now heads around the back of the houses at Caton in a SW direction. We track the contour lines, so at this stage the walking is easy, and before long we see buildings ahead, at what was once a mill powered by the Artle Beck, and which is now a domestic dwelling.



Just before the house we see a well signposted track on the left leading uphill – this is our route today.

We are now heading SE and heading steeply uphill with woodland on our right. The path becomes less steep and wanders round to the left taking us in an easterly direction until we reach the top of the hill at a stile.

After crossing, we head over a flattish field to a gate where we find a track leading back down to the Littledale Road. We don't follow this track all the way though – halfway down we see a footpath leading right to pick up a green lane – a good landmark here is the overhead electricity supply; this also follows the green lane.

We follow the lane as it curves left down to a farm building, and we exit to the left of the barn onto the farm track down to the Littledale Road.

At Littledale Road, we cross and take the smaller road straight ahead. This is Moorside Road.

We follow this very quiet road down past the large houses at Moorgarth until we arrive at a "Y" junction just past the post box. Here we turn right and head up Quarry Road past some very modern new houses into open countryside.



The road begins to climb, and very soon we see a farm on our right. This is the curiously named No Fret Farm. Opposite this, and on our left is the track down to Annas Ghyll – which is the route we now take.



As the track arrives at the farmhouse at Annas Ghyll, note that the path keeps to the left of the buildings – through a stile and then a gate before carrying on (NW) over the fields and back toward Caton. This is all well signposted, so navigation should not be an issue.

The path now heads NW over the crest of a ridge, and then down toward the Caton Green road where we cross a stile and turn left and downhill along the road for a short while.

We soon see Kirkbeck Close on our right, and down there we see a signpost indicating the route between houses and back into open fields.

We see the A683 ahead of us across the field and we head down to the stile where we turn left to find Bull Beck Car park and the end of the walk.



- Total distance 8.5km (5.3 miles)
- Total ascent 228m
- Easy walk