

Whitbarrow

Distance - 13 km (8 miles) Ascent 244m (800ft) Map: Ordnance Survey Explorer OL7, The English Lakes, South Eastern Area 1:25,000



 - Walk

 - A590

1 - See attached instructions for details of points

Disclaimer:

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Whitbarrow

Walk 8

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Whitbarrow is huge limestone ridge, a great whale back rising high above the low ground of the Kent Estuary marshes and the alluvial Lyth Valley. Sheer cliffs abound although much of Whitbarrow, particularly on the east, is heavily cloaked in woodland. The views, particularly from the top, are wide ranging.

The circuit set out below is quite demanding; although the great majority of the tracks are excellent, apart from a little mud, there is a rather vague path near the summit and a steep downhill section which needs special care. Overall, there is great variety of landscape, with limestone features and with open area around the summit contrasting with the dense woodland of the approach route. Beck Head and Mill Side, both with some charm, are outlying hamlets of Witherslack.

Start/car parking - Small roadside spaces in Mill Side hamlet, grid reference 44942. Turn left from A590 four miles beyond Lindale.

WALK

Start from the information board/seat/telephone box situated in the middle of Mill Side hamlet, heading back towards the main road. Turn left at the adjacent road junction.

1 In approximately 200m turn left along a roadway with a 'Low Fell End' sign. Pass through the farm to reach the bottom edge of woodland, entered through a gate. Follow a narrow path, rising to the right to join a more major track in a short distance.

Turn right. The track stays close to the bottom edge of the wood, passing above the buildings of Whitbarrow Lodge, before reaching a farm roadway at Raven's Lodge.

2 Turn left to pass through the farm, then bear right (waymark) to continue along a broad track, with the precipice of White Scar above to the left.

3 Next is Rawsons, nestling below the woodland. Turn left at the buildings, go up a few steps and commence a prolonged ascent on a narrow but clear path, zig-zagging up the hillside. At a junction keep right, now on a broad track at an easier gradient, heading roughly north west, then north, for a further one and a half miles. The woodland is well varied and attractive. Ignore tracks to left and right, go to the left of the wood yard. Continue along the main track to second gate on the left. Take little gate to right of main gate. If you reach a gate in a wall across your path you have gone to far. Go back approximately 100 metres.

4 Turn left, uphill, for second prolonged ascent of the circuit. At a fork (waymarks each way) keep left, continuing to rise. At the next junction go right to reach the wall which marks the top edge of the forest.

5 Go over the stile and bear left along a distinct path to head for the highest point of Whitbarrow - Lord's Seat (215m - 705ft) on the top of a prominent mound. Whitbarrow Scar is the notable limestone feature on the left. Note the commemoration plaque on the stone pillar. Canon G.E.K. Harvey, founder of the Lake District Naturalists' Trust in 1962. The

large reserve covering this upland area is named after the Canon. The extensive views include Lake District mountains to the north and large swathes of Morecambe Bay to the south.

6 Turn right to leave Lord's Seat; for some distance the path is a little vague, with a mixture of grass and stone underfoot, but is marked by two large stone cairns as it descends steadily to the south west. After an area of rather isolated silver birch trees, enter woodland. The path is now clearly defined, with one section needing special care, descending a steep hillside on embedded rocks and loose stones. After a waymarked stile at the bottom a school football pitch is reached. Cross the near end of the pitch to another stile.

7 After the stile turn right, cross a large meadow, pass farm buildings and rise to join a minor road. Turn left to walk by the roadside for a half mile.

8 Turn left at a signposted public bridleway to follow a broad farm track leading to the little hamlet of Beck Head, with farm and some more modern buildings. One farm building has a 'Hikers Rest' refreshment room with Tea, Coffee and (sometimes) Soup. The beck issues most attractively from beneath limestone. Continue along the tarmac roadway, straight back to a road junction at Mill Side and the chosen parking place.

Refreshments - Hiker's Rest at Beck Hand (limited!)