

Along Ullswater's Shore to Silver Point

*From the shores of Ullswater
to one of its most spectacular viewpoints.*

DISTANCE 4 miles (6.4km) **MINIMUM TIME** 1 hr 30min

ASCENT/GRADIENT 490ft (150m) ▲▲▲ **LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY** +++

PATHS Stony tracks and paths, no stiles

LANDSCAPE Lake and fell views, mixed woodland

SUGGESTED MAP OS Explorer OL5 The English Lakes (NE)

START / FINISH Grid reference: NY 396159

DOG FRIENDLINESS Passes through working farm and open hillside grazed by sheep, dogs must be under control at all times

PARKING Pay-and-display car park opposite Patterdale Hotel

PUBLIC TOILETS Opposite White Lion in Patterdale village centre

The elongated hamlet of Patterdale has a rugged, mountain quality. Sited below the mighty Helvellyn massif its straggle of houses, inn, hotel, mountain rescue base, church and school have a bleakness about them. A perfect contrast to the splendour of Ullswater, whose southern shore lies hardly a stone's throw away. This walk strolls through mixed woodland and open aspect above the shores of the lake to visit the famed viewpoint of Silver Point. The adventurous may wish to make the scramble to the top of Silver Crag, as did horsedrawn coach parties of old, for a better view of the lake.

Ullswater

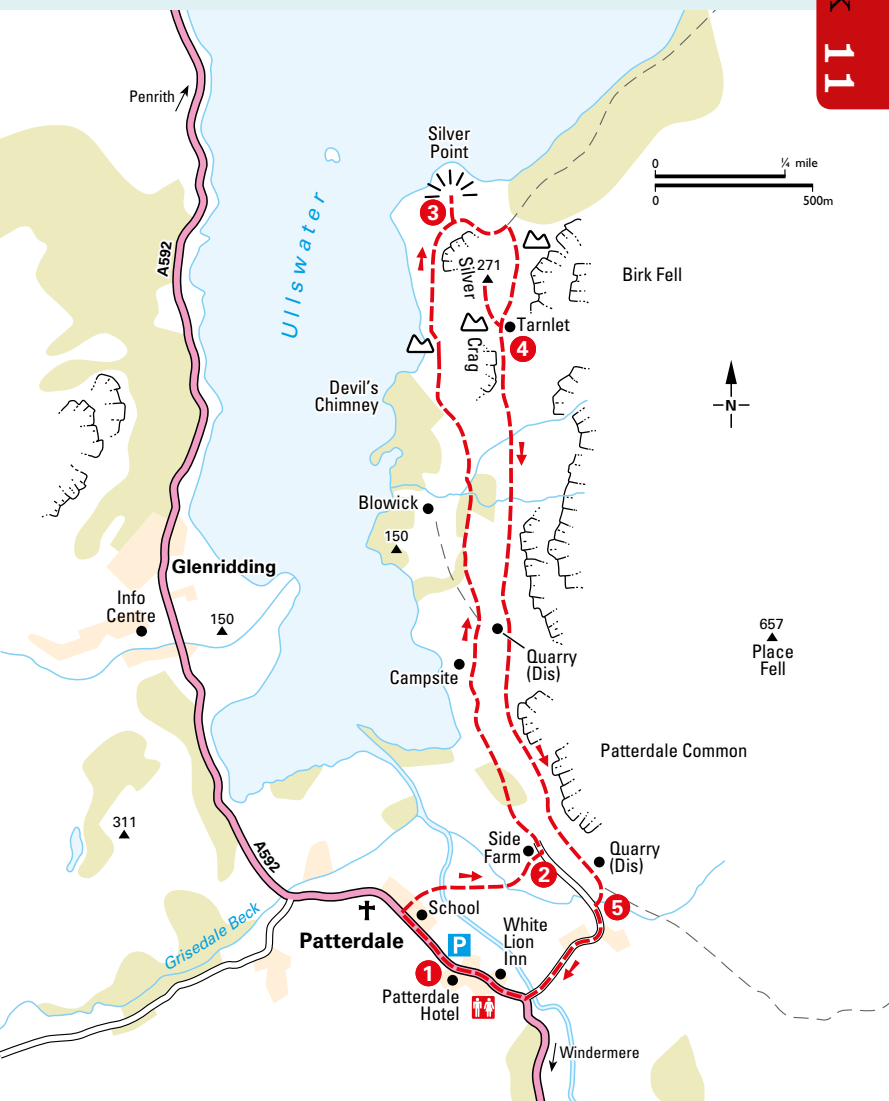
Undoubtedly one of the loveliest of the lakes, the three legs of Ullswater add up to a total length of 7.5 miles (12.1km) with an average width of 0.5 mile (800m) and a maximum depth of 205ft (62.5m). It is Lakeland's second largest lake, not quite measuring up to Windermere. Its waters are exceptionally clear and in the deepest part of the lake, off Howtown, lives a curious fish called the schelly; a creature akin to a freshwater herring.

Apart from rescue and Park Ranger launches, you won't see many power boats here, but Ullswater 'Steamers' have three boats operating between Glenridding and Pooley Bridge during the summer. Alfred Wainwright (1907–91), known for his seven *Pictorial Guides to the Lakeland Fells*, regarded this to be a part of one of the most beautiful walks in the Lakes. Preservation of the lake in its present form is due to a concerted campaign, led in Parliament by Lord Birkett, against the proposed Manchester Corporation Water Act in 1965. Although the act was passed, and water is extracted from the lake, the workings are hidden underground and designed in such a way as to make it impossible to lower the water level beyond the agreed limit.

Among the trees, beside the shore, it was the golden yellow daffodils of this lake that inspired William Wordsworth's most widely known poem, *I wandered lonely as a cloud* or *Daffodils* as it often referred to (published in 1807). His sister Dorothy recorded the event vividly in her diary: 'I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones about and around

PATTERDALE

them, some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillar for weariness and the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew them over the lake.' There is no doubt that this later helped William to pen his famous verse.



WALK 11 DIRECTIONS

1 From the car park walk to the road and turn right towards the shore of Ullswater. Pass the school to a track leading off right, through the buildings. Follow the unsurfaced track over a bridge and

continue through the buildings of Side Farm to join another unsurfaced track.

2 Turn left along the undulating track, with a stone wall to the left, and pass through mixed woodland, predominantly oak and

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

Take a look around the nearby village of Glenridding. It has an information centre, inns and a variety of shops and places of interest. It is now the main gateway to the high Helvellyn massif and a popular place for hillwalkers and climbers. Until the 1960s it was also an important mining village. The Greenside Lead Mine, located at the top of the valley, was the largest lead mine in Britain. All is now quiet, and a youth hostel occupies a former mine building.

ash, before open fellside appears above. Proceed along the path above the campsite and pass a stand of larch before descending to cross a little stream above the buildings of Blowick, seen through the trees below. The path ascends again to crest a craggy knoll above the woods of Devil's Chimney. Make a steep descent following the path through the rocks before it levels to traverse beneath the craggy heights of Silver Crag. A slight ascent, passing some fine holly trees, gains the shoulder of Silver Point and an outstanding view of Ullswater. A short there-and-back to the tip is worthwhile.

3 Follow the path, which sweeps beneath the end of Silver Crag and continue to pass a small stream before a steep stony path, eroded in places, breaks off to the right. Ascend this, climbing diagonally right, through the juniper bushes. Gain the narrow gap which

WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

En route, Side Farm sometimes offers teas and ice creams and, in the centre of Patterdale, next to the road, stands the White Lion Inn which serves bar meals throughout the year.

separates Silver Crag to the right from the main hillside of Birk Fell to the left. This little valley is quite boggy and holds a small tarnlet.

4 If you don't care for steep, exposed ground, follow the high narrow path to make a gradual descent south in the direction of Patterdale. But for those with a head for heights, a short steep scramble leads to the top of Silver Crag and a wonderful view. Care must be exercised for steep ground lies in all directions. Descend back to the ravine and the main path by the same route. The path is easy though it traverses the open fellside and may be boggy in places. Pass open quarry workings, where there is a large unfenced hole next to the path (take care), and continue on, to cross over the slate scree of a larger quarry. Bear right to descend by a stream and cross a little footbridge leading to the gate at the end of a track.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

The distinctive golden yellow and white of the indigenous daffodil still abounds in the woods by the lake shore and may be seen at its best from mid-March to mid-April.

This wild variety is smaller than the broader flowered cultivated version and, many would say, even more lovely. There has been concern recently that the introduction of cultivated daffodils to this area is actually damaging the survival prospects of its smaller relative and jeopardising the view Wordsworth loved.

5 Go left through the gate and follow the lane which leads through the meadows. Cross the bridge and join the road. Bear right through Patterdale to return to the car park.