



DISTANCE APPROX:

7.5 km / 4.7 miles



GRADIENT:

Some steep sections but much level walking.



UNDERFOOT:

One very rough section and some wet patches but mostly easy.



PUBLIC TOILETS:

None en-route.



REFRESHMENTS:

None en-route.

Important:

Dogs are not permitted on the access land in the first half of the walk.

Getting to the start:

Sadly, public transport is not really an option.

Energetic people could walk or cycle the 7 km from Lancaster.

The shortest route is:

Town Hall; East Road; bear R on Quernmore Rd then L, past Leisure Park. Continue 4 km to Quernmore village; L at crossroads by Post Office then next R on Rigg Lane.

Walk 5

Birk Bank And Baines Crag

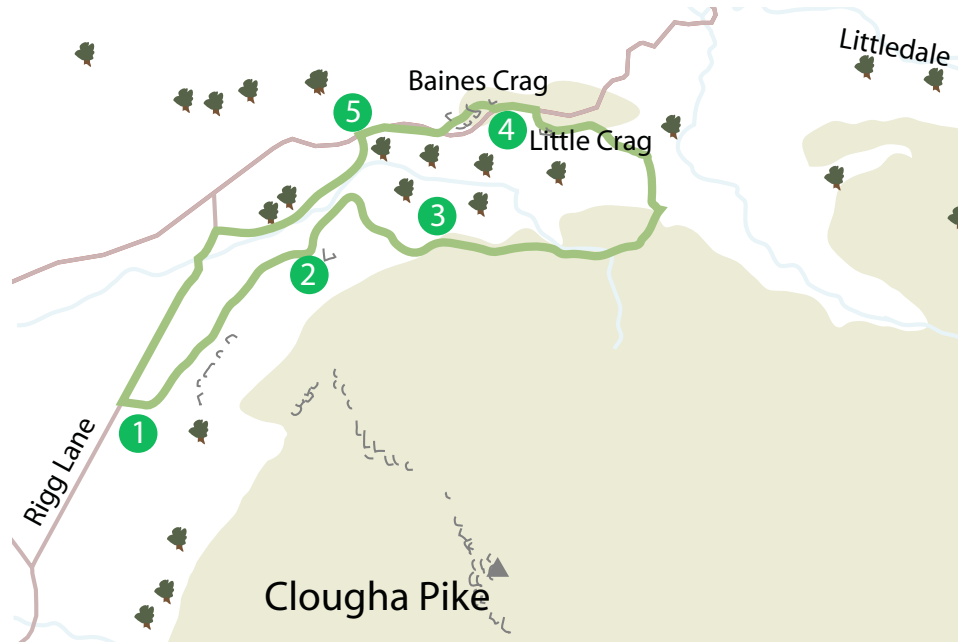
Lancaster's 'other' AONB is the Forest of Bowland; Lancaster's share of this is larger than the whole of Arnside - Silverdale and includes the highest fells. It's above all an area of sprawling heather moorland, punctuated by rocky outcrops and dissected by sheltered valleys. This walk provides a taste of these contrasts and gives some magnificent, far reaching views into the bargain.



View from Baines Crag



Walking in Littledale © Jon Sparks



KEY: L: left · R: right · SA: straight ahead or straight across · FP: footpath · BW: bridleway

1 START BIRK BANK CAR PARK ON RIGG LANE, QUERNMORE

Follow track above car park then fork L. Follow green, mostly level, track, crossing wet patch with stepping stones, to bridge.

2 OTTERGEAR BRIDGE 1.4 km / 0.9 miles

Cross, bear L then in 20m turn R on rising grassy track (NOT R track immediately after bridge). Meet a gravel track and turn R, through dip then slanting up steep slope. It levels off then curves away to R.

3 PATH LEAVES TRACK 2 KM / 1.25 MILES

Bear left on narrow rocky path, very rough but generally level, eventually descending into little enclosed valley. Follow base of R hand slope and skirt areas of rushes to reach stile at end of valley. Follow good green track, rising slightly then down alongside line of trees. At T junction turn L to fine barn. Bear R wards across next field, aiming for further of 2 metal gates. Cross stile and bear L on clear rising stony track, soon climbing past small ruined barn and up to stile on skyline. Go L to walk above Little Crag; at end join road. Walk down and over cattlegrid. At end of wire fence which runs along the right hand side of the road, go R, past perched boulder then bear L along crest of Baines Crag.

LOOK OUT FOR: The little valley is a 'marginal meltwater channel' formed by torrents pouring off stagnant ice sheets at the end of the last Ice Age. Baines Crag is a fine viewpoint, looking over the Lune Valley towards Morecambe Bay and the Lakeland hills. Its rocks occasionally attract climbers.

4 BAINES CRAG. 4.8 KM / 3 MILES

From end of crag path drops down steeper section then weaves through bracken and scattered trees to meet road. Cross, and follow green track, almost parallel to road, until they rejoin. Continue down through gateway to FP sign and stile on L.

5 STILE 5.4 km / 3.35 miles

Drop down through brambles to another stile then bear R; don't cross the stream but follow it down past a house. Path becomes clearer as valley narrows. Cross stile in a wall then another in a wire fence to continue following stream. Another stile and gate lead into farmyard. Short track runs out to Rigg Lane. Turn L and follow lane back to start.

